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‘Old School’ in a New Millennium?  
Exploring Literacy Across Three Generations: A Qualitative Study on One Multi-  
Generational Mexican-Descent Family Living in California

By

María De Los Angeles Almanzo

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

Requirements for the degree of

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in

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

Committee in Charge:

Professor Sarah Warshauer Freedman, Chair  
Professor Daniel Perlstein  
Professor Alex M. Saragoza

Fall 2011



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Abstract  
'Old School' in a New Millennium?  
Exploring Literacy Across Three Generations: A Qualitative Study on One Multi-  
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by

María De Los Angeles Almanzo  
Doctor of Education  
University of California, Berkeley  
Professor Sarah Warshauer Freedman, Chair

The focus of this study took into account the collective literacy and language learning experiences of one multi-generational Latino family in relation to their community public school. I sought to understand better the persistent contentions between public schooling literacy education and second language learners. I used a qualitative interpretive design to determine the types of attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors associated with the lens of reading the word through content analysis of selected historical documents and the interviews of 22 family participants pooled from one multi-generational extended family.

Each participant was held accountable to the conditions of learning based on the influences of concurrent selected policy reforms. The major findings revealed that only 3 participants received instruction that included Spanish support. The remaining 19 participants from third to fifth generations experienced learning to read in English only mainstream classes. The discourse analysis of uptakes, footings, and frames showed that some participants responded to their learning experiences through uptake styles supporting attitudes of resignation, conflict, and assimilation. Even though policies for literacy reform purport to alleviate risks of illiteracy, risks for children with vulnerable language needs continue to lack adequate attention and support while meeting the demands of higher educational expectations.

Understanding learning to read from varied family experiences responding to institutional offerings is an important contribution to recognizing the complexities of navigating school culture for culturally and linguistically diverse children as they develop academic par with peer group native speakers of English.

## Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my loving family.

*In memory of my Grandparents,*

Angel and Isaura Almanzo

and

Felix and Elena Solis

*In memory of my Father,*

Roberto Angel Medrano Almanzo

*Mother,*

Josefina Solis Almanzo

*Brother and Sister,*

Jose Luis Rodriguez and Elena Almanzo

*Husband,*

David Renteria

*Children,*

Angélica Trella Jau Renteria

Aaron David Renteria

Daniel Langston Renteria,

*my extended family and ancestors.*

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I am indeed thankful to the family members who graciously accepted me into their homes and for allowing me a glimpse into their lives while growing up in the Central Valley of California. I am honored that they trusted me with their personal experiences. I appreciate deeply their willingness to share their stories with me and through this dissertation.

I also like to acknowledge the support of my colleagues and endearing friends who were supportive throughout the endeavor of accomplishing this dissertation. These were Carolina, Esperanza, Manuel, Colin, Tryphenia, Mimi, Joan, Elizabeth, Cynthia, Stephanie, Tina, Diana Lynn, and DOPPA writing group. I am indebted to their supporting conversations, feedback and generous sentiments of encouragement.

Finally I would like to thank my family for their continued support and generous understanding throughout the years while I was in graduate school. I remain in awe and deeply inspired as my own family grows and extends into future generations.

## Chapter 1 'Old School'<sup>1</sup> in a New Millennium?

*"They looked to education for the promises their parents had so often mouthed, and they reaffirmed a faith that schooling ought to make a difference in the job a man or woman could expect."*

Shirley Brice Heath, *Way With Words*, 1983, p.28.

Every morning, according to CA Department of Education enrollment data<sup>2</sup>, there are potentially 6.2 million public school children in California who wake up, get ready, say good-bye to loved ones, and attend their respective public schools. The same data source reports that 1.4 million are English language learners<sup>3</sup>. The vision of schooling that unfolds daily before each child is contingent on educational priorities and goals that branch from three differential levels of decision-making bodies: federal, state, and community. However, decision-makers from state and national levels are rarely in a position to see the unintended consequences of children's actual experiences when advocating for educational reforms. In the routine of schooling, children step across the threshold of their classrooms and take on student roles that are attached to the daily processes of classroom practice, which are often influenced by these decision-making bodies and their notions about the what conditions for learning should be more like.

This dissertation evolved from my 10 years of experience teaching at the study site's focal primary grade school. I became familiar with both the community and school parents. During "Back to School Night" events, I would listen to parents discuss their educational concerns for their children. I was empathetic to personal stories of family hardship. Examples of their challenges included low wages in menial jobs or physical exertion working either in agricultural fields and local food processing plants. In order to make ends meet, some mothers would defer to personal skills like selling tamales in the neighborhood or bartering their time or goods for necessities. In addition to sharing economic experiences, school parents shared their concerns about the language of instruction and whether their children would benefit more from bilingual education or an English immersion class. Most parents tried to offer help with their children's homework, but for some even at third grade, any English material was beyond their comprehension due to their own evolving English language proficiencies.

During the same time period, policy goals were brought to my attention when, as a teacher, other teachers and I were to collectively know the goal of 'every child a reader by third grade'. This was an idea taken from Goals 2000 introduced in 1990. From the moment this policy goal was put in place, teacher meetings included discussions around what it meant and how to reach that goal. The school year included meetings to articulate grade-level standards. During these meetings, teachers gave their input. These meetings began with teachers at each grade level within a school and then moved to cross-school,

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<sup>1</sup> Merriam Webster defines old school as, 1: adhering to traditional policies or practices <an *old-school* coach> 2: characteristic or evocative of an earlier or original style, manner, or form <*old-school* music> Downloaded: 9/14/2011 <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/old-school>.

<sup>2</sup> Enrollment in California Public School District, California Department of Education Educational Demographics Unit, downloaded: November 17, 2011. <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/content.asp>.

<sup>3</sup> Enrollment in California Public School District, California Department of Education Educational Demographics Unit, downloaded: November 17, 2011. <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/lc/NumberElState.asp?Level=State&TheYear=2010-11>.



grade-level meetings, aimed at coming up with shared strategies for meeting the goals and integrated professional development. There were some ideas that I could embrace such as D.E.A.R. (Drop Everything and Read) time and others I could not such as shutting down bilingual education and only instructing students in English. These experiences along with the parent sharing piqued my curiosity about how families were affected when even teachers were not in agreement over matters of instruction.

As parent stories were being told, I wanted to understand better how families were being impacted by the school decisions filtered through policy and policymakers. I recruited the help of one family with a situated history in their town for over five generations. Hearing the voices of inter-generational crossings from home to school rendered a unique opportunity to examine how a system of local education enacted practice for culturally diverse language learners as a response to changing policy interests over time. The family members have become rooted in their community and passed through periods of legislated educational shifts that have defined a literate citizen. Each family member navigated the invisible contentions of literacy and language development through the vying frames of best educational practices and the educational interests mandated from official policymakers.

The domains of interest for this study included selected documents on legislated literacy reform and the experiences of one extended family with their neighborhood elementary school. The goal of the study is to understand the family's intergenerational efforts over time to maneuver or pool resources to meet their linguistic educational needs initiated by reading the word in the world of schooling. I contrast language and literacy development as advanced by selected directives based on legislative goals as the netting backdrop for contrasting participants' lived experiences with the inaugurated schooling practice. This study borrows and extends the concept of "Funds of Knowledge" (Moll, 1992), a concept of socio-cultural literacy theory that was first put forth to highlight the potential use of knowledge that students from a low SES Chicano community brought to school. While studying reading and writing, Moll showed the resourcefulness of the collective pool of distributive family members' potentials for academic support. His motivation was to 'identify these resources and develop practical ways to harness them for use in literacy instruction (Moll, 1992, p. 212). I hope to extend the notion of funds of knowledge to explore the linguistic demands and expectations associated with schooling and the concept of literacy. This dissertation strives to offer insight to educators regarding the language and literacy development for culturally and linguistically diverse families with children who are learners at varied English proficiencies, children who are both learning to read the world and the word (Freire, 1987).

This study is guided by the following questions:

1. How does 'policy talk' relate to the ways that literacy programs are put in place in the school?
  - a. What is the relationship of official practice to reading the world?
  - b. How do varied policy agendas strive to promote literacy?
2. What instructional material did Familia Ortiz encounter and how did they respond to literacy and language programs?
  - a. What issues of language or literacy do the narratives of individual family members identify?

- b. How have family members negotiated language exchanges in order to be considered literate and appropriate speaking in the official world of schooling?
3. How do family stories reflect the discourse of legislative ‘policy talk’?
- a. How are school site programs represented and discussed within family stories?
- b. How do family representations and discussions of these programs change across generations?

I hope to offer prospective teachers and educators an illustration of related unintended consequences associated with the practice of reading the word that impacted second language learners through classroom practice across concurrent time with inaugurated policies. In doing so, I further hope to broaden the context for recognizing pedagogical resources from the lived experiences of culturally and linguistically diverse families.

### Theoretical Perspective

One has to respect the levels of understanding that those becoming educated have of their own reality. (Freire, 1987, pg. 41)

### Reading the Word of Multiple Worlds

Children learn to discern and negotiate meaning as they participate in real time social interactions. For example, a mother is pushing an infant in a shopping cart down a grocery store aisle. Along her side she has a toddler and seven-year-old. As their trip through the aisles of the grocery store proceed, each child and the mother experience a facet of the experience, each taking in what she already knows in addition to any further information she gathers from her vantage point. As the seven-year-old persists in reading labels and signs, the artifacts of the environment, the toddler may tune in and out; the mother may correct, encourage, or for expediency’s sake, read aloud as she goes along making her trip more efficient.

Cultural artifacts lend presence to incidental<sup>4</sup>, embedded, and explicit episode opportunities open to participant interpretations in situated environments. These opportunities offer spontaneous or determined construction of socially constituted knowledge. Experiences inaugurating<sup>5</sup> reading the word or world, such as the one exemplified above, emerge from the social interactions of the natural world of daily living within family influences. Stepping over the classroom threshold, in contrast, may underrate family influences for those of a public system agency of knowing what is best in the interest of children (Bourdieu, Valenzuela, Brice-Heath, Freire). In the world of public schooling, the act of reading inaugurates recreating social interactions around a synthetic system of language installments constructed from the influences of research and expert advice (Freire, Pease-Alvarez & Samway-Davis, Cole, Shannon, Bidwell).

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<sup>4</sup> The term incidental refers to qualities of opportunistic happenstance and the nature of unintentional knowledge acquisition. The term embedded refers to knowledge acquisition as it occurs in a contextually nested circumstance. In a holistic teaching approach, phonic patterns in words are explained within a selection of text without the exclusion of text comprehension. Explicit refers to deliberate categorical appropriation of specific and discrete knowledge constituents. The functionalist teaching approach expects phonetic mastery, the appropriation of sound to letters above understanding words or text.

<sup>5</sup> Inaugurate. **1** : to introduce (someone, such as a newly elected official) into a job or position with a formal ceremony, **2** : to celebrate the fact that something (such as a new hospital or school) is officially ready to be used, **3 a** : to be the beginning of (something, such as a period of time). In *Merriam-Webster.com*. Retrieved May 8, 2011, from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/inaugurate?show=1321479724>



Instruction of reading the word is based on curriculum associated with or attached to organizing students dominantly around textbook curriculum.

Textbooks are cultural artifacts that give shape to the complex contingencies of issues around policy accountability and foundational learning assumptions. Beyer (1991) gives an example supporting the dimensional contingencies concerning social justice in education that can be associated with textbooks. He points out that textbook publishers are included in a group of potential agencies that have the capacity to transmit moral perspectives. He noted that,

Yet when teachers do not consider the moral dimensions of education, or the moral qualities of educative experience, other people and agencies including textbook publishers, individuals and organizations representing business and industry, politicians, and special interest groups have a relatively unobstructed hand in determining the moral perspectives communicated to students. (p. 247)

The McGuffey Readers of the mid-19 century reflected overtly contemporary moral judgments digested through publishers and processed into textbook form for instructional purpose of teaching reading the word. In addition, In addition the McGuffey Reader also integrated a mass-market strategy into their textbooks by suggesting, upon completion of a text through the narrator, that the child ask their parents for the next book in the series.

Although moral development is outside the scope of this study, historically reading management programs have evolved to become less overt with moral judgments and more focused on content elements based on scientific facts. Yet, the overlapping contingencies associated with textbooks continue to contribute to the confounding experiences of a second language learner in a primary English content instructional environment. The world of schooling has become a little broader from inquiries into the conditions of vulnerable children populations. In spite of the advancement of science informing goals undergirding legislative directives, reforms in education has yet to significantly reduce early school career termination for students with diverse needs. This has been a historically repetitive theme of policy concerns (Shannon, 1989) that suggest seeking potentials for deeper explanations.

For instance, reading basals and primary or peripheral support materials<sup>6</sup> are held to the current standard of thought that integrate newly prescribed principles of instructional reform reflecting concurrent policy goals. Collectively over time, the episodes of practice that go about setting up the constituted elements of literacy awareness assume that textbooks are compact with the minimal amount of knowledge expectation for grade level transmission for all students (Shannon, 1989, McQuillan, 1998; Coles, 2003). The representation of the grocery store experience, for example as a curriculum idea may more likely be viewed as a theme to reorganize and deconstruct into nubs of language to be learned and then tested for reproduction skill accuracy (Freire, Bourdieu). The units around the nubs of language, making up textbooks content material inaugurates particular expectations of language production that regulates how and what and by whom gets said with associated or attached social behaviors.

In contrast, reading the world and the word is bound to the inquiries of the participants. Based on the foundational principle of coauthoring, it is an engagement of participant interpretation of spontaneous or determined episodes of lived experiences.

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<sup>6</sup> Primary support materials are those that come included with the reading management program. Peripheral support materials include separate reading information working in tandem to the adopted reading management program.

The socializing activities for reading the word and the world take in the perspective that lived experiences include, “the moments we live either are instants in a process previously inaugurated, or else they inaugurate a new process referring in some way to something in the past” (Freire, 1994, p.27). To read takes in both linguistic and behavioral shapings of a lived experience episode brought to inquiry as an act of problem-posing. The participant’s degree of awareness coming to these shapings is set in a process of praxis, reaction, reflection, and action. Problem posing is an orientation towards endeavors deconstructing personal intent and behaviors conventionalized through common social expectations. A conscious effort to gain clarity, reading, undertakes guided or unguided multi-sensory interpretation of the world for authenticating the voice of the inquirer. The intent is to expand around what is known and what is unknown by integrating first-hand creative responses to the experience. By reading the world of the grocery store, one looks for the potential for re-creating the world and the word as co-authors among the participants.

Reading episodes offer opportunities in making sense of supporting contextual interpretations of the world. As an example of the contextual interpretations that could occur from the grocery store experience, the mother reaches for a low content sugar cereal even though her child is asking for another. The mother considers her children’s health first. The children are not as thoughtful, but have an opportunity to see their mother negotiate the world based on personal and local information. The grocery store offers food, but not all foods are healthy. The individual is responsible for personal decisions based on how he or she goes about interpreting the offerings of the environment. Children first begin reading the intimate worlds of their families before venturing out from their homes into new environments that necessitate specific readings of the contextual realized world (Freire, 1987) and as children get older they read increasingly more complex aspects of their social worlds and offered word. As such, Freire suggests literacy is about understanding the conditions of humanity, the offerings of society and its limitations, and to whom these are extended as invitations or punishments. The competitive nature of the synthetic system, for lack of understanding space, however, in coming to these realizations has instead contributed to contentions and misaligned programming for neophyte citizens.

Freire’s principal ideas of literacy are derived from the process of “concientización”, the act of becoming aware. Concientización infuses the notion that knowledge is imbued with political, cultural, and social assumptions and influences interpretations. Regarding literacy, Freire states, “[R]eading is not the mere act of decoding the written word or language; rather, it is preceded by and intertwined with knowledge of the world” (Freire, 1987, p.29). The composition of the world consists of sounds, texts, words, letters, animals, environment, people, and the language of social intimates, their beliefs, tastes, fears, and values linking the local world to the wider global world. An intrinsic quality of literacy is an act of coming to know and being aware of one’s shared reality mediated by signs, symbols and gestures. Schooling is a process by which a learning community responds to the development of equipollent systems of language: spoken and written (Tolchinsky Landsmann, 1996). The schooling experience of language learners is one area of concern in determining how a community is responsive to the linguistic needs of children’s voice: their self-initiated expressions



inaugurated in homes, schools, and communities (Valdés & Figueroa, 1996; Cazden, 1988; Heath, 1983).

The overlapping value-judgments of home, school, and community share diverse cultural and political relationships embedded in the field of daily social interactions that affect the conditions for the production of language (Freire, 1987; Bourdieu, 1974; Foucault, 1995; Dardar, 1991; Dyson, 1993). The contrast between academic daily norms and family daily norms creates two distinct socially constituted knowledge environments for the developing awareness of reading the world and word for the child (Moll, 1992; Heath, 1983; Flor Ada, 1990). Stepping over the family's cultural doorway and evoking their collective remembrance of their schooling experiences allows a glimpse into the distinct fields of organizing relationships and their varied expressions as influenced by legislation, community, and families.

During the time period covered by this study, 1983 to 1999, debate regarding the best approach for literacy development proliferated resulting in rich and varied empirical studies indicating children's literacy achievement or shortcomings as measures of discrete deconstructed reading skills (Adams, 1990; Lemann, 1997, Stanovich & Stanovich, 2003). These studies, however, neglect cultural and social influences that affect the relationship between home, school, and local community. In addition, issues of accountability, second language acquisition, and literacy development for second language learners remain unresolved (Valdés, 2001; Valenzuela, 1999). Qualitative approaches to observing children, and critical discourse analysis offer other lenses into the influences of multiple perspectives that are handed down in digest form to schools through instructional tools that remain covertly entangled and unaccounted for by measures of accountability focused on quantifiable outcomes.

### **Approaches and Reading the Word**

The family members for this study encountered two concurrently evolving theoretical perspectives for reading the word in their schooling experiences, holistic and behaviorist. The holistic approach is associated with Kidwatching (Goodman, 1985). Kidwatching was an idea that evolved through the child study movement of the 1930s to gain better insight into the intricacies of child development that was yet unknown through a behaviorist lens. Kidwatching, was based on holistic principles which contrasted sharply with the diagnostic/remedial approach pioneered by William Scott Gray.

The science of an emerging diagnostic/remedial approach, adaptable to behaviorist principles, was pioneered with the basal series, *Elsen Basic Readers*. The series was co-authored by William Scott Gray in the 1930s. His research interest in the application of scientific methods in reading instruction allowed him, in 1936, to author the Dick and Jane basal series. His material was replicated for public schools and in a mass wave of distribution eventually replaced the previous scientific based textbook, The McGuffey Readers. As noted by Callahan (1962), additionally attributed and influenced with economic and political interests as educating,

[M]illions of Americans in their formative years learned from these books not only the idea that success was a result of honesty and hard work but the idea that success was material success: and the successful in individual used as models were usually bankers or merchants (1962, p. 2).

Callahan demonstrates the susceptibility of textbooks in transmitting values of particular power interests shaping the word behind the instructional tool school source for reading material.

Both perspectives, holistic and diagnostic/remedial strove to educate the child. This early 1930s period of research produced a wealth of new understandings for human development and children's potentials as they responded to their educational environments and practices. Both perspectives also differed in how they influenced the social and academic relationship between the teacher and child. The holistic perspective encouraged teacher's roles to expand with researcher's qualitative tools in order to become better informed about the subtle distinctions in how children acquired mental power dexterity,

Teachers can translate child study into its most universal form: learning about children by watching how they learn. The term kidwatching has caught on among those who believe that children learn language best in an environment rich with opportunities to explore interesting objects and ideas. Through observing the reading, writing, speaking, and listening of friendly, interactive peers, interested, kidwatching teachers can understand and support child language development. (Goodman, 1985, p.9)

Kidwatching evolve to expand teacher's roles to assess children's language development form through the perspective of episodic occurrence, oral or written, noting appropriately applied conventional wisdom of use. Whereas the role of the instructor under a diagnostic/remedial approach brokers instructional objectives of any given reading management program. Both perspective underlie the broader vision of an educator's eye, however, however, policy leaders assuming responsibility for political direction and economic needs perceived growing risks of a poorly educated populous in terms of affecting national interests.

After the Sputnik scare of the late 1950s, the focus for education turned to the eradication of children's "kid" mistakes. Since then refining proficiencies for language and literacy for grade level mastery were increasingly taught by reading management programs relying on a diagnostic/remedial approach. The children were further evaluated and prescribed specific remedial instruction if they faltered from lowest expectations. The intent of schooling shifted priorities motivated by a heightened concern of urgency, the overwhelming sense of pressed-for-time, the need to efficiently and quickly fix the lack of proficiencies in faltering students even though the system gave evidence of needing attention (Coburn & Stein, 2010).

Even though, American reading instruction "has changed across time according to contemporary social, political, and economic circumstances" (Shannon, 1994, p. 42), the lens of research undergirding public instruction minimally includes authentic voices of both children and parents actively responding to their educational circumstances embedded in the daily occurrences of living their lives. The continued lack of proficient attainment or minimal literacy engagement for student populations such as second language learners with vulnerable language issues, suggest seeking deeper explanations outside the mechanisms sustaining the application of the common Traditional Approach.

