UC Berkeley
UC Berkeley Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

When Highly Qualified Teachers Use Prescriptive Curriculum: Tensions Between Fidelity and Adaptation to Local Context

Permalink

https://escholarship.org/uc/item/85w2j5fb

Author

Maniates, Helen

Publication Date

2010

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

When Highly Qualified Teachers Use Prescriptive Curriculum:
Tensions Between Fidelity and Adaptation to Local Contexts

By

Helen Maniates

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Education

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Jabari Mahiri, Chair

Professor P. David Pearson

Professor Robin Lakoff

Spring 2010

Abstract

When Highly Qualified Teachers Use Prescriptive Curriculum:
Tensions Between Fidelity and Adaptation to Local Contexts

By

Helen Maniates

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Jabari Mahiri, Chair

Learning to read marks a critical transition in a child's educational trajectory that has long term consequences. This dissertation analyzes how California's current policies in beginning reading instruction impact two critical conditions for creating opportunity - access to qualified teachers and rigorous academic curriculum – by examining the enactment of a prescriptive core reading program disproportionately targeted at "low-performing" schools. Although prescriptive curricula attempt to ensure achievement, classroom implementation is mediated by teachers exercising professional prerogative. The quality of these mediations may be determined by a teacher's expertise in negotiating the tensions between fidelity of implementation and adaptation to local context. Through classroom observations and teacher interviews, this multi-case study illuminates fundamental issues of teacher quality as they are realized by experienced teachers exercising professional prerogative with prescriptive curriculum in order to be more effective with their students. The findings indicated that instructional decisions and strategies of effective teachers were driven by a clear definition of equity based on a theory of action that included mechanisms for both expanding access and achieving desired outcomes. These theories of action allowed teachers to exercise professional prerogative to utilize content and pedagogy both within and beyond the prescribed curriculum.

Dedication

To the memory of my mother, Aileen T. Maniates

Table of Contents

List of Tables and Figures

Preface

Ten years prior to this study, I worked as an outside support provider in the school district under study, which adds to both my knowledge and curiosity about the evolution of their reading program. I worked intensively with one school in the district through the Bay Area School Reform Collaborative, and then served under the Assistant Superintendent for Title 1 Programs where we launched a cadre of site-based literacy coaches in the fall of 1999. The purpose of the coaching program was to directly impact the achievement gap in reading proficiency between Title 1 and non-Title 1 students. I designed and facilitated the literacy coach program using what was then referred to as a balanced literacy approach based on the Fountas and Pinnell model (1996). Although the literacy coach program was successful at some sites, implementation was uneven across classrooms and schools. In the fall of 2002, the literacy coaches were recommissioned as Reading First coaches to support the implementation of OCR. I continued to work intermittently with Reading First coordinators to design professional development for the reading coaches. This experience caused me to wonder about how experienced teachers sorted out the similarities and differences between approaches to reading instruction, how they addressed student needs using OCR and what was actually enacted in daily classroom practice.

Acknowledgements

Chapter 1: Introduction

> *"Equity to me as an educator is you have to go to them, not them come to you...
> access is bringing it to them."*
>
> -   *Third grade teacher*

Learning to read marks a critical transition in a child's educational trajectory that can determine future personal, academic, and professional opportunities and choices (Ladson-Billings, 2006). Success in academic learning depends upon students being able to access increasingly sophisticated curriculum content as it unfolds over time. Early reading skills bootstrap subsequent reading skills so that students who have understood concepts and mastered each step along the way have an advantage over those who have not (National Research Council, 1998). Lack of access to quality beginning reading instruction can result in a "burst of inequality" nested in a system of "dynamic inequality" that compounds ever-widening differences in educational outcomes over time (Grubb, 2007). Early differences in reading proficiency that first emerge in the elementary classroom mean that some students do not learn to read with the ease and depth of understanding needed to engage in the literacy practices that will be required to be successful in the future.

This dissertation analyzes how California's current policies in beginning reading instruction impact two critical conditions for creating opportunity - access to qualified teachers and rigorous academic curriculum – by examining the enactment of a prescriptive core reading program disproportionately targeted at "low-performing" schools. The challenge of connecting reading instruction and students can be visualized as a fulcrum with the teacher in the center, balancing students' individual, cultural, and linguistic resources with curriculum content. The purpose of this study is to investigate the tension between teacher prerogative and prescriptive curriculum in a policy environment that calls for more equitable student outcomes. Using a multi-case study design, I explore the ways in which three experienced teachers exercise prerogative as they balance policy mandates with variations in implementation that meet the real-time learning demands of their students. The study took place in three elementary schools that use the Open Court Reading curriculum (SRA/McGraw-Hill, 2002a), commonly known as "OCR," in a challenging urban environment in a medium-sized city in northern California during school year 2008-09. The question of how experienced teachers work to achieve more equitable student outcomes within and beyond the limits of a prescriptive reading program drives this work.

Policy Context of Prescriptive Reading Curricula

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) recognized that "reading failure exacts a heavy toll on student motivation and school performance" and further suggested that "improved early reading instruction can be the first step toward raising academic achievement" (U.S. Department of Education, 2002, para. 6). NCLB called for 100% of students in the nation's public schools to read at grade level by 2014. To impact reading instruction directly, Congress funded the Reading First initiative under NCLB which

required participating schools to "base instruction on scientific research proven to work in the teaching of reading" (U.S. Department of Education, 2002) as endorsed by the National Reading Panel Report (National Reading Panel, 2000). California's Reading First Program was launched in 2002. Participation in the federally-funded program was limited to schools where 50% of second and third graders scored "far below basic" or "below basic" on the California Standards Test (CST). Schools that received Reading First funding were required to fulfill three main assurances:

1. Full implementation of scientific, research-based instructional programs as evidenced by use of the State's adopted instructional program(s) for reading/language arts.
2. Use of appropriate valid and reliable diagnostic, screening, and classroom-based instructional assessments.
3. Ongoing professional development, with the first year of training in state-approved professional development programs for all teachers and site administrators involved with the student in the Reading First Program schools. (California Department of Education, 2002, p. 2)

California's Reading First Program represented a confluence of federal, state and local policies that mandated the use of prescriptive, highly specified core reading programs and related assessment and professional development as an antidote to demographic disparities in reading proficiency. Between 2002 and 2008, these policies were mutually enforced in historically low-performing schools through the intertwining of funding, monitoring and sanctions. Since that time, the funding for the California Reading First Program has expired and school districts are no longer are held accountable for fidelity of implementation. However, these curricula are still in use and will remain in California schools until at least 2016 due to deep cuts in the state budget for instructional materials (Manzo, 2009). In addition, after seven years of compliance with Reading First assurances, these systems have become normalized in California schools as the primary method for teaching reading in kindergarten through grade 3.

Shifts in Reading Policy in California Since 1987

Although the adoption of prescriptive core reading programs seemed an abrupt change in the course of reading instruction (Crocco & Costigan, 2007; Pease-Alvarez & Samway, 2008), the shift to external control of the reading curriculum in California actually occurred gradually over a period of years (Coburn, 2004). In the mid-1980's, California had embraced teacher-designed reading pedagogy as reflected in the literature-based approach of the *English Language Arts Framework* (California Department of Education, 1987), a 52-page document that offered very general guidance for reading instruction. Responding to concerns that "a majority of California's children cannot read at basic levels" as evidenced by the 1994 NAEP scores, *Every Child a Reader: The Report of the California Reading Task Force* (California Department of Education, 1995, p.1) directly called the 1987 framework to task for not presenting "a comprehensive and balanced reading program" and giving "insufficient attention to a systematic skills instruction" (p. 2). The report recommended retaining the "valuable components of the

Framework that emphasize literature, writing and oral language" while adding "the details of skill instruction" (California Department of Education, 1995, p. 13). It included a "Sample Reading Curriculum Timeline: Preschool Through Eighth Grade," foreshadowing the California Reading/Language Arts Content Standards that were later adopted in 1997. In 1995, the curriculum timeline was presented as "a range of instruction possible."

The adoption of the first state-wide content standards for reading/language arts in 1997 set the stage for more discrete measure of accountability in instruction. The standards clearly articulated phonemic awareness and phonetic knowledge that students in grades K-3 should acquire by the end of the primary grades as well as standards for vocabulary development, reading comprehension, literary analysis, writing processes and conventions and oral language. To "guide the implementation of the standards by specifying the design of instructional materials, curriculum, instruction, and professional development," the State Board of Education adopted a new curriculum framework, the *Reading/Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools* (California Department of Education, 1999, p. 1) which had now grown to 380 pages and included extensive criteria for the development and evaluation of instructional materials that emphasized systematic instruction of the standards. A renewed interest in systematic phonics instruction was bolstered by the publication of the National Reading Panel Report (National Reading Panel, 2000) which conducted meta-analyses of experimental design studies and identified five critical components for reading instruction that could be supported by research meeting their criteria; phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Concurrently, the State Board of Education adopted "Criteria for Selection of Scientifically-Based Reading Materials" in 2000. The National Reading Panel Report (National Reading Panel, 2000) became the rallying cry for systematic, explicit instruction, which resulted in the California State Board of Education adopting commercially-designed prescriptive programs in 2002. These programs were marketed as reflecting both the state standards and the findings of the National Reading Panel. With the release of each document, the state moved further away from a teacher-designed approach to reading instruction to one that is externally determined by the State Board of Education's adopted textbook series. A new era of reading instruction had been ushered into California, dovetailing with the advent of Reading First. Thus, the introduction of prescriptive core reading programs in California was accompanied by Reading First policies calling for fidelity of implementation. The California Reading First Plan (California Department of Education, 2002) specifically stated that

> "critical to what happens in the Reading First classroom will be whether or not teachers hold to the fidelity of the instructional program that the local governing board adopted from the State Board's authorized list. This includes diligence in avoiding the use of other supplemental materials, technology programs, and/or assessments not aligned to the adopted reading/language arts instructional program." (p. 33)

Under experimental conditions, fidelity of implementation is required in order to validly attribute observed effects to a specific intervention. However, a consequence of

the across-the-board fidelity policy in the daily life of schools was that these programs were often enacted by experienced teachers of reading who were required to maintain fidelity to the program rather than invoke the contextualized "pedagogical content knowledge" that is a hallmark of quality teaching (Shulman, 1986).
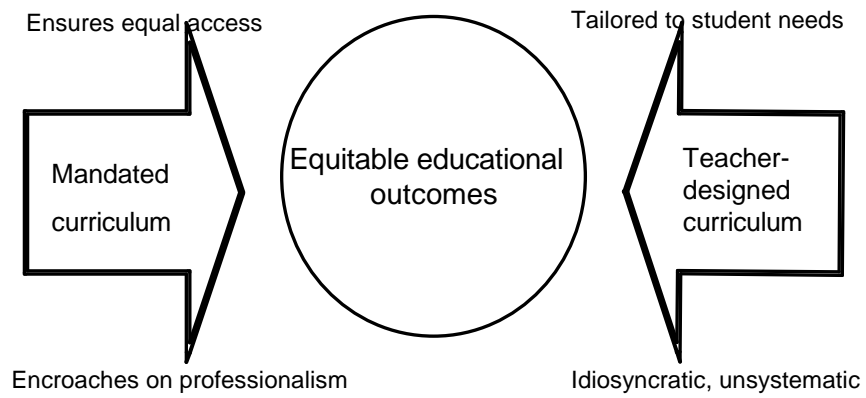
Definitions

A word about terminology is needed here because descriptors such as "scripted curriculum," "prescriptive curriculum," and "highly specified curriculum" are used interchangeably in the public debate but there are relevant distinctions. To be truly "scripted," a curriculum would display closed-ended prompts for teachers and expected responses by students; for example, curricula using the Direct Instruction method (Bereiter & Engelmann, 1966). State-adopted commercial reading programs in California are not scripted in this sense, but they are highly specified in terms of the level of detail they provide to support instruction. Whether they are used to guide or dictate instruction is contingent on local policy. Thus, I use the term "prescriptive curriculum" in this context to refer to core basal reading programs that provide highly specified lesson plans and reading selections to teachers. "Fidelity" is used to refer to the requirement that features of the curriculum be implemented exactly as prescribed in program manuals. While the enforcement of fidelity varies according to local context and time period, the pressure to hew closely to the program is felt in the broader policy environment.

The reader may note that the term "achievement gap" is not used in this discussion of disparities in educational outcomes. I share the perspective of Ladson-Billings (2006) who has coined the term "education debt" to describe this phenomena. Ladson-Billings (2006) uses the metaphor of budget deficits and debt to explain that while at any given period of time there is a deficit that represents the difference between spending and income, a cumulative debt also exists from long term shortfalls that undermines our ability to address the deficit. In education, this means that while measures are taken to reduce present disparities in achievement, these disparities are the result of unaddressed inequities that have accumulated over time. Therefore, it would be a disservice to focus on the education "deficit" or achievement gap while ignoring the education "debt."

Prescription and Equity

The urgency for schools to achieve more equitable educational outcomes has been used to justify both prescriptive curricula and teacher autonomy in curriculum design. In this scenario, educational equity in literacy has become a contested space where mandated reading curricula and teachers' pedagogical knowledge face off in classroom practice, as illustrated by Figure 1-1. On one hand, a mandated curriculum is touted as the best way to insure that all students have equal access to beginning reading instruction because it offers consistency and coherence. Advocates of teacher-designed approaches, on the other hand, claim that teachers' expertise and knowledge of the needs of their specific students is a more effective and efficient guarantee that access will result in equitable outcomes than a universal, one-size-fits-all curriculum (Allington, 2002;

Ensures equal access

Tailored to student needs

Mandated curriculum

Equitable educational outcomes

Teacher-designed curriculum

Encroaches on professionalism

Idiosyncratic, unsystematic

Figure 1-1. Equity as a contested space.

Shannon, 2007). While a prescriptive approach encroaches on professionalism and may contribute to the deskilling of teachers, relying solely on curriculum developed by teachers can result in ineffective, idiosyncratic and/or unsystematic programs.

Framing this issue as an "either-or" proposition oversimplifies what actually transpires in classrooms as teachers struggle to utilize the mandated curriculum and their professional expertise in tandem. It also implies that either a one-size-fits-all curriculum or an eclectic approach should prevail when it is quite possible that neither addresses student diversity in a productive way (Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López & Turner, 1997). Prescriptive curricula attempt to ensure educational interactions that lead to students' mastery of state standards by systematically introducing concepts and skills at a predetermined pace. However, the degree of fidelity in implementation is mediated by individual classroom teachers exercising "teacher prerogative" (Pearson, 2007) derived from their professional status.

Prescription and Professional Prerogative

The warrant for professional prerogative is rooted in a sense of responsibility to make the instructional choices necessary to achieve a "fit" between policy and local context. It is precisely the flexibility to exercise judgment that teachers feel is the value added by their conduct as a professional rather than as a technician (Little, 1993). Standardized or universal curricula, designed to ensure that all students receive the same instruction, is thus pitted against teacher prerogative to design instruction that meets the needs of individual students (Agnastopoulos, 2003). Helsby and McCullough (1996) refer to this tension as a struggle between teacher professionalism and curriculum control. In his case study of the implementation of ambitious mathematics standards, Cohen (1990) observed a paradox in which teachers are central to the reform, while at the same time seen as major obstacles to successful implementation because of their individual interpretations. In a similar way, highly specified curricula are positioned as "teacher-proof," yet they are reliant on teacher judgment for quality of implementation. Because of the wide variation in how prescriptive reading programs are actually implemented, McGill-Franzen (2005) suggests it is possible that we "overstate the relationship of the developer's programs and program materials to children's learning and undervalue the contributions of the teachers' adaptive implementation" (p. 366). In fact, the use of prescriptive programs may restrict students' access to high quality instruction unless teachers freely use their expertise to adapt to local conditions, particularly in cases where teachers have extensive experience to draw from.

An investigation of policy implementation with the concept of prerogative at its core is especially relevant here because it examines an aspect of teacher professional identity that is challenged in the current policy environment. Pearson has described the status of teacher prerogative in such an environment as "endangered" (2007). In this context, focusing on the ways that experienced teachers adapt a prescriptive reading program in California that claims to result in more equitable outcomes for historically under-performing students takes on critical importance.

This study contributes to an emerging body of research on the implementation of current curricular reforms using highly specified core reading programs (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2006; Kersten & Pardo, 2005; Valencia, Place, Martin & Grossman, 2006). While a high degree of specification can be seen as welcome support for new and inexperienced teachers, we have not examined how these programs are used by veteran teachers who already have a background in the teaching of reading. We have not yet evaluated the contribution made by the teachers themselves to the success of a particular core reading program, the degree of expertise needed to use these programs to reach students at various levels of reading proficiency nor the variations in implementation that yield more equitable student outcomes. In addition, previous studies on curriculum implementation have not investigated how teachers' conceptions of equity influence their practice as they make choices and adapt core programs to actualize achievement goals.

This study also sheds light on how districts can differentiate professional development and supervision for inexperienced and experienced teachers, and utilize the skills that veteran teachers bring to a district-wide effort such as curriculum implementation. Examining strategic cases contributes insights into the process of curriculum implementation – what is utilized, what is adapted and what is omitted – and the ways in which teachers exercise professional prerogative to make instructional decisions situated in the classroom environment. As Stein and D'Amico (2002) advise, "those policies that most successfully influence the educational core will be those that begin with microanalyses of what is being taught and learned inside the classroom door and then trace backward to implications for macro-district-wide policies" (p. 1314).