### **The Official World of Recreating the Word**

The power to recreate the official word of understanding change-for-social-benefit, as presented in *A Nation at Risk*, in contradictory visions, offered a dark picture



of what change is from, “[If]an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war (NCEE, 1983, p.9) and on the same page, alludes to a conviction as an entitlement of the common citizen, “[A]ll, regardless of race or class or economic status, are entitled to a fair chance and to the tools for developing their individual powers of mind and spirit to the utmost”. The messages, even if ambivalent or confusing, were evoked to carry by remote transmission the, attached or associated, tone, intent and emotional stance representative of the official in office perspective for the purpose of organizing daily civic duty of carrying out the digest form of scientifically-inform-and-replicated-results-pedagogy. Evoking the imagery of war gave something as a cause for reacting with intense response to the lack of quality students and school. Whereas the trajectory vision for compulsive education alludes to the sense of exploring one’s limitless potentials, the common citizen, however, is only as educationally sound as the science offered to pursue their interests beginning with reading the word as a way of reading the world.

Indeed, the notion of subjecting our children, neophyte citizens, to the scientific nature of schooling has not been limited to one political perspective. For instance, the anticipation that children in the schooling process would eventually placate themselves into the larger society can be traced back to the late 1800’s with U.S. Commissioner of Education, Dr. William T. Harris, 1898. He expressed a vision for public education by stating, ‘Our schools have been scientifically designed to prevent over-education from happening...The average American [should be] content with their humble role in life, because they’re not tempted to think about any other role’ (Kearney & Perkins, 2011, p.4). The statement alludes to one perspective for setting up the purpose of schooling indicating the relationship between science and civic application for the common person.

Close to a century later, in contrast, the goal for educating all students, based on *A Nation at Risk*, assumed that schooling would include “the tools for developing their individual powers of mind and spirit to the utmost” (NCEE, p.9, 1983). Yet whether a hundred years ago or in current practice, properly organized evaluations and assessments tool to inform teacher decisions have yet to be adequately refined and established or practiced with full confidence towards the communicative potentials of the bilingual child (Valdés & Figueroa, 1996). Instead the linguistic vulnerabilities of the second language learners are looked as qualities that need remedying or eradicating through the process of surveillance and influences of extrinsic control (Foucault, 1977).

The content and curriculum affected under proposed policy changes and supporting ideas, as quoted above from *A Nation at Risk*, were not concerned with the subtle developmental changes that occur given patience and time towards the child as in *Kidwatching*. But, instead, the application of reforms facilitated the role of the textbook as the most efficient teaching tool and easily dispersed to meeting children’s academic needs. The changes affecting content, as evident in textbook examples<sup>7</sup>, looked towards the attainment of a greater amount of isolated skills, the legitimized collective needs in which all student populations are held accountable. Regarding the relationship between teachers and textbooks, Shannon (1989), noted that,

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<sup>7</sup> See Table 6.

...observational studies have demonstrated not only that teachers use basal materials religiously, but that they rely on the teacher's guidebook to inform themselves about the science of reading instruction and that they define their instructional success according to the parameters established in the materials (p.42).

Such material parameters also shifted the relationship between teacher and child. Issues of accountability pushed teachers away from making instructional decisions based on their professional judgment to making decisions based on neophyte potential for standardized assessments performance instead of human capital refinement. Both teacher and student are given the digest form of how schooling should occur. They follow a day micromanaged by the pacing and flow charts of the ultimately scripted detailed teachers' manuals. Lessons are designed for teachers in minimally resourced educational environments, replete with sequentially prescribed activities, evaluation instruments, and remedies for poor performance. As a result, the incremental units of learning material are assumed to accommodate and advance symmetry between grade level curriculum and standards; breadth and scope, evaluations, goals, and expectations.

*Management programs and reading the word.* Traditionally, schools have assumed a prescriptive stance that theoretically supports reductionist assumptions towards the development of literacy (McLaren, 1993; Freire, 1987; Moustafa, 1999; McQuillan, 1998). Literacy, from a school's perspective, is identified and aligned with standards set forth by the State Department of Education. These standards delineate grade level skills in reading and writing. The school site makes accessible to the teacher instructional materials adopted from State regulated commercial literacy programs in order to facilitate a student's growth in reading. These literacy programs provide a variety of activities to connect the child to literacy. These programs also assume that children are limited in accessing their knowledge of the world in order to solve print literacy tasks (Moustafa, 1997). This stance, based on a top down approach, has contingent assumptions regarding how children learn to read through teachers that manifest management pedagogies (Giroux, 1988) in order to teach literacy. Giroux regarded management pedagogies as those, which reserve "for teachers the role of simply carrying out predetermined content and instructional procedures" (1988, p. 124). Reading management programs organize and systematically indicate timing and pacing for their content material. The terms "teacher-proof curriculum" and "student-proof" are terms from teacher talk that associate the lock step, ready to use, guided curriculum plans that shape learning processes. Students are required to follow disenfranchising repetitive activities that reduce literacy to minimal meanings of discrete skills and the practice of gaining mastery.

In the official world responding to the educational needs of all student populations, the science and material represent the remote proxy voice of policy digested into the tools of application, such as textbooks. In this study, both participants and the constituent conditions of the available material resources are being taken into account to further examine literacy awareness and the ways in which reading the word varies at three different sites: home, school, and community for the layered family generations.



**Plan of the Dissertation**

This project advances the notion that an integral component to any educational reform advancing literacy and language necessitates the inclusion of marginalized perspectives of those participants, whether adults or children, for whom the educational reforms are being made. Their interests, attitudes, and beliefs may offer another key into the examination of how schooling practices and programs influence the understanding of literacy and language development for culturally and linguistically diverse student populations.

In chapter 2, I provide a description of my procedures for contacting volunteer participants, the criteria used for selecting focal participants, data collection and the process for data analysis. In chapter 3, I consider the influences of legislative ‘policy talk’ that target changes in how reading the word literacy was presented, framed and packaged for classroom consumption. The selected frames were sampled for linguistic devices of uptakes, footings and alignments to frames. In chapter 4, I delve into the practice of language and literacy as presented by the family participant’s interviews of their schooling experiences and current practices for reading. I conclude with chapter 5, a discussion of the relationship between the findings and the implications for language and literacy development for families with diverse linguistic needs who often negotiate the schools under conditions of high academic stress.

## Chapter 2

### Research Methods, Research Site, and Participants

“The great strength of qualitative research is its “naturalism,” its intimacy with real people in real situations, its concern for understanding human beings as they act in the course of their daily lives” (Hull, G. 1997).

This chapter begins with a discussion of my role as a researcher. Next, I explain the design and data collection for the two areas of investigation: (a) document analysis of ‘policy talk’ from selected National Reports informing legislated literacy reforms and (b) a case study of selected focal participants from one extended Latino family: La Familia Ortiz. Finally, I describe my data analysis techniques.

#### **Beginning the Ethnography: My Role and Questions**

Through the years, I remained in contact with several families that helped to inform my particular interests in language and literacy development while in graduate school. As a result, I became interested in how the schooling process of one generation affects subsequent generations in relation to both primary and second language acquisition and literacy development. As an elementary school teacher, I saw several children of my husband’s cousins attending my school with mixed experiences with respect to the language of instruction. Some had bilingual instruction whereas others did not. As I refined my ideas about the direction of this project, I asked members of my husband’s extended family if they were interested in participating in a study of language and literacy development across generations. As this study evolved, I first wondered what parents remembered about their childhood reading processes and how residual memories influenced the understanding of reading at home. This exploration is important since the study examines participants (children in particular) who, in contemporary organizations, are impacted by economic, social, political, and cultural pressures related to the development of simultaneous reading of the word and world. At the school site, it asks what is accessible to the teacher and inaccessible to the child? How are children drawn to literacy events? What are the implications for classroom evaluation and practice based on how literacy is defined?

My concerns about my role for this study include, (a) strong personal bias bordering on hostile attitudes towards school policies, (b) the danger of over generalizing and (c) romantic or nostalgic attachments or associations with the subjects in the study. I did not want any of these biases or lack of sensitivity to contribute towards a misalignment of intent spoken by the participants. My professional remedy to keeping the integrity of focal study interest and distance from these attachments included the opportunities to discuss potential biases and implications with my graduate writing group. This was important, since I wanted also to offer a respectful representation of the family members. Additionally, I believe a major contribution of the study was in coming to understand facets of reading the word and it’s relationship within the boundaries of accessibility activities for meaning making with or to the participants. This space is mitigated for children by the assumption for textbook use as tool for minimally resourced environment and subpar leading instructor through. Accessibility activities can allow for either support of a child’s naturally innate feelings towards exploring curiosities or not. This study provided a platform to cull an unexplored potential for a deeper understanding of how the intimacy of a family’s personal lives are affected by the schooling process and what in the relationship remains under-detected.



## Setting and Participants

The Familia Ortiz resides in a California Central Valley community that has a rich agricultural history populated by various immigrants groups. This family was chosen because of their accessibility and because their history parallels the changes in the rural community in which they resided from rural to suburban. This family, in particular, has lived in the community for over forty years beginning in the early 1930s. Economic opportunities in their county include dairy, farming, and canning industries. Currently this community appears to be experiencing the effects of population growth due to a sharp rise of San Francisco Bay Area commuters. In addition, other effects of growth are indicated by community needs for additional housing, transportation services, and educational accommodations

## Data Collection

Data include (a) historical documents and (b) ethnographic interviews and field notes in which family members recount their experiences.

### A. Historical Document Data

The document data Table 1 below emerged from selected congressional hearings, legislative initiatives, supporting panel research reports and resulting materials used at the school.

### B. Participants Interviews

1. I collected ethnographic interviews from 27 family participants.
2. I conducted one interview with 5 members and two interviews with the other 22 family members. Although I had collected 49 interviews, the analysis is based on 44 interviews from the 22 participants who participated in both.

Historical Document Data. Between 1983 and 1999 congress commissioned four different reports (Table 1) to identify and address reform around the areas of school curriculum and teacher preparation by applying rigorous standards at national and state levels. The selected reports included: *A Nation at Risk*, *Becoming A Nation of Readers*, *Beginning to Read: Thinking and Learning About Print*, and *National Reading Report*. The selected national policies include: *America 2000*, *Goals 2000*, *America Reads*, and *The Reading Excellence Act*. The selected policies at the state level include: *Every Child a Reader: The Report of the California Reading Task Force*, *Teaching Reading: A Balanced, comprehensive approach to Teaching Reading in Prekindergarten Through Grade Three: the Reading Program Advisory* and *The California Reading Initiative*. Other document sources included accessible information downloaded from selected electronic websites, school district public documents, community public documents and material information from the school. I selected these documents because they included samples of top down conversations in formal and informal settings. The recommendations from these policies fostered a chain-of-command response for expanding subsequent legislated literacy campaigns where previous goals were integrated with concurrent reports and policies.

**Selected Literacy Campaigns and Focal School Material**  
**Table 1**

Year	Reports	National Policy	State Policy	School District
1983	A Nation at Risk			1950-1960 Dick and Jane <sup>8*</sup>  The Ginn*
1985	Becoming A Nation of Readers			1960-1970 Low*  Grade Level*  High*
1990	Beginning to Read: Thinking and Learning About Print	America 2000		1979-2000  Heath, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich
1994		Goals 2000		
1995			Every Child a Reader: The Report of the California Reading Task Force	
1996		America Reads	Teaching Reading: A Balanced, comprehensive approach to Teaching Reading in Prekindergarten Through Grade three: the Reading Program Advisory	
1997		Reading Excellence Act	CA Reading Initiative AB 1086 Reading Instruction	
1998	National Reading Report		CA Proposition 227	2002 Houghton Mifflin
			1999 ELD Standards coordinate w/ Language Arts/Reading Content Standards	

Each campaign attached agendas for re-organizing the content of language and literacy programs and their consequential conditions for optimal student learning. In addition, each campaign strove to motivate optimal commitment towards the proposed learning goals and the conditions for shaping teacher and student relationships (Yatvin, 2003). In turn, textbook adoptions initiated the duty bound inertia for micromanaging the expressive voices of teachers and students. Consequently, these policies and their influences shaped, changed and affected the voice and power of all participants involved with the school community.

*Interview procedures with Familia Ortiz.* I recruited participants through telephone calls and word of mouth referrals. The 22 focal participants of this study were drawn from a family pool of over 150 extended multi-generation members (see Table 2).

<sup>8\*</sup>-Information based on interview with Ms. Marlene.



**Family Member Landscape**  
**Table 2**

Familia Ortiz									
First Generation Deceased	Oscar Ortíz & Myra Romo Married in 1925								Total
	As Children:		Lena	Patricia	Don	Nora	Yoli	Ana	
Second Generation	Pat 1926	Francis 1927	Alma 1928	Rick Deceased	1933	Gina 1936	1938	Deceased	6
Third Generation	2	8	9	5	6	8	3	4	45
Fourth Generation	6	34	33	n/a	n/a	14	n/a	n/a	87
Fifth Generation	n/a	14	2	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	3	21
Sixth Generation	0	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	2
								Total	161

From the pool of potential family members, I informally interviewed 4 of the 6 second-generation siblings. Learning about their children, I found that there were at least 47 family members who attended the focal school and who volunteered for interviews. Of the 47 members, I chose to interview 9 third-generation members, 14 fourth-generation members, and 1 fifth generation member. The participants' ages range from nine years old to seventy-seven years old. The collective educational experiences of the family members ranged between grade school to university level. In total, I interviewed 29 family members with 22 members (Table 3) finally undergoing two formal interview sessions and therefore included in the study.

I also had access to a 1981 taped interview with the original father who commented on his lived experiences. The interview was conducted early in 1981. I obtained this recording through my husband who had conducted the interview with his grandfather for a college class assignment. The interview focused on child-rearing practices, and the economic and cultural context of his early adulthood. I combed the interview to gain a better idea of his world-situated position and for a deeper understanding of the family heritage concerns.

The first interview concerned their current preferences for reading and writing. The second interview focused on the participant's schooling experiences around learning to read and write such as recalling instructional materials and activities they encountered for language and literacy development.

For the first interview, I requested, a 24-hour activity survey (Appendix A), a print and broadcast checklist (Appendix B), and their current preferences for reading and writing (Appendix C). The second interview focused on the experiences of the family members around literacy and language while attending school (Appendix D). When possible, I gathered any past school related artifacts (Appendix E) such as writing samples, reports cards, school related special events material and achievement certificates and list of codes (Appendix F).

During the interviews the participants browsed through a notebook that contained sample illustrations of past California State adopted textbooks. In some cases, the participants were able to handle an actual primer and browse through the pages. The collected examples represented the theorized manifestations of the varied management reading primers offered through public education since the early 1900's. The representations included basals from the McGuffey Readers, Dick and Jane series, Ginn Readers, Heath Language Arts textbooks, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Science Research Associates, Open Court, McGraw Hill, and sample Wright Group readers. I hoped by viewing these materials, the participants not only would recall the product program used for reading the word but also convey direct expanding or contracting relationships by the enactment. The interviews yielded randomly connected details around social influences associated with the enactment of reading. The pattern of social behavior associated with the discourses were themed and grouped by influences of the selected topics, of which worked with the exception for one participant. The resulting narratives included the participant's recall and retelling activities around language and literacy experienced at school.

The interviews lasted from half an hour to an hour and a half. They were conducted at the homes of the participants or at a place of their convenience such as a workplace site. As the interviewer, I collected interview data in the following ways:

- a. I took handwritten observational notes during the interviews. These notes allowed me to consider further questions during the interview.
- b. With participant's consent, I audio-recorded the interviews on a tape-recorder and transcribed the recording.
- c. Upon analysis of the first interview, I proceeded with the second interview which was an open-ended conversation based on questions that drew upon the participants' schooling experiences.

## Family Participants

**Table 3**

Family	3rd Generation		4th Generation		5th Generation	
	Name	Age	Name	Age	Name	Age
1	Franco	54	Franco	37	Mercedes	16
2	n/a		Abel	23		
			Blanca	15		
			Cecilia	11		
			Celestina	11		
3	Delia	48	Adela	30		
			Maya	24		
4	Carlos	40	Cathy	22		
	Diana	37	Alicia	17		
5	Roberto	44	Adan	16		
	Perla	54				
6	n/a		Inez	18		
7	Domingo	45	Lluvia	23		
			Alberto	18		
			Delfo	9		
Total	7		14		1	22

The language proficiencies of the participants were self-reported and observed from interview discussion. Language preference and varied competencies ranged from equally proficient Spanish-English bilingual/bi-literate and varied degrees of proficiencies between Spanish to English only. The participants were given a choice of either English or Spanish language interviews. The second-generation family members all preferred Spanish for the informal interviews. However, I conducted the remaining 22, interviews for the third, fourth and fifth generations in English, although several of these participants acknowledged their varied proficiencies of Spanish.

*Document Data Analysis.* Historical documents were all first subjected to content analysis. The documents were selected from a collection of narrowly defined primary sources that related and pertained to the selected reports and associated literacy campaigns for a content analysis. Each of the reports refined and narrowed its focus and discussions. Each subsequent reform interest, whether report or policy, offered to resolve issues of schooling contentions of academic progress around risks encountered from the lack of literacy refinement. These topics are identified as: 1) student achievement, 2) teacher education, 3) curriculum and instructional changes, and 4) family participation influencing accepted conventions for educational practice. The topics were first identified through the report, *A Nation at Risk*, and then have permeated into subsequent reports. The overlapping concerns of the reports were linked through attached (verbatim) or associated (paraphrasing or referencing) uptakes, footings and frames that in due course pressed forward the primary focus of reducing "risk" through scientifically researched remedies that conformed to legislated terms of policy reforms; the "policy talk".



*Interview Analysis.* I wrote summaries after each interview and then transcribed them. I assessed and arranged material to identify potential extending questions and developed evolving thematic patterns. The combination of content analysis of documents and analysis of the focal participant's interviews provided for a thick description based on the family member's perceptions around the schooling process of language and literacy development.

### **Discourse Analysis: Frames: Footings and Alignments of Uptakes**

I analyzed participant transcripts and historical documents for features of discourse ensuing uptakes, footings and alignment to corresponding frames. As I culled the data, I began to form a system discerning discourse patterns of uptakes, footings, alignments, and frames. I developed preliminary coding categories based on the patterns of recurrent themes. Next, I indexed interview data for patterns of beliefs, attitudes, conditions, strategies and factors relevant to textbook based instruction. Historical documents were indexed for patterns of footings and alignments to the selected frames embedded in 'policy talk'. I followed an inductive analysis in which the analysis and "[projections] of the next steps is in a constant emergent design" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 188).

Tannen (1993) provides an overview of the conceptual terms related to frames distinctive by discipline and its consequential application. In general, framing is strongly related to a sense of expectation, the types of structures or schema's that underlie linguistic surface features of how "the only way we can make sense of the world is to see the connections between things, and between present things and things we have experienced before or heard about" (Tannen, 1993, p. 15). Additionally, Schiffrin (1994) discusses Goffman's contribution of these two concepts:

"Frames are the organizational and interactional principles by which situations are defined and sustained as experiences (Goffman 1974); footing concerns "the alignments we take up to ourselves and the others present as expressed in the way we manage the production or reception of an utterance" (Schiffrin, 1994, p. 104).

Tannen (1993) who also builds on Goffman and quoting Goffman, writes "linguistics provides us with the cues and markers through which such footings become manifest, helping us to find our way to a structural basis for analyzing them" (Tannen, 1993, p. 3). Framing and footing are socio-linguistic tools for examining "the power of expectation" among participant interactions (Tannen, p. 14). In other words, framing is the superstructure in which footings are the alignments of participant stance (Goffman, 1981). This inquiry of how the world of school makes sense is being cast with a wide net to further refine the focus from it's array. I also borrow the notion of uptake from Austin's Speech Act theory (1962) to demonstrate the interconnected acceptance or adoption of frames from one text to another context. The uptake is like a semantic content handshake. It secures a footing between two paired utterances or texts<sup>9</sup>.

The selected phrases or segments of discourses are analyzed for their associated frames of "policy talk" (Tyack & Cuban, 1995, p.5) as they promote "uptakes", the

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<sup>9</sup> The inter-text connections subsumed in succession to affirming recognition of discourse patterns. "Uptake' names the bi-directional relation between text and what Peirce would call its 'interpretant': the text is contrived to secure a certain class of uptakes, and the interpretant, or the uptake text, confirms its generic status by conforming to this contrivance"(Freadman, 2000).



process of securing conceptual alignments in order to advance the theme of a frame. This would be analogous to the extending hand and the subsequent mutually friendly handshake dispersing widely the chain-in-command dispensation of goals and expectations for the selected literacy campaigns. Each subsequent campaign assumes qualities of retrospect, by the uptake of previously identified concerns and remedies with new insight, so that foresight is a step ahead. The discourses of legislated mandates proposed the frames, ushered in and organized footings securing the advancing conceptual alignments by interlocking the overlapping reforms initiated by the previous and concurrent literacy campaigns. Campaign claims are based on advancing the best interest of the child. Yet, what a child experiences in the world of school is assumed to go home with the child, but what a child experiences in the world may not be reciprocated at school.