Research Questions

The current study addresses the relationship between issues of professional prerogative, prescriptive curriculum and educational equity. I use instances of experienced teachers' adaptations of a prescriptive core reading program to investigate the tension between teacher prerogative and prescriptive curriculum in order to inform the most viable practices for equitable student outcomes by addressing the following questions:

1. What types of adaptations do experienced teachers make when implementing a prescriptive reading program? How do they determine what to change or omit?
2. In what ways have experienced teachers worked to achieve what they conceptualize as more equitable student outcomes beyond the limits of a prescriptive reading program?
3. How do experienced teachers understand the relationship between professional prerogative, prescriptive curriculum and equitable outcomes?

Dissertation Overview

The theoretical framework and relevant literature for addressing these questions are presented in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 details the methods used for site and participant selection, data collection and data analysis. In Chapter 4, I report findings that establish the relationship between teachers' desired outcomes and their stance toward the focal curriculum and their conceptions of equity by sharing classroom vignettes that illustrate how they exercised professional prerogative to make adaptations that connected students' literacy experiences with curriculum content. In Chapter 5, I describe how teachers go beyond the prescriptive reading program to invent learning activities that broaden the curriculum. In conclusion, Chapter 6 draws together these findings and draws implications for the use reading curriculum policy, the development of reading curriculum and the role of teachers in pedagogical design, and reading research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The theoretical framework that guides this research weaves together theories on literacy and literacy education, educational equity, and professional prerogative that inform how the teacher connects students with curriculum. In this chapter, these theories are applied to reading instruction in school - an integral but small component of what constitutes literacy. This is followed by a review of the literature that examines the implementation of curriculum policy at the micro-level, including studies of the implementation of reading policy that lead up to studies in the current era of prescriptive reading programs.

Theoretical Framework

Of all areas of instruction, reading is particularly charged because of pervasive cultural beliefs about the value of literacy, what counts as literacy, how children become literate, and the constant evolution of the role of literacy in society. These beliefs run so deep as to be invisible, having been normalized and institutionalized into the fabric of everyday life, and operate for each individual as a sort of default position. Because literacy is a socially-situated and relative construct, there is a wide range of default positions that sometimes conflict with one another. What seems so logical, obvious and imperative in one set of socially-constructed beliefs is complete anathema in another. As Luke and Freebody (1999) state, "there is no single, definitive, scientific, universally effective, or culturally appropriate way of teaching or even defining literacy" (p.2).

Literacy and Literacy Education in a Social Context

In the broadest sense, literacy involves decoding and encoding a wide range of signs and symbols represented in a variety of textual forms that extend beyond print (Hassett & Curwood, 2010). Each definition of literacy and approach to literacy education reflects a particular set of interests and power relationships, and results in the development of a different set of skills and capabilities. Therefore, literacy education is never neutral (Luke & Freebody, 1999; Street, 1984) and "problems" in literacy education result not from teaching methods but rather surface in times of social change when the literacy practices shaped by the old methods may no longer be sufficient for students' success in a changing social environment (Luke & Freebody, 1999; Smagorinsky, Lakly & Johnson, 2002). This perspective challenges the positioning of "scientifically-based reading research" as the exclusive and indisputable standard for shaping classroom practice. While the experimental design studies used in meta-analyses by the NRP have contributed greatly to what we know about teaching reading, they represent one research tradition and as such have strengths, limitations and interests. One notable limitation is the absence of the role of local context that results from findings being generalized to situations where they may not apply (Gerstl & Woodside-Jiron, 2008, Pressley, Duke & Boling, 2004).

Technical skill versus social practice. The current policy environment reflects a tension between the view that there is a single, neutral, acultural definition of literacy and

one that recognizes multiple, situated literacy practices (Street, 1984). This tension has origins in debates on the "great divide" between oral and literate cultures that attempted to establish the supremacy of written culture by outlining a causal relationship between a specific form of literacy and abstract thought (Goody and Watt, 1968), thereby privileging the knowledge of some traditions over others so that the "knowledge of the less literate became lesser knowledge" (Cook-Gumperz, 1986, p. 35). Growing out of that debate is the notion of "autonomous text" (Olson, 1977) that holds that meaning is encoded in the text and can be extracted accurately by the reader in isolation. Many theorists have challenged the autonomous view of literacy (Heath, 1983; Scribner and Cole, 1989) and proposed that literacy is not a technology but a set of practices. Text-based reading reflects the belief that literacy is a technical skill that exists outside of a social context (Street, 1984). This belief is reflected in the simple view of reading that comprehension is the sum of decoding plus oral vocabulary; in other words, a reader simply decodes and then applies word knowledge to comprehend a text. Sweet and Snow (2002) have since broadened our understanding of the reading process to be an interaction between reader, text and activity in a social context, reflecting a transactional perspective on reading first put forth by Rosenblatt (1978).

Taking the position that literacy is a technical skill as opposed to a social practice has several pedagogical consequences as illustrated in Figure 2-1. Rather than recognizing an emergent process that begins at birth from immersion in language and symbolic representation (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott & Wilkinson, 1985), the technical view marks the beginning of literacy in terms of school-based "readiness" skills thereby discounting the usefulness of children's culturally-based literacy experiences. Meaning is seen to reside in the text alone rather than being constructed by the reader in transaction with the text so consequently, reading and writing tasks can be decontextualized from authentic purposes and structured as drill, rather than being situated in a community of practice. Claims that core reading programs have "narrowed" the curriculum (Achinstein et al., 2004; Crocco & Costigan, 2007) and will not serve students in the 21st century are based on the perception that these programs reflect a technical view of literacy. Luke (1998) warns there is risk in being too successful in acculturating children to outmoded literacy practices because they will not have the "purchase and power" needed in the future (p. 307). Schoolchildren are already living in the future, growing up with technological advances and socio-political conditions their parents and teachers have only begun to grapple with as adults.

Educational Equity as a Contested Space

Although the construct of literacy as a technical skill is an example of just one type of social practice, it operates as the "default" position in school literacy and in efforts to reduce disparities in educational achievement. Larger societal tensions about how to achieve educational equity are played out through competing approaches to reading instruction. The technical view of literacy casts equity as a matter of redistribution of resources. NCLB embodied a comprehensive effort at redistribution through accountability policies that judged the effectiveness of schools by the achievement of student sub-groups on standardized tests. In Reading First schools in
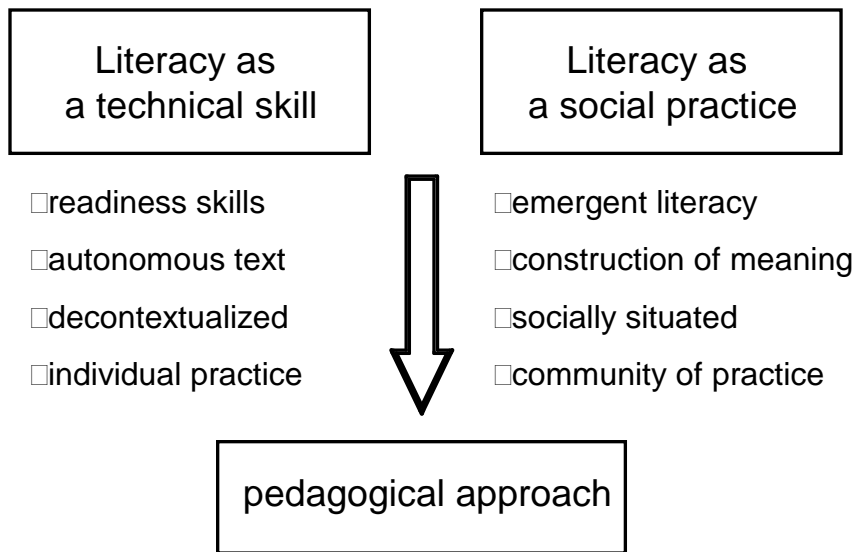
Figure 2-1. Pedagogical consequences of contrasting approaches to literacy.

California, this included curriculum policies that required teachers to provide the same grade level curriculum to every student using a prescriptive core reading program.

Systematic, explicit instruction. The OCR curriculum used by the teachers in this study reflects the theory of action that systematic, explicit instruction ensures "equalization of opportunity" (Gutman, 1999, p. 128) by providing access to grade level curriculum content using the same materials at the same pace for every child. The goal is to bring all students to the "basic" level on the California Standards Test. A systematic approach to reading instruction assumes that sequential lessons build competencies over time and comprehensively cover five elements of the reading process identified in the National Reading Panel Report (National Reading Panel, 2000) including phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension and fluency. A heavy emphasis on beginning decoding is intended to prevent early reading failure by ensuring that students develop the requisite phonemic awareness to understand subsequent lessons in phonics which will then allow them to build reading fluency without falling behind. Consistency across classrooms facilitates grade level collaboration, consistency across grade levels allows for cross-grade articulation and consistency across schools supports students who move frequently within the district due to larger social issues such as housing, etc. The task of lesson planning for language arts is lifted from teachers who have limited time, many subjects to teach and may have limited expertise. However, the standardization offered by a high degree of specification is also its shortcoming.

Universalist standards and textbook adoptions are based on a distribution paradigm – that a fixed and pre-determined body of knowledge should be equally imparted to all students (Luke, 1998). While contributing to the equalization of opportunity, these approaches have been challenged as "nostalgic proxies for the days of principally monocultural, monolingual populations in stable, print-based economies and cultures (where these might have actually existed)" (Luke & Grieshaber, 1998, p. 8). The problem is that one-size-fits-all programs by definition do not recognize the range of social resources that students bring to school. Gee (2001) refers to these resources as "pre-cursors" (no page number). Some students are "well pre-cursed" while others are "poorly pre-cursed" depending on how well the literacy practices of their communities are "fruitfully networked (by teachers) to school-based semiotic domains" (Gee, 2001, no page number).

The redistribution paradigm. Redistribution implies a more equitable sharing of material goods and opportunities. However, as Young (2000) points out, redistribution of material goods will always fall short of true equity because it doesn't re-imagine the social relationships between people and their structural and institutional contexts. It is in the relationship to opportunity that equity must be present. This relationship exists in a historical context (Ladson-Billings, 2006) and as such reflects both historical and present inequities. Conceptualizing literacy as a social practice leads to an approach to equity predicated on two understandings; 1) that the literacy experiences that students bring to school are relevant to school literacies and 2) that students are entitled to the opportunity to develop their capabilities to use text in a variety of social contexts. Dyson and Labbo
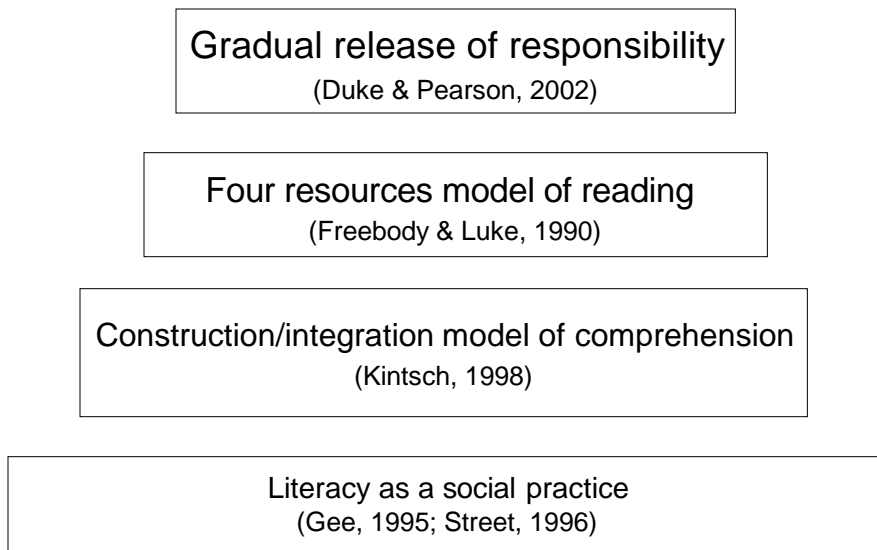
(2003) object to the racialized insinuation that "all" children may not bring relevant literacy experiences to school by recognizing the "multiple communicative experiences that may intersect with literacy learning, and bequeaths to each child, in the company of others, the right to enter school literacy grounded in the familiar practices of their own childhoods" (p. 101).

A classroom literacy event is culturally relevant to the extent that it includes contexts with which children are familiar. In fact, non-relevant contexts may actually limit the amount of comprehensible information some students receive, thereby differentially impacting their chances for learning (Au, 1981; Pressley et al., 2004) since reading comprehension is enhanced by background knowledge (Anderson & Pearson, 1984). Engaging with students through familiar contexts, the teacher can integrate new knowledge with students' prior knowledge by providing an opportunity for them to index their own experiences to understand new ideas. In other words, it is not the competencies that students bring to school that are more or less relevant to the school context, it is the ability of teachers to recognize and capitalize on them because "in order to learn, students must use what they already know to give meaning to what the teacher presents to them" (Mahiri, 1998, p. 104).

When equity is seen in terms of relationships rather than end products as envisioned by Young (2000), reading acquisition is not the attainment of static skills but rather a capability that leverages a variety of social benefits. Sen (1992) describes this view of equity in terms of "capability to achieve functionings" (p. 4). Applied to reading instruction, this view requires that students are taught not only the means to become a reader, but that structures are instituted that support and sustain them to use reading to advance their own purposes and goals. Reading instruction is an induction into participation in a selective set of literacy practices that are valued by the majority culture and that are predicted to serve children in the future (Luke & Freebody, 1999). Equitable reading instruction enfranchises children's range of literacy practices and experiences, and anticipates the preparation they will need to fully participate in the literacy practices of the future.

Models of Reading and Learning

As shown in Figure 2-2, I use three models as criterion for approaches that consider literacy as a social practice; the construction-integration model of comprehension (Kintsch, 1998), the Four Resources Model (Luke & Freebody, 1999) and the gradual release of responsibility (Duke & Pearson, 2002). None of these models put forth a "method" of reading instruction but rather suggest elements that must be a part of any effective method. Kintsch's (1998) model describes how we comprehend text and build new knowledge. As readers, we draw a "family of practices" illustrated in the Four Resources Model depending on the social context, interacting with text in various ways to accomplish various ends. The gradual release of responsibility provides a mechanism for moving from novice to expert.

```
┌──────────────────────────────────────┐
│   Gradual release of responsibility   │
│        (Duke & Pearson, 2002)         │
└──────────────────────────────────────┘
 ┌──────────────────────────────────────┐
 │    Four resources model of reading    │
 │        (Freebody & Luke, 1990)        │
 └──────────────────────────────────────┘
  ┌────────────────────────────────────────────┐
  │ Construction/integration model of comprehension │
  │               (Kintsch, 1998)                │
  └────────────────────────────────────────────┘
   ┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
   │         Literacy as a social practice         │
   │         (Gee, 1995; Street, 1996)            │
   └─────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Figure 2-2. Models of reading based on literacy as a social practice.

Construction-integration model of comprehension. When literacy is recognized as a set of social practices, the experiences and knowledge of the participant are integral to learning and must be actively utilized. To construct new knowledge from text, readers synthesize their understanding of the "text base" with their own knowledge base to construct a "situation model" (Kintsch, 1998). This is shown in Figure 2-3. Kintsch and Kintsch (2005) caution that teachers must pro-actively guide students to "deliberately link the text to be understood with prior knowledge and experiences" in order to create a situation model (p. 4). The teacher is a temporary figure scaffolding students' understanding so that they not only learn to decode but also make the connection between text and prior knowledge that builds new and deeper knowledge. Pedagogical approaches that privilege rudimentary code breaking over meaning making fall short of guiding students to create a situation model. If a situation model is not constructed by the reader, new information does not become part of their knowledge base. In this study, Kintsch's construction-integration model provides an analytic tool for determining how teachers engaged students in constructing a situation model, both within and beyond the prescribed lessons.

Four Resources Model of Reading. Luke and Freebody (1999) propose that literacy education prepare students to master a repertoire or "family of practices" that are all necessary but singly insufficient capabilities needed to engage in multiple literacy contexts. The family of practices include code breaker, meaning maker, text user and text critic. In code breaking, readers flexibly use sounds, symbols, spelling patterns and conventions. Meaning making involves both comprehending and composing a range of texts drawing on cultural resources. The text user resource allows readers to understand and manipulate various functions, contexts and structures of text including tone, sequence and formality. Finally, the practice of text critic invokes a critical literacy stance where readers analyze and redesign texts based on a recognition of power relationships. The concept of a repertoire of capabilities aligns with Sen's (1992) notion of capabilities of functionings and reflects an "ecological approach" to reading instruction as suggested by Pearson (2002). The Four Resources reflects the history of methods (Underwood, Yoo & Pearson, 2007) and blends them into a single ecological model. As Luke and Freebody (1999) write, "teaching and learning literacy, then, involves shaping and mastering the repertoire of capabilities called into play when managing texts in ways appropriate to various contexts." Using the Four Resources Model in the context of this study allows for analysis of the level of literacy targeted by a curriculum approach that claims to result in more equitable outcomes.

The gradual release of responsibility. In the current policy, explicit instruction is seen as the method that will most effectively lead to equitable access and outcomes. However, explicit instruction must involve more than declarative statements in order for novices to develop into experts. The gradual release of responsibility (Duke & Pearson, 2002; Pearson & Gallagher, 1983) is a series of instructional moves that connects access to outcomes by providing a mechanism for incrementally removing support. If students are merely exposed to skills and concepts without developing as independent users, then
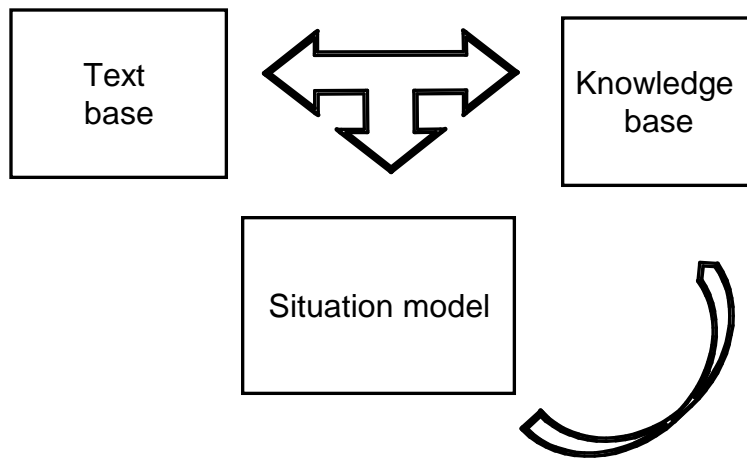
Figure 2-3. Kintsch's (1998) construction-integration model of comprehension.

the process is stalled and outcomes are not realized. The steps in the gradual release of responsibility are:

1. An explicit description of the strategy and when and how it is used.
2. Teacher and/or student modeling of the strategy in action.
3. Collaborative use of the strategy in action.
4. Guided practice using the strategy with gradual release of responsibility.
5. Independent use of the strategy. (Duke & Pearson, 2002, p. 208-209)

This process proceeds from an initial state where the teacher holds primary responsibility as a strategy is described and modeled, to shared responsibility where the teacher structures guided practice for the student and incrementally turns over control, to independent use where the student has primary responsibility, as illustrated in Figure 2-4. In this way, access to a strategy or concept is extended through explanation, modeling and guided practice, allowing a student to draw on prior knowledge to make sense of a new idea or new performance demand. In repeated guided practice, a student builds up background experiences that adds to their knowledge base and allows them to take ownership of the strategy or concept. In a way, the student constructs a "situation model" of the new information. The gradual release of responsibility is used here as a criteria to determine whether there is a mechanism that connects access with outcomes in the literacy activities of the focal classrooms.

The Parameters of Teacher Prerogative

An approach to reading instruction that seeks to connect students' experiences with school-based literacy practices and develop their capabilities in a variety of literacy contexts necessarily requires the teacher to act as an active curriculum developer. This is no less important but may be more difficult in a policy environment that utilizes highly specified curriculum with fidelity as shown in studies of resistant teachers that focus on threats to teacher autonomy (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2006; Crocco & Costigan, 2007). In the present study, I use the concept of "prerogative" rather than "autonomy" to examine teachers' agency in mediating conflicting demands of a universalist curriculum with pedagogical strategies that "better address the knowledges, practices and aspirations of communities at risk in the face of new technologies and economic realities (Luke, 1998, p. 306).

Prerogative is a situated and conditional phenomena, commonly defined as a right or privilege of a person or persons of a particular category. The parameters of prerogative are defined by both tradition and myth (McCullough, Helsby & Knight, 2000), which imply that prerogative is a privilege *granted* by the larger society and as such, can be revoked when conditions change. Teachers have claimed the right of professional prerogative to make instructional decisions regarding their classrooms and their students. Doing so, they have struck an unspoken bargain with the larger society – they agree to devote their professional lives to developing and exercising specialized expertise and in return, as acknowledgement of their wisdom and status, they are given flexibility to

"Gradual release of responsibility"
Duke & Pearson (2002)

< Primarily student

Shared responsibility

Primarily teacher >

Access ------>-------------->------------------> Outcomes
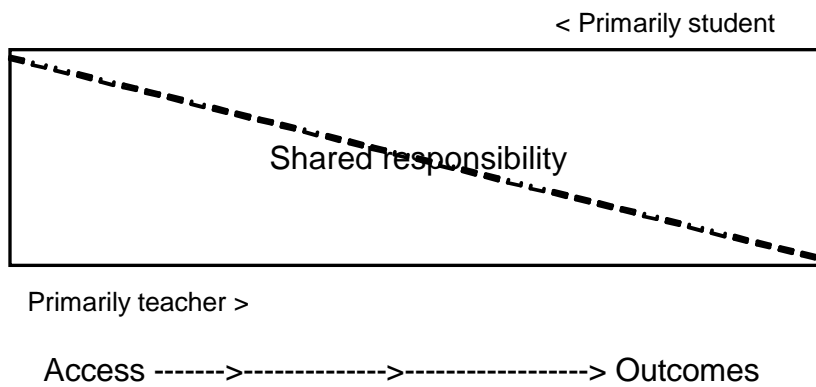
Figure 2-4. The gradual release of responsibility.

effectively do their job. Implicit in this social compact is the burden and responsibility for continual refinement of professional skills and ongoing engagement with the big ideas and literature in our field; failing that vigilance, the teaching profession risks increased curriculum control (Pearson, 2007).

Policies that mandate particular curricula insinuate that teachers as a group have not fulfilled their obligations to the social contract and can no longer be trusted with pedagogical prerogative (Duffy & Hoffman, 1999; Sloan, 2007). As Sikes (1992) writes, "imposed change carries official authority which challenges professional experience, judgment and expertise" (p. 49). Studies of teachers' work have referred to this flexibility with a variety of related terms - autonomy, professional discretion, individual latitude, and thoughtful eclecticism (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2006; Little, 1993; Duffy & Hoffman, 1999). The term "prerogative" is specifically used here to invoke the dynamic tension between claiming a right and granting a privilege that operates in this policy environment. The construct of "autonomy" may be too self-interested to represent the phenomena that the present study examines. The "idealization of professional autonomy" casts the use of textbooks in general as the antithesis of creativity and professionalism (Ball & Cohen, 1996, p. 6), a notion that discounts the possibility that a text could ever be helpful. Sloan (2007) cautions against viewing teacher agency as "merely a capacity to resist" because it "obfuscates important issues involving educational quality and equity" (p. 31). While a teacher can be constrained from effective practice due to a mandated program, there are also instances where practice improves under these conditions (Sloan, 2007).

The distinction between prerogative and autonomy. A distinction between prerogative and autonomy is used here to explain variation in implementation due to considerations of professional responsibility versus professional freedom. Variation in implementation will necessarily be the rule rather than the exception "because of the undeniable fact that children differ from one another" (Pearson, 2007, p. 151), and that different approaches have differential effects on different students (Luke & Freebody, 1999). As Pearson (2007) explains when discussing the age of prescriptiveness and accountability, by holding both means (the curriculum) and ends (achievement targets) constant, the only room to maneuver is in the implementation of the curriculum.

The theoretical framework for this study is predicated on the view that reading instruction must go beyond literacy as a technical skill. A narrow approach inhibits learning in two ways. First, constrained objectives don't support students to develop the varied repertoire of literacy practices they will need for the future. Second, it privileges a select set of experiences as relevant while marginalizing or ignoring others. Learning results when a situation model is built that integrates a reader's knowledge base with the text base. Therefore, the teachers role is to guide students to network their knowledge base with the text base. This means that teachers have to be aware of students' knowledge and range of experiences and connect them to school literacy. Furthermore, they must provide a mechanism for moving from novice to expert status if access is to result in tangible outcomes rather than simply provide exposure.

## Relevant Literature on Curriculum Implementation

Although formal reading instruction involves an interaction between teacher, student and text, the content and pedagogy of the reading curriculum is not solely the purview of the individual teacher. Federal, state and local school district policies around the teaching of reading directly impact individual teacher's practice, as shown in Figure 2-5. This study draws on previous work in policy implementation research to understand the relationship between policy and practice in the current era of prescriptive core reading programs.

Studies of the implementation of policy on reading instruction are situated in several distinct but nested arenas. In this section, I provide background for the current study by moving from broad policy implementation research to progressively narrower arenas leading to research that specifically focuses on contemporary prescriptive reading programs. The studies cited here represent different perspectives on the problem of policy implementation.

Policy Implementation Research at the Micro Level

Using a wide lens, policy implementation studies have examined the "black box" of implementation in an attempt to illuminate factors that contribute to the extent to which a policy is taken up. This field can be organized into two bodies of literature; studies that examine factors that influence implementation at the macro level of policy making and policy design (Matland, 1995; Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1980) and those that take a micro view of factors at the point of implementation. The current study takes a micro view that focuses on the agent at the point of implementation, the teacher. A classic example of the micro view is Lipsky's (1980) seminal study of "street level bureaucrats," which found that actors change policy at the point of implementation in direct relationship to conditional factors they experience such as inadequate resources, unclear policy goals and involuntary clients.

The Rand Change Agent Study (Berman & McLaughlin, 1975), a large scale investigation of implementation of federally-funded education programs in 1973-74, focused attention on factors at the point of implementation at a time when implementation of policy directives was assumed. McLaughlin (1987) summarized these findings on the complexity of implementation at the "street level" by reiterating that "implementation dominates outcomes" (p. 172). Variation in implementation is to be expected due to two factors; 1) each individual actor's enactment of a policy and 2) the distinctive local instantiation of the problems that a policy is designed to address. McLaughlin's seminal works (Berman & McLaughlin, 1975; McLaughlin, 1987) identified several principles that continue to inform policy implementation research. First, the effectiveness of a policy depends on local capacity and commitment, sometimes referred to as "will and skill." Local implementers not only must value the objectives of the policy, but they also must have the expertise to execute it. Secondly, the locus of change is located at the lowest point in the implementation chain where the policy
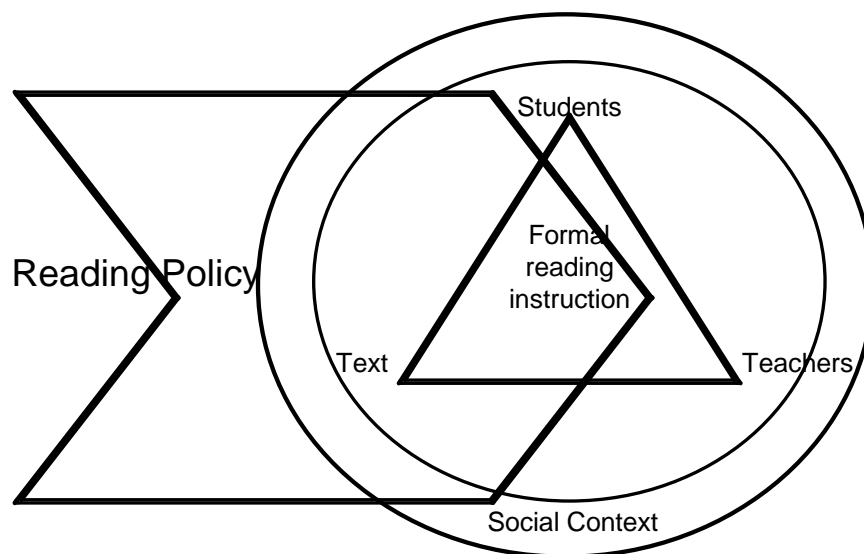
Figure 2-5. The overlay of reading policy on the relationship between teachers, students and text in a social context.

directly interacts with the agent entrusted with carrying it out. These agents are influenced by a "combination of pressure and support from the policy" (p. 173). Finally, at the point of implementation, policy is not static but evolves as agents respond to local conditions, resulting in "mutual adaptation" (Berman & McLaughlin, 1975, p. vii) where policy both changes and is changed by implementing agents. At the time of the Rand Change Agent Study (Berman & McLaughlin, 1975) these findings stood in counterpoint to prevailing wisdom that incentives, penalties and oversight could control variation in policy implementation. McLaughlin's work introduced the notion that implementation could be conditional and inspired future investigations that identified a range of variables that influence street level agents.

Studies on the Implementation of Policy for Math and Literacy Instruction

Policy implementation studies in education flourished during the 1990's and into the early 2000's as policy reforms pushed for high demand, ambitious teaching (McGill-Franzen, 2000; Stein & D'Amico, 2002) in math, science and literacy. Ambitious teaching required cognitive engagement on the part of the teacher to deeply understand the reforms, as illustrated by both Spillane (1999) and Remillard (1999).

Spillane (1999) built on McLaughlin (1987) by proposing that when implementing reforms, teachers enter into a "zone of enactment" that integrates their "will and skill" with policy incentives. Using a sub-sample of 25 classrooms from a larger study of mathematics reform in Michigan in 1996, he contrasts the zones of enactment of teachers who changed their core practice with those that did not. Spillane (1999) defines the "core of instructional practice" in mathematics as "principled" rather than "procedural" knowledge (p. 145), making the distinction between deep conceptual knowledge and computation. Based on questionnaires, surveys, classroom observations, and interviews, Spillane (1999) proposes a cognitive model where teachers learn about reforming practice from a range of sectors he calls the six "P's"; "policy," formal and informal "professional" interactions, responses from "pupils," "public" and parents' concerns, and "private" influences such as textbook publishers. These five "P's" surround and interact with the sixth "P," the "personal" resources of the teacher. Personal resources and each of the other five "P's" are in reciprocal relationships where they mutually influence one another. Moreover, each teacher's zone of enactment is socially situated and distinct. For example, Spillane (1999) found that teachers who changed their core practice as a result of the reform tended to participate in professional interactions more than those that maintained an "individualistic" practice. This was a result of variation in "personal" norms of privacy and collaboration. He found that change occurred when teachers' enactment zones utilized personal and professional resources in tandem with material resources provided by the reform to bridge the distance between a teacher's current practice and implementation of the reform.

Remillard (1999) examined the potential of curriculum materials, which represent one type of material resource, to support change in mathematics instruction. She highlights teachers' role as "curriculum developers" as they implement the textbook. She

points out that teachers "read" their students in the process of curriculum enactment, as well as reading the textbook itself. From observational and interview data, she outlines three junctures in which teachers make decisions about how to use the textbook; "design," when they select tasks to implement, "construction" when tasks are enacted as real classroom experiences and "curriculum mapping" when they envision and organize a scope and sequence over time. At each juncture, they read both the textbook and their students to determine appropriate action. By using the term "reading" in the transactional sense (Rosenblatt, 1978), she signals the use of teachers' personal resources as they construct meaning. For example, in the design arena, Remillard (1999) observed the "appropriation" of tasks directly from the textbook as well as the "invention" of new tasks that a teacher perceives would be more critical to students' understanding of a mathematical concept. During construction, teachers "read" the students and "improvised" in response to emerging understandings. She postulated that because the textbook often spoke "through" teachers rather than "to" teachers by giving directives rather than rationales, they were left with little explanation of underlying concepts and defaulted to previous practices (p. 328). Remillard's curriculum mapping arena illustrates that teachers make decisions about implementation of content as well as pedagogy. Because of teachers' central role in curriculum development at the point of implementation, Remillard (1999) cautions against the tendency of instructional materials to speak through rather than to teachers.

Studies on the implementation of reading policy. Reading policy at state and local level during the 1990's challenged teachers to move from a technical view of reading to a more constructivist, social view (Stein & D'Amico, 2002). As suggested by Spillane (1999), this required extensive professional development in order to achieve more than superficial levels of implementation. Stein and D'Amico (2002) investigated the link between professional development and implementation of student-centered reading policy based on the notion of differentiated "assisted practice" (Cambourne, 1988; Clay, 1993; Fountas & Pinnell, 1995) in twelve classrooms in one school district in New York City during 1997-98. Key features of the program were the use of read aloud's, guided reading and independent reading, sometimes referred to as "reading to, with and by." Professional development for teachers mirrored the differentiated assistance model used with students by providing literacy coaches, mentors and opportunities for collaboration. The congruence between professional development and the approach to reading instruction was a critical component in working towards principled rather than procedural changes.

Like Spillane (1999), Stein and D'Amico (2002) discovered that variations in implementation could be organized into the two distinct categories of underlying goals and structural features. They noted three patterns of implementation using these two dimensions. Some teachers followed the structural routines of the literacy approach without understanding the underlying goals. Others executed both goals and structure. A third category implemented only the goals using their own structures. These measures of alignment were then cross-referenced with measures of quality, defined as a combination of "clarity of focus" or purposefulness of lessons and degree of "student engagement" (Stein & D'Amico, 2002). Newer teachers' practices were generally coded as high-