An example of home to school policy talk influence can be discerned through framing and footing. A focal participant mother expresses a school to home concern as she reported on one of her five children's reading abilities. "Sophia", the mother shared, "has a little more problems, like she could read. Teachers says she reads slow, slower, she needs to read more faster". The mother is aware that her daughter can read. Her opinion, however, is greatly influenced the teacher's judgment. When the mother stated that her daughter needed to read faster, she has acquiesced her voice and ventriloquized that of the teacher's. The mother ventriloquizing the teacher is an example of an uptake. In addition, the mother uses the words "reads slow" this construct calls direct attention to the issue of instructional reading evaluation benchmarked by fluency tests. The construct of fluency is an example of framing. The issue of fluency has become a paramount index in assessing children's abilities to read during classroom practice, however, as researchers have shown comprehension is not necessarily improved with faster reading of words (Smith, 1998; Moustafa, 1997; Clay, 1993). The mother's words, "she needs to read more faster" reflects a judgment that stems from a classroom experience that may have potential consequences for the daughter's home experience. The judgment alignment between a parent and teacher is an example of footing. This example of Sophia's reading ability is a type of discourse that will be explored further in this investigation in addition to the discourse types of alignments offered by Wine (2008) below.

Wine explains that the adhesive quality of accord is not necessarily a mutually consensual endeavor. She proposed factors that influence the uptakes to alignments. She described the concept uptakes, the initiate of the footings that allow for alignment of frames. These grasp affect the analogous handshake between the uptake and footing were delineated in three examples of the following conducts (a) synonymous with agreement, (b) pseudo-accord, and (c) feigned-accord. In the first example, alignment synonymous with agreement, a firm handshake, refers to the concurrent synchronization of emotional and intellectual consensus between participants. In the second example, the pseudo-accord is indicative of a power struggle, a shaky handshake, of 'whose claims about certain issues are going to dominate' (p.2). This factor assumes that those with less power have to work harder at reaching alignment in order to ingratiate the dominant powers. The last example, feigned-accord, less than honest handshake, is a form of lip-service similar to a 'veneer of consensus', passed off through compromising in which all those involved will achieve some form of meeting goals. Wine described alignments as a form

of dance step between conversational partners in which those with greater power lead. The examples delineate the under-detected contentions of learning impacted by power, agenda and voice for the diverse learners.

In addition, I kept in mind also that reliance on memories, although at times, sketchy in detail, still allowed for a glimpse of the participants' worldview construction "springing from a common landscape" (Bruner, 1994, p. 31) the school and home. Bruner further states, "one view of the world cannot confirm another, though, in Clifford Geertz's evocative phrase, it can "thicken" it (p. 31). The narratives of the participants offered an opportunity to explore concepts of reading the word from the participants' understanding of the situated schooling practice of learning to read and the opportunities afforded or offered either at home or school that refined their understanding of reading the word.

This study offered an opportunity to view educational policy through the relationship shared between the focal family members and their community school. Issues of accountability, yearly progress, and school wide programs are reexamined in light of circumstances accentuating memorable attention experienced by each generation.



### Chapter 3

#### **The Discourse of Legislative Reform: Official Word to World “Policy Talk”**

The role of the educator has shifted, as stated by Kliebard, “...it shifted from the tangible presence of the teacher to the remote knowledge and values incarnate in the curriculum”

(Kliebard, 1995, p. i.)

In the preface of his book, *Broken Promises*, Patrick Shannon argues that a reason for growing problems in reading has been the influence of science and business in creating commercially packaged reading programs that inhibit student empowerment. Yet, over time, national and state policies pursued integrating and refining the science behind the recommendations from each Congressionally commissioned report that purported to advance student achievement. In turn, the process of producing reading curriculum with associated (such as recommended trade book titles for unit enrichment) and attached (student workbooks) materials undergo careful scrutiny ensuring matched curriculum to policy changes.

For this chapter, I draw on national legislative archives to pool data that scaffold the selected discourses as they evolved to advance the frame of ‘risk’ from one commissioned report to another and their recommended remedies abating risk. A synthesis of the same reports are given by Cowen, (2003) where they are reviewed for major concepts. The review I offer, instead, is tracing selected discourse frames political influences concerning risks that are advanced in digest form into the practice of schooling as the backdrop for embedding the family member’s potential for experiences expanding literacy awareness and language refinement. The commission reports are introduced by their historical appearance and discussed for content frames. I then discuss the framing influences of ‘risk’ as integrated with national policy demonstrated by the ‘policy talk’ of the four topics.

#### **Commissioned Reports: A Brief Overview**

Within fifteen years, 1983 and 1998, four different reports (Table 4) were commissioned by Congress to address the foundations and remedies of reform around school curriculum and teacher preparation. The underlying fear of ‘risk’ required stricter adherence to remedies along with constant attention towards meeting behavioral expectations for both teacher and student. Contingent educational priorities and goals that branched from the three differential levels of decision-making bodies: federal, state, and community, as tandem as possible, advanced supporting stricter monitoring and evaluation to keep up with the demands of national interests.

The centerpiece conviction for each policy was the promotion of rigorous standards and accountability attached to empirical data. The recommendations fostered a chain-of-command implementation process for each successive legislated literacy campaign affecting how ‘policy talk’ percolated through the agencies and making visible footings, alignments, and uptakes to discourse frames. Over the sixteen years, each campaign refined previously proposed goals by interlocking the defining theoretical principles while advancing loyalties and invested commitments of those bound by commercial interests (Bracey, 2005; Garan, 2002; McQuillan, 1998; Coles, 2003; Nystrand, 1992; Toppo, 2007). I review the reports first then the policies. The reports are discussed in order of publication. I organized the national level policies by the year they were publically introduced or established.

### **A Nation at Risk (1983)**

In 1983 Secretary of Education, T.H. Bell, undertook examining the quality of education by forming The National Commission on Excellence in Education. The commission was charged in defining the problems “afflicting American education and to provide solutions, not search for scapegoats” (p.2). The commission strove to integrate the concerns from a wide scope of representatives, which included letters from citizens, an analysis of the current state of education, and reports from experts in the field. The focus of the inquiry included assessing teaching and learning in public, private, colleges and universities. The final report was published in 1981 as *A Nation at Risk: A Imperative for Educational Reform*. It found that “the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people” (A Nation at Risk, 1983). The subsequent report published in 1985 focused on reading.

### **Becoming A Nation of Readers (1985)**

Following the publication of *A Nation at Risk*, The National Academy of Education’s Commission on Education and Public Policy brought a panel of members together to identify research that could inform educational policy around literacy reform. The commission found that “children can benefit from early reading and language instruction in preschool and kindergarten” (CRNAE, 1985, p. 29). It also favored a balanced program of formal and informal approaches to reading instruction. This included a systematic reading program that incorporated explicit phonics instruction (Cowen, 2003). Yet, the commission also warned,

...instruction should be systematic but free from undue pressure. We advise caution in being so impatient for our children that we turn kindergarten, and even nursery schools and daycare centers, into academic bootcamps.” (CRNAE, 1985, p. 30)

Additionally, the commission discussed selected and detailed issues regarding phonics instruction. First, the concept of readiness formulated in the 1930’s was no longer applicable as it had been in earlier educational practice. Systematic reading instruction was appropriate at preschool and kindergarten when reading programs included “formal, structured, and intensive” (CRNAE, 1985, p. 29) practice combined with informal approaches. It argued that some reading programs tried to teach too many letter-sound relationships and prolonged phonics instruction over years. It suggested that the program of phonics instruction should aim to teach the most important and most regular letter-sound correspondence first. The specific purpose for phonics instruction was to teach children the alphabetic principle.

The goal is for this to become an operating principle so that young readers consistently use information about the relationship between letters and sounds and letters and meanings to assist in the identification of known words and to independently figure out unfamiliar words.” (CRNAE, 1985, p. 42)

In spite of its intent, this report spawned the idea of “phonics first and fast” (Adams, 1995, p. v) that, in turn, became the focal point of the report, *Beginning to Read*, (Cowen, 2003).

### **Beginning to Read: Thinking and Learning about Print (1990)**

As stated by Pearson, “Ironically, in the end, it was *Becoming a Nation of Readers*, with its clear support of “phonics first and fast,” that spawned the legislation



(authored by the late Senator Zerensky [sic. Zorinsky] of Nebraska) commissioning this report on phonics” (Adams, 1995, p. v). Adams was directly referencing the connection between her report, *Beginning to Read*, and the previous one, *Becoming a Nation of Readers*. The matter of phonics became a dominant feature for subsequent debates regarding reading instruction and research. Further support for explicit phonics instruction was the focus of the next major report, *Beginning to Read*.

The purpose of this report was a comprehensive review of basic and applied research from the previous twenty years. It included topics such as “the controversies surrounding phonics instruction, the processes involved in identifying sounds, letters, words, and meaning, and the processes involved in learning to read” (Adams, 1995, p. vi). Adams undertook the task to review the research for the Center for the Study of Reading and submitted the report to the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI).

In *Beginning to Read*, Adams described the traditional approach to reading which established the “problem begins with the ultimate goal of reading and then successively identifies its prerequisites” (Adams, 1995, p. 237). She continued to delineate the sequential hierarchy of skills of this approach.

To have extracted the full meaning of a written text, readers must first have understood its individual sentences. To have understood its individual sentence, readers must first have correctly analyzed the clauses and phrases of those sentences. Whereas proper analysis of those phrases and clauses depends on having correctly recognized their component words, recognition of each word depends on having processed its spelling patterns or phonological translations. Finally, recognizing the processed the order array of individual letters that comprise it. (Adams, 1995, p. 237)

Reading the word, associated with the traditional code emphasis approach, assumes the principle that comprehension occurs after one masters synthetically related language skills organized and sequentially ordered in a controlled system, i.e. reading management programs. The theoretical framework for the advancement of reading instruction focuses on parceling out language units taken up by state adopted commercial programs.

Code emphasis instruction is based on voicing a synthetically ordered system of units around linguistic structures designed to expand incrementally per skill proficiency result with concurrent grade level target objective. Evaluation and feedback are introduced through both oral, teacher voiced, and calibrated paper exams, the standardized tests. Attention to form such as phonics, the oral identification and expression of the grapho-phonemic symbol, allows for a mechanistic system of evaluation that uses paper and filled in bubbles to represent the voice of the student. Additionally, concerns for accountability, as they evolved through policy demands, have curriculum pacing calendars attached to scripted literacy programs that also affect the relationship of voice for teacher and student. In this system, underperforming students are outsourced collectively to undergo an intervention of reality, the remedy instruction, so that they may return later to par advancement with the voices of their grade level peers.

Meanwhile, during scripted instruction, adult attention is given to redirecting the child towards the meticulous detail of form before allowing the child to explore his or her

abilities in discerning the function of communication and deeper meta-understanding. Yet, it is after demonstrating mastery of the form, that the child then merits more disclosure of encoded units of linguistic structures. Under the traditional approach the action of the student voice and the reaction of the teacher's voice are stipulated in a feedback and evaluation loop of reward or punishment contingent on target expectations of competitive test ranking. This synthetic system of competition defers opportunities for students to develop the confidence to self-elect highly responsive oral or written material.

The method described above by Adams instead supports a mainstream culturally dominant schooling practice observed by Heath in 1983, 'child answering the question with the obvious answer', in an Initiation-Response-Evaluation (Cazden, 2001) classroom discourse pattern. Although some children may not find the answer so obvious, if they are considered low or non-proficient performers, then they are more likely to spend time practicing the eradication of their errors instead of discussing concepts or elements of their language arts lessons. Student voice is not a premium commodity as lessons evolve around children doing less talk while teacher talks the most (Davies Samway & Pease Alvarez, 2005). This practice furthers exacerbates the lack of support for nurturing and refining language abilities of linguistically diverse children since they are doing the process of eradicating their voice for the scripted model (Valdés & Figueroa, 1996, Valenzuela, 1999 ). However as the original report stood, panel disagreement in opinion occurred regarding the use of one scripted element, phonics.

Based on a concern that practitioners would not consider phonics within a broader framework, panelist, Strickland and Cullinan did not agree "totally with her [referring to Adams] selection of studies or with her interpretation of research data" (Adams, 1995, p. 426). Both panelists were invited to write an afterword to the book. They delineated their concerns believing that the report was narrowly focused while offering a limited perspective for practitioners to make sound decisions. Although they both believed in providing children opportunities to learn letter-sound correspondence, they believed that phonics should not be taught in isolation or that it was a precursor to reading development. Most of the studies cited by Adams focused on children's literacy performances out of context. Further, they state that the information of these studies do not "provide a base to sort out any kind of temporal sequence nor does it imply that the best way for children to acquire linguistic awareness is through direct instruction" (Adams, 1995, p. 428). As such, their primary concern about the report was that it put the reader at "risk of ignoring the way phonics instruction fits into a broader framework of language learning" (Adams, 1995, p. 426). Instead, they suggest in their final statement that the evidence of the research supports "a whole language and integrated language arts approach with some direct instruction" (Adams, 1995, p. 433).

#### **National Reading Panel Report (1998)**

The 1998 report was a consensus document taking into account "the best judgments of a diverse group of experts in reading research and reading instruction" (NICHD, 2000, p.7). The committee was asked to address seven questions that:

"identified and summarized research literature relevant to the critical skills, environments, and early developmental interactions that are instrumental in the acquisition of beginning reading skills" (NICHD, 2000, p7).



A previous committee<sup>10</sup> of the National Research Council (NRC) “did not specifically address in their report, ‘how’ critical reading skills are most effectively taught and what instructional methods, materials, and approaches are most beneficial for students of varying abilities” (NICHD, 2000, p.7). The NRP panel undertook several steps in order to build upon and expand the work of the NRC Committee. First, they “developed an objective research review methodology” (NICHD, 2000, p.7). Next, The Panel undertook a “comprehensive, formal, evidence-based analyses of the experimental and quasiexperimental research literature relevant to a set of selected topics judged to be of central importance in teaching children to read” (NICHD, 2000, p.7). As careful as the NRP was about reviewing the literature, inconsistencies began to emerge early on as researchers in the field began to respond to the NRP report (Garan, 2001, 2002, Coles, 2003, Yatvin, 2002 ). Yet, one NRP panelist strove to highlight, in her professional judgment, some of the inadequacies of their evaluations and concern for misinterpretations due to the hastiness of meeting deadlines without proper attention to objective review and evaluation of the research.

As the body of research reviewed by the NRP began to permeate the field of reading research, other researchers of language and literacy were noticing the inconsistencies of the report. Garan, 2001, first reported that the citations of the NRP report were unclear and confusing. The NRP published two different reports and did not distinguish one from the other. She also reported that the NRP report existed in three separate formats and found that the panel incorrectly listed the studies used in the meta-analysis. In addition, Garan explained how the NRP report did not meet their criteria for sound meta-analysis. As a result, the research base for the report regarding the accuracy of the data and their conclusions was inconsistent (Garan, 2001, 2002). A minority report filed by panel member, Joanne Yatvin, further discussed and supported the identification of “the scientific flaws in some sections of the report that critics have since pointed out” (Yatvin, 2003, p. 44).

Her first observation of the process included reporting the manner in which the panel was given the directive to review phonics just days before the report was published. As a result of her first-hand experience digesting the material and report, she offered her informed recollections and “what the report actually contains” (Yatvin, 2003, p. 45) to offset “distorting the truth to advance political agendas (Yatvin, 2003, p. 44). In essence the report, had “been used to support the research agenda of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and the Reading First Initiative of the federal “No Child Left Behind” Act of 2001” (Yatvin, 2003) p. 45). She confirmed that the Panel’s comprehensive analysis only considered a small fraction of the entire field of reading research. The panel reviewed 432 studies from an electronic database field of 100,000 studies on reading that were published between 1966 and 1998. As the panel began to narrow down their topics, Yatvin reports that thirty-five topics were omitted under the constraints of time and the resources necessary to study them. Instead they reported “positive results for five of the six instructional strategies it investigated” (Yatvin, 2003, p. 47). Yatvin then proceeds to explain the application of a direct distortion based on this information.

“Nowhere in its report does the panel assert that the strategies found effective are

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<sup>10</sup> The NRC Committee on Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children. 1998, Snow, Burns, & Griffin. (NICHD, 2000, p.7)

the “essentials” of reading instruction. That determination was made elsewhere, embodied in the No Child Left Behind Act, and then included in the guidelines for Reading First. Ultimately, references to the “five essentials of reading” appeared in state applications, media commentaries and promotional literature for various commercial programs” (Yatvin, 2003, p. 47).

Instead the panel expressed its regret at not being able to examine other worthy topics, and stated: “[T]he panel emphasizes the omissions of topics...are not to be interpreted as determinations of unimportance or ineffectiveness” (Yatvin, 2003, p. 47). Yatvin has since continued to challenge the findings of this report. Yet the influence of the National Panel Reading Report has further advanced curriculum and instructional changes called on by earlier reports, but still neglecting areas of concern for students of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Garan, 2001). The NRP report in addition to the previous ones, *Beginning to Read*, *Becoming a Nation of Readers*, and *A Nation at Risk* influenced national policies to consider the urgency and plight of unresponsive children due to their lack of reading the word or literacy in the educational system. The explicit adaptation of economic theory for application and educational practice contributed to another veiled layer of contentions. It introduced the recommendation that policy-makers “should wield the carrot and stick”<sup>11</sup> (Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, 2004, p.15) as the model for reorganizing student behaviors conforming to the accountability process of tracking successes and failures of child and school.

### **Report Influences on National Policy**

#### **Introduced in 1990: America 2000**

During a 1992 fundraising luncheon in San Francisco, President George H.W. Bush expressed his enthusiasm for a new educational reform proposal,

Because we believe in responsibility, we believe in education reform, fundamental reform. We've laid out a strategy called America 2000, to literally revolutionize our schools. It's not Democrat; it's not Republican. It's not liberal; it's not conservative. It is American, supported by the 50 Governors to meet our six education goals.

We need to hold our kids and our teachers to a higher standard; that's part of it. And here's a radical notion: Let's test these kids at the 4th and the 8th and the 12th grade, see what we're doing, where we're doing it well, and where we need to do more work. Our schools need a good dose of competition with each other. Right now, kids are a captive audience. You give the parents a chance to choose their children's schools, and you'll see our schools start doing their homework. And the bad schools will be picked up by the competition. School choice is working where it's in effect, and it will work nationwide.

President George H.W. Bush, February 25, 1992

The rallying effect of this remark was to revitalize public attention and support for America 2000, policy orientation, in principle was driven by compliant behavior student goals. It emphasized integrating a closed agency system of rewards and punishments

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<sup>11</sup> Dr. Hanushek’s research stressed that students under stronger accountability systems and testing regimens do better than their peers who are not. The emphasis is on extrinsic motivation to catalyze change in students and not necessarily meant to change the quality of offered schooling.



dispensed by rank of designated authority to motivate students into improving their academic performances that impacted schools ratings. Hanushek, an economist investigating school spending, persisted with research and introduced the formulation where he,

stuck to modeling the returns on human capital, calculating the financial payoff to workers for extra years of schooling. Almost single-handedly, Hanushek introduced the economist's study of production functions (i.e., how much will a measured change in inputs alter outcomes) into the world of education research. (Fordham Prizes, 2004, p.10)

As such, the attitude of stronger extrinsic incentives produced desired changes was encapsulated in the slogan attributed to his contribution to the educational field, “[R]educed to a campaign slogan, his take-away-message might well be “[I]t’s the incentives, stupid” (Fordham Prizes, 2004, p. 11). Following this trend, America 2000, described as a strategy by President Bush Sr., materialized in 1990 from the leadership of the President and a consortium of state governors and business leaders.

America 2000, although never passed by Congress, established and contributed the foundational goals for subsequent national policies and their directive actions of reform. There were six goals:

1. All children will start school ready to learn.
2. The high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90%.
3. All students will become competent in challenging subject matter.
4. Teachers will have the knowledge and skills that they need.
5. U.S. students will be first in the world in mathematics and science achievement.
6. Every adult American will be literate. (Department of Education, 1993, p.19)

This policy “maintained that it would use the principles of free market economy to promote improvement by rewarding excellence and by introducing the element of choice into education” (Department of Education, 1996). The policy stood resolute on several principles. First, that all children would start school ready to learn by the year 2000. Second, it recognized teacher knowledge as a salient feature of exemplary programs. Third, it envisioned every adult American as literate and having the necessary background skills to compete in a global economy. Last, the policy regarded highly the firm principle that all adults would exercise their citizen rights responsively. Eventually, with the end of Bush’s term, America 2000 had folded out the frames of Teacher Education, Curriculum & Instructional Changes and Family Participation. The six goals delineated above were then picked up by the subsequent policy of Goals 2000 and America Reads.

#### **Introduced in 1994: Goals 2000: Educate America Act and America Reads**

Although America 2000 was not enacted as a national policy, President Clinton’s in 1994 proposed, Goals 2000, which retained intact the six goals of America 2000. In addition, it offered two additional goals,

- 1) Every school in the United States will be free of drugs, violence, and the unauthorized presence of firearms and alcohol and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.

2). Every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children.

The purpose was to build a national consensus regarding education. Two years later, in 1995, President Clinton launched the America Reads program as a key element of literacy reform.