alignment/low-quality while the most experienced teachers were low-alignment/high-quality as might be expected. This study raises the distinction between implementation of goals and procedures by introducing complexity into the notion of fidelity of implementation, referred to here as "alignment," and calling into question the assumption of that quality necessarily goes hand-in-hand with "high-alignment."

In California, policy for reading instruction shifted several times between 1980 – 2000, moving from a basic skills approach, to a literature-based approach to a "balanced" literacy approach that included both literature and basic skills, as noted by Coburn (2004). In her investigation of the relationship between reading policy and classroom practice during the "balanced literacy" era, Coburn (2004) challenged conventional wisdom that schools make superficial changes that protect classroom practice from policy reforms, in effect "decoupling" classrooms from policy. She found that teachers do, in fact, implement reading policy depending on its pervasiveness, intensity, coherence with their beliefs and degree of voluntariness (i.e., regulatory pressure), reflecting a sort of "bounded autonomy" (p. 234). Coburn (2004) used an historical analysis of shifts in reading policy to reconstruct messages in the policy environment which she then cross-referenced with responses to the policy by case study teachers. She postulated a continuum of implementation of reading policy whereby teachers might selectively reject practices recommended by the policy, implement symbolically but not substantively, insert new techniques alongside or parallel to current practice, blunt new practices by assimilating them into their current practice, or embrace new practices by accommodating to them. Degree of understanding of the policy or associated practices and/or perceived "fit" with the needs of their students contributed to their response. Because the "balanced literacy" approach added to the existing reading policy and was not accompanied by regulatory policy, teachers in this study may not have felt the regulatory pressure to implement. Coburn's (2004) work substantiates McLaughlin's (1987) notion that policy is re-imagined at the "street" level and adds nuance to further describe how "mutual adaptation" might be manifested in a non-coercive policy environment.

Implementation of a highly specified reform model in reading. While Coburn's (2004) study is concerned with teachers' relationship with the policy environment, Datnow and Castellano (2000) suggest that teachers' response to policy may also be contingent on how they conceptualize the needs of their students. In their study of the implementation of the Success for All (SFA) model for reading instruction (Slavin, Madden, Dolan & Wasik, 1996) in two contrasting school sites in 1998-99, they found that teachers "co-constructed," or revised, the program to fit their local context. Both sites had implemented SFA English and Spanish versions for two years, one successfully and one with difficulty. Although this study took place in California around the same time as Coburn's (2004) study of balanced literacy policy, it focuses on the implementation of a highly specified reading program as part of a whole school reform effort under the federal Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) Program. While fidelity of implementation was strongly encouraged at SFA schools, it was not a component of the state or school district reading policy at that time. However, there was substantial

pressure on teachers to implement the program as a whole school effort in order to raise achievement in reading.

In their study, Datnow and Castellano (2000) observed a continuum of responses to the program ranging from "vehemently against" to "simply supported" to "generally supported" to "strongly support" the SFA reading program. Surprisingly, there was no connection between a teacher's response to the program and fidelity of implementation. Teachers who embraced SFA adapted it as freely as those that rejected it. They also found that even those teachers who felt personally constrained by SFA implemented the program because they felt its consistency and specificity was beneficial to their students. This may indicate that like Remillard (1999) they were "reading" their students as they implemented SFA. In addition to reconfirming McLaughlin and Berman's (1978) notion of "mutual adaptation" many years later, Datnow and Castellano (2000) introduce a new factor into curriculum implementation research – responsibility to the student.

Research on Core Reading Programs in the Current Era

The current study takes place in a policy environment that asked teachers to abandon the constructivist pedagogical strategies that had been promoted during the 1990's. The adoption of a highly specified reading program like SFA during the 1990's was an exception to the trend at that time, and Datnow and Castellano's (2000) study foreshadows the tension between fidelity and variation in implementation in the current era. Fullan (2001) describes the "tension running through the educational change literature in which two different emphases or perspectives are evident: the fidelity perspective and the mutual-adaptation or evolutionary perspective" (p. 31). The return to core reading programs after a long period of locally designed and/or selected materials was met with skepticism and outright resistance, even though these programs vary in degree of specificity and are not necessarily accompanied by policies requiring fidelity of implementation. The research on core reading programs in the current era is organized here into studies on particular elements of the programs and studies on teachers' responses.

Concerns about effectiveness of program elements. Specific features of core reading programs such as the quality of the texts provided to students (McGill-Franzen, Zmack, Solic & Zeig, 2006) and time spent actually reading (Brenner, Tompkins & Hiebert, 2007) have been critiqued, respectively finding that the texts did not provide sufficient support to beginning readers and scant classroom time was devoted to "eyes on the page" reading. A comparison between principles of comprehension strategies instruction that have been well-established by research (Duke & Pearson, 2002; Pressley, El-Dinary, Gaskins, Schuder, Bergman, Almasi & Brown, 1992) and the approach to comprehension instruction used by two prescriptive core reading programs in California found that key elements, such as guided practice, were not provided for (Maniates & Pearson, 2007). Dewitz, Jones & Leahy (2009) compared the guidance for comprehension strategies instruction in the teacher's manuals of 5 core reading programs with the methodology used in the studies cited by the National Reading Panel Report (National Reading Panel, 2000) that lead to these practices being deemed "scientifically-

based." They found that the successful interventions that provide a research base for these practices were implemented with more intensity in the original studies than is recommended in the core reading programs.

Broader critiques of core reading programs question their congruence with principles of early childhood education, English language development and new teacher development. Spencer (2009) contextualizes her study of a young child's experience in a reading intervention program in the research on early literacy instruction that views the child as a participant in "multi-faceted language and literacy practices" (p. 218) and questions the limited definition of reading that results in interventions with what she refers to as standardized literacy instruction. By analyzing participant structures in the practices of OCR, Pease-Alvarez, Samway, Almanzo & Cifka-Herrera (2007) point to limited opportunities for English learners to develop oral language in classrooms dominated by teacher talk.

Although this dissertation study is not designed to evaluate the core reading program itself, these critiques question the potential effectiveness of particular core reading programs and provide a backdrop of a less than ringing endorsement that surrounds their implementation. The weaknesses uncovered by studies that examine program elements suggest interesting junctures that may prompt teachers to adapt the curriculum.

Teachers' responses to prescriptive core reading programs. Reading First's mandate to use prescriptive reading programs exclusively introduces the notion of compliance into considerations of policy implementation that were not a part of earlier reforms that did not use regulatory pressure. Still, many of the patterns that earlier researchers observed are relevant for describing current phenomena. However, because they are situated in a coercive policy environment, studies on teachers' responses to these programs intermingle issues of agency with critiques of program content in a way that was not present in the prior studies on curriculum implementation cited here. This is reflected in current studies on the implementation of prescriptive reading programs that mainly focus on either new teachers or the choice between compliance and resistance.

Impact on new teachers. Acknowledging that a high degree of specificity can support new teachers struggling with the demands of curriculum planning, Valencia, Place, Martin and Grossman (2006) compared new teachers in contrasting settings. New teachers using a prescriptive program felt it provided a "safety net" (p. 102) that insured they were serving their students. However, they took a procedural approach to implementation focused on the structure of the program. Novices who were provided basal reading programs but were expected to use them to design their own program adhered closely to the programs at first but gradually shifted to tailoring instruction to their students using supplementary materials. By their third year of teaching, the teachers who built their own reading program learned to adapt their curriculum while those using the mandated program did not, resulting in stilted development as teachers. The authors postulate that the limited opportunity to adapt the program to meet the needs of their students prevented them from gaining confidence as teachers and may have intimidated

new teachers into self-limiting behaviors. They describe highly specified curriculum as both a scaffold for teacher development and as a shackle that mitigates against the exercise of teacher prerogative.

Achinstein, Ogawa and Spieglman (2004) also contrasted new teachers in prescriptive and non-prescriptive policy environments. They raise the possibility that new teachers are socialized by their first teaching experience, resulting in a kind of "teacher tracking" that relegates teachers most willing to comply to schools using prescriptive materials which are disproportionately located in challenging urban environments. Like Valencia et al. (2006), these findings focus on the effect of fidelity policies that require teachers to hew closely to the text rather than on the content of prescriptive programs themselves.

Patterns of compliance and adaptation. There is an emerging body of research that shows how teachers navigate mandated reading programs through both creative adaptations and active resistance. Similar to the earlier finding that teachers implemented and adapted SFA regardless of their commitment or resistance to the program because they perceived that a whole school effort would benefit to their students (Datnow & Castellano, 2001), Pease-Alvarez et al. (2007) discovered that teachers resistant to OCR implemented with near fidelity in order to maintain congruence with their colleagues. In their study of how teachers shifted their practice from balanced literacy to a prescriptive program as a result of a top-down mandate, Pease-Alvarez and Samway (2008) found that teachers mostly abandoned past practices and attempted to stay "under the radar" when subtly "tweaking" the new program to adjust to students' needs (p. 38). They introduce their study with two anecdotes from the same teacher's practice with balanced literacy and with a "scripted" program, contrasting an engaged, dynamic teacher with a disembodied performance, suggesting as did Stein D'Amico (2002) that high alignment that is purely procedural does not necessarily result in high quality.

Some teachers "finesse" and "hybridize" their practice to remain in compliance while drawing on their own expertise (Kersten & Pardo, 2007). Finessing is defined by Kersten and Pardo (2007) as making "decisions to attend to some things while ignoring others," while "hybridizing" blends old and new practices resulting in a "original pedagogy" (p. 147). These codes recall Coburn's (2004) continuum of implementation that describes the various degrees to which teachers both avoid and accommodate new practices. Because hybridizing results in a new pedagogy, it could be seen as an expression of mutual adaptation (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978).

Resistant stance. While the studies above discuss the ways in which teachers attempt to maintain compliance while still utilizing their expertise, Achinstein and Ogawa (2006) call for the recognition of legitimate resistance to prescriptive programs by teachers who are not "shirkers" but professionals expressing "principled resistance" (p. 1). They clearly state that they are not evaluating approaches to literacy instruction but rather the fidelity policy itself that they claim is pushing highly effective teachers out of the profession as illustrated by their case studies of two teachers (taken from a larger study) who publicly challenged a prescriptive program. Both teachers felt that OCR

limited their creativity and their students' opportunity for active engagement so they enacted alternative approaches in place of OCR., risking their jobs. Crocco and Costigan (2007) warn of potential problems retaining teachers, citing a "shrinking of space" (p. 521) - a lack of support for creativity and autonomy, constraints on developing authentic relationships with students, and limitations on professional development as a result of fidelity to "narrow" curriculum and pedagogy.

Policy Environment for Prescriptive Reading Programs

Current research on the implementation of prescriptive curriculum is nested in a larger tradition of policy implementation research. Seminal works have revealed patterns that continue to be relevant. At the same time, the policy environment for prescriptive reading programs differs from past reform eras in two important ways; first, it has been characterized as "narrowing" rather than broadening the reading curriculum and second, in the California schools funded by Reading First, prescriptive curricula were accompanied by fidelity of implementation policies.

Narrowing the curriculum. When drawing on previous research in curriculum policy implementation, it must be recognized that prior reform eras were aimed at changing the instructional core by expanding beyond technical or procedural approaches to learning. As mentioned earlier, Spillane (1999) described this as moving from "procedural" to "principled" practices. The current era of prescriptive reading approaches is seen as a narrowing of curriculum by many of the researchers cited in this review, because of tight accountability policies tying the curricula closely to standardized assessments and the direct, explicit approach to teaching with mostly whole group participation structures, practices which "reflect curriculum and pedagogy that, according to a substantial body of research, distinguish low academic tracks from high tracks" (Achinstein, Ogawa & Spieglman, 2004). In my search of the literature, I did not find studies that challenged this view although in-depth investigations of the content of the curricula are needed to substantiate it. Studies that have examined the content and pedagogy of the programs themselves have challenged the effectiveness but not the breadth of particular program elements for supporting the teaching of beginning reading. For example, in a study of comprehension strategy instruction in Open Court (Maniates & Pearson, 2007), we found that although the program described a transactional rather than transmission model of comprehension, lesson plans did not provide adequate guidance to teachers on how to carry that out in contrast to the highly specified guidance provided for phonics lessons.

Fidelity of implementation policies. It is yet to be seen how applicable the findings of curriculum implementation studies conducted in a normative policy environment will be to a regulatory context. Resistance to broadening the nature of literacy learning is not the same as resistance to narrowing it. Regulatory pressure manifested in fidelity policies introduces the notion of compliance and non-compliance which changes the equation. In general, studies in the current era of prescriptive reading programs investigate the limitations of these programs and how teachers have reacted against them, rather than how they have reacted to them. This suggests a bias towards

regarding the variation in implementation of mandated curriculum in terms of resistance rather than adaptation. The pressure to comply makes it difficult to distinguish the effects of the fidelity policy on teachers' responses from the effects of the prescriptive reading program on their practice and frames the issue in terms of teacher autonomy. Valencia, et al.'s (2006) study of new teachers' use of a range of curriculum materials found that teachers' ability to adapt programs to meet their students' needs was related to the strength of their knowledge base and the restrictiveness of the program. This suggests that curriculum itself can be a rich source of learning (Ball & Cohen, 1996; Remillard, 2000) if infused with educative supports as well as pressure and an optimal degree of voluntariness (Coburn, 2004).

Role of adaptive teachers. Casting highly specified curriculum as the antidote to lagging student performance reflects a focus on teaching methods that has been criticized for missing the pivotal role that teachers play in mediating any curricular innovation (Gutiérrez, Baquedano- López & Turner, 1997; Duffy & Hoffman, 1999; Luke, 1998). Although implementation of educational policy does not rest solely with classroom teachers, their position at the point of implementation makes them central to changes in the instructional core, in tandem with or in spite of policy directives. Studies on the implementation of prescriptive curricula to date have focused on teachers who complied involuntarily, new teachers and resistant teachers. This literature raises well-founded concerns about threats to teacher autonomy, but it assumes that teacher autonomy and student engagement go hand-in-hand. The notion of autonomy needs to be unpacked, and weighed in balance with the benefits of consistency across classrooms and coherence across grade levels.

The findings of a pilot study of teachers' responses to highly specified reading curriculum (Maniates, 2007) suggest that the instructional decisions experienced teachers make are much more complicated than a choice between compliance or resistance. These teachers showed a high degree of adaptation, indicating that they freely exercised professional prerogative in statements such as, "I take the best of what it has to offer," "I always do one extra lesson that brings it alive," and "teaching is not taking a manual and reading it." The adaptations observed in the pilot study were geared towards increasing access by changing prescribed lessons to accommodate small group discussion, hands-on activities, guided practice and parent involvement.

While the experienced teachers in the pilot study maintained their autonomy to adapt the curriculum, their perceptions about reading instruction changed when they saw students benefit from more direct, explicit instruction than they had done in the past. They attributed three positive outcomes to the curriculum. First, they noticed that more children were able to read with fluency and comprehension at earlier ages. Second, they appreciated having a base of shared technical knowledge (Lortie, 1975) that allowed for discussions of student assessment data among colleagues and finally, they were relieved to spend less time on lesson planning and scrounging materials. These features seemed to balance some of their initial concerns and disposed them more positively to the mandated curriculum. The perspectives of experienced teachers who use and mediate these programs for their students indicate that there is more to be learned about how

teachers actually use these programs in their classrooms. The give-and-take between teachers and curriculum to achieve a "fit" with their local context reflects McLaughlin's (1987) notion of mutual adaptation.

Chapter 3: Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

A multi-case study approach (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003) using the constant comparative method of analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1994) was used to uncover the processes by which experienced teachers in grades 1, 2, and 3 enact a prescriptive core reading program over the course of one school year, 2008-09. "Strategic cases" (Honig, 2003, p. 332) can be especially fruitful for illuminating complex phenomena such as policy implementation because they can reveal the dimensions, interactions and contingencies that shape implementation. Three teachers are presented here as strategic cases of how teachers may understand the relationship between professional prerogative, prescriptive curriculum and equitable outcomes as realized through their approaches to curriculum implementation. The teachers work in three different elementary schools in a medium-sized urban school district in the San Francisco Bay Area that adopted Open Court Reading (OCR) with accompanying Reading First assurances of fidelity in school year 2002-03. The study was conducted during the first school year after Reading First funding had expired.