Unlike the previous undertakings of top-down policy measures, Goals 2000 introduced a bottom-up grassroots community component to literacy reform. While it focused on the momentum reforming school curriculum in also sent a volunteer challenging to all sectors of society recruiting community members towards active participation to help enable other citizens to read through, America Reads. In addition, principles emphasized fostering stronger partnerships between parents, schools, community and businesses. The creation of a cadre of support from the community, business, and school site became the hallmark of both Goals 2000 and America Reads.

#### **Established in 1997 Reading Excellence Act**

By November of 1997 the House proposed an alternative policy for literacy reform called the Reading Excellence Act. Although it had similar goals as America Reads, it used substantially different strategies to meet these goals by providing aid for statewide family literacy activities and providing funds for high school tutors. It further supported professional development, out-of-school tutoring and family literacy. Additionally, it sought to combat ‘fly-by night fad programs by requiring that reading instruction draw from “reliable, replicable research on reading, including phonics (H.R. Rep. No 106-645, 2000). Congressman Goodling addressed the House of Representatives in support of passing the bill,

Today we have an opportunity to support a refinement and an improvement of all existing literacy programs, the Reading Excellence Act, which will help ensure that individuals of all ages have literacy skills they need to lead productive lives. Over the years what has been missing from our efforts has been a focus of preventing reading difficulties from developing in the first place. The bill addresses this problem. (H.R. Rep. No 106-645, 2000).

Accordingly, Congressman Goodling outlined four additional goals to the proposed primary focus of preventing reading difficulties. This focus contributed to normalizing a skill driven approach to the problem of literacy. Studies in literacy development contributed to bringing to light qualities of a good reader. These qualities such as recognizing sounds, phonics, pace of reading, fluency, and assessing mastery became the cornerstone of classroom reading instruction. However, as classroom practice began to adhere to the more strict and regulated curriculum, researchers from alternative theoretical approaches were demonstrating the limitations between the commissioned research and the effects on diverse student populations (Moustafa,1997; Garan, 2002; McQuillan, 1998; Coles, 2003). The span of 14 years, 1983 to 1997, reports and consequent policies shaped education into expectations for teachers and students that were still founded around the organization of ‘phonics first and fast’ of the 1930s along with social values of ‘carrot and stick’ motivation. The norm for understanding reading was established for teachers to implement and students to follow regardless of academic concerns for how students of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds were to



measure up. In the next section I trace the uptakes of the study's selected reports and legislated pieces that advanced the opinion of 'policy talk' risk.

### **“Policy Talk” Risk Frame**

“A Nation at Risk” (1983) found that the declining trend in the quality of schooling stemmed “from weakness of purpose, confusion of vision, under use of talent, and lack of leadership” (NCEE, 1983, p. 15). In addition, the report identified four areas that demonstrated disturbing inadequacies of public education. These areas were “content, expectations, time, and teaching” (NCEE, 1983, p. 18). The report also described high school curricula as homogenized, diluted, and diffused, so that there was no longer a central purpose. It claimed that the current diversity of curricula offerings created a smorgasbord approach, which combined with extensive student choice led to minimal participation in more rigorous disciplines.

Due to notable deficiencies while comparing high schools in the United States with those in other countries, the report claimed that risk accrued in various areas of the educational system. First, the report found that students in United States spent less time on homework, had less rigorous exams, and spent less time in math and science coursework than international students. Second, on the topic of time, the report lamented then the six-hour school day compared poorly to England's eight-hour day. Additional comparisons included that U.S. schools had ineffective classroom instruction and homework and did little to help students develop appropriate study skills. Third, the report determined further risk came as “not enough academically able students are being attracted to teaching” (NCEE, 1983, p. 22). Accordingly, teacher education programs needed substantial improvements.

The recommendations of the report and their advised implementations were organized around the expectation for the U.S. to continue to exert leadership where, “[W]e must demand the best effort and performance from all students, whether they are gifted or less able, affluent or disadvantaged, whether destined for college, the farm, or industry” (NCEE, 1983, p. 24). However, rather than influence a curriculum responsive to the sophisticated potentials in all students, over time, the pervading theme of risk, handed down from policy to policy, instead, influenced a stifled curriculum that has become more stringently prescriptive around the areas of student achievement, teacher education, curriculum, and family participation.

The selected reports and consequent policies are delineated in Table 4 below. The selected policies and reports directly supported legislative directives to change school literacy programs honoring a 'carrots and sticks' approach for both individual and school profit, meaning doing well on the yearly measurement test could yield attention or material incentives and the school is ranked better as well. The social roles of school participants and their families have shifted to emphasize how parents can help their children draw benefit and support the system. This endeavor casts a wide net in order to discern the patterns of discourses that are most prevalently repeated from transcripts, reports, and policies.

These discourses are linked by the continuity of principles from one report to another. In spite of advancing the principle of best practices based on 'reliable, replicable research', the understandings of refining literacy advancements for multilingual children continues to evade attention for the sake of a mono-cultural arrangement propelled

through political gains. Employing the devices of uptakes and footing allowed the opportunity to see how continuity in discourse is achieved across mediums and venues of 'policy talk'. I chose to consider four key topics and how they related to second language learners. The four topics considered are a) student achievement, b) teacher education, c) curriculum and instructional changes, and d) family participation.

Whether teacher education or student achievement, these policies all allude to the initial report of *A Nation at Risk* and subsequently purport to focus on remedies that abate risk for all students. But for the second language student, risk is still imminent over generations since skill, as family members demonstrate may not be a problem, but the language and practice of binding conventional instruction may be.

Different means for rating literacy among varied target populations continue to indicate the lack presence in adequately meeting the needs of the Latino population towards literacy awareness. In 1988, according to the report, *The Latino illiteracy in the United States* (Macias, 1988), Hispanic illiteracy rate in the general population was at 14%. Yet, reporting on school children, six years later, in 1994 NAEP report finds that, 'Consistent with the national and regional results, the average reading proficiencies of White, Black, and Hispanic students at grade 12 declined significantly between 1992 and 1994' (White, S. 1994, p. 44). The goal to facilitate literacy awareness among the different target populations is historically problematic not only for students of diverse cultures, but continues to persist for students with vulnerable language needs in spite of the amount of time given to policy to practice implementation. Advancing refinement of linguistic and on par proficiencies for literacy awareness continues to elude second language learners and remains a prevalent quality among Latino families.

### **Risk and Uptakes**

The frame of "risk" embedded the concern of readjusting schools through legislative measures across the years to meet and sustain economic advantage in a globally competitive international pool. It began to shape the parameters for how higher learning was to be attained. "A Nation at Risk" called on students to undertake more challenging and rigorous curriculum. It summoned parents and educators to value excellence in education as well as established the principle that schooling was the beginning point for life long learning as a responsibility of all concerned citizens. Subsequent discussions of school reform shifted their focus from a national concern regarding secondary schools to learning to read as the pivotal experience underpinning the advancement of academic learning: however, the frame of risk permeated policy discourse over time.

Although, as well influenced by "Beginning to Read", the subsequent policies of America 2000, seven years later, Goals 2000, eleven years later, and the Reading Excellence Act, fourteen years later, all continued to sustain the heightened concern of risk. As an example of a direct uptake of *A Nation at Risk*, America 2000 stated, "eight years after the report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education, the Nation's schools have yet to show significant improvement" (102d Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 1991). Whereas the sentiment is echoed again in Goals 2000 as this policy reiterates how educational excellence was an economic imperative whereas the Reading Excellence Act, (REA) strove to improve identifying and classifying failing students to appropriate remedial programs.



Further, an example linking one report to another through discourse uptakes and footings, *A Nation at Risk* to *Becoming a Nation of Readers* carried this proposition into its report:

The Commission on Excellence warned of the risk for America from shortcomings in secondary education. Yet the early years set the stage for later learning. Without the ability to read, excellence in high school and beyond is unattainable (Commission on Reading, 1985, p. 1).

The uptake phrases supporting the frame of risk above; “risk for America”, “early years”, “the ability to read” stressed and attached the belief that higher learning is attainable through the ability to read.

The 1985 report, *Becoming a Nation of Readers* further advanced peripheral discourses in which the parts contributed to the manifestations of uptakes and footings responding to satellite frames of student achievement, teacher education, curriculum and instruction, and family participation established as areas of concern and risk by *A Nation at Risk*. Furthermore, it elaborated and discussed the details for establishing a systemic reading program with explicit phonics instruction in support of its concurring instructional changes. It indicated that a systematic and responsive reform movement towards reading in early childhood schooling was necessary to minimize and remedy the risk for America. The areas of concern then were positioned around the recommendations for remedying the identified risk areas.

### 1. “Policy Talk: Student Achievement

*Becoming a Nation of Readers* (1985) continued the sense of urgency and associated proposed remedies to minimize risk through recommendations for student achievement. In an explicitly referenced uptake manifesting the frame of risk and the transition is found in the following assertion,

“The Commission on Excellence warned of the risk for America from shortcomings in secondary education. Yet the early years set the stage for later learning. Without the ability to read, excellence in high school and beyond is unattainable” (CRNAE, 1985, p.1).

Making a comparison between American students’ and reading performance with that of students from fifteen other countries further supported the perspective that reading was pivotal in remediating risk. One reason given for the decline of reading scores was attributed to “larger numbers of youth from less advantaged families have been staying in school and taking the tests” (CRNAE, 1985, p.2) Student achievement attached to performances on tests were evolving to show the success and failure of the student rather than indicate novice citizens who learn for personal and self empowerment (Shannon, 1989). Further recommendations were to facilitate “citizens who read with high levels of skill and do so frequently with evident satisfaction (CRNAE, 1985, p.117). In order to teach and evaluate how well students learn to read one question arose as to what were the necessary elements and the most effective approach to teaching reading. As a result, Senator Zorinsky commissioned a report on phonics that became the focus of the following report, *Beginning to Read*. Yet, the report was not without dissenting concerns regarding both content and practice and issues regarding English Language Learners lacked attention due to their minority status among the mainstream population.

## 2. “Policy Talk”: Teacher Education

The uptakes and footing alignments of policy talk for teacher education shifted the focus of teacher’s roles to emphasize meeting policy measures and goals rather than strengthen the quality in relationship with students. The shift, also stemming from 1983 with *A Nation at Risk*, first indicated that teacher preparation programs were not adequately preparing teacher candidates as experts in their field. One of the findings stated, “(T)he teacher preparation curriculum is weighted heavily with courses in “educational methods” at the expense of courses in subjects to be taught” (NCEE, 1983, p. 17). Again the need for teachers to be proficient in their respective fields manifested again in 1990 through *America 2000*, “teachers and school leaders in every State should receive the additional training they need to deliver capable instruction in the core academic disciplines and to provide strong instructional leadership to their schools” (102d Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 1991). This objective included an additional intent for teachers to become advanced instructional advocates in order to exercise their professional prerogatives with confidence.

In 1994, *Goals 2000*, however, teacher preparation programs were then further directed to provide teacher candidates the skills necessary to widen their scope of expertise in meeting the needs of a diverse student population, “A) By the year 2000, the Nation's teaching force will have access to programs for the continued improvement...to instruct and prepare all American students for the next century” (103<sup>rd</sup> Congress,1994). Yet, response to accommodate the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students were assumed under teacher adaptations mediating a narrowly defined curriculum, deferred to specialized instructors or neglected. However by 1997, the focus of the Reading Excellence Act was “to improve the in-service instructional practices for teachers who teach reading (H.R. Rep. No 106-645, 2000). This endeavor meant an application process where content and potential presenters were reviewed for following the legislated mandates.

## 3. “Policy Talk”: Curriculum & Instructional Changes

The initial frame for changes in curriculum offered through the recommendations of *A Nation at Risk* focused on high school revisions. Yet the report also stressed how primary education needed to reflect a sound foundation for instruction in the later years.

These years should foster an enthusiasm for learning and the development of the individual's gifts and talents (p.20)...[N]ew instructional materials should reflect the most current applications of technology in appropriate curriculum areas, the best scholarship in each discipline, and research in learning and teaching.” (NCEE, 1983, p.21)

Accordingly, subsequent policies concurred, but *America 2000* emphasized the slow pace of previous reform endeavors while calling on the participation the community members, “the educational reforms of the 1980's were too slow and too timid; a bolder and more comprehensive effort that involves the citizens of every American community is needed; SEC. 3 (102d Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 1991). Yet, by 1994, *Goals 2000* introduced the concept of voluntary national content standards and student performance standards,

...national student performance standards, and voluntary national opportunity-to-learn standards if such standards are sufficiently general to be used by any State without restricting State and local control of curriculum and prerogatives regarding instructional methods to be employed (103<sup>rd</sup> Congress,1994).



By 1997, the focus of literacy reform through the *Reading Excellence Act*, attached teacher preparation to a new policy talk uptake phrase of ‘reliable, replicable research’, “To improve the reading skills of students, and the in-service instructional practices for teachers who teach reading, through the use of findings from reliable, replicable research on reading, including phonics” (H.R. Rep. No 106-645, 2000). The influence of this goal impacted not only the content of literacy programs, but also the types of exams for teacher candidates.

The report contributed to further narrowing the focus of literacy development to five domains of instruction; (a) phonemic awareness, (b) phonics instruction, (c) fluency, (d) vocabulary and (e) text comprehension. The National Reading Panel Report focused on five primary topics with associated subtopics: Alphabetics, Fluency, Comprehension, Teacher education and Reading Instruction, and Computer Technology. This report delineated,

... studies had to measure reading as an outcome. Reading was defined to include several behaviors such as the following: reading real words in isolation or in context, reading pseudowords that can be pronounced but have no meaning, reading text aloud or silently, and comprehending text that is read silently or orally. (NICHD, 2000, p.8)

These domains became the fundamental elements that were supposed to be used for structuring lessons in prescriptive basal textbook programs. The identification of these domains were meant to lead to specific skill instruction in a sequentially organized fashioned designed to meet and remedy the general pattern of past program failures; children not reading at grade level or progressing in more advance classes as presented originally by “A Nation at Risk”. The accumulated influences of this report was aimed to further micromanage instructional practices that accentuated the features of fear and failure through commercialized assessments that altered the quality of instruction for all students especially for English Language Learners due to the continued power dynamics of the dominant language of instruction (Garan, 2001, 2002; Coles, 2003; Yatvin, 2002; Valdés & Figueroa, 1996).

The presence of outside social pressures lacking insight into the process of speaking and learning a second language also impacted classroom instruction and materials that were offered after culminated for the state of California in the passing of Proposition 229. Yet, services for enriching primary language potentials was not necessarily available or accessed prior to the policy change limiting dual immersion instructional environments. For this study, only 3 of the 22 participants received dual immersion services after the passing of Proposition 227 in 1998. Older family members, such as second, third and fourth generation were designated into mainstream classes and received no dual language services either. In all cases, the schools promoted rendering any language proficiency issues regarding second language occulted by the need to immediately speak English and made that a requirement to engage in school activities. Recommendations from policy influences have not accounted for the sudden need for children to utilize a second language at the expense of the first for academic pursuits suggest continued and further investigation in this field of interest.

#### **4. “Policy Talk”: Family Participation**

The role of the family’s experiences has taken a stronger presence in current affairs of the common schooling experience. The initial accounting of the family voice

was as a contributor to the alarming state of the poor quality of the nation's public educational system. Even though, in 1983, *A Nation of Risk* strove to be inclusive and integrate the concerns of 'risk' from the varied populations affected,

“We have heard the voices of high school and college students, school board members, and teachers; of leaders of industry, minority groups, and higher education; of parents and State officials” (NCEE, 1983, p. 10).

The inclusion of outside voices allowed the agenda to percolate the frame of 'risk' from a national concern down to an individual level.

“Each generation of Americans has outstripped its parents in education, in literacy, and in economic attainment. For the first time in the history of our country, the educational skills of one generation will not surpass, will not equal, will not even approach, those of their parents” (NCEE, 1983, p. 10)

Personalizing the matter allowed the uptakes to permeate what appeared to be the common experience, but did not account for how broad the exceptions were to evolve resulting from narrowly viewing the confounding issues of language and literacy development for a growing diverse student population. Given discipline issues, for example, parents may still rely on wives tales, such as La Llorona<sup>12</sup> stories for explaining life's general phenomenon's when their children may have already surpassed parental level of education. Is this a bad thing in light of rich indigenous repertoire of story telling of spiritual legends? In the case of Latino families, consejos are a prevalent way of sharing gained knowledge while positioning agency with cultural implications of respect. Although, since 1983, leadership elicited parental support through active civic participation, “[T]his Commission calls upon educators, parents, and public officials at all levels to assist in bringing about the educational reform proposed in this report” (NCEE, 1983, p.40) , support meant to maintain the given goals while neglecting relationship contentions between parent and child. Attention to the contentions of power between parent and child ironing out issues, for example, such as disrespect, remained outside the scope of factors considered for evaluating the educational system's intent and purposes.

The distribution of power continued into 1990 with America 2000 supporting family participation but for the purpose of capital gain, “parental choice in education creates market-based accountability, encourages school diversity and competition, and provides parents and their children with a sense of investment in their schools” (102d Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 1991). Most programs for students of diverse backgrounds have implemented the values of a sink or swim perspective. Competition is facilitated through the consequences of students striving for rewards or avoiding punishments. Families from immigrant backgrounds have been in the position to reconcile their economic state with a growing demand for pop cultural acquisition of material goods and their family survival. In 1994, Goal 2000 included the allowance of some resources so that “parents will have access to the training and support parents need” (103<sup>rd</sup> Congress, 1994). In addition to aspiring to the goal,

“By the year 2000, every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children (103<sup>rd</sup> Congress, 1994).

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<sup>12</sup> Cultural legend retold by parents to reminding young children to behave well.



Heightened concern for the wellbeing of the child does not appear to be a priority value when high stakes testing and accountability consequences are attached to a loss of teachers and schools due to their lack of meeting their yearly annual progress benchmarks. Lastly, in 1997 the Reading Excellence Act sought to “expand the number of high-quality family literacy programs” (H.R. Rep. No 106-645, 2000). The idea to proliferate family literacy programs also became incorporated into California’s state policies among several other key elements. Yet based on early study reviews, Auerbach (1995) demonstrated how family literacy programs assume a deficit model to remediate families rather than build upon or enrich family strengths suggesting further investigations on how integrating a family’s funds of knowledge could provide valuable resources.

#### **Selected Reports and influences on State Policy**

Table 4 highlights the selected state policy mandates with their concurrent literacy campaigns as influenced by the reports *Beginning to Read* and the *National Reading Panel Report*. In addition, California programs were affected by the conditions of Proposition 227 limiting bilingual programs.

## Commissioned Reports Setting out to Influencing State Policy

**Table 4**

Report	Date	State Legislation
1990 Beginning to read: Thinking and Learning About Print	1995	Every Child a Reader: The Report of the California Reading Task Force
	1996	Teaching Reading: A Balanced, comprehensive approach to Teaching Reading in Prekindergarten Through Grade three: the Reading Program Advisory
	1997	CA Reading Initiative AB 1086 Reading Instruction
1998 National Reading Panel Report	1998	CA Proposition 227
	1999	ELD Standards coordinate w/ Language Arts/Reading Content Standards (1999)

### State Policy Integrating National ‘Policy Talk’

State legislation, influenced by these reports, created a need for publishers to create tightly scripted reading management programs<sup>13</sup> around the elements of assessments, remedy instruction, and grade-level instruction (Cowen, 2003, Shanon, 1989). Given that the recommendations were for English dominant concerns, commercial interests continued to develop curriculum around English that promoted a common learning experience associated or attached to benchmark state standards. Each state, in turn, created state level documents compelling the changes proposed by national policy. In California, *Every Child a Reader: The Report of the California Reading Task Force* collaborated around the notion of “... a crisis in California that demands our immediate attention. National and state reports indicate that a majority of California's children cannot read at basic levels” (CA dept. of Education, 1995). However, an explicit uptake referred back to how “[T]he 1984 publication, *Becoming a Nation of Readers*, stressed the critical importance of reading for the individual and for the nation” (Ca Dept. of Education, 1995). The frame of ‘risk’ is preserved and further advances the traditional approach, the impetus for continued efforts around literacy reform. Following this pattern, in 1996, a program advisory, *Teaching Reading: A Balanced, Comprehensive Approach to Teaching Reading in Prekindergarten Through Grade Three: the Reading Program Advisory*, suggested activities per grade level to support the goals set forth in *Every Child a Reader*. The advisory was also created to support state adopted “materials in grades one through eight that include "systematic, explicit phonics, spelling, and basic computational skills"(California Department of Education, 1996). In reference to phonics instruction, the advisory quoted the following passage,

<sup>13</sup> Reading Management Programs are an organized system of material for the purpose of reading instruction and students being held accountable for that reading.



“ [A] high proportion of the words in the earliest selections children read should be decodable (i.e., conform to the phonics they have already been taught; *Becoming a Nation of Readers*, 1984)” (California Department of Education, 1996).

This uptake example demonstrates the persistence of the traditional approach to appear as relevant twelve years later in a different historical context. Both *Every Child A Reader* and *Teaching Reading* cited *Beginning to Read* and *A Nation of Readers* in their bibliographic support.

Thereafter, the California Reading Initiative continued to press forward with the following goals:

1. a strong literature, language, and comprehension program that includes a balance of oral and written language;
2. an organized, explicit skills program that includes phonemic awareness, phonics, and decoding skills to address the needs of the emergent reader;
3. on going diagnosis that informs teaching and assessment that ensures accountability; and
4. a powerful early intervention program that provides individual tutoring for children at risk of reading failure. (California Department of Education, 2000)

Although these goals were proposed to remedy the underperformance of struggling readers, the achievement gap continued to persist among those students with diverse needs while competing with those who meet grade level distinctions.

The continuing effects of early the early national reports and policies further facilitated the heightened concern of ‘risk’, influencing the domains of agenda, voice and power in literacy reform efforts. Throughout the years, various committees were formed for the purpose of gathering research, anecdotal experiences, and expert advice and then to propose recommendations that have focused primarily supporting an instructional agenda based on the considerations of native English speakers. English was used as the dominate feature of reform while making features of multiple languages a subsidiary consideration that was outsourced from the primary organizing panel to satellite peripherally situated committees.

In 1995, *Every Child a Reader: The Report of the California Reading Task Force* promoted the notion in order to solve the reading crises, “[T]his campaign should include families, businesses, the education community, and elected officials” (CA dept. of Education, 1995). The report strongly suggested that, “We can no longer continue to do business as usual. Parents must read to their children and make reading an important part of the home (CA dept. of Education, 1995). The recommendations were general and it was not until the following advisory, *Teaching Reading: A Balanced, comprehensive approach to Teaching Reading in Prekindergarten Through Grade three: the Reading Program Advisory* (1996) that actual parent-child activities were identified. One strategy stated that, “teachers should encourage the parents to share-read (e.g., every other sentence or paragraph) with their children (California Department of Education, 1996).). Another recommendation encouraged parents to read at home to their children. “Activities provide playful yet explicit exposure to letter names and the alphabet” (California Department of Education, 1996). It then went on to suggest other related activities for parents such as “[H]ome activities should include extra reading, writing, and high-quality conversations with parents and older siblings California Department of

Education, 1996). In both the above policies, family participation did not reflect the complexities and challenges that culturally and linguistically diverse students face at home (Auerbach, 1995; Valdés & Figueroa, 1996; Paratore, Melzi & Krol-Sinclair, 1999).

The California Reading Initiative (1997) considered funding a school for improvements when it had 60 percent of students performing below grade-level standards in language arts and math. These schools were recognized as Title I schools. The funding was directed at the following,

“Instructional improvement may be needed to ensure that all students attain performance standards. Such improvement includes: the reallocation of resources to meet specific students' needs; effective classroom assessment procedures; professional development; family-school partnerships” (California Department of Education, 2000). The family-school programs began to include instruction around the needs of the adult participants in order to facilitate coordinated support for children’s literacy development (Paratore, Melzi & Krol-Sinclair, 1999). Yet, most instructional orientations for adults in family literacy programs have assumed a deficit perspective (Auerbach, 1995). With this in mind, most programs provide instruction to parents on how to support the interest of the school rather than to challenge or ask question for critical evaluation. Instructional materials in the classroom also corresponded to a deficit model that brokered knowledge between author and student through the instructor’s role.

Each policy selected and discussed above was influential in setting the purpose for textbook content and approach to match policy goals. Table 5 below identifies an explosion of textbook diversity adopted in California. Textbook publishers needed to consider both target content and teachable skills that coincided with the recommendations of the reports and policies. The assimilationist perspective of the McGuffey Readers and Dick and Jane series gave way to the considerations of a balanced approach by 1985.



**Influences of Policy on Textbooks**  
**Table 5**

Policy	Purpose	Process	Influences	CA Textbooks	School District
1983 Nation at Risk	Problems afflicting American schools	Expert opinion from wide representation	Reading Instruction	1983-1985 1) Allyn and Bacon; (2) Bowmar/Noble; (3) Ginn and Company; (4) Glencoe; (5) Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich; (6) D. C.Heath/American Book; (6) Houghton Mifflin; (7) Laidlaw Brothers; (8) Macmillan; (9) McDougal, Littell; (10) Scholastic; (11) Science Research Associates; (12) Scott, Foresman; (13) Silver Burdett; and (14) Prentice-Hall. <sup>14</sup>	1950-1960 Dick and Jane*  The Ginn*       1960-1970 Low*  Grade Level*  High*
1985 A Nation of Readers	Research to Inform Literacy Policy	Balance Approach	Phonics to teach alphabetic principle		1979-2000  Heath,
1990 Beginning to Read	Comprehensive Review of Research from Previous 20 years	Phonics Approach	Sequentially instruct hierarchical skills	1988 CA English and language arts subject-matter committee reviewed over 7000 items for adoption <sup>15</sup>	Harcourt Brace Jovanovich
1998 National Reading Panel Report	Summarize Research Literature Reviewing Critical Skills to Literacy Development	Five Essentials of Reading	Reliable Replicable Research	2002 -Basic RLA-ELD Programs: six adopted, -Reading Intervention Programs for Students in Grades 4-8: five adopted, -Reading Intervention Programs for English Learners in Grades 4-8 <sup>16</sup>	2002 Houghton Mifflin

<sup>14</sup> California Department of Education, (1983). Catalog of Instructional Materials in English and Dictionaries, 1983-1985.

<sup>15</sup> Rothman, R. (1988). California Panel Urges State Board To Pick Reading Textbooks With 'Real Literature'. Education Week

<sup>16</sup> California State Board of Education, (2002) Reading/Language Arts/English language development (RLA/ELD)adoption: Final Report.

The increasing proliferation of educational material considered for adoption (Table 5) allowed flexible choices and practices; however, by 2002, diversity was reined. The years between 1983 and 1985, California had adopted up to 14 textbook series. In 1988, the Language Arts subcommittee for California's textbook adoption had reviewed over 7000 artifacts. As a result of the 1998 Language Arts Frameworks criteria, textbook adoptions for linguistically diverse students were based on materials that emphasized remediating L2 in order to develop on par peer English skills since only one program was received for review but rejected,

Basic RLA-ELD Programs: six adopted, and three rejected.

-Reading Intervention Programs for Students in Grades 4-8: five adopted, and two rejected.

-Reading Intervention Programs for English Learners in Grades 4-8: one adopted, and three rejected.

-Primary Language Programs: the one program submitted was rejected.

(California State Board of Education, 2002).

The lack of market value support and quality for primary language instruction underscores the dormancy of access to potential resources that diverse children encounter for the sake of maintaining a dominant mono-cultural education climate. A child developing literacy skills in L2 is more likely tracked into catch up<sup>17</sup> instructional activities based on a terminal learning system; the management program and attached textbook.

A principal function of textbooks was to solve classroom problems as well as promote the understanding of subject matter. However, textbooks are cultural artifacts that transmit attitudes and beliefs even with the proliferation of material, textbook adoption instead has become an industry securing business for publishers that support the interests of policy driven by a linguistically mono-cultural<sup>18</sup> perspective. These elements, policies, textbooks, and patterns of discourses support a climate of linguistic monoculture that continues to be a prevalent influence of subtractive schooling (Valenzuela, 1999) for culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Each series considered for statewide adoption underwent various changes in values, formats, and materials reflecting the contemporary interests. The effects of power, agenda and voice of national and state policy mandates filtered into classroom practice through reading management programs. An examination of past teacher manuals demonstrated the shifts of institutional responsibility for children learning to read the word.

Textbooks were designed to influence participant behaviors through suggested social activities. The management social activities secured assurances that textbook instruction was synchronized appropriately with children's development of particular skills. The management programs were timely paced within a school year that benchmarked grade level proficiencies through matched program evaluations. Thus leading to the sense of credibility that the scope and sequence of the reading management

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<sup>17</sup> Catch-up programs-my term for ELD/SDAIE /Submersion classes.

<sup>18</sup> 3. a culture dominated by a single element: a prevailing culture marked by homogeneity



plan functioned on a large-scale basis and with all children in mainstream classes. Yet, the diverse needs of all children's imaginative potentials were co-opted for the agenda of the micromanagement system as a result of large-scale implementation of single textbook curriculum options.

The provisions for diverse literature organized for the purpose of self-elected reading for the diverse child were limited and instead, program resources were diverted to fix those qualities of diversity; the manifestations of small errors that became magnified to suit empirical observation. In addition, the implementation of management programs contributed to static transmission of knowledge that can linger in outdated material for several years until another policy replaces the current one offering more remedies while putting at risk opportunities for authentically emergent incidental events that could be integrated with purposefully academic interests.

The adoption and distribution of textbooks further supported another assumption that materials are minimally sufficient for eliciting all mainstream children's abilities towards meeting policy goals of learning to read the word. Textbooks also represent the culling and culmination of a process of consensus offered by a monocultural system of education (Freire, 1985; Darder, 1991).

### **Discussion**

Reviewing historical documents designed to influencing the direction of educational reforms demonstrated contentions of concerns among the different members in committees or panels serving to investigate problematic school issues, including program implementation and student achievement for meeting academic goals. The discourses of policy talk problematized issues around fears and risks of a system rife with destructive gaps for attaining academic goals and supporting national interests in a global economy. Even though a process for legislative changes included the voices of experts, teachers, educational leaders, etc., still eliminated were the voices of children and their parents. As observed by Foucault of the process,

Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true (1977).

The process of recognizing those who qualify as mastering the goals that count is contingent on the terms of surveillance, normalization and control (Foucault, 1977) of those who exert power.

As policy shifts and ushers in new changes, as early as 2001, Davis observed from a survey of teachers and administrators that, 'a majority of those interviewed mentioned teachers being afraid as one of the consequences of policy change process' (2001, p.35). This attitude of fear not only underlies hidden reactions of adults, but can also trickle into the culture of the school environment. In addition, these values and reactions, although not unique to contemporary schooling have become more stringent and noticeable as a result of current educational policy changes affecting instructional materials offered. For example, although the textbooks identified within the study's time frame acknowledged diversity in student population, the normalization process of schooling, grading, testing,

and sorting became more attached to the consequences of more rigorous extrinsic motivation emphasizing punitive responses for the lack of not meeting performance target goals. The qualities of affirming diversity in materials continue to demonstrate surface feature changes rather than substantial changes in discourse opportunities or alternative program delivery options for students of diverse cultures. Up to now, however, there has not been a clear connection between research and what happens in schools. In addition the relationship between recommendation and implications is not a linear one.

Coburn and Stein (2010), however, observed that among their selected focal programs, that those that were successfully implemented, met with the highest degrees of success, not only were their findings easily understood and accepted by district leaders, but they were also able to quickly assess the implications of those findings for practice. We argue that this “easy uptake” of research findings was the product of a high degree of common understanding around the instructional matters that was shared...(p.191).

All programs are inspired to comply with changes influenced by policies. The trickling down effect, however, from the hierarchical decision making bodies that direct widespread changes, though, may instead contribute to a lack of common understandings due to the nature of agencies catching up to the current overlapping assumptions of foundational knowledge. The qualities of affirming diversity in materials continue to demonstrate surface changes rather than substantial changes in discourse opportunities or alternative program delivery options for students of diverse cultures. Up to now, however, there has not been a clear connection between research and what happens in schools. In addition the relationship between recommendation and implications is not a linear one.

Coburn and Stein, 2010 offer a full discussion of this common disjunction between policy recommendations, research findings, and what happens in schools. They further investigated 10 projects for conditions leading to successful school program maintenance with ongoing and supporting research. They proposed rethinking the dynamics of how programs support sharing foundational knowledge by changing their framework from a linear model to an interactive one (see also Stokes,1997). Thinking in terms of interactions contrasts with the linear process of change assumed by the selected reports and policies. Studies such as Colburn and Stein’s suggest how thinking about dynamic relationship contingencies can contribute to the depth of understanding student, program and school phenomenon, something particularly important for the population I am studying.

How students the family experienced the application of the digested policy recommendations will be the concern of chapter 4.



## Chapter 4

### The Word and the World of Schooling

And do you think what they're teaching you about reading right now is going to help you in the future? No.  
Not really. Adan, (Interview)

In the previous chapter, uptakes were considered against the background of 'policy talk' of selected reports and policies of educational reform. This chapter considers the discourse bonding quality of accord with the Ortiz family uptake styles of varied reforms: (a) synonymous agreement, (b) pseudo-accord, (c) feigned-accord through observations of sampled participants' experiences and offered opportunities for reading the written word or unwritten word, by school and community.<sup>19</sup> Like most intergenerational studies, this one also assumed "the premise that as parents improve their own literacy, the skills and knowledge will promote literacy learning among their children" (Paratore, 2001. p. 46). For this reason, members of the third and fourth-generations were of special interest. As I became more methodical with the data, I came to appreciate more deeply the concerns of the child traversing the planes of his or her home to that of the community school. Second, the schooling experiences for both generations were within a range of the educational changes, some of them prompted by selected policies. All were caught up in the undertone of shifts from a child concerned focus to an emphasis on national security (Kliebard, 1995), in other words from child-sensitive to policy-sensitive schooling.

I first consider the situated schooling experience of my subjects, with attention to how reading management programs offered by the school site addressed issues of reading the word. In the second section, I consider three experiences drawing attention to how participants mitigate footings and alignments to frames that illuminate uptake styles<sup>20</sup> of negotiating power. Finally, I examined the unstructured literacy opportunities of the permeable material that passed through the hands of the participants. Hearing the voices of inter-generational crossings from home to school rendered a unique opportunity to examine influences of policy interests outside of the scope of formal evaluations. Although the experience of one family is not representative, as individuals they give form to the encountered types of unintended academic stresses and challenges that students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds encounter while learning content

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<sup>19</sup> (a) synonymous with agreement: an alignment synonymous with agreement, a firm handshake, refers to the concurrent synchronization of emotional and intellectual consensus between participants.  
(b) pseudo-accord: indicative of a power struggle, a shaky handshake, this factor assumes that those with less power have to work harder at reaching alignment in order to ingratiate the dominant powers.  
(c) feigned-accord: less than honest handshake, is a form of lip-service similar to a 'vener of consensus', passed off through compromising in which all those involved will achieve some form of meeting goals.

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area curriculum (Valenzuela, 1999).

School district following adoption trends. School district documents regarding management programs were available through school board meetings starting from 1988. In addition to the documents, the school district language arts representative, Ms. Marlene, provided her recollection (interview) as an active teacher with the school district. She began working for the school district in the early 1960s as an elementary teacher. At the time of the study, she was responsible for coordinating among the elementary schools the adoption of commercially based management program and its implementation. These reading management programs varied by material and objectives, but similarly offered highly structured activities that were selected to illustrate and develop reading lesson target skills. These preset skills were to be introduced and taught in sequence based on an assumed hierarchical order. Teacher editions typically contained at least 3 primary elements, 1) pre-reading and post-reading activities, 2) recommended checking for comprehension questions and story discussion points and 3) answer keys for student workbook exercises. Alternative programs not only differed in practice material and teacher/student role structure of the reading activity but also in underlying theoretical perspective. In this case, a holistic multi-age program offered whole language instruction.

She described the types of management reading programs offered by the school district.

She recalled the school district offering the Dick and Jane series throughout the 1950's and into the early-mid 1960s. During the late 1960s the district switched to The Ginn series. Also starting in the late 1960s and into the late 1970s the district began to offer one textbook series for adoption for each type of reader, low, grade level and high, but she Ms Marlene did not specify any programs or titles. Starting in 1979, she reported that the district offered DC Heath for about ten years, but also began using Harcourt Brace Jovanovich in 1987/1988. By fall 1999, the district offered K-3 Harcourt Brace Jovanovich and 4-6 MacMillan. Houghton Mifflin series was then offered in 2002. Table 1 (Chapter 2) summarized the types of programs offered by the school site by approximate years and coordinated these to legislation discussed in chapter three. The family members who were interviewed also recalled using supplemental material that will be delineated in the next section.

Situated experiences across generations. There were 9 family members<sup>21</sup> who walked the grounds of the focal school as a junior high built in 1949. After 1980, the remaining 13 family members<sup>22</sup> attended the same campus as an elementary school. Table 6 displays the materials the participants recalled using for their formal reading instruction.

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<sup>21</sup> 8 third-generation and 1 fourth-generation.

<sup>22</sup> 11 fourth-generation and 1 fifth-generation



## Family Participants and Reading Management Programs

Table 6

Family	3 <sup>rd</sup> .Gen.	Text	4 <sup>th</sup> .Gen.	Text	5 <sup>th</sup> Gen.	Text
1	Franco (54)	D&J	Franco Jr. (37)	D&J	Mercedes (16)	HBJ
2	n/a		Abel (23)	Heath		
			Blanca (15)	Heath		
			Cecilia (11)	HBJ/WG/AR		
			Celestina (11)	HBJ/WG/AR		
3	Delia (48)	D&J	Adela (30)	Heath		
			Maya (24)	Heath		
4	Perla (54)	D&J	Adan (16)	Heath		
	Roberto (44)	D&J				
5	Carlos (40)	NR	Cathy (22)	Heath		
	Diana (37)	D&J	Alicia (17)	WL/WG		
6	n/a		Inez (18)	WL/WG		
7	Domingo (45)	D&J	Lluvia (23)	Heath		
			Albert (18)	WL/WG		
			Delfo (9)	SHM/AR		
Total	7		14		1	22 Participants

Texts: D&J-Dick and Jane; NR-No Recall; WL-Whole Language; SHM-Spanish Houghton Mifflin; WG-The Write Group; AR-Accelerated Reader

The nature of these textbooks included a teacher's edition with sequentially ordered units for teaching reading. The units were organized around a theme that incorporated stories or sections of literature that were related. Students engaged in both small group and large group instruction with individual practice time based on related unit workbook practice. Teacher and student roles were predetermined but teacher discretion mitigated the degree of strict adherence.

What materials passed through their hands? The 6 third-generation participants primarily held the Dick and Jane readers in their hands with 1 participant not able to recall any material used. The 7 fourth-generation participants recalled using the Heath basal reader. 3 of these pointed out using Wright Group texts in combination with whole language instruction. 2 other participants reported using Harcourt Brace Jovanovich and Wright Group texts as additional support material along with the Accelerated Reader program. On the surface it may appear that the participants were being offered a variety of textbooks influenced by state of the art concepts and tools for teaching reading. Although, most of the basal textbooks looked like they were providing something new and different, their underlying learning theory was not different from those established with the Dick and Jane readers. Throughout the generations, instruction offered at their community school remained consistently associated with reductionist principles supporting the methods of a traditional approach even though target teaching material artifacts became more diverse in mirroring back the subject population of instruction. In addition the participant's language proficiencies in Spanish or English were not necessarily taken into account while making academic decisions for their learning needs. Each generation were met with the same practice of implementing one reading management program for the whole student population.

Only 1 fourth-generation participant received instruction in Spanish through the Houghton Mifflin program. He also reported using the Accelerated Reader program as a supplement. The students who used the Accelerated Program also reported receiving

points for each completed story and record form. The 1 fifth-generation participant recalled using the Harcourt Brace Jovanovich texts. Most of the participants recalled being placed in high or low groups. They also recalled using supplemental program student workbooks. In addition, accelerated control for alternative language instruction in languages other than to English had become more highly regulated after the 1998 passage of Proposition 227. Parents in this school district signed waivers to allow their children into dual immersion classes. Yet, all except for two participants received primary reading instruction in English.

These were Delfo, (4G)<sup>23</sup>, a student in a Spanish/English dual immersion program, and Diana, (3G), who finished second grade before immigrating to United States. An additional 3 participants experienced whole language instruction in a bilingual program. Albert (4G), Alicia (4G) and Inez (4G) had primary reading instruction conducted in English with Spanish as enrichment curriculum in their progressive program. Collectively they underwent the experience of formal schooling buttressed by the frame of remedying the habitual patterns of risk for nonmainstream students. The remaining 19 cousins, however, were held accountable to English instructional material evolved under the frame of alleviating risk. Yet, risks may have increased instead due to policy influences promoting a competitive system embedding daily language practice.

The management program's efficiency status continues to rely on the approach of monitoring students to ventriliquize the voice of someone other than their own through scripted lesson designs. One activity may include, independent drill or workbook practice of a specific grade level target skill, such as verb recognition. A student's social role is attached to identifying and underlining the verb in a preset sentence as an indication that the skill is in the process of assimilation. The assimilation of preset skills is assumed to be a prerequisite for eventually earning appropriated space for authentic voice expression. Yet, further studies are suggested in discerning how student social roles influenced by instructional material that may be redundant, easily finished, confusing, delayed finished for various issues, one being second language, or even enjoyable, fun, to the student since the affective domain is not an issue under accountability within the context of the school day. Yet lessons are designed in mind with large student groups doing the same page at the same time, assuming the same expected results. Students may assimilate or resign under the pressures of normalization, how they respond to instructional conflict based on the influences of how they uptake their lessons.

### **The Kid Business of Negotiating System Choice Agreement**

Among the seven families represented, only five had uninterrupted sequential generation parent and child pairs. From these five families, I highlight the shifting transferences of footings that contributed to influencing their relationships at home based on the nature of reading the word at the home and school site differences. The samples were chosen to examine Freire's notion of 'intervention in reality' which is the process for people or children, as they "single out elements from their "background awareness" and to reflect upon them. These elements are now objects of their considerations, and, as such, objects of their action and cognition" (Freire, 1992, pg. 83). The uptakes of the

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<sup>23</sup> Generation identification will be referred by the abbreviation (3G) or (4G).



offered programs and how might they mitigate the relationship between child and parents are one indication of life unfolding in families responding to changes of school reforms and expectations for literacy awareness.