Since adopting the core reading program, both the district and the focal schools have shown gains in achievement in language arts on state and district standardized tests by students traditionally labeled "at risk." My research questions, which probe the teachers' contribution to those gains, guided my research design. As mentioned in Chapter 2, these research questions are:

1. What types of adaptations do experienced teachers make when implementing a prescriptive reading program? How do they determine what to change or omit?
2. In what ways have experienced teachers worked to achieve what they conceptualize as more equitable student outcomes beyond the limits of a prescriptive reading program?
3. How do experienced teachers understand the relationship between professional prerogative, prescriptive curriculum and equitable outcomes?

Research Design

To explore the centrality of teacher adaptation to curriculum implementation, I chose data collection strategies that would uncover the types of adaptations experienced teachers made when implementing a prescriptive reading program and how they determined what to directly implement, change or omit. Since adaptations occur within the tension between fidelity to an externally-designed program and teacher-constructed responses to local context, I planned to collect evidence that would help me understand the ways in which experienced teachers worked to achieve what they conceptualize as more equitable student outcomes within the affordances and limitations of a prescriptive reading program. These data sources would then lead me to insights on how experienced teachers understand the relationship between professional prerogative, prescriptive curriculum and equitable outcomes. These three objectives, embodied in my research questions, determined that I would need to collect and analyze data from a variety of

sources including published lesson plans and teacher support materials from the core reading program under investigation, classroom observations during the literacy block book-ended by pre- and post-interviews with the teacher informants, and interviews of teacher informants using stimulated recall (Kennedy, 2005) in response to curriculum materials and formative student data.

Strauss (1987) recommends doing preliminary fieldwork before embarking on a formal qualitative study in order to uncover potential questions and data sources. In 2006-07, I conducted a pilot study of teacher prerogative and prescriptive curriculum using structured interviews with three focal teachers. The findings of that study, discussed in Chapter 2, revealed ways in which teachers reshape the curriculum, resulting in a high degree of variability in implementation. In addition, I previously conducted two document studies (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003) of the core reading program under investigation; one focused on the use of comprehension strategies instruction research in prescriptive reading programs (Maniates & Pearson, 2007) and the other on the potential of the curriculum to be educative for teachers (Maniates & Woulfin, 2008). The document studies gave me a familiarity with the curriculum that facilitated both data collection and analysis.

Sampling

Site selection. The current study takes place in three schools in a K-12 school district with a high percentage of students of color, students learning English and students in poverty (see Table 3-1). The setting is central to this work because the California Department of Education policy has made claims that prescriptive curriculum is especially effective in this demographic environment as a key strategy for closing the achievement gap (CDE, 2008). In addition, the district received funding from Reading First, the early literacy initiative of No Child Left Behind legislation, which required the use of "research-based curriculum."

The district began implementation of OCR, a prescriptive core reading program, in the fall of 2002 with a policy requiring fidelity of implementation in K-3 classrooms that was disproportionately enforced in historically "low performing" schools. With funding from Reading First, Title 1 schools were provided a site-based literacy coach who received extensive training in the curriculum from the local Reading First Technical Assistance Center and ongoing support from the district's curriculum division. The coaches provided demonstration lessons, facilitated grade level meetings around the curriculum and conducted classroom coaching through observation and feedback. During summer vacations, teachers were incentivized to attend week-long trainings provided by the local Reading First Technical Assistance Center to learn how to use the OCR curriculum. The fidelity policy was discontinued by the time that preliminary interviews for this study began in school year 2008-09. These factors created a setting with high variability in implementation that offered a rich field for investigation.

Participant selection. Because experienced teachers who have worked five years or more bring both prior experience as reading instructors and a professional identity to

Table 3-1

School District and School Enrollment by Group by Percent (2007-08)

Groups	District	School A	School B	School C
African American	23.2	8.95	34.42	26.65
American Indian	0.2	0	.22	0.8
Asian	9.8	6.55	3.25	1.6
Filipino	5.4	3.71	.87	0.2
Hispanic or Latino	45.1	76.2	45.24	69.14
Pacific Islander	0.6	1.09	.22	0.8
White (not Hispanic)	11.2	3.06	5.63	0.2
Socio-economically Disadvantaged	63.1	100	74	100%
English Learners	33.8	70	39	58
Students with Disabilities	13.37	5	8	6

Note. District enrollment percentages from West Contra Costa County Unified School District. About WCCUSD Quick Facts. Retrieved November 27, 2009 from http://www.wccusd.net/Documents/quickfacts.aspx

School enrollment percentages from West Contra Costa County Unified School District. (2009, September). School Accountability Report Card Reported for School Year 2007-08. Retrieved November 27, 2009 from http://www.wccusd.net/Documents/departments/schools/sarc.aspx
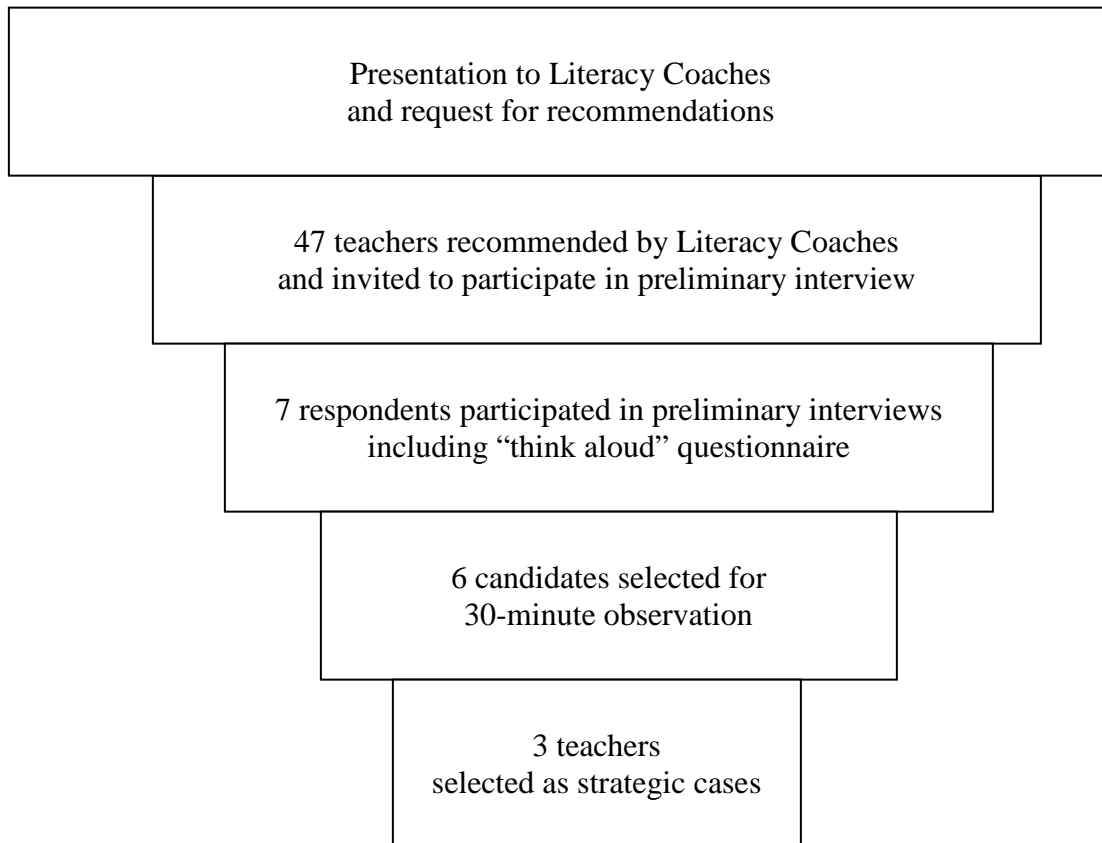
the policy environment, they offer the opportunity to investigate more complex characteristics of teacher quality than what is currently defined by NCLB's baseline standards. After obtaining permission from the district to conduct research on the reading curriculum in their elementary schools, I used the following funneling process to identify strategic cases of experienced teachers from the total pool of K-3 teachers in the Title 1 schools in the district as shown in Figure 3-1.

In the spring of 2007, I briefed Reading First site-based literacy coaches on the objectives and requirements of this project at one of their regularly scheduled meetings and asked for their recommendations for potential teachers for the study. I drew on the expertise of coaches in the district who have worked closely with teachers through grade level meetings and frequent observations in their classrooms to direct me to teachers that might be strategic cases. I asked them to identify kindergarten, first, second and third grade teachers who met four threshold requirements, as follows:

1. Teachers who have been teaching at least 5 years (in the district or elsewhere).
2. Teachers who the site-based literacy coach regards as exemplary teachers.
3. Teachers who are implementing OCR.
4. Teachers who the site-based literacy coach thinks would be willing to talk about their role as a teacher, their implementation of OCR and how they use OCR to increase student achievement in reading.

From this process, I collected 47 recommendations for potential study participants, listed in Table 3-2. The recommended teachers were sent a letter of invitation to participate in a study of how veteran teachers effectively implement core reading programs and how teachers use their professional judgment and expertise in their day-to-day classroom work (see Appendix A). Seven teachers responded representing kindergarten, first, second and third grade. To select my cases from this group of seven respondents, I used preliminary interviews and classroom observations to uncover evidence of an expert's sense of personal responsibility for each student as described by Berliner (1992). Preliminary interviews elicited background information on teachers' experience and training, as well as their stated philosophy on using the focal curriculum and examples of choices they make in implementation using a structured interview format. I then asked teachers to "think aloud" as they filled in a questionnaire designed to probe how they saw the role of the teacher in relation to highly specified curriculum, and how they conceptualized the responsibility for student access to curriculum content (see Appendix B). The preliminary interviews with think alouds were audio-taped and transcribed. From these interviews, I gained insight on how the teachers viewed their role in crafting a reading program. I was looking for teachers who would allow me to see variation in the implementation of OCR and expressions of professional prerogative to make choices that responded to their students' needs and interests.

Using the responses to the preliminary interviews, I chose six teachers for 30-minute observations. The purpose of the observation was to get a quick read on the match between responses in the interview and actual practice. I wanted to eliminate

Presentation to Literacy Coaches
and request for recommendations

47 teachers recommended by Literacy Coaches
and invited to participate in preliminary interview

7 respondents participated in preliminary interviews
including "think aloud" questionnaire

6 candidates selected for
30-minute observation

3 teachers
selected as strategic cases

Figure 3-1. Funneling process used to identify strategic cases.

Table 3-2

Tally of Teachers Recommended by Literacy Coaches

School	Kindergarten	1st grade	2nd grade	3rd grade	4-5th grade	Total by school
School A	1	1	2	-	-	4
School B	2	-	-	1	1	4
School C	1	-	1	2	-	4
School D	-	1	-	2	-	3
School E	2	3	-	-	-	5
School F	-	-	-	1	-	1
School G	2	2	-	1	-	5
School H	1	1	1	-	-	3
School I	2	-	1	1	-	4
School J	3	1	-	-	-	4
School K	1	1	1	1	-	4
School L	-	2	2	1	1	6
Total by grade level	15	12	8	10	2	-
Total number of teachers recommended						47

factors that were outside of the purview of my study, such as poor classroom management, a disorganized or depleted environment or inefficient use of classroom time. I reviewed the published lesson plan that corresponded to the date and time of my visit and tracked the lesson in the Teacher's Edition as I observed. From these observations, I got a sense of how teachers were using the OCR program which contributed to how I shaped the study. Implementation ranged from injecting an animated delivery, to using the prescribed text with different objectives, to using the objectives with different content, to using both the objectives and content but with a different pedagogical approach (such as small group rather than whole group, etc). In some cases, a teacher's primary divergence from the published lesson plan was to cut a lesson short when time ran out (for example, the bell rang for recess, etc.). These teachers were eliminated because I was interested in exploring teachers' thinking when making more deliberate variations in implementation.

This process resulted in my selection of 3 teachers as strategic cases. I chose a teacher from first, second and third grade respectively. Through the preliminary interviews and observations, I realized that differences in the nature of instructional demands for teaching reading at each of these grade levels could lead to different approaches to curriculum implementation and adaptation. I had not anticipated this in my original design and it caused me to watch for signature grade level responses in my subsequent data collection activities. For example, a first grade teacher charged with teaching beginning decoding might view prescriptive curriculum differently than a third grade teacher with responsibility for the transition from learning to read to reading to learn. Therefore, the selection of a teacher from three different grade levels would likely yield the most variation in implementation for this study.

The teachers I selected as strategic cases also differed in ethnicity, years of experience teaching, years at their current school and district, year they received their teaching credential and year they began teaching with teaching OCR (see Table 3-3). Michelle, a biracial African American/Causasian teacher in her early 30's, did her student teaching placement at her school and was drafted to fill a vacancy. She took over a first grade class at midpoint in the school year and used the previous language arts textbook, Harcourt Brace Signatures, for one semester before OCR was adopted in the district. She has the most experience at her grade level. Susan, a white teacher who had changed careers, held a variety of teaching positions in her school including kindergarten and reading support teacher, before settling into second grade. She had used a balanced literacy approach when teaching kindergarten before OCR was adopted. She is the most experienced of the three cases in terms of years teaching. The third grade teacher, Sonia, has only used OCR in her five years of teaching. She is a younger Latina teacher who began teaching at her current school, left for one year to experience a more affluent district and returned with a renewed mission to work with under-served children. All the teachers work in de facto segregated schools where there are few, if any, white children. In addition, these schools are located in neighborhoods that experience spikes of violence. Responding to a suggestion in the OCR teacher's manual to take students on

Table 3-3

Characteristics of Case Study Teachers

Characteristic	1st grade teacher	2nd grade teacher	3rd grade teacher
Ethnicity	African American/ Caucasian	White	Latina
Years teaching at this grade level	9	4	5
Years teaching at current school	9	14	4
Years teaching in current district	9	14	4
Year completed credential program	2000	1995	2003
Year began teaching with OCR	2002	2004	2003

a neighborhood walk, one teacher expressed how unrealistic that would be by remarking, "we have a police escort for our Halloween parade."

None of the three teachers selected worked in schools where the principal had strictly enforced the district fidelity policy during the years of Reading First. This offered the opportunity to investigate how teachers interact with the curriculum when this factor was minimized and to separate the issue of fidelity from the characteristics of the program itself.

Data Collection

The data collection methods for this qualitative study reflect a dynamic view of curriculum as it exists both inside and outside of the textbook. Curriculum moves through several states on its way to actualization in the classroom, as illustrated in Figure 3-2. It begins in the teacher's manual as an imagined or espoused curriculum (Doyle, 1992). From there, teachers translate the specified content, suggested framework and strategies into an intended curriculum in their lesson plans. The curriculum is then enacted through performance and interaction, and is experienced by students. Teachers are in the mediating role of predicting and planning for the enacted or experienced curriculum.

Phases of Data Collection

I conducted two cycles of classroom observations with each teacher, including a pre-observation interview and post-observation daily debriefings. One cycle was held in the fall semester and one in the spring. For each teacher, I observed a literature-based unit with a social studies theme and a unit using informational text with a science theme. The published lesson plans provided the imagined/espoused curriculum, pre-observation interviews spoke to the intended curriculum and the observations allowed me to witness the enacted curriculum. Post-observation interviews gave some insight into how the teachers experienced the curriculum. Students' experience was somewhat reflected in examinations of student work, although they were not the focus of this study. In total, I conducted 23 hours of interviews and 41 hours of classroom observations using this process. Through the preliminary interviews I learned that the district had dropped the fidelity requirement for the writing component and the inquiry component of OCR early in the initial implementation process. Therefore, I focused my observations and interviews on two sections, identified by their color-coding; the "green" section that covered phonics and word recognition and the "red" section that focused on reading comprehension and vocabulary.

Phase I: Pre-observation stimulated interviews around curriculum materials and lesson planning. Before observing in each classroom, I conducted a pre-observation interview prompted by the Teacher's Edition from the core reading program for the lesson to be observed to uncover how teachers make decisions about what to implement, adapt or ignore. Using stimulated recall, I asked the teacher to walk through the teacher's manual as she described her intended lesson plan. Capturing the teacher's thinking at this
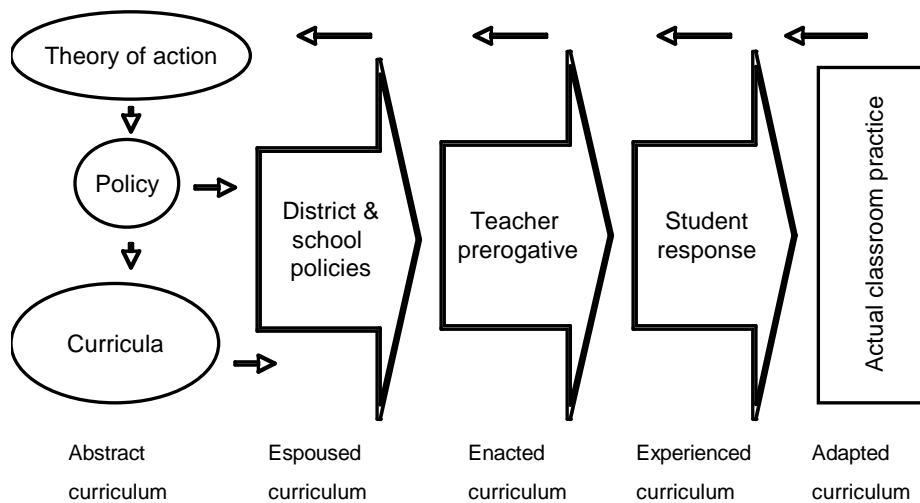
Figure 3-2. Dynamic view of curriculum (adapted from Doyle, 1992).

stage allowed me to compare the plan with the lesson that would be enacted in the less predictable environment of the classroom. Following Coburn (2005), I asked teachers what they look for in the lessons in the teacher's manual, how they determine what can be directly implemented and what they feel must be adapted or omitted, how they determine what kind of adaptation is needed, and how individual students' needs influence lesson planning. Interviews provide an "opportunity to learn what you cannot see and explore alternative explanations to what you do see" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). Although I designed a structured interview protocol, I found that it was more generative to keep the structure open and follow the teacher's thinking as she shared how she planned to approach the published lesson. As we paged through the Teacher's Edition, I asked, "how will you use this activity? What do you usually do?" The pre-observation interviews were audio taped and transcribed.

To prepare myself to recognize fidelity of implementation and to distinguish adaptations from fidelity, I conducted a fine grained analysis of the lesson plans from core reading curriculum for the units that I would be observing. This helped me to understand the program as imagined or espoused. I broke each week's lesson plans into "episodes" (Kennedy, 2003) that represented one teaching activity within a larger teaching segment. For example, the daily comprehension lessons in OCR are presented in the red section entitled "Reading and Responding." Within the first part of this section, there are many inter-related but distinct activities to be used before reading, such as browsing the story selection, activating prior knowledge, setting a purpose for reading. I delineated each of these as a separate "episode" and noted the teaching objective and pedagogical strategy that was indicated in the Teacher's Edition. This helped me to structure my field notes, recognize and anticipate the activities and note the degree of compliance or variance to the published program.

Phase II: Classroom observations and post-interviews – first round. A round of observations of the implementation of a focal lesson plan for three to five consecutive days was conducted with each teacher, in both the fall and spring semesters. Lessons in the core reading program are designed in a three- to five-day sequence, so this allowed me to gather data on the enacted curriculum for the complete trajectory of a lesson. As I observed, I followed the lesson plan in the OCR Teacher's Edition and noted when a lesson was executed as indicated or if it was changed, even slightly, and noted the nature of the change. I audio taped the lesson and took running field notes as I was observing. Classroom observations were critical to "learning teachers theories in use rather than their espoused theories" (Kennedy, 2003; p. 253) and provided a basis of comparison with the information self-reported in interviews. An end-of-session debrief was done at the end of each observation to capture teachers' immediate impressions of the lesson that just transpired. These interviews followed an open structure where my questions were prompted by the experiences and impressions that teachers shared, such as "how did you think that went? How do you know? What will you do next as a result of this experience?" The debrief interviews were audio taped and transcribed. Elements of the physical classroom environment as well as student work displayed on the bulletin boards in the hallway outside the classroom were captured in field notes and photographs. I

also collected samples of teacher-made materials and worksheets for the focal lessons. After each contact, I reviewed my running field notes in conjunction with the audio recording and my notes on the published lesson plan and merged them to create more detailed field notes for analysis. I logged each exchange or topic covered during the contact so that I would be able to see at a glance what had transpired during each contact and where to find particular incidents or quotes in my field notes or audio recordings.

Phase III. Classroom observations with pre- and post-interviews, second round. The process described above in Phase I and II was repeated in the spring semester to capture both changes and consistencies in how teachers used the curriculum at two points during the year and using two different genres of text. If a lesson using narrative text was observed during Phase II, I observed a lesson using informational text in Phase III and vice versa. Because OCR is designed to integrate science and social studies topics through thematic units that use both narrative and informational text, I purposely observed lessons representing both genres in order to understand variations in implementation that may be associated with text type.