These reforms materialized in forms of school site-based, learning-to-read programs. Each succession of state textbook adoptions led to the proliferation of classroom practice assuming appropriate reflection for contingencies of grade level, language, and cultural expectations for all children. The reflections of the family narratives indicate dynamic issues responding to the contingencies of literacy awareness and practices inaugurated through school history.

*On par with program performance.* The family members narratives allowed magnifying both the form of the language and content where footings were manifested through issues encountering language and literacy directly related to school influence. The experiences between family members in families 5, 6, and 7 show how exposure to the umbrella frame 'reading' through their learning to read experiences may instead lead further to a lack of understanding the instructional responses to their needs and proper parent management on how to ask questions and receive information. The improper understanding of either alternative or traditional programs challenged both the parent and children responding to the enactment of learning to read. The examples reflect on the process of how prior experiences allow for uptakes of expectations for learning between the parent and the child. The first example highlights a mother and daughter negotiating the handshakes (uptakes) to frames between two distinct programs with divergent expectations for learning. One program adopted whole language principles with 1st to-3rd grade and 4th to 6th grade multi-age configuration. The second program was a traditionally based fifth grade reading management program.

The mother, Diana (3G) was born in Mexico. She could not recall her parents reading to her as a child, but she did remember that her religious teacher read to her on a frequent basis. By age seven, she began to understand what it meant to know how to read. Her introduction to reading was made in a strict traditional catechistic approach classroom that incorporated corporal punishment. Children sat in rows and remained silent-voiced until either asked to read in unison or as a selected individually by the teacher to respond during their reading lesson.

Diana: When I started school I was in Mexico. I went there for two years, and that was the worst experience of my life actually because they're so strict. My mother didn't send me to kindergarten, so I didn't have that experience of starting out. It was just straight first grade and second grade. I just remember the yardstick coming towards me and pulling out my hand and then just whacking me. Not that I was a bad student, but they require a certain level of trying or...

Almanzo: Performance maybe?

Diana: Right. Exactly. Performance and I was just terrified. I wanted to go home, but, you know, it was traumatic in that sense of a young kid going into something like that, but it was also good because it prepared me; staying there for two years and coming here as a third grader, I pretty much knew everything pretty much because they are so advanced there.

Although I had offered the term performance, Diana affirmed the term as she was explaining, as a child she was eager to learn, but did so with reservation around the heightened anxiety of performance or production expectation, “she was terrified” and worked towards avoiding corporal punishment, she thought, “I’m like, as long as I’m good and I don’t do anything I won’t get beat. Despite the tone of heavy handedness in instruction and her emotions of fear, she managed the curriculum and expectations with proficient satisfaction up to the third grade. She immigrated to California with her family along with cultural attitudes receptive to footing and alignments of learning to read through a catechistic approach, which included an element of fear-based student threat. She was a fluent Spanish-speaker that was enrolled in a traditional diagnostic/remedial approach in 1972 at the third grade. Her situation for language & reading instruction was differently organized from the mainstreamed students.

Diana recalled her third grade induction to language learning. She was sent to another classroom for the majority of her language arts or reading lessons. Her lessons occurred isolation or in a small group with other English learners. She sat in front of a large metal machine that voiced out loud the matched vocabulary words to illustrated magnetized scanning card strips. In addition, she pointed out the Dick and Jane series as one of her primary texts for reading instruction while in primary school. Later, as a teenage mother, she obtained her high school diploma through continuation school. Whenever feasible, she had been persistently attending junior college during the past 10 years. She began taking courses in English when she noticed feeling consciously aware that her English was not proper or corresponding with that of her co-workers at a legal office from her early employment career. She was proud that she was able to persist and her goal was to eventually obtain an Associate Arts degree in English.

Although Diana was education-oriented and supportive with her family, she was very perplexed at her youngest daughter’s lack of reading progress, at the third grade, in 1995. Although she had elected to involve her youngest daughter in an alternative designed holistic multi-age based program, issues surfaced negotiating the footings of alignment to the frames of learning principles. These principles differed in learning assumptions and range of reading material to the ones lived experienced of her childhood. Instead Diana was culturally acclimated to the harsh method of an eradication, surveillance, and control from her early childhood. She acknowledged, in retrospect, the benefit, “it was traumatic in that sense of a young kid going into something like that, but it was also good because it prepared me. In addition, her observations concerning for her daughter, Alicia, were also noted and affirmed by one the representative instructor in a Narrative Report (Appendix E).

Her daughter’s experience was embedded in a progressive point of view that offered a learning environment with material discernibly organized for child elected purposes supporting personal interests associated with both formal and free reading time. Instruction included the combination of teacher-selected material with attached child-directed reading circles<sup>24</sup>. The instructor-guided activities used big books and matching small books while embedding target skills within the context of the lesson. Children rotated to two other instructors responsible for curriculum in math/science and Spanish

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<sup>24</sup> multiple children with a copy of one text with a formal structure for text analysis



literatures arts. Alicia (4G), indicated how she discerned her experience learning to read between the two programs, the progressive and her fifth grade class,

Alicia: I kind of learned in like third and fourth but not as much as I did like in fifth.

Almanzo: What kind of things did you do in third and fourth that helped with reading?

Alicia: Well, we read little books, but there wasn't nothing really big to teach me how to read really good.

Almanzo: And so what did they do in fifth that helped?

Alicia: They just read a lot more, bigger books, tougher words.

Almanzo: And do you remember what your teachers did in third and fourth grade to the class when they were teaching reading?

Alicia: They just had us take a book and read it to her, but people would still pick the same books that they read over and over again.

Almanzo: What did your teachers do in fifth grade?

Alicia: They'd have you read out loud different books, like a popcorn reading.

The popcorn reading activity can be designed to motivate student participation based on the idea of surprise tag. The child who read last is allowed to pick the next child to read. Each child is assumed to pay attention since he or she may be called on at any randomly given moment to perform. This method supports student's tracking the text due to the anticipation of being the next reader. The activity in Alicia's class was organized around children seated at their desks and following along silently to allow students to listen better to the reader's voice. This play activity manifests an organized and orderly whole class delivery and practice that reinforce activity protocols for students to wait patiently for their turn to take place if ever.

The progressive program instruction contrasted sharply with the fifth-grade traditional one for reading period<sup>25</sup>. It allotted a period of time in which students self organized and elected to go off individually, in pairs or small circles to practice reading the words of their texts in spaces of classroom corners, out in the hallway, at their desks, or small circles on the classroom carpet. The noise level of this practice was respectful, but buzzing about in higher decibels and the appearance of slight chaos. The activity challenged traditional approach uptakes for sequentially organized isolated skill practice and mastery by allowing students to freely talk about their literature for self-interest as well as for academic goals. This surface appearance may have invoked imagery of too much play, the work of a mental playground around reading, instead of doing the work of reading, filling in answers to worksheets. Yet, through orderly organization, as depicted in the instructor's report, the program's formal structures embedded in-school volunteer support,

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<sup>25</sup> The period is the allotted routine organized schedule of time for multiple subjects discipline practice.

Alicia has struggled with reading, but is very consistent and persistent in her efforts and her parents have supported her reading and writing at home. At school, she has had one on one help almost daily for the past two years with volunteers who are retired teachers and frequently with the classroom aide (1995-1996 Narrative Report).

In addition, as indicated in the report, the primary instructor's activities for reading the word,

I [instructor] also have worked with her individually on a frequent basis, as well as in small groups, nudging her as much as possible. She is working well with beginning sounds, and is working very hard to carry out a "phonics" sounding out, which has been difficult for her. However, the beginning sounds are a help for her, and she is starting to use other strategies while she develops an ear for utilizing sounds. She needs lots and lots of immersion into reading (1995-96 Narrative Report).

The report and process of student evaluation may have contributed to a lack of understanding for how these elements related to the perspective of how reading was defined and enacted. Both mother and daughter knew what it meant to read the word in their school setting, but were unable to accommodate resolution over confusion regarding information describing Alicia's reading progress and the ambivalent benchmark descriptive status term described in the report as, "[S]he is reading comfortably at the III Early Reading stage" (Appendix E). The category term, III Early Reading stage, was not referenced to a source in the report. Although terms may have been discussed in actual parent-teacher conference, the verbally communicated information may not have been retained. In addition to the misalignment of proper explanation of program evaluations, instructor and student roles influenced by the organization of the program demonstrated another area of contentions.

After the initial experience of duress, Diana, assumed a conforming and passive student role under the footing and aligning principles and manifested conditions of a catechistic approach. It featured ventriliquizing as a dominant strategy for student practice. Instructor's roles were oriented towards an authoritative voice. Thee degree of intensely governing students to mastering the defined objectives was contingent on the professional judgment of tolerating errors. Even though Diana attributed the feature of corporal punishment to the successes in her academic career, she felt her daughter Alicia could also have benefited to similar student treatment to motivate her to show better result indicating learning curriculum content. In this sense, at home, Diana and Alicia continued struggling to resolve both the divergent notions of reading the word and the uptakes and footings of a program's theoretical preferences of an alternative educationally organized by contrasting theoretical principles of the potential



varied perspectives, socio-cultural, constructivist or connectionist, adapted under a holistic vision for understanding the child.

Here, the holistic program strove to allow space for children's needs to surface assertively and find appropriate and properly organized responses while investigating solutions for student academic concerns. It also encouraged as active parent participation as possible by calling on parents as indicated in the report,

Alicia needs to become more aware of the meaning of what she is reading, and this is where I hope you will discuss stories with her over the summer. I would suggest that you talk to her new teacher in the Family early in August.

Diana decided to reassign Alicia to a traditional 4<sup>th</sup> grade class and subsequent grade levels. The primary reason for the move was due to the holistic program not addressing adequately what Diana and Alicia credited to the reading management program situated in a traditional approach environment, learning to read.. The alignment was not based on the content but through the manifesting uptakes and footings towards a preference method of motivation as indicated by Diana,

And another great thing that has happened to her is Mr. Connor. I think that I was probably the same way when I was young. I did not want to be at school. I wanted to be at home with my mom, and I think that's pretty much how she is. And having that teacher in front of me with a threat, I think it helped me. It put the fear in me, but I think it helped, and I think that is what is happening with her also. Mr. Connor is not going to back down. He remembers if you don't bring your work. He is not going to just let you slide, and I think that she is doing much better because of that.

Concurring with her mother's opinion, Alicia assigned on par alignment of learning to read with the traditional approach under her fifth grade instructor Mr. Connor. However, Diana's synonymous agreement uptake is towards student motivation with a fear-based element of provocation as founded on her personal experience. Alicia's frame of discourse indicate signs of feigned accord to the holistic program due to improper communication of the program's principles and pseudo-accord with the traditional program of the fifth grade class.

Both Diana and Alicia experienced teacher-front instructional practice with integrated with examples indicating possible ranges of heightened degree of intensity student-fear for motivation. Separated by in time by their generation, however, did not diminish the intensity they each felt during the time of implementation. There were at least four contemporary cousins of Alicia's who also had Mr. Connor for their fifth grade instructor. They knew his reputation well and kept their desks organized to stay out of predictable teacher target response. Student-fear in the world of schooling can be attached or associated with either the expectations of curriculum or of social standings. Each child, here, read the peripheral along with the actualized experience and made decisions that either refined or eroded responses in negotiating the uptake footings constructing the frames of expectation of what it meant to read.

Another cousin, Franco Jr. (Family 1, Gen 4), also identified experiencing a traditional reading approach based on the Dick and Jane material, who entered school in

1955, but he attributes learning to read in an alternative laboratory based program indicating potential expenses of technological innovations for the underperforming chosen few students. He recounted learning to read twice, once in first grade where the instructor read to everybody before students took turns reading a paragraph while standing in front of the class. Yet what appeared to be in at a later grade level in the mid-60s,

But reading, I went to the labs...the teachers would come to you. They'd walk around all the kids, and then they'll sit there and talk to you and ask you what you're reading. They took us on field trips. We went to San Francisco. They would take us to field trips to that reading lab, and then we'd go and they would teach us how to read and all that.

Although the specific grade level and type of program was not known, his description alluded to a reading program designed around reciprocal teaching between a class in San Francisco and Franco Jr.'s reading class. Math also was taught in tandem. Franco described how reading and math were taught in same instructional manner, in a laboratory with individual computers. The frequency of assisting the other school is not known, but travel time alone from the town of the focal school would be at least a 4 hour round trip bus ride, and yet, he was enthusiastically recalling the details of this program.

We'd go back. I liked that class. You'd go and you go to a regular classroom, or they'd switch it. Then you go back to one teacher and you sit there in that part of the lab. There was two regular classrooms and then there was like one room that had two classes mixed together, and then we'd switch and we'd go to the regular classroom and they'd come over here. That was fun like that, that kind of teaching. I liked it. Instead of just sitting in one class all day. They made it seem fun. Yeah. That's where I learned to read.

This description of the reading program offers an opportunity into the practice of scientific innovations associated with instructional alternatives responding to students of diverse needs. The laboratory process supported self-paced student progress and it was monitored by the assistance of multiple teachers. In addition, the innovation included evaluation with scores of performances immediately displayed after taking the test.

With the reading lab we had, they had some kind of test you would take. And then you would take this test with headphones on. I forgot what it was, and you'd tell them how far, you know, where we were at in reading.

The laboratory model adapted the diagnostic/remedy approach with a mechanical proxy agency of surveillance, eradication and control. The bureaucratic rationale for manifesting the few selected students for removal and isolation from their source school setting would have been interesting to know. How were cost and benefits calculated to surmise that this attempt could offer the sufficient experience to expand student language potential towards a long term academic career? Was this a last ditch effort? The innovation of platform, however, were still not much differently principled than that of the catechistic style of listen-to-the-voice-of-authority-example-and-ventriliquized back. However for Franco, the experience was associated as a fun endeavor.

The three experiences of Diana, Alicia and Franco Jr's demonstrate the vulnerability of children in having little control or sparse understanding of how they became participants in the varied programs for reading instruction. The traditional



approach described by Alicia and her mother highlighted the adaptability of operant conditioning through stimulus-response and their reactions to avoid punitive attention to correct errors in effort and performance. In addition, minimal student participation or understanding, such as Franco's experience contained, These experiences show how mismatched programs to potential abilities for second language learners were not formally addressed to include primary language support. The match of service was instead based on the lack of language proficiency meeting current adopted mainstream basal program goals. The benchmark for assessments and attention of instruction collapsed measurements of incremental nubs of knowledge attainment into indexing the child in relation to how other students fair with similar assessment tools. The laboratory setting is some other tinkering and not of design to integrate the whole child's facets of emotional, cognitive, and inspired sense of purpose and appropriate guidance.

The underlying assumptions of how children learn to read through offered structured language opportunities set the context for delving into the types of reactions negotiating the aligning social and linguistic elements of uptakes and footings to frames. In light of the dominance of top-down programs offered at the school site even after three generations, there were less than a handful of the extended family members that pursued higher education.

*Student achievement and outliers.* Each subsequent generation appeared to have more members remaining in school and completing secondary school education. Acclimating to social and academic qualities of school culture and English language with better attendance, however, did not appear to signify preparation for the family members in the type or types of language that was linguistically or academically expected for higher education. There were only six members that had college experiences (Table 7). These were Domingo, Diana, Abel, Adela, Lluvia and Maya. Yet, there were only two members who stood out for their particular early grade experience in creating a platform for building an underlying interest in pursuing advanced degrees, one a master's and the other a law degree that will be discussed in the next section.

## Participant Education Career

**Table 7**

Family	3 <sup>rd</sup> Gen.		4 <sup>th</sup> Gen.		5 <sup>th</sup> Gen.	
	Name	Exit	Name	Exit	Name	Exit
1	Franco	EE	Franco Jr.	EE	Mercedes	11 IS
2			Abel•	BA		
			Blanca	10 IP		
			Cecilia	6		
			Celestina	6		
3	Delia	12CS	Adela•	12		
			Maya	12		
4	Perla	EE	Adan	12		
	Roberto	EE				
5	Carlos	EE	Cathy	12		
	Diana•	12IS	Alicia	12		
6			Inez	12		
7	Domingo•	JD	Lluvia	12		
			Albert	12 CS		
			Delfo	4		
Total 22	7		14		1	

\*-College Experience; IP-In Progress; EE-Early Exit; CS-Continuation School; IS-Independent Study; JD-Juris Doctorate

Two family members were distinguished from their cousins of the same generation, Domingo (3<sup>rd</sup> Gen. Family 7) and Abel (4<sup>th</sup> Gen. Family 2), for attaining advanced degrees. Of the 6 fourth generation members, 4 male cousins were early exit and 2 female cousins received high school diplomas based on alternative High School options. What is notable about Domingo's lived experience, however, is how he came to reading the word in the world that differed in social attitude from his community compared to the word of learning to read in school.

Reading the word and the world is a process of disentangling. One example is illustrated by the lived experiences of Domingo (3<sup>rd</sup> Gen. Family 7, Table 3) and his father. His father married into the focal family configuration through his marriage to Gina (2<sup>nd</sup> Gen. Family 7, Table 3). Domingo's father was very astute and politically wise in the universal school of life, but he never mastered the formal sense of reading, nor any social functional literacy conventions, but he taught his children a strong work ethic and demonstrated the courage to create one's own opportunities. Life was an adventure to be had.

He came into the agriculture industry as a 17 year old migrant worker during the 1950's, but through his business sense and abilities, accumulated the capital to own his own ranch, become a contractor and, in addition, invented a disc for drilling the earth that is still in use today all as a non-English speaker. Without any formal education from either his country of origin, Mexico, or the United States, he is a prime example of obtaining the American dream without reading the word of decoding print.

His third oldest son, Domingo, as well as his other 7 children grew up experiencing the family's initial economic lean years. Around age 9 in 1968, Domingo decided on his own, to go sell newspapers. He navigated Main Street's long sidewalk topography or stood on any one of the corners selling papers to whoever was walking by. He already mastered his k-2<sup>nd</sup> grade curriculum, he was proficient in reading most street



signs and signs in store windows. In his interview, he recalled one window with a sign that read, “No shirt, No shoes, No Mexicans”. At 9, he was embarking his formal learning of reading the word through school management programs, and, like his father, understanding the potentials of reading the world and the adventures to be had.

Like his contemporary cousins, Domingo learned to read the word with the Dick and Jane series management reading program, however, he differed from the others by contributing a favorable review of the qualities he picked up from the book. Bringing up his childhood observations of the textbook, he said,

See Tom run. Yeah. Here you go. Dick and Jane. I liked them. I liked them because they were always in a pleasant environment. They’re always in there, in apple trees. There was always green grass. They always had food to eat. That’s what I liked about it. The girls were always pretty. They were always nicely dressed. Everyone had pressed clothing. They weren’t getting into trouble. It’s the kind of life I wanted to lead.

The illustrations were not only a highly motivating but also offered Domingo a reading the world lifestyle alternative that differed from his own lived experiences. Domingo continued discussing his understanding of personal achievement and academic progress related to the book series,

This is the primary stuff that I remember where I learned to read were these books, and I remember how important it was for me to advance myself to read more advanced books. Just going from blue to green to white, whatever the -- you know.

He liked to read. In turn, at home, he recalled the only reading material available was an encyclopedia set. He did not read at home but relied on the school environment and acquired an attitude of vitality towards print within its premises to stimulating his interests. He was very eager to be in the more advanced reading groups and, in contrast with his other 3<sup>rd</sup> generation cousins, felt that he was well recognized and respected for his work:

I was being nurtured, not just academically but generally by the way I was open to learning and I was very good at it. So there were a lot of good opportunities for me and it was easy.

At the time of the study, Domingo was an established attorney. On any given day he could be found reading up to 8 hours if researching or 3 hours writing legal document. He was also one of the few among the 22 participants applied reading to direct personal and professional growth. Regarding personal growth, he stated, “[W]ith every little piece of knowledge that you gain, one little piece of knowledge can affect everything about you, and as soon as you make some growth you’re affecting yourself 100%.” His enthusiasm for reading was based on the opportunities to learn something different. He was an independent reader with the ability to integrate complex ideas with new understandings from the materials he chose. This was a habit he developed as one of the many consequences of his primary grade experience. In his profession, he regarded reading as a way to meet his legal responsibilities,

I enjoy reading. I like to read. It allows me to be me. I can read things for people because I can read good. And I also understand and put things into context and decide whether or not they’ve been subject to any form of

abuse, and if they are, then I get to advocate for them, at least in my profession.

Both Domingo and his father were outliers not only in affiliation with their extended family pool, but also from the standpoint of reading the world by their separate lived accomplishments. The father, if considered by general principles of literacy awareness and standards of conventional schooling evaluation, he would have been considered a failure at reading. Never having gone to school, so bypassed typical conventional years of remedial instructional practice. Domingo also had outlier qualities by superseding his family's educational standing in addition to the general population by reading the word conventional with academic institutions.

Domingo's younger cousin, Able, was working on a bachelor's degree in technical project management at the time of the study with aspirations in the future,

I want to be able to fix... I want to go into bioengineering. That's what I want to do. I want to get into fixing medical equipment. That's what I want to do. That's my goal. Further from there, I'll have the bachelor's presenting if I ever want to go on further than that. That's why I did this one. It basically teaches you how to sell something. So that's what I want to go for.

Yet, when he was asked if he liked to read, he responded by saying, "not really." I was surprised to hear this considering how he spoke with enthusiasm regarding his current college experience. I wondered how he managed program literacy demands where he claimed there are a lot of textbooks. Although there were a lot of textbooks, his projects were organized around the efforts put forth by a team of students with smaller embedded individual assignments. He also described his writing tasks as equivalent to high school English but at a higher level. He had no problem reading the content of his textbook because it was related to solving the problems of his assignments, however, if confronted with a book outside of studying, he said:

I just can't sit there and stare at a book for a long time. I start, my mind gets sidetracked and my mind just wanders. I start thinking of other things. If I have to read it, or, you know, there have been some articles that are really interesting and I'm just totally into it. But I rarely read. I just read for school, that's it. And that's because I have to. I don't think I will ever read just for fun.

While he addressed learning to read, he identified the Heath series reader as one of the first materials he encountered in his primary grade experience. Heath was in contemporary standard of offering an array of selected pieces of literature in composite form under themes or units of instruction. He then started to discuss the peripheral material he came across along with his regular reading book. "I think we read like little novels, stuff like that, and I thought those were always pretty cool. I didn't really like reading," but he goes on to state,

I think we had to like basically read a book and talk about it. I'm not sure. I know we read a lot of scary books and stuff like that. I read Goosebumps, but I think this other one was just kind of like little short stories. We did a lot of that. I remember reading a lot of those little short funnies stories. There was one something about a funeral, the hearse, or something. I don't remember what that book was called and that book



was a pretty neat book. It had all these fictitious stories that scared you when you were a kid. I read those a lot. There was a series of those and I liked them.

Here he described material very unlike his regular reading book. He may have been reading chapter books or short stories, or short novels, but he was reading and found something he enjoyed reading. Yet having this experience in primary school did not ensure that in his future he would continue to enjoy reading.

Domingo and Abel were on opposite poles regarding their personal pursuit and interest in reading. Domingo's attributed his pleasure directly to his basal experience. His handshake was a consciously strategic compliance to learn as much as he could about the world and the word offered by his school. He was and an eager reading student. Abel, on the other hand, was not eager to read. Although he reads and writes proficiently, he prefers writing to reading. His uptake showed feigned accord. He reads only materials attached to his career goals.

The two examples of manifesting attitudes, Domingo's enthusiasm for reading, and Abel's self-elected rejection, offered a background spectrum for the degree of polarity for current reading practice among the family members. Based on interviews, they were included among 16 other cousins who were active practice pleasure readers. Although 5 other cousins were minimally active readers who didn't like to read much. However, an additional cousin, in particular, Inez, was very serious and pensive while she addressed this topic and said, "No, I used to read when I was going to the 'focal' school. I used to read all the time, but I don't know. I stopped." Hers was a dramatic and puzzling change similar to Abel's decision for pivotal termination since the tool served its purpose. Whether the participants liked to read or not, they all shared the common dependency on libraries. Whether the school's or the community's, libraries were primary sources for accessing print material from second to fifth generation.

*Through their hands passing.* The structured schooling practice around the varied offerings of print materials was a subset of the participants' exposure to reading the word experienced on a daily basis throughout their lived experiences. The episodes inaugurated for reading word outside of a schooling environment occurred within the context of their neighborhood, community and work related activities. The schooling experience strove to teach reading the word so that students leaving the system would have, at minimum, rudimentary potentials of decoding skills. I examined the participants' use of this resource from the acquired material that passed through their hands. I found three broad categories of resources among the 22 participants. These were disposable text, life situated text, and children's text from academic environments.

The first category, disposable text was a composite of media, newspapers and magazines found embedded through environmental print. Media included commercial flyers or inserts, and department store catalogues. This material was accessed either through mailings or at work in employee lounges. The material<sup>26</sup> under this category was given freely and minimally perused or just rejected by the majority as junk mail, however, my hunch is that this pool of material may offer a source of investigation that is academically predisposed given principles of reading the word and meanings that may come attached or associated to inquiries of source and benefits of advertized products.

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<sup>26</sup> Support media (Appendix F) included artifacts of direct mail solicitations, catalogues, infomercials, telemarketing, or videos.

For example, using market flyers are adaptable for multiple level discussion and social organization for basic math computational activities to grade school children or more advanced grades in discussions regarding resource distribution of nutritional commodities and local access.

The second category, situated life category included personal activities of economic and social consequence. Only 5 participants were self-sustaining owners of small businesses that included a mechanic shop, law and billing office. In addition the economic experiences of each subsequent generation included contracts for appliances, loans for cars, credit card, and checking accounts. When a family member encountered a business need beyond their understanding, there were 2 family members who were easily accessible and could help. Diana had knowledge and experience with formal letters of business, and Domingo, could offer advice about matters of potential legal consequence. When needed, the extended family met potential economic risks with extended member configurations of support, trust and help as exemplified above with Diana and Domingo.

The third category, children's text from academic environments included the influences of school and libraries. Both environments provided primary access to print resources for the first through fifth generations. Although visiting the library was a sporadic endeavor and sometimes, as evident in Perla's experience, a place of potential risky business. When she was asked about taking her son to the library she responded,

I used to, but now I don't let him go to the library. There was some activity going in the back, and I found out. Like I said, I'm always untrusting. And I'm just wondering why are they doing something at the library? It's not a place any more for kids to go study. It's a place where they can have activities going on. Gangs, they're doing graffiti in the back or, you know, or they meet there to fight in the back.

As a parent, she kept an eagle sharp eye towards her son, since the location of where they lived had a higher possibility of social pressures related to gang influence. She may have over generalized the potential for gang related activities being realized in the library, but her heightened sense of fear also stemmed from seeing other extended family dealing with this issue. She stated adamantly after reflecting a pause from her previous statement,

No, but, you know what, no. That's not it, Maria. The thing is, you know, I'm not going to lose my son to, you know, if he starts wanting to, you know... He's interested in stuff like that, you know, and I'm not going to allow that. I'll protect him.

Yet, the presence of home computers in third and fourth generations is emerging as an alternative source for print access replacing earlier generations dependency on libraries and schools. In addition, though, it has risk potential qualities of its own.

Included in this category were experiences either self-elected endeavors towards reading alternative sign symbols such as music or teacher dedicated. Franco Jr. recalls fondly how one of his teachers offered him a literary source:

I used to like to read... This guy gave me this book one time. It was a poetry book. It was kind of neat. It was from South America and a lot of poets from over there. They were oppressed but they were poets. He gave me this book. He gave me three of them. I had it for a lot of years. I don't remember. I used to like to read it. I can't remember his name now.



This experience inspired the awe of wonderment in Franco. He would read what became a three-volume anthology that he would reread since, “[I] couldn’t understand some of the things, but some of them you just think about it and you think of what you thought it meant.” His was an impressive recollection due to the nature of how he was captivated by the work and its lasting influence. Even though, Franco Jr. read his anthology at home, it did not have any connotations of homework that is prescribed by teachers. However for at least 5 other cousins, including, Blanca, who exasperatedly expressed her reaction to the crossover of school print to home, “probably when we got homework, I guess,” she continued to explain, “[L]ike biology work we have to go...we have to go like worksheets we have to finish at home ‘cause we have to use our books to find it. We have to read it”. For the younger fourth and fifth-generation members, homework was a becoming a bigger issue of ‘have to’ due to accountability for it was becoming more strictly regulated in counting towards their grade.

There were 12 family members who were unable to recall parental assistance with their homework. Reflecting on her primary schooling experience, Adela (C, 4) mentioned,

No one asked me if I had homework, or, you know, rarely my mom would say do you, do you have homework? But the homework, honestly, I’m going to be honest, I never put my whole effort into it. I just did enough to get a C. You know, I barely would do it that morning. I never had to do my homework when I got home.

Adela was not alone in her experience as for all of the third generation parents As one parent, Delia (C, 3), explained, “Cause now it’s like hard for me to even help little Lionel (her grandson) with his homework. It’s been so long anyways, but it’s hard for me to help him. It’s difficult because their work is so hard now.” Delia’s grandson is in early primary grade. Even though she had assisted school in the early 1960s, her schooling experiences could not prepare her, nor peer cousins, for what she would confront as a grandparent concerned with her grandson’s education and lifestyle.

Few family members, however, indicated how they arranged for homework assistance through support and trust kinship relationships. One parent sent her daughters to her sister’s home for help. The two families lived in close proximity, just around the corner from each other. Cecilia (B,4), mentioned about her mother, “she would, not really anything. If she could she would help, but if she doesn’t understand she’ll send us to them. Like in the early evening.” The girls looked forward to going over. In addition, as home computers were becoming more prevalent household features, children used email to send questions to other family members or friends. Yet, this strategy was depended on the contingencies of Internet availability. Enrichment experiences for the family members included both choir and instrumental music options. There were 5 participants who recalled learning instruments and having to bring home their music and instrument to practice. Other school to home ties included school flyers that were either mailed or sent home with students. These mailings included community awareness towards scheduled events and school adequate yearly progress reports.

### **Discussion**

The participant encountered a diverse range of instructional material associated with their reading management programs. Most of the activities were based on a diagnostic/remedial model. Under the principles of a Traditional approach, this model

included student workbooks initiating organized small or whole group instruction and independent practice. The conditional practices of habitual tendencies, such as ventriloquizing instructional reading scripts or filling in workbook blank lines, socialized behavior norms with practice of form managed and easily monitored by one instructor of over 30 students. Overlooked are substances of refining language proficiencies that initially may take more time to implement because of their difference of values and structure. For instance instead of increasing time for students to practice talking, starting as early as first grade, less time has been appropriated over time for encouraging students to speak during instructional reading time (Davies Samway & Pease Alvarez, 2005). Each generation experienced instructional tendencies towards higher social involuntary conformity due to extrinsic rewards for strengths and punishments for weaknesses. The confidence level of each member had to grow in spite of inappropriate attention to his or her language needs as exemplified by Diana's awakening into reading the word. With this in mind, I discuss two major assumptions of practice in relation to their schooling experiences. The first assumption was whether the learning needs of subsequent generations were better met than their antecedents. Included, I discuss implications to second language learners under instructional approaches combined with fear-based stances. The second assumption considers the implications of terminal schooling delay of the family members schooling experience and potential of employable skills.

*Assumption 1: Schooled children are better educated than their parents.* Across generations reading programs continued to offer traditional approaches using fear to motivate students. The catechistic style for content delivery was becoming a redundant routine in teaching reading. Yet, a lack of understanding in light of redundancy can also lead to frustration when language proficiency is not on par with class expectation. Student frustration can be further exacerbated when the presence of punitive responses are implemented to address remedying the lack of knowing. For example, Domingo recalled having nurturing experiences while learning. He found himself in a situation where he did not have the sense of knowing what was being asked to complete his assignment around writing definitions to words. He was aware for one of the first times of student social standings defined by the academic stress of negotiating assignment expectations and performance levels,

I think it was the only time I really began to understand the distinction between different groups of people because everybody put me in this, I don't know, this separate class where all the other bright students were. We sat at a different table and given different assignments. I remember having some difficulty with the assignment. They were giving us words, or actually having us define words, like okay what is the definition of a dozen. Twelve. What is the definition of such and such, and such and such, and such and such? And I remember having difficulty understanding the concept of definitions. And I also remember not being to get any help for it.

Domingo, a successfully dedicated student, still felt the frustration of not knowing and was beginning to sense performance pressure against other dominant English speakers. Academic success alongside dominant speakers confounded personal issues in relation to academic demands and depending on the intensity of the motivating fear-based stress lead to passive coping skills negotiating uptakes from subordinated positions.



Not knowing or performing below expectation could have severe stress consequence like in the cases of Diana, corporal punishment, and her daughter, Alicia, avoiding predictable teacher target response. Franco Jr., finding some success in school, however, made a choice between staying on the regular campus or moving to the continuation high school campus. He recalled,

[E]verybody that came from the west side. Everybody that came from that way was already in Rosewood<sup>27</sup>. And everybody wanted to go to Rosewood because they didn't want to be at Brier<sup>28</sup> High, not because of the hours or whatever. It was because they weren't comfortable.

On the surface, he was not a successful student and he found himself at the continuation school not by academic default but by choice since he did not feel that he could fit in socially with the dominant population as his other cousins. Having to perform on par without proper social and language support through understanding or advocacy made learning an overwhelming endeavor. The communication between program intent and parents understanding for their children with diverse language and literacy needs continued to elude closing gaps for better student and parent support. It appeared that the evolution of a more narrowly prescribed curriculum around reading the word has not led a higher proportion of the subsequent generations of this family advancing into higher educational institutions.

*Assumption 2: A schooling experience may yield students with more employable skills.* The daily offering of school based cultural material and the discourses around these artifacts have consequences outside of the original context. Tracing how these discourses follow a child home offer another glimpse of potential insight for the consideration of appropriate instructional responses to a child's development of inquiry and expression. The undertaking of management program changes has place more burden on the student for knowing the particular elements of language construction than comprehension.

As the frame of reading management programs undertook the dominant model of textbook implementation as the bounded associations of what was considered literate and appropriately speaking for proficiency performances. In addition, reading management programs included alternative peripheral material to bolster their system in meeting the needs of the nonmainstream student. Linguistically diverse students of varied English proficiencies have been regulated to the alternative system of peripheral material with varied social interactions within the limitations of student groupings and technology interventions. By the second generation, the family members of Familia Ortiz were treated only with English dominant instruction since language alternative resources were not readily available. The family members use of Spanish also began to wane as more attended school with dominant instruction in English.

As Gándara and Rumberger observed, policies structure language opportunities (2009), in turn, influences of the policies also have an effects on attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors with consequence to economic potentials. Each one of these personal qualities, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors add an additional layer of considerations while navigating the choice agreements offered by school programs. Yet, in the midst of program

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<sup>27</sup> pseudonym

<sup>28</sup> pseudonym

offerings, one action based on the process of disaffirmation for 4 third and 1 fourth generation participant was the decision to exit early from high school in spite of risks to their employment gain. The notion of rejection was a dual process, one, for not meeting program expectations and the second, personal frustration for the lack of preparation. The risk of not having employable language skills did not outweigh the impatience at the lack of attention to these member's particular academic needs.

*Accountability averting risks.* The recommended remedies from national and state policy eventually filtered into classrooms as common practice to facilitate achieving mandated goals. In turn, the common learning experience of classroom practice shifted orientation according to stricter demands for achievement based on a broader spectrum of skill knowledge than on the refinement of authentic personal comprehension and articulation. The sequentially lock step process of learning afforded little time for and appropriate academic attention towards second language learners. The participants potential for reading in a reward and punishment educational milieu was misaligned with offered management programs that intensified the consequences for the lack of language stability and continuity of comprehension. Instead the participants' personal goals and long-term interest to know more were further at risk of nonattainment due to the lack of guidance in properly organized instruction with attention towards their language development.

Valenzuela explored the notion of care and the effects of a schooling process with a "curriculum that denies students' community-based identities"(Valenzuela, 1999, p. xviii). In a broader sense, students with diverse cultures and language resources experience very similar processes of denied personal potentials. These potentials represent the thrust of challenges to a manufactured pedagogy. The process of reading the word through textbook initiated activity offers little tolerance for diversity of thought and response based on incidental or happenstance connections. The trend, over the time frame of eighteen years, appears to exhibit similar qualities from the lineage of efficacy in public schooling depicted by Callahan (1962). He traced sources and influences of the business-industrial ideology with a system of scientific management attributed Fredrick Taylor emerging in the late 1800s. In this case, though, scientific application perpetuates degrees of outside field influences historically a traced pattern from over 200 years ago. The current scientifically calibrated textbook has been implemented efficiently micromanage time and pacing factors of the delivery system which have become more stringent for teachers and students. In addition, students, teachers, and schools bare the brunt of punitive responses to evaluations of the management program if they are not in compliance rather than question the compliance of a tool to the student population it serves.

As time progressed from one literacy campaign to another, more remedies were suggested to fix the problem of the lack of success for all students. Children now had a job to fulfill. It was to learn reading the word through lens and the steps offered by research based literacy management programs integrated with the goals of national and concurrent state policies. The goals for education became less child oriented while initiating advancing market influences creating value comparisons assuming that all mainstream children were on equal par in learning and that competition creates stronger academically inclined students. One of the forms of alignments that students of diverse



cultures or language need to hurdle is that of the power over the terms of reading the word through uptakes to the principles underlying management programs.

In this study, both participants and the constituent conditions of the available material resources were taken into account to further examine the ways in which reading the written or unwritten word had varied judgmental consequences at home, school, and community. At school, for example, “the social organization of the school class...places the child as one among a number of pupils of the same age, confronting the same tasks and rules and similarly related to the same teacher” (Bidwell, 1991, p.192). The child is expected to learn “norms of achievement, of independence, and of bureaucratically appropriate conduct that will be required in the formal, instrumentally oriented settings of adulthood” (Bidwell, 1991, p.192). Yet studies, such as this one, strives to contribute to a broader understanding of the human conditions and influences of children while meeting the expectation of reading offered at a traditional school site.

## Chapter 5

### Revitalizing 'Old School' in a New Millennium

"This is a nation where citizens are politically divided, distracted, uninterested, and submissive, and where 'elites' are happy to keep them that way." ---Paul Street, historian

This study contributes to intergenerational studies that consider learning to read for culturally and linguistically diverse children. Content and discourse analyses were employed to explore the potential of unintended consequences of policies influencing reading the word through school based reading programs. I studied 22 members of an extended multi-generation Latino family. The 3 questions that motivated the study interest were,

1. How does 'policy talk' relate to the ways that literacy programs are put in place in the school?
2. What instructional material did Familia Ortiz encounter and how did they respond to literacy and language programs?
3. How do family stories reflect the discourse of legislative 'policy talk'?

This chapter will discuss findings that suggest that school-offered management reading programs, intended to decrease the risks of educational failure faced by culturally and linguistically diverse students, ironically, may also contribute to recreating manifested experiences of increasing the risks of failure for the very populations they are trying to support culturally and linguistically diverse students. Further, some experiences shows that reading based on reductionist definition of decoding in itself may not always be necessary for the manifestation of success in society.

#### *Findings and Interpretations*

Assimilating Power to regulate language and knowledge. Power to regulate language and knowledge in lived experiences of increasing reading programs, 1<sup>st</sup> and linguistically diverse. It includes an inquiry into the influences from sources outside the realm of the situated experience. The examples are illustrated by the lived experiences of the family members undergoing the influences of program implementations and the relationship of reading achievement with their current practices of reading the word. How does one obtain power to wield the benefits of reading the word? One example, Domingo's father was very astute and politically social wise, but he never mastered the academic reading, nor the social functional conventions of the written word, but he instilled in his children "a good work ethic". He came into California's central valley's agriculture industry as a 17 year old migrant worker during the 1950s. Through his astute nature and determination he accumulated the capital to own his own ranch, become a contractor and, in addition, invented a disc for drilling the earth that is still in use today. He accomplished all of this as a non-English speaker. Without any formal education in his country of origination or from United States, he is a prime example of challenging the assumptions towards obtaining the American dream does not require reading the word in the most conventional sense.

His third oldest son, Domingo, as well as his other 7 children grew up experiencing the family's initial economic lean years. Domingo at about age 9, decided on his own, to sell newspapers. He navigated Main Street's long sidewalk or stood on any one of the corners selling papers to whomever was walking by. He mastered his k-2<sup>nd</sup> grade curriculum, he was proficient in reading the street signs and signs in store



windows. In his interview, he recalled one window with a sign that read, “No shirt, No shoes, No Mexicans.” He was not only embarking on his formal learning of reading the word, but also, taking after his father, cultivating the potentials of reading the world. However, the world he read was not welcoming to him and may well have increased his risks of failure.

The crossing over from “improper language of the people [to] the correct language of the people” (Freire, 1994, p.10) for the first generation family members began in the early 1900s. Each subsequent generation thereafter confronted different challenges put before them regarding social, economic and political influences; however, the educational system was a common focal experience reflecting the intersection of public and political influences in relation to personal awareness. Education became an area of national stress and concern about the lack of student successes. In this context, the Ortiz family’s educational experiences were framed by political discussions that led to the design of an accountability system and changes in curriculum that at times were just as harmful as the public signs Domingo read as he traversed his world.

Changes in textbooks and curriculum implementation were aimed at pursuing the most efficient way of teaching the most important parts of reading to a child learning to read in a public schools. Both the second and third generation family members, entering school, from the mid-1930s to mid-1960s, reported using basals from the Dick and Jane series. The series, however, since the 1950s offered an explicit phonic instructional component.

A strong phonics component had become an even more landmark feature of the 1990s. Marilyn Adams’ report, “*Beginning to Read: Thinking and Learning about Print*,” 1990, reviewed basic and applied research on reading from the previous twenty years. She concluded that what she called this Traditional (phonics-based) Approach was the most academically sound and robust.