Phase IV. Stimulated recall around formative student data. A round of interviews prompted with formative student data such as fluency scores, spelling tests, students' writing to prompts and in response to literature, and unit tests was conducted with each teacher to uncover how they use these data sources to make decisions about what to implement, adapt or ignore. Student data is an artifact of the experienced curriculum and in some cases may represent the consequences of the choices teachers make to implement, adapt or omit. I designed these interviews as a method for uncovering teachers' strategies for insuring equitable access and outcomes because they involve discussions of students' response to the curriculum as shown by their work. The teachers shared district-generated print-outs of test results, classroom-generated unit tests and reading fluency scores showing each student's standing in terms of the California state-defined categories of far below basic, below basic, basic, proficient and advanced. Again, I used an open format where I simply asked teachers to tell me about their data and them probed their responses. I asked teachers to describe the patterns they saw in student achievement and how they would explain those patterns; for example, what may explain a jump or drop in reading fluency scores, or why a particular student had not progressed. I then asked teachers how they planned to respond to the data, for example, how they planned to respond to the jumps, drops or stagnation in performance. In addition to quantitative data, we looked at student work, including informal and prompted writing samples, short answer responses on end-of-lesson tests, entries in personal "word notebooks" for vocabulary. These interviews were audio taped and transcribed.

Phase V. Follow-up interviews. In one case, a teacher had committed more omissions from the curriculum than adaptations to the curriculum. To understand how she made decisions to omit OCR content or strategies, I conducted an additional interview with her using an open-ended protocol that simply said," I'm interested in your thinking when you decide not to do something in OCR. Talk to me about how/when you decide not to do some part of the lesson using some examples." After that opening, I

asked about some specific omissions that I had noticed. This interview was audio taped and transcribed.
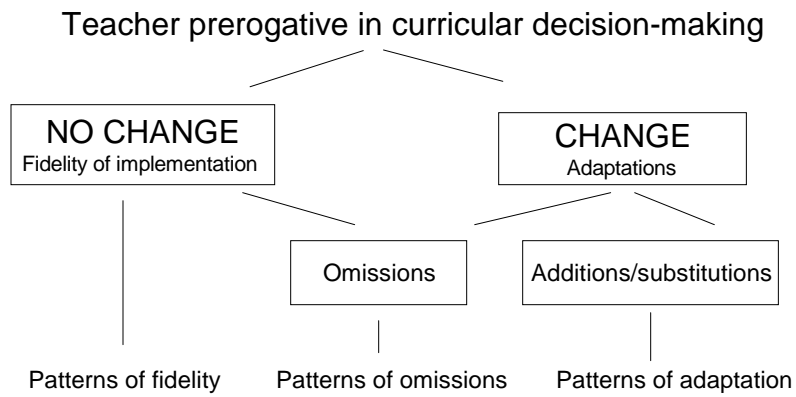
Data Analysis

My analysis seeks to describe and explain how teachers utilize prescriptive reading curriculum to respond to their students by constructing descriptive cases. The unit of analysis is an instance of curricular decision-making that results in implementation, adaptation, or omission of prescribed practices. This can include dimensions such as adherence to lesson task, lesson objectives, lesson dialogue and lesson pacing, use of materials, and the level of demand on students (Coburn, 2005). Evidence came from observations of teacher behavior and statements to students during instruction and artifacts such as student work and formative data, as well as self-reported views on lesson planning, role of the teacher and attitudes towards students collected in interviews. I worked with subsets of data for each teacher in succession, and then returned to start again. Following the constant comparative method (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), the analysis of each subset of data informed the analysis of the next subset of data, suggesting additional ways to code and categorize patterns.
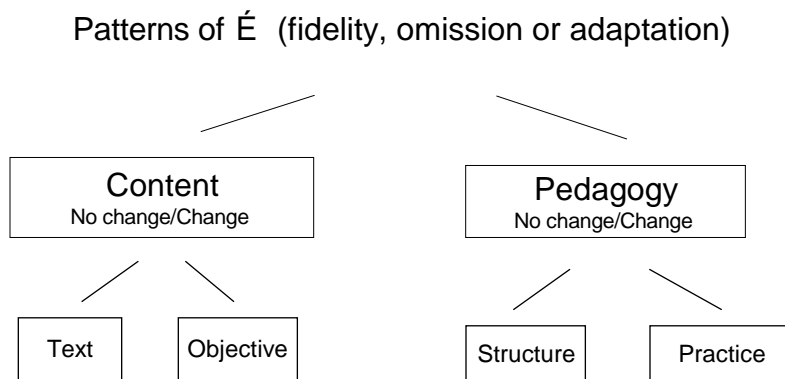
Conceptual Framework for Analysis

Using the tools described in this section, a conceptual framework for analysis emerged. I began with descriptive coding by simply sorting instances of curricular decision-making into three categories – no change or fidelity of implementation, change or adaptation and omission, as shown in Figure 3-3. As I continued to work with the data, further distinctions in patterns of fidelity, omission and adaptation became clear. Figure 3-4 illustrates how data in each of these categories could be further sorted in instances of that represented either content or pedagogy. In terms of the "content" of the curriculum, teachers either implemented, adapted or omitted text or lesson objectives. When observing pedagogical strategies, I noticed that teachers either utilized, adapted or omitted the prescribed structure of a lesson or the amount of guided practice. These analytic decisions are reflected in the description of data analysis below.

Contact summary sheets. My first step in data analysis was to organize the data from each contact using contact summary sheets (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Rather than write a narrative summary, I created a matrix on the contact summary sheet to code the data based on my conceptual framework of "no change," "omission" and "change." The contact summary sheet also included a section to note expressions of prerogative ("I'm responsible for my kids"), considerations of increasing access and/or outcomes ("they have to make it theirs), questions that the data raised and a "to do" list generated by that contact (for example, a follow-up interview question to be asked or an item to check in the OCR teacher's manual).

To categorize the classroom observation data on the contact summary sheet, I began with a simple yes/no sorting process based on my conceptual framework – each pedagogical move that I had recorded during a lesson represented either "change" if it

Figure 3-3. Conceptual framework for descriptive coding.

Patterns of É (fidelity, omission or adaptation)

Content
No change/Change

Pedagogy
No change/Change

Text		Objective

Structure		Practice

Figure 3-4. Conceptual framework for analytic coding.

varied from the guidance in the OCR Teacher's Edition or "no change" if it did not. Incidents of "change" were then sorted into two types of change, "adaptation" or "omission," in other words, the teacher either varied from the published lesson plan or she deleted an aspect of the plan. These codes were clearly defined by comparison to the published lesson plan. A segment of a lesson that was not done and not rescheduled for another time slot was coded as an "omission." A segment of a lesson that was implemented but implemented differently from the guidance in the Teacher's Edition was coded as an "adaptation."

A first reading of the data revealed different types of adaptation. I broke down the three categories of "no change," "omission" and "adaptation" into the sub-categories of "content" and "pedagogy" that describe the nature of the implementation or change. I defined "content" as the story selection provided in the student anthology and the lesson objective provided in the OCR teacher's manual. The code entitled "pedagogy" referred to the structures used to deliver the lesson, for example, grouping of students and performance demand on the student. These codes allowed me to see when a different pedagogical approach was used with the text and/or objectives in the published lesson, when an objective was addressed using an alternate text or pedagogy and when lesson objectives or performance demand were changed but text and/or pedagogy from the OCR teacher's manual remained constant. For example, when a teacher implemented the phonics lesson using the content and objectives in the Teacher's Edition, but had a student leader running the lesson rather than herself, I coded that episode as "no change" in content and "change" in pedagogy. When a teacher substituted an alternate text for the text in the student anthology while using the whole group reading with think aloud as indicated in the Teacher's Edition, I coded that as representing a change in content and no change in pedagogy.

The sub-codes "content" and "pedagogy" were influenced by Diamond (2007). In his study of reforms in classroom instruction in response to high-stakes testing, he coded for implementation of content reforms versus pedagogical reforms and found that although content reforms are necessary, more equitable access to content was addressed by pedagogical reforms (Diamond, 2007). This distinction is helpful here because my focal curriculum introduces both a change in content (such as highly specified phonics instruction and the use of specific texts or "story selections") and a change in pedagogy (a return to mostly whole class instruction).

Classroom vignettes. The contact summary sheets highlighted particular instances of variations in implementation which I developed into vignettes. Vignettes are "focused descriptions" that serve two purposes; first to identify and isolate significant moments in volumes of data and second to provide an opportunity to reflect on these events (Miles & Huberman, 1996; p. 81). Early in analysis, I wrote narratives of particular classroom activities that represented either no change, change or omission. Producing these vignettes helped me to clarify my perception of events (Erickson, 1986) and led to further analyses using a series of data displays to address emerging patterns and questions.

Lesson chronology matrix. Miles and Huberman (1994) recommend systematically organizing raw qualitative data into data displays that "permit a viewing of a full data set in the same location" (p. 91) which aids in drawing out patterns. After coding the data using the contact summary sheets, I took another pass through the Teacher's Edition to compare it to my data. I created a chronology of the activities in the published lesson plan and laid it side-by-side with a log of what the teacher did during my observation. This process highlighted additional instances of change or no change that I had missed, and to see patterns in which segments of the curriculum were omitted or changed. Finally, I clustered incidences of direct implementation, adaptation of omission and determined patterns within these categories. This allowed me to cluster anecdotes from the data and create an outline for my findings on implementation.

Cross-case comparison matrix. In order to reveal patterns within and across my three cases, I created a cross-case comparison matrix. I isolated standard, repeated practices from OCR in the left-hand column (room arrangement, use of sound/spelling cards, use of concept/question board, approach to teaching phonics, comprehension and writing, use of OCR workshop format for differentiating instruction). This revealed similarities and differences between the variations in implementation enacted by each teacher that I had observed.

Layering versus adaptation matrix. To further understand the phenomena of "change" to the published lesson plan in the form of adaptations, I probed deeper into the sub-codes of adaptation of content and objectives versus adaptation of pedagogical strategies by creating a data display that sorted these two types of adaptation. This revealed that additions or adaptations to pedagogical strategies that preserved the original intended OCR objectives were really a type of "layering" of strategies on to the program. This display helped to define the difference between types of adaptations, and to distinguish more dramatic changes from layering.

Evidence of teacher prerogative and conceptions of equity. My main source for examining teacher prerogative was the interview data. To analyze the interview data, I coded for statements of prerogative, such as "I am responsible for what happens in my classroom," "I know my kids, Open Court doesn't know them" or "I put this in because I know it works" or "there's a disconnect between what they give you and what you really need to be doing." These statements were then linked to specific examples from the classroom observation where the teacher had either implemented or adapted the curriculum in order to increase access to concepts.

To code for conceptions of equity, I looked at teacher behavior as well as statements to construct their theory of action. For example, I noticed that one teacher consistently insisted on attention and engagement by explaining why an activity was important, calling on students who were not attending, modeling how to learn from errors and making connections between previous experiences and the topic at hand. In interviews, she spoke about the importance of students being active rather than passive learners and her role in garnering engagement, and how critical it was that students begin

to think what she termed "metacognitively." By comparing her actions and her statements, I extrapolated her conception of equitable teaching, what it takes from the teacher to create access and what it requires from both teacher and student to increase outcomes. I repeated this process with the remaining two teachers to determine the theory of action underlying their conception of equity.

Use of theoretical framework for analysis. In Chapter 1, Kintsch's construction-integration model of comprehension (Kintsch, 1998), the Four Resources Model of Reading (Luke & Freebody, 1999) and the gradual release of responsibility (Duke & Pearson, 2002) were presented as theoretical tools for understanding how teachers' implementation of the prescriptive core reading program aligned with the ways in which they conceptualized equitable access to the opportunity to develop as a proficient reader. I looked for evidence that teachers fostered students' intentional invocation of their own knowledge and experiences to access the meaning of text as a condition of constructing a situation model. I extrapolated this to include instances where students confronted any new material, concept or skill and must construct a situation model to embrace and incorporate it as part of their knowledge base. The Four Resources Model informed my analysis of how each teacher prioritized the development of students' capabilities to utilize particular resources as readers in particular contexts, and how this influenced the extent to which they directly implemented or adapted the OCR program. The gradual release of responsibility was used as a criteria to determine the presence of a viable mechanism for expanding access to new concepts and skills through explanation, modeling and sufficient guided practice to result in increased outcomes.

Limitations

This study has several limitations inherent in the research design. By definition, case studies provide detailed insight but only reflect a few selected cases. In addition, the data gleaned from the classroom observations could have been constrained by the particular lessons observed on the dates scheduled or the researcher's presence and limited experience as a novice researcher. Interviews are by nature self-reports, and could have been influenced by teachers' desire to make a good impression or say what they perceived the researcher was looking for. Finally, interpretation of the published curriculum was made outside of the context of the intent of the curriculum designer. While published materials must stand alone and communicate directly with the reader, at the same time the intent of the designer may have been misinterpreted by the school district, the teachers and/or the researcher.

The experience of three teachers in a short time frame can only begin to describe the complex process of curriculum implementation. Informants were chosen not for their typicality but for their strategic position in helping to describe adaptation of curriculum. My intention is that the rich description made possible by focusing in on limited cases will be offset by the contribution of experienced teachers' perspective on curriculum implementation that will inspire further study.

Chapter 4: Prerogative and Equity

Instructional materials are one of many tools that are used to communicate and enforce policy initiatives. In concert with curriculum frameworks, assessment of student progress, monitoring of classroom practice and requirements for teacher licensure (Cohen & Spillane, 1992), instructional materials contribute degrees of pervasiveness and intensity that attempt to insure that a policy is implemented as intended (Coburn, 2005). California's Reading First initiative utilized an array of mutually-reinforcing tools for instructional guidance that gave a clear message about the approach to reading instruction that was sanctioned by the policy and allowed very little room for divergence. However, the teachers in this study weighed the merits of the instructional materials adopted by their school district according to their own notions of how well a particular instructional strategy or objective was a "fit" for their students. As the data reported in this section will demonstrate, they were willing to engage with the intent of the policy but imposed their own caveats as to how they would implement the reading program based on how they conceptualized their role, the objectives of their grade level and their students' strengths, needs and interests. They augmented OCR with their own theories of action for developing students as independent readers. In fact, they utilized many of the same practices that have been documented in the literature on teachers resistant to prescriptive reading programs (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2006; Kersten & Pardo, 2007) but characterized themselves as pro-actively working with the program to make it more effective.

Because teachers were screened for their stance towards implementation of the reading curriculum and their attitude toward professional responsibility during the recruitment process, I knew that the teachers I had chosen for the study could shed light on the relationship between their conceptions of equity and how they exercised professional prerogative. Since all worked in urban schools under pressure to raise achievement among all sub-groups of students, they had to negotiate issues of equity. Through interviews and classroom enactment, they revealed how they thought about their students' right to high quality reading instruction and the pedagogical principles that would most effectively guide their students to become proficient readers. In separate interviews, all three teachers in this study defined equitable outcomes in terms of their students' success in mastering the California content standards. In reading instruction specifically, this required that the concepts and skills represented by the content standards for Reading/Language Arts for their grade level be made accessible to their students in a such a way that lead to independent use. As stated in the *California Reading/Language Arts Framework* (California Department of Education, 2007), the goal of reading/language arts instruction is that students will:

> "develop competence in the language arts to ensure that they will be able to access information with ease, apply language skills at levels demanded in the twenty-first century, appreciate literature, and obtain the liberty society offers to those who can use the English language with facility. The mission of all public schools must be to ensure that students acquire that proficiency to enhance their civic participation and their academic, social, personal, and economic success in today's society and tomorrow's world." (p. 12)

This statement of intent reflects the establishment of a "democratic threshold" as a foundational standard for equity (Gutman, 1999). The Framework goes on to state that the California content standards in Reading/Language Arts are to designed to serve as "curricular guideposts for teachers and provide clear-cut curricular goals for all learners" (California Department of Education, 2007; p. 14) with the intention that all students will meet or exceed the standards and with the particular specification that all students "must be fluent readers at least by the end of third grade" (CDE, 2007; p. 15).

Although the mandated reading program is keyed to the California Reading/Language Arts standards and claims to provide the rigor and structure for all students to succeed, teachers had to exercise prerogative in order to insure access to content that would lead to more equitable outcomes. The program was marketed as an antidote to underachievement, claiming that OCR showed the "largest gain scores for schools with high concentrations of both LEP (Limited English Proficiency) and low-SES (Socio-Economic Status) students" (SRA/McGraw Hill, 2002a, p. vii). Certainly, if teachers utilized the program as written with some degree of consistency across grades, a bump in test scores could result due to increased consistency alone. However, my data shows that teachers made many complex choices about how to use the program in order to reap the promised gains. Categorizing which aspects of the prescribed curriculum teachers either directly implemented, adapted or omitted using the conceptual framework introduced in Chapter 3 simultaneously illuminated both the value-added of each teacher's practice and areas where the curriculum fell short. At times teachers chose to implement the lessons as prescribed. Other times they adapted lessons by layering pedagogical strategies of their own design on to the activities in the teacher's manual. Sometimes they adapted more dramatically by changing the lesson to one they felt was more valuable to their students in consideration of connecting their students' experiences to grade level standards. Occasionally, they completely omitted an activity within an OCR lesson because they could not justify the use of time in light of the limited benefits they felt it would yield. As one teacher remarked, "there are parts of OCR that need to be strengthened."

This section will address the central research questions of how experienced teachers worked to achieve what they conceptualize as more equitable outcomes and how they understand the relationship between professional prerogative, prescriptive curriculum and equitable outcomes. I describe how teachers exercised prerogative to insure that their students accessed curriculum content and were supported to develop as confident and competent readers. I begin by describing the teachers' goals for reading instruction at their grade level in the context of their conceptions of equity, since instantiation of these goals would be evidence of professional prerogative. Then, I discuss each teacher's evolving stance towards the OCR program in order to establish a context for the choices they make in implementation. Finally, I share classroom vignettes that illustrate the various ways teachers exercised professional prerogative through compliance, adaptation and omission of specified lessons in order to be more effective with their students both within and beyond the limits of the prescriptive program.

Teachers' Desired Outcomes and Their Conceptions of Equity

All three case study teachers shared the overarching goal that students would enjoy reading and take ownership of their reading by monitoring their own understanding and response, and seek out reading for their own purposes. Susan mentioned her pleasure in catching students engaged in "sneak reading" under their desks. Sonia was thrilled when a student called out "I love visualizing!" with gusto during a discussion of a particularly descriptive passage in a whole class read aloud. Michelle delighted in sharing new books she had discovered with her first graders and later finding them rereading them on their own. This common overarching goal implies the teachers' greater purpose of developing students as text users while at the same time working on specific objectives for code breaking and meaning making at their grade level. Within the parameters of their grade level standards in Reading/Language Arts, each teacher defined her grade level objectives and mediated the adopted reading program to meet those goals.

First Graders as Code Breakers

Michelle's first graders represented a wide and disparate array of emergent literacy experiences. Contrasting the experiences of her students with those from more affluent schools, she said "they come with a different tool box." It was apparent to her which of her students had a rich preschool and kindergarten experience because they were familiar with book handling and concepts of print in a way that other children with limited exposure to books were not. Many of her students were English learners who had scored as "early intermediates" on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) at intake the year before. These students subsequently progressed as English learners at different rates. They had the dual challenge of learning to speak and read in a second language at the same time. Michelle described her first hurdle as "just getting students to listen and participate." I often heard her review the behaviors she wanted students to exhibit, what to attend to, where to look for information; what Luke (1992) might call "literacy training as a moral and political discipline" (p. 10). In fact, coming to know what people do when they read, why they read and how they function in a literate community was a theme that stretched across all three grade levels.

Emphasis on prosody. Much of the OCR first grade program is devoted to what Luke and Freebody (1999) would describe as becoming a "code breaker." Michelle's goal was "first and foremost, just to get the decoding happening," and "to get (students) to the point that they are comfortable enough with the sounds and the spelling, so that they feel comfortable with the idea of blending and decoding words, and the idea of how to tackle new words." She saw first grade as foundational because if students didn't crack the code in first grade, the gap "keeps getting bigger and bigger." At the same time, she was determined that her students not be inexpressive "robot readers" and incorporated an emphasis on prosody along with the OCR lessons on individual phonemes and spelling patterns. She felt that developing fluency - which she defined as speed, accuracy and phrasing - would give her students the confidence they needed to see

themselves as readers and to say to themselves, "okay, this is something I can do." This confidence would propel further reading development.

During the fall semester of first grade, OCR introduces several spelling patterns each week so that the entire complement of English phonemes has been covered by the end of January. Much of the time in the literacy block is slotted for phonics instruction during this period because there is so much to cover to keep pace with the program. Consequently, teachers may minimize comprehension instruction because there is simply no time left, although reading researchers emphasize the importance of teaching decoding and comprehension simultaneously in the early grades (Duke & Pearson, 2002). The program shifts to a more equal balance with "meaning making" after January. In accordance with OCR's synthetic approach to reading, this intense pacing allows students to acquire the "parts" they need to fashion into "whole" words. The district's benchmark for fluency at the end of first grade is 74 words per minute, which Michelle felt can be a set-up for failure. She recognized that this goal is not developmentally appropriate for every child because "it's not that there's something wrong with them or they're never going to get it, they're just doing things at their own pace." Michelle was clear that although some students may be able to decode as many as 80-90 words per minute, "if they don't understand it then they are not fluent readers."

Michelle was not overly concerned about reading comprehension at the end of the first semester of first grade, which she said comes for some students along with fluency but comes later for others. She accepted this temporary imbalance and looked forward to the shift in the second half of the year when OCR's phonics content lessened and there would be more time for working on listening comprehension. I refer to this phase as listening comprehension rather than reading comprehension because the texts from the student anthology that are used in first grade for comprehension strategies instruction are read aloud to the children. OCR assiduously avoids placing performance demands for reading on students without having previously taught the spelling patterns needed to decode a text. Consequently, due to their limited knowledge of sound/spelling correspondences and sight words, students' actual reading at this stage is done with decodable texts ("decodables") that reflect previously taught patterns. As students log more practice time with spelling patterns and high frequency words, they progress to choral reading of the story selection in the student anthology. On the one hand, this practice could be seen as more equitable because students are not held accountable for elements of word analysis they have not yet been taught. In that way, the responsibility for learning is placed on instruction. On the other hand, this perspective on systematicity does not imagine that students are actively constructing generalizations as they gain phonetic knowledge from formal instruction and their own informal observations about sounds and symbols that they apply when encountering unknown words.

One way that Michelle preserved the idea that the role of the reader is to make sense of the text and to expect text to make sense is her emphasis on prosody even before children began to read. She added prosody to every aspect of her reading instruction through her use of dramatic voices, rhythm and call-and-response. When reviewing the OCR sound/spelling cards where reciting the sound, name and spelling pattern of all 44

English phonemes could get monotonous, Michelle lead the class in a rhythmic call-and-response recitation with hand gestures. When reading decodables designed primarily to practice the quick decoding of spelling patterns, Michelle modeled expressive reading. Students followed suit with dramatic renditions when chorally reading decodables as a whole group and "whisper reading" to a partner.

Grade level exposure balanced with actual reading levels. Since OCR moves quickly through the spelling patterns, sometimes featuring more than one pattern per week, Michelle was concerned that her "shaky students could really get dusted." At the same time, she believed it was her responsibility to make sure all the skills are taught to all the students. She counted on OCR's spiraling format where concepts and/or skills are introduced and then revisited multiple times, giving students multiple opportunities over time to acquire them. She used a "thumbs up" gesture to gauge student understanding; a confident "thumbs up if you got it" and a sideways "I'm-not-sure-thumb so I know you're trying." For the first exposure, "you've got to power through it because you know they are going to hit this 50 million times before the end of the year." Subsequently, drawing on her observations of students and assessment data, she could recalibrate her approach according to students' emerging understanding. This gave her a second chance to address a concept in a different way that might be more effective but required vigilance for "teachable moments." She added that it takes teacher expertise to seize those moments and make those connections for students.

Differentiation and choice. Using anecdotal observations and formative assessment data, Michelle formed four leveled reading groups that she met with during OCR "workshop time." Leveled reading groups composed of clusters of students who read text at similar levels of difficulty are not used in the OCR approach because of the focus on grade level instruction. Instead, 30 minutes per day are designated for differentiated instruction during OCR "workshop time." Teachers are instructed to pull individuals or small groups of students who would benefit from pre-teaching or re-teaching of the prescribed lessons while others work on independent activities. Michelle chose to use this time to differentiate instruction for all students, pulling each reading group to work with her for 15 minutes while others were engaged in independent activities. I observed her working on similar activities with each group at different levels. For example, one day she worked on beginning and final consonant sounds structuring a different level of performance demand for each group. Using whiteboards and dry erase markers, students manipulated words with the /oo/ sound in the medial position such as book, hook, took, look. For one group, Michelle modeled how to change the first letter to spell a new word. She wrote "book" on her whiteboard, erased the "b" and showed students how she could fill in "t" to get the word "took." She then asked them to change the first letter to spell "look," "cook" and "hook." When she felt that initial sound substitution was established, she shifted to final consonants and asked students to change "hook" to "hood." She proceeded by asking them to change "hood" to "good" and "wood." Then she shifted back to final consonants and asked them to change "wood" to "wool." With the next group who were more proficient readers, she omitted the step of modeling and challenged them with consonant blends and digraphs. She asked them to change "book" to "shook" and "brook" before proceeding with final consonant

substitutions. On other occasions, the reading groups worked with leveled texts. By modulating the cognitive demand with each group, students had the opportunity to work at their instructional level.

Michelle set up several open-ended "application" activities for other students to work on while she met with successive groups. She believed that the concepts she covered in direct teaching had to be applied independently and regularly by students to achieve desired outcomes. I observed choices such as free reading in the class library, rereading of big books using a pointer for tracking, writing to a descriptive or imaginative writing prompt, a synonym/antonym matching game, a word family hunt, and listening to OCR story on a CD in the listening center. For each free choice activity, students had to produce what Michelle called "evidence" that added an element of student accountability. For example, they listed their pairs of words from the matching game, wrote sentences with the words in the word family, filled in a book report worksheet in the listening center, produced a short paragraph on the writing prompt, etc. Michelle diverged from the remediation approach of OCR workshop to support the whole range of beginning reading levels in her classroom. This balanced students' exposure to grade level text with use of text at their current reading level where they could be active participants.

Use of relevant text. In addition to her concern about differentiation, several times Michelle mentioned that OCR "is not super diverse." She wished that "the literature was a little bit richer" because often students did not identify with the themes and characters represented in the story selections and consequently were not engaged. As she imagined, students seemed to be asking themselves, "how come everybody in this book is white or an animal?" To broaden her students' experiences with literature and informational text, Michelle had collected an extensive library of multicultural materials that dominated one corner of the classroom, underscoring its importance in her approach. Occasionally she switched the OCR story selection for one from her own collection that she could use to meet the same objectives. In addition, she regularly read books from the classroom library aloud to her students to deepen their understanding of the OCR unit theme, noting that "it gives them something else to grab on to, it makes them more eager to connect with literature and makes them more excited about reading."

Second Graders as Meaning Makers

Susan's stated goal for second grade was not only that "every student has access to the standards" but that "they have access to practicing the standards and access to teaching that will allow them to take it in at their level and master the standards." In this statement, she alluded to both the need for differentiation that provides scaffolding for students and the gradual release of responsibility. As an experienced teacher, she said she was aware of the "level of learning that second graders are capable of." When students do not understand the content she is working on, she analyzes their mistakes to find another way to present the content. She looks for "that little gap – that little spot." She recounted that she often sits next to a student who is struggling with a concept and observes them as they work to ascertain not what errors they make, but which errors they

choose to correct. This helps her to glean "what it is that's keeping them back from learning (it), the one thing that they don't know that's keeping them from going on."

Making word work meaningful. Susan spoke of "empowering" students with knowledge of how words work. She wanted students to see the underlying patterns and rules of how words are constructed in English so that they would have the resources to decode and encode unknown words with accuracy. She pointed out the utility of particular phonetic rules by making comments such as, "this is important, this is huge, you have to know this." At the same time, she felt rules and patterns would be meaningless without buy-in from the students and saw a reciprocal relationship between being interested in a topic and developing the necessary tools and skills to read about it. Her work in reading comprehension motivated her work in word knowledge. For example, if students were excited about reading about Cinderella, then a study of compound words such as "stepsister" and "godmother" or multiple meaning words such as "ball" and "coach" would have more salience. Meaning-making was not limited to reading comprehension; Susan wanted her students also to make sense of how words work.

Membership in a learning community. In Susan's room, the class moved as a whole. Differentiation was provided individually and quietly within the whole group setting. For example, during one of my observations, one student took a long time to finish an assignment and the class moved on. He continued working and when he was finished, Susan silently handed him the materials he needed to join the next activity. "He knew he was going to get that done…and that I would let him do that," Susan explained. Another student who read haltingly was paired with a strong reader at his table group. That person was always available to him for support. During my observations, Susan called on this student every time he raised his hand and repeatedly validated his participation as a learner, telling him for example, "you're becoming such a good writer; you are just going to become a writer extraordinaire" when he shared his story with the whole group.

When she directed a question to the group, Susan often waited for most of the students' hands to go up before calling on someone. If the response was weak, she said, "if you don't know, read that passage again and dig it out" giving more students the opportunity to have the answer. In some cases, she identified a particular student to answer the question and publicly coached the student to respond, at which point she praised him by saying, "there it is, he got it." Several times I observed Susan respond to a student who suggested an incorrect answer with, "I thought the same thing, but this is different" or "I can see why you said that but what else is happening?" She praised the thinking, regardless of the answer, for example, "you heard it and you wrote a long "e" spelling; its not correct but you heard it, yeah for you!"

Student accountability for active participation. Susan offered increased access but she required that students actively partake in instruction. She was vigilant about on-task behavior and called out those whose attention drifted. Kennedy (2005) noted teachers' single-minded focus on managing behavior at the expense of exploring tangents

that might lead to deeper understanding. There was not a lot of wiggle room for off-task behavior in Susan's approach but she did not require attentive behavior for its own sake. She conveyed a sense of urgency around the content they are studying, communicated in statements such as "you're going to have to rein it in Francisco, this is too important." She felt that it was imperative that students stay with her ("stay with me on this") in order for proficient reading behaviors to become habitualized.

During my observation, it became clear that Susan's verbal cues to recapture students' attention were central to her theory of action of more equitable access. Access was not enough, students must be actively engaged in order for access to be meaningful. "What you're really doing is giving them the opportunity to learn how to use meta-cognition and the enthusiasm for doing it," she explains. By meta-cognition, Susan meant being conscious of your own thinking. Susan suspected there are some classrooms "where (instruction) is being done but not being heard." She described classrooms that are not necessary chaotic, but where children are not attending "and they must be attending." Strategies for re-engaging students were especially emphasized when she felt it was essential that students grasp a particular concept. As she remarked, "its hard to explain to a 7-year old that they need to take this seriously."

I noticed Susan using three distinct types of verbal cues that I categorized as active learning comments, behavior management, and praise. Active learning comments were most frequent. This type of comment exhorted children to think about what they know, how they can find out, or explained why a particular concept is important to remember. These were pro-active statements made to muster student effort, as opposed to reactive behavior management statements that refocused students' attention. For example, "I want you to think about how we do things in our classroom; use your brain and think about how we do things. I'm going to be really tough today" was stated to focus the beginning of an instructional segment while "I'm hearing a lot of singing and right now we're not singing" was a reaction to off-task behavior.

Susan did not accept passive learning and communicated the expectation that students would take the necessary steps to complete the task in comments such as, "look at the words and if your hand isn't up, figure it out," "you got it or you need help?" and "if you don't know, read that passage again; we're gonna dig this out." While students worked on a spelling task, she made suggestions such as "think, have I ever seen this word written, what did it look like? Picture it in your mind, how did you see it spelled?" and gave hints to push the students to use their knowledge to problem-solve such as "here's another one with a very tricky syllable using a rule we've learned, listen to how I break it into syllables." This was in line with her goal to get students thinking about their thinking, and making connections to what they know. As she said to a child who was impatient while others worked through a task she had already mastered, "I learn something every time I do this; I learn things when I make connections, you got to make connections." At one point, I counted 29 connection statements from Susan in 140 minutes, or one every five minutes.

Susan's vigilance regarding behavior was also directed at positive behavior, as illustrated by comments such as "you were all really good detectives," and "this is the first dictation where everyone in the class had a period on their sentence; let's give ourselves a silent cheer; we're getting there." She communicated her confidence in the class as a whole, saying "you guys are really cooking now; this is getting to be so easy" and "you guys are getting this stuff; I'm giving you all a silent cheer." She rarely gave non-specific praise, such as "good job," but usually paired praise with acknowledgement of a particular behavior as in "nice questions on 'Clues, Problems and Wonderings.'"