In this approach when students had difficulty with decoding, they received remedial instruction on phonics and were not exposed to more open and enriching reading activities. Enriching activities were rarely mentioned in the family member’s memories of learning to read. Even with technological innovations, such as the magnetized strip machine reader to the more sophisticated computer interventions, most family members were not encouraged to engage in enriching activity. The innovations had the appearance of offering wider access to the curriculum and alleviating patterns of errors in decoding, but these experiences also denied students language opportunities that could have led to early independent authentic self-regulated-voice to the parameters set by a collection of digested arbitrarily bound articulation skills.

The examination of historical documents for traces of policy talk since 1983, show a refining the perceived risks for students from families like the Ortiz family, both risks to them personally and risks that they supposedly will pose to the nation. The policy concerns were how to change student behavior to meet the projected National goals of the educational system. These goals, however, evaded properly organized, educationally sound responses for culturally and linguistically diverse children. Schooling continued to

arrange for a mono-cultural environment propelled by political interests<sup>29</sup> and fears of the voting public<sup>30</sup>.

Most of the third, fourth and fifth generation family members left school early. This lack of progress, in spite of shifting policies and shifting approaches to teaching reading suggests the need to continue to focus on how best to teach all students.

*Agenda of learning to read.* Children with diverse needs challenge usual instructional practices, not only because they lack potential but because their potentials are not adequately addressed. The mono-lingual programs offered for all children regardless of their language preferences or needs puts them at significant risk. If they do not understand the language they are learning to read in, they are at academic risk across the curriculum; they cannot be challenged academically and their potential for active participation is diminished. The original language of 'A Nation at Risk' identified 2 major assumptions about schooling. The next section will revisit these related assumptions with implications and suggestions for practice.

**Assumptions: Schooled Children Will Be Better Educated than their Parents and Schooling May Yield Students with More Employable Skills.**

It is important, of course, to recognize that the average citizen today is better educated and more knowledgeable than the average citizen of a generation ago--more literate, and exposed to more mathematics, literature, and science. The positive impact of this fact on the well-being of our country and the lives of our people cannot be overstated (A Nation at Risk, 1983, p. 13).

The experiences of the Familia Ortiz challenge these assumptions. Those in newer generations were not necessarily becoming better educated, but they were integrating English as their dominant language of interaction in and out of the school environment. In addition, this movement had some influence on the quality and the potential for acquiring employable skills. Outside in the community, social interactions were not explicitly designed or properly organized for learning. Yet those experienced in the schooling process did not yield more improved access for children with vulnerable language issues over time. Instead 3 examples summarized below, indicate student qualities of resignation, conflict, and assimilation to the schooling process may contribute to undermining or supporting family member's future potentials responding to their economic situation.

As an example of resignation, Diana found that a traditional approach worked for her and the punitive measures were not as bad as those she had experienced in schools in Mexico. She states,

I think the thing that made me feel good was that I knew I wasn't going to get hit by a ruler. You know, get whacked with a ruler. 'Cause back there, in Mexico, that's what they did, and for some reason they always whacked me. I don't know what I did. But here they weren't doing that, and I was like, "Oh, my gosh, you know, you don't get in trouble here." I mean, not for any reason. So that's what I looked forward to, that I could go and learn and I felt relaxed. In Mexico I hated

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<sup>29</sup> America 2000, Goals 2000: Education America Act, and Reading Excellence Act.

<sup>30</sup> California Proposition 227.



going to school. I would cry. I just did not want to go. I'd look for my brothers to just get me out of there, and here I didn't have to worry about that.

Diana further

narrated a sense of insecurity understanding the demands of the holistic approach to reading and saw the threat of punishment as a motivator for Alicia's learning to read in the fifth-grade. Alicia's experiences, on the other hand, demonstrated how students negotiate conflicts between expectations of the role of the student and the authority or expertise of the instructor shaping the program. Other issues of negotiating conflicts emerged with her male cousins.

Traditional approaches with their use of punishments had a different effect on other students. Roberto, Carlos, Franco Sr., Franco Jr. and Domingo even experienced corporal punishment for either class disruption or lack of fulfilling class expectations. The experiences of punishment in general and corporal punishment in particular may have contributed to many of the family members' decisions to terminate their schooling careers early. Issues of social and cultural dimensions contribute to a student's well-being, but decisions, such as Franco Jr's, to choose a continuation school environment suggests investigating further how avoiding attention from the eye of authority makes a typically worse educational environment more inviting.

The benefits of active and assimilated participation are clear from the data provided by Domingo and Abel, who were successful in school. Both gave personal thought to the power of schooling and to reading, beginning early in their primary grade experiences. What evolved was a personal sense of determination and the development of strategies for success as they matured into their young adult years. Domingo sought a traditional advancement of higher learning based on the public school system. He attained his Juris Doctor through the University of California, Hastings College of the Law and became a life-long reader. Abel, on the other hand, circumvented reading whenever he could despite the reading demands of his higher learning experience.

His primary goal for his experience in college was to obtain a bachelor's degree in technical project management through an alternative competitive college system, a Tech School. At the time of the study, Abel valued his education both for its potential to help him exploit future interests and to support his projected personal lifestyle needs. Both Domingo and Abel demonstrate how school can 'make the beyond attainable' and that personal preferences make a difference in what kinds of readers one becomes. A spark for learning, however, was not sufficient to sustain and inspire their other cousins who felt more self-conscious about their personal differences. The employable opportunities for family member who early terminated schooling, were instead caught in making use of living by their wits and the potential for unskilled labor offered in their community and agriculture industry. In addition, in a broader sense, their experiences also underlie how students come into the position of pseudo-accord to the historically inaugurated daily practice of schooling.

*Changes across the generations.* The data showed that second-generation and third-generation parents provided little or no help towards their children's schooling, mostly because of economic concerns and their own lack of academic development. The fourth generation members, however, reported more parental involvement. Two in particular, Diana (D,3) and Perla (E, 3), were especially involved. Both mothers intervened as best as they could, attending parent/teacher meetings in addition to making



themselves accessible to teacher-initiated requests for parent visits. They both offered their best personal guidance in helping their children manage what appeared as an overwhelming task to Alicia, learning to read, and for Adan, getting through continuation school with a high school diploma. Perla felt that a high school diploma was, at minimum, necessary for her son to gain entry into a competitive employment market. Diana, on the other hand, a small business entrepreneur, had already begun to teach her older daughter Cathy how to establish her own billing business. Alicia was embarking on the same instruction from her mother at the time of the study. Diana was not a parent bridging the business world with her daughters but also determined to protect them by minimizing the gaps of misaligned programs in meeting their language needs.

***Implications for teacher education.*** The focus of the Reading Excellence Act, was “to improve the in-service instructional practices for teachers who teach reading (H.R. Rep. No 106-645, 2000). The influences of ‘policy talk’ around improving teacher education failed to address instructional materials that may contribute to student risk factors. In fact, professional standards pressure teachers to use adopted material and those materials may not include special attention to English language learners or immigrant populations. The family members’ collective experiences accentuated the sparseness of enriching educational opportunities around developing students’ academic confidence. Instead, the data indicated that 19 members experienced a consistently stable Traditional Approach, which for the most part was not working for them, over the span of six generations, 38 years. Only three family members experienced a progressive program based on a whole language approach. Two of these members, Albert and Inez, felt confident with their student roles and content demands. Alicia’s experiences indicated, however, that children with vulnerable language issues may not receive adequate attention to properly address access to academic progress.

Policy implications have narrowed the role of the teacher and so they have found it difficult to meet the needs of their diverse populations. Their roles have become more those of recordkeepers who monitor compliance with pre-packaged programs than as teachers who are trained to assess their students’ needs in ongoing and dynamic ways.

Teacher education needs to accept the challenge to rethink how to educate and better support and influence teacher candidates in recognizing ways to integrate professional judgments with the limitations of reading programs. Changes in policy should allow for acceptance and more flexibility in integrating ground up professional judgments about solutions to problems teachers face in their everyday practices.

The combination of both curriculum changes and teacher preparation could integrate active decision-making by both students and teachers. Steps towards less dependency on prescribed teaching materials could help facilitate efforts to broaden the opportunities for nonmainstream students as could allowing students more space for active participation in their learning experiences.

***Implications for research and practice.*** It may appear obvious that reading is important. However, for an immigrant family, literacy and its value are rooted in experiences of personal access at school, libraries or work—and that access varies. Children may see differences in the value their parents place on reading and schooling as compared to the values espoused by their schools. And these competing values may be hard for them to reconcile. For instance, Franco Jr. recalls his mother used to read to him,



'My mom used to read. My dad said it was a waste of time. Now he don't say that anymore. Now he don't say that'. I continued to press on and asked why? . Cause he learned that reading means a lot and it's important. Not just working. You gotta read everything. You have to know how to read. Everything is about reading and math in one way or another, but reading is part of everything that comes in your mail, everything they give you when you go to sign papers or whatever. You got to know what you are reading.

His father changed his attitude due to his experience of raising a family in a print dominant society. Research is needed on the effects on children of such contrasting messages. How do they navigate a sea of shifting values, both within the family as time passes and conditions change, and between family and school when the needs of the different institutions come into conflict?

Children also may not see reading as important when they do not understand the language of the texts they are given. And those who do learn to read, may not become lifelong readers, choosing not to read as time goes on. It would be useful to investigate potential experiences that lead to such personal decisions to stop reading,

Finally and most importantly, the insights offered by this study emphasize the importance of properly organized and appropriately responsive pedagogy to the growing array of student subpopulations with their array of linguistic and social needs. Suggested next steps might include developing and studying the effectiveness of a new class of ways for meeting these needs. New pedagogies would have to be based on more honest evaluations of the political, social, and economic interests that can easily destabilize the learning environment affecting the potentials of linguistically and culturally diverse students.

### **Conclusion**

The inquiry that motivated this study emerged from a process of questioning my professional role as an elementary teacher embedded in the daily enactment of schooling. My role as an elementary teacher afforded me access to the inner workings of daily tensions and their resolutions by those involved in schooling—from parents, to teachers, to administrators implementing the newest policies. After being exposed to discussions in faculty meetings around reading, I saw our collective goals were accommodating changes based on policy recommendations. The selected study participants were part of my extended family through my husband. Their experiences allowed for an observation of these discourses. I watched how all parties used linguistic devices of uptakes, footings, and alignment to frames. I learned that schooling supports the idea of limitless potential but in practice appears to limit potentials.

Policy making needs to reverse trends that neglect addressing and valuing the linguistic potentials of all students just as it needs to advocate equal access to properly organized schooling. Without such attention, policy pressures are likely to penalize and contribute to the underperformance of children with diverse needs. Risk, for the children of the Familia Ortiz, came from incongruent experiences of learning to read with their linguistic potentials under a system of reading based on penalty responses of not measuring up. The experience of this research allowed me to gain a deeper appreciation for children and their resilient potentials as they endeavor to meet their academic needs.

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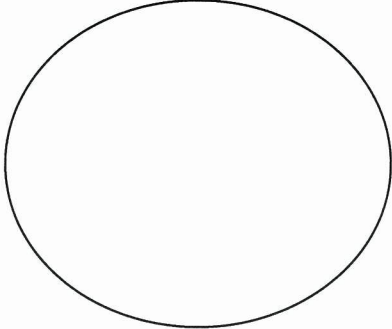
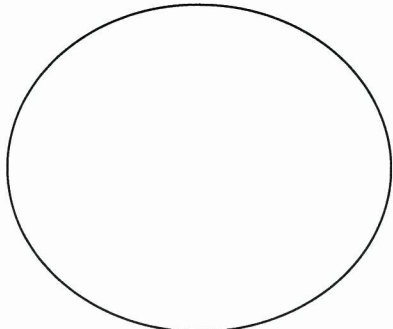
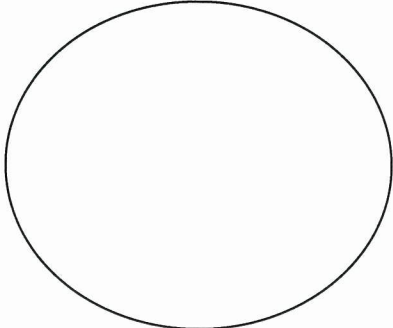
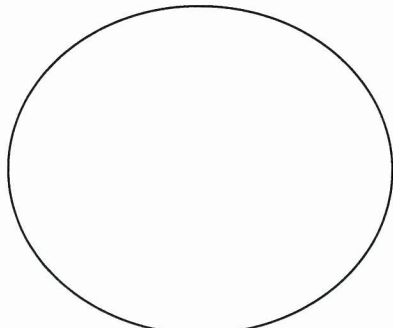
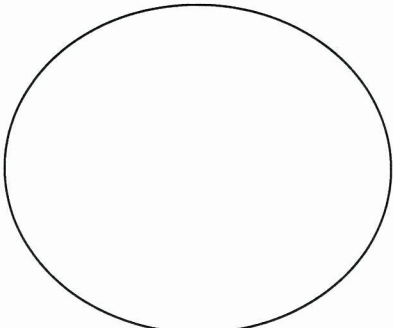
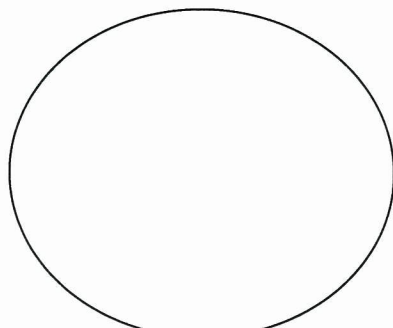


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**Appendices A - F**



Appendix A  
24 Hour Activity Survey

Name/Nombre _____	Date/Fecha _____
Each circle represents 24 hours How often do you .	Cada círculo representa 24 horas ¿Qué frecuente .
	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">Read/Lea</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">Watch TV/Mirar televisión</div>
	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">Listen to Radio/Escuche la radio</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">Work/Trabajo</div>
	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">Writing/Escribiendo</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">Other/Otra</div>

### Appendix B: Print and Broadcast Media Survey List<sup>31</sup>

<b>Print Media</b>		<b>Economic and Strategic</b>	
Magazines		business	
local		Real estate(rentals & selling)	
national		Contracts	
regional		Loans	
special audience		Credit	
		Checks	
<b>Newspapers</b>			
local		<b>Ritual &amp; Religion</b>	
national		Liturgical knowledge	
daily		Bible reading	
weekly		Other	
special audience			
		<b>Arts</b>	
<b>Support Media</b>		Vocal	
direct mail		Instrumental	
print media		Art	
infomercials		Music	
direct-mail catalogues		Composition	
telemarketing			
video shopping		<b>Medicine</b>	
teleshopping		Folk	
		Institutional	
<b>Broadcast Media</b>		<b>Social Exchange and Culture</b>	
		Visits	
		Letter writing	
		Telephone calls	
<b>Radio</b>		<b>Education</b>	
		Formal	
		Parent assistance with homework	
		Job Training	
		Religious training	
		Musical training	

<sup>31</sup> Checklist adapted from article: Moll, L.C. (1992). *Literacy research in community and classrooms: a sociocultural approach*. In Beach R., Green J.L., Kamil M. L., & Shanahan T. *Multidisciplinary perspectives on literacy research*. (pp. 211-244). Urbana, IL: NCRE



### Appendix C: First Interview Questions

1. *Le gusta leer?* Do you like to read?
2. *Le gusta escribir?* Do you like to write?
3. *¿Cómo describe sus habilidades de lectura?* How would you describe your reading abilities?
2. *¿Cómo describe sus habilidades de escritura?* How would you describe your writing abilities?
3. *¿Cuándo lees?* When do you read?
4. *¿Cuándo escribes?* When do you write?
5. *¿Sabe usted si sus hijos les gustan leer?* Do you know if your child (children) like to read?
6. *¿Sabe usted si sus hijos les gustan escribir?* Do you know if your child (children) like to write?
7. *¿Cómo describe las habilidades de lectura de su hijo(a)?* How would you describe your child's ability to read?
8. *¿Cómo describe las habilidades de escritura de su hijo(a)?* How would you describe your child's ability to write?
9. *¿Cómo describe la habilidad de su hijo(a) para leer en español.? Inglés?* How would you describe your child's ability to read in Spanish? English?
10. *¿Cómo describe la habilidad de su hijo (a) para escribir en español. inglés?* How would you describe your child's ability to write in Spanish? English?
11. *¿Adónde tiene su hijo/a acceso a los libros?* Where does your child have access to books?
12. *¿Qué clases de libros y en cuáles idiomas?* What kinds of books and in what languages?
13. *¿Va usted a la biblioteca con su niño? Si van ¿porqué?* Do you go with your child to the library? If so why?
14. *¿Describe cómo se siente hablando inglés (español) y bajo cuáles circunstancias utilizas estos idiomas?* Describe how you feel when you speak English (Spanish) and under what circumstances do you use these languages.

15. *¿Se encuentra beneficios hablando español? ¿Inglés?* Do find benefits speaking Spanish? English?



## Appendix D: Second Interview Questions

## Remembering:

16. What events do you remember?
17. Why was it a memorable event?
18. What was the reputation of your elementary school, junior high, and high school?

## Family:

- a. Were the schools you attended diverse?
- b. How did your schools treat diversity?
- c. Do you remember your teachers different teaching styles?
- d. What do you think is your learning style, given your experience with school?
- e. What did you look forward to going to school?
- f. What learning expectations did you have of your elementary school?
- g. What made you feel good about going to school?
- h. What made you feel good about coming home from school?
- i. What language did the teacher teach in?
- j. Do you remember when you learned to read?
- k. Did you learn to read in school or out of school?
- l. Do you remember what materials were used? What did the materials look like?
- m. How do you remember your teacher teaching reading lessons? What happened during the reading lesson? What did the teacher do?
- n. How do you remember your teachers talking to students? Did it matter if you were a boy or a girl?
- o. How often did you read in school? At home?
- p. What did you like reading?
- q. What were your favorite stories?
- r. Do you remember having any favorite authors or books?
- s. What do you remember people saying to you about reading?
- t. Were there any discouraging experiences while learning to read?

## Assessment

How should student progress be determined?

how often

how important; are there some ways more important than others?

How do you like getting your information about learning progress?

What do you think of standardized tests?

Do you think all children need to be educated to go to college?

Why do you send your children to school?

## Definition

What does learning mean to you?

What does reading mean to you?

What is a quality school? Were your schools quality schools?

## Appendix E: 1995-1996 Narrative Report

1995-1996 Narrative Report

Name: ██████████

██████ has been in the Family for most of her first, second and third grades. She was very shy initially, and has blossomed into a leader in the class. She is extremely honest, dependable, and is an excellent and concerned worker at her school work.

██████ has struggled with reading, but is very consistent and persistent in her efforts and her parents have supported her reading and writing at home. At school, she has had one on one help almost daily for the past two years with volunteers who are retired teachers and frequently with the classroom aide. I also have worked with her individually on a frequent basis, as well as in small groups, nudging her as much as possible. She is working well with beginning sounds, and is working very hard to carry out a "phonics" sounding out, which has been difficult for her. However, the beginning sounds are a help for her, and she is starting to use other strategies while she develops an ear for utilizing sounds. She needs lots and lots of immersion into reading. The parent support will surely help to bring satisfying results for ████████, who is confident that she will be a better reader. ████████ needs to become more aware of the meaning of what she is reading, and this is where I hope you will discuss stories with her over the summer. I would also suggest that you talk to her new teacher in the Family early in August. She is reading comfortably at the III Early Reading stage.

██████ loves to do math, which is much easier for her than reading. She is working on multiple column addition and subtraction with regrouping. Her math skills are adequate, and we need to keep nudging her in this area also. She uses manipulatives a lot and works with a concept until she pretty much understands it.

██████ has produced some very nice writing. She has a flair for writing stories and has also produced some nice research. Her handwriting is appropriate for her age, and she will soon be ready to develop cursive writing. She has worked very hard at spelling, and spelled many words on a district spelling survey correctly in May. She usually is aware when spellings are not conventional, and is willing and eager to be sure her work has conventional spellings before publication. Her working level in writing is III Early stage, where her work is growing in length, use of punctuation, etc.



█████ has utilized spelling skills very well at school. I'm sure you must be helping her at home. She is in the III Strategic: Alphabetic/Phonics stage, where she is learning to use information about decoding and our alphabetic system of writing. She is a very eager writer and interested in editing her work for correct spelling.

Science: The students were able to be involved in the themes of earth materials, plants and matter this year. Each week, the students had four sessions in which they participated in hands-on experiments in cooperative learning groups. All experiments included activity in reading and writing. Younger students learned the scientific process while older children organized and became scientific observers.

█████ overall is a consistent student whom we expect to keep progressing in her reading and writing skills as she progresses to the intermediate Family. We studied indigenous peoples of the Americas this year, and she contributed to discussions and projects. We really look forward to continuing working, nudging, and learning with █████.

## Appendix F: Codes for Permeable Material

## A. Disposable Media

Newspapers  
National  
Local City  
Home Town  
Support Material  
Support Media (SM) Direct Mail  
SM Catalogue  
SM infomercials  
SM Telemarketing  
SM Video  
Magazines  
Local Town Based  
Special Audience

## B. Situated Experience

Economic  
Business  
Real Estate  
Contracts  
Loans  
Credit  
Checks  
Social  
Visits  
Letter writing  
Telephone  
Radio  
English  
Spanish  
Both  
Total

## C. Academic to Home Experience

Fine Arts  
Vocal  
Instrument  
Mixed Media  
Library