Learning from errors. Susan made a point of stressing the value of errors as a learning tool to her students. As she told her class, "you are all growing into being better learners; when you have a mistake on your paper you have the opportunity, the chance, to grow smarter." In this way, she modeled what successful learners do when they hit a roadblock. Several times I heard her ask, "who remembers?" when she referenced a concept they had studied before and then add "who was reminded?" The second part of the question legitimized the idea of recalling an idea when scaffolded and communicated to children that they learn as part of a larger community. Susan also highlighted her own mistakes when writing in front of the class on a chart pad or the overhead. When she made an error when writing in front of the class on the chart pad, she reached for her roll of "magic tape." This was a roll of wide correction tape that she used to cover the error and write over it. When students were engaged in interactive writing where they co-constructed words on the chart pad, she said, "we might have to use some magic tape today so don't get upset; this is tough." As she explains,

> "when they come in from first grade, the idea of making a mistake is horrifying to them. See how many mistakes I make? You have to make mistakes, you correct them and move on. Like the magic tape – there's nothing magic about that tape! All in an effort to make them see. Make a mistake and learn from it, it doesn't get any better than that."

Building resilience. Two of Susan's success stories were students who she retained the previous year. They were the students mentioned previously who were "sneaking a book under their desk and reading it when they shouldn't be," which she used as a measure of how much they came to embrace reading. Both students had entered second grade as non-readers and at the end of the year they were reading but still scored at the "below basic level," the second level on a five point scale. Susan felt they were not yet ready to go to third grade and be successful. As she explained, "how do you expect a child to make up three years in just one year?" They could have been promoted as scheduled, but she felt they would be in a perpetual catch-up mode as other students continually surpassed them and their motivation as learners would be badly damaged. By spring semester of the repeated year, one of the students was at the top of the class, scoring "proficient" and "advanced" on district benchmark assessments. The other student was solidly "basic," performing at an average level with confidence and independence. "Now they're not going to give up," Susan observed, "they're going to keep going and they're going to keep learning." She saw her responsibility to the

students as extending beyond the second grade year. She felt she could not promote students until they developed resilience as learners.

Involving students' families in the learning community. Susan welcomed students' families into the learning community at Back-to-School Night where she distributed a shoebox of homework supplies such as pencils, crayons, markers, sight word lists, erasers, and 100's charts (for math) to each family. Students decorated these "homework boxes" that Susan felt conveyed the idea to parents that she was serious about their involvement. She asked that they work on fluency and spelling with their child by reviewing high frequency word lists, practicing the weekly spelling words and rereading the weekly decodable at home. She also asked family members to support their child in out-of-school literacy activities such as writing, reading and bringing in artifacts that relate to the classroom theme. Susan regarded the families' contribution as more than just "helping out" but as an important reason for their students' improvement. The results of weekly spelling tests were sent home every Friday so that parents received specific feedback on their efforts with their children.

Formative assessment and immediate feedback. Although weekly assessment using the OCR end-of-lesson test is not required by the district, Susan feels that is it something all second grade teachers should do because "getting ready to read for information" supports the students' transition to third grade where they will be expected to draw information out of text. Since this is not a high stakes assessment and the scores are recorded only for Susan's information, there is no secrecy or "gotcha" factor in operation. The assessment is comprised of the weekly spelling test and the OCR end-of-lesson test that includes vocabulary and comprehension questions about the story selection. Before she removed the spelling words from view, Susan lead the group in cheering for each word. Students read the spelling list chorally followed by a group recitation of the spellings in unison. She similarly reviewed the vocabulary words, asking what each word means and probing for nuance, for example, "is an attic like a basement?" She gave the comprehension assessment as an open book test, as designed by OCR, so that students would practice going back to the text for answers, or as she describes it, "going back into the book and digging it out." Keeping with her philosophy about learning through errors, Susan checked the assessments immediately as students handed them in and sent them back to be corrected by the student. At the end of the assessment, every child had a near-perfect paper and Susan knew exactly the types of errors they made and how they corrected them.

Third Graders as Text Users

Sonia's goal was for students to think about and analyze text, "rather than just reading and answering questions." She worked toward independent and flexible use of comprehension strategies so that students would "truly understand and gain meaning from their reading." She wanted students to take ownership of their own learning and to love reading; as she described it, "where you say it's time to read and they're like 'YES!'"

"Access is taking it to them." When asked how she thinks about educational equity, Sonia stressed the importance of making instruction relevant to students' experience. This involved connecting concepts drawn from the grade level content standards to students' experience - "you've got to link it to their world" - and providing a safe zone for taking the risks involved in learning by providing ample practice before demanding performance of a skill or concept. "Equity is you as an educator have to go to them, not them come to you," she explained and challenged rhetorically, "do you *know* where they are at?" During the first weeks of school, Sonia conducts one-on-one interviews with each student while others work independently. She asks about their family, their favorite foods and TV shows, what they like to read, what they like to do. She explores "what they know, what they are into to, what reaches them as learners, who they are and how I can tap into that." This personalization of instruction (Stodolsky & Grossman, 2000) was underscored by a prominent display of large color portraits of each student in the classroom. Sonia believed that every student was "totally capable" of scoring at the proficient level and it was her job "to bring that out of them." The concrete examples she used in her demonstrations and mini-presentations are drawn from what she knew about the movies they have seen, the sports they play, and their friendships. This allowed her to build connections to new knowledge, rather than rely on memorization. She remarked that many educators don't understand that "access is taking it to them."

When thinking broadly about why some of her students struggle with reading, Sonia cited limited vocabulary, background knowledge and exposure for both her native English-speaking students and those learning English. When reading a particular sentence, for example, "there are so many words they don't know and there are not enough words they do know to pull context to understand the meaning." In addition, when students have no background knowledge of a topic, they "don't understand either the subject or the theme or anything that's going on." Limited exposure to books at home and trips to the library resulted in less practice with school-based literacy activities. Context clues had limited utility for them. However, she felt that teachers could "attack those areas" by building vocabulary and background knowledge both before and during reading, as well as increasing exposure through independent reading.

The reading/language arts content standards were a central focus in Sonia's planning and assessment. She cross-referenced OCR activities to the third grade standards and California Standards Text (CST) release questions to gauge the level of performance demand that would be required. She designed a weekly homework sheet with tasks linked to the standards, and recycled items until most students consistently displayed mastery. A version of the homework tasks were then repeated on a weekly test that she designed. The homework and the weekly test incorporated test preparation strategies by structuring questions as they might appear on the CST. The CST loomed large in Sonia's third grade program, especially in the spring. After testing time passed in late April, she planned to shift away from the OCR story selections and start literature groups around books of students' choice.

The importance of student interaction. Sonia's lessons were a continual interplay between teacher talk and partner discussions. Not more than a few minutes

went by before students were asked to turn to a neighbor to share their responses to a snippet of text, a question or a teacher demonstration. The classroom was arranged to facilitate talk about text. Desks were grouped in teams of 4 students. There was a large carpeted area where the whole group met for discussions, presentations and read alouds. A comfortable bench and a sofa provided meeting spaces for partners or small groups. Students were surrounded by anchor charts (Harvey & Goudvis, 2007) that captured their discussions on fluency and comprehension strategies.

Citing the importance of student-to-student interaction she said "they have to talk." She continued, "if they don't know the answer it gives them the opportunity to hear the answer and if they do know, it gives them the opportunity to teach it to others." She hoped that these external conversations with partners would eventually become internal dialogues between students and their reading.

"Go deep." Sonia felt that she needed to "go deep" when introducing a new concept to truly insure access. She did not have much faith in OCR's spiraling format because it didn't offer sufficient scaffolding for students to understand, practice and master a concept for independent use. She used three sets of principles to guide her planning and teaching; the notion of moving from concrete to abstract, strategies for Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAI) and the gradual release of responsibility (Duke & Pearson, 2002; Pearson & Gallagher, 1983), which was described in Chapter 2. These three approaches share a Vygotskian perspective of scaffolding instruction in the zone of proximal development. Sonia blended them together when crafting lessons, as shown in the example below.

When introducing a new concept or strategy, Sonia launched the gradual release of responsibility by modeling with a concrete experience or example that did not involve text. For example, when presenting an OCR lesson on "adjectives" that called for students to brainstorm and record descriptive words, she prefaced the lesson with a concrete warm-up activity. In her book, *Comprehension Connections,* McGregor (2007) explains the power of "launching" a lesson with a concrete experience before introducing text so that students connect intellectually without the complications of decoding. Sonia began the warm-up by demonstrating what an adjective is. She pulled a carrot out of her lunch bag and discussed how it looked, sounded, smelled, tasted and felt. She recorded the descriptive words gathered in the discussion in five columns representing the five senses on a large poster that would become an anchor chart (Harvey & Goudvis, 2007) for students' future reference on adjectives. She then distributed objects to small groups of students and asked them to think of words that described how they looked, sounded, smelled, tasted and felt, and record their adjectives on a worksheet patterned after the anchor chart. The concrete experience of examining and describing their objects then became part of the students' knowledge base that they could later apply when describing concepts presented more abstractly in text.

The next step in the lesson sequence, still in advance of the OCR prompt, was to model the same concept with a snippet of text. This was followed by guided practice where partners grappled with the focal concept with the support of a peer, the teacher and

a familiar text, such as a story that the class had read aloud. The guided practice phase was open-ended and could be extended as long as students needed practice. When the focal concept was firmly established in students' knowledge base, Sonia moved to independent practice with unfamiliar text such as the new OCR story selection. Finally, she included the focal concept on her weekly homework and assessment to evaluate students' independent use. During the observations for this study, this sequence was used several times in lessons on adjectives, inference, making predictions and identifying the main idea of a passage. Guided practice, the engine of the gradual release of responsibility, propelled Sonia's students from access to outcomes.

Understanding word meaning as well as word structure. In contrast to the first and second grade teachers in this study, Sonia spent minimal time on the OCR Word Knowledge activities. She regarded this section as unnecessary once students were reading and thought the time designated for phonics would be better spent on vocabulary development and fluency practice. At Sonia's school, all the third graders were pooled and reassigned to groups by English proficiency level for the OCR Word Knowledge section. Each teacher at the grade level took a group during this time. Sonia taught the early intermediate English learners group. She reorganized the OCR weekly sequence so that the lesson on spelling patterns was covered in one day, freeing up time for vocabulary development and fluency practice. She felt strongly that there was no point in students learning the spelling patterns of words for which they didn't know the meaning, so she routinely incorporated discussions of the featured words along with the phonics lesson. For example, in a phonics lesson on silent "k," Sonia spent time asking students what they knew about the words "knot," "knit," and "knob" and supporting them to refine and clarify the meanings they had constructed. Words used to illustrate spelling patterns in OCR were not necessarily a word students would have heard before, such as the words "stable" and "nibble" in a lesson on how to read "le" at the end of a syllable. She frequently asked them to explain terms such as compound word, synonym, etc., by imagining if a kindergartener, another teacher, the principal or the yard supervisor walked into the room and said, "huh?" and asked for an explanation. She was grateful for this time focused on solely on students learning English because she found that they asked questions they might not have asked in their regular classrooms when grouped with English native speakers. It allowed her to take more time to "break it down and go off on those little tangents and make that time really meaningful."

Guided practice of English reading fluency. In place of the prescribed review of the OCR phonics lesson, Sonia used one session a week to explicitly demonstrate and practice reading English text with the early intermediate English learners using leveled passages providing in the OCR Intervention Guide. Referencing the distinction between conversational and academic facility in a language she said, "just because you speak English doesn't mean you know what to do when you come to a question mark." She likened reading fluently to riding a bicycle because you always have to look ahead. She demonstrated how a question mark cues the reader to raise your voice at the end, like a roller coaster, while a comma indicates its time to take a quick breath. After reviewing punctuation cues ("what do you do when you come to an exclamation mark?"), she listened to individuals read from the leveled passages and gave them specific feedback

("you changed your voice to show a different character, now I want you to work on your breathing") as other students read independently.

Independent reading and choice. Sonia had collected an extensive library including both narrative and expository texts organized in baskets by topics and reading levels. She set up a "library locker" using a magazine holder for each student. Once a week, students chose one book that would be easy for them to read, one that would be challenging and several books at their "just right" level by estimating their fluency level. Linking their fluency work to book choice, Sonia explained that if they found themselves reading "like a robot," the book is a beyond their current fluency level. Conversely, if they could easily read the first few paragraphs with expression and automaticity, the book is at their fluency level. The majority of their book choices would be "middle of the road" books that students could read with more ease than "robot" but not yet with expression. Over the course of the year, Sonia saw students develop their individual preferences in reading after initially choosing the same books as their friends. She used these books for both independent reading during OCR workshop time and for guided practice with new concepts and skills. After modeling a concept, she might ask students to try it with one of the books in their library locker.

Formative assessment that informs teaching and learning. Because Sonia wanted students to take an active role in monitoring their own learning, she shared her criteria for evaluating performance. She believed that all students could master the standards but needed varying levels of support on their way to independence. She didn't want summative rankings such as report card grades to be a surprise to students, and told them, "if you've been getting "2's" on your weekly tests, you're probably getting a "2" on your report card." Students knew that a score of 1, 2, 3 or 4 represented not ability but level of support needed to carry out a task. She began this process by describing levels of skill as being like infant development, a progression many of them had witnessed with younger siblings. She might ask them to evaluate their progress with a particular skill by asking, "are you a newborn, are you crawling yet, holding on, or walking?" As an on-the-spot assessment that was informative to both teacher and student, she would direct students to raise their hand if they need a lot of help to carry out a task, a little help or if they could do it on their own.

Sonia stayed abreast of her students' progress using on-the-spot checks, weekly tests and district benchmark assessments. In one instance that I observed, as Sonia modeled how to respond to a multiple choice question on the overhead, she asked students to choose their answer and then have a "silent, honest vote." Students closed their eyes and raised their hand to indicate which of the answers they had chosen as she read them aloud. This gave her a quick assessment for whether the group was ready to move on, or if further modeling or guided practice was needed. Weekly tests that she designed and quarterly district benchmark assessments helped Sonia keep tabs on students' progress towards mastering the grade level standards. She organized these results in a binder and was able to "flip through and see exactly what kinds of questions (a particular student) is missing." This was key to differentiating instruction – "I know

exactly where they're at, I can pretty much tell you their strengths and weaknesses, what standards they are really good at."

In these examples of the relationship between the three teachers' desired outcomes and their conceptualizations of equity, the teachers generally adapted the prescribed pedagogy and maintained the content. I wondered whether these adaptations reflected pedagogical knowledge (PK) or pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) as described by Shulman (1986). Shulman distinguishes PCK, knowledge of how to teach particular content effectively, from PK, general expertise in how to organize and motivate instruction. In Table 4-1, I categorized the use of strategies such as active participation, student interaction, activation of prior knowledge, parent involvement, formative assessment, learning from errors and striving for meaningfulness and relevancy as PK because they could be used with any subject matter. Strategies to develop prosody, independent reading and teaching word meanings along with word structure were sorted into the PCK category. Table 4-1 shows many more instances of the use of PK than PCK. This suggests that to achieve a fit between their students and OCR, the teachers drew on extensive general pedagogical knowledge. If this level of PK is needed to execute the curriculum, then it appears that the program is not "teacher-proof."

Teachers' Stances Towards the Curriculum

One aspect of professional prerogative explored with the case study teachers in interviews and classroom observations was their stance towards the adopted reading program. Each teacher had a different stance towards OCR, influenced by their goals for their grade level, their experiences with reading curricula and their broader approach to instruction. Their stance was not uniform across the program, but varied considerably between the phonics and comprehension components. In preliminary interviews, teachers shared their initial response to OCR when it was first adopted by their district, and how their attitude towards the program changed over time. Each recalled a catalyzing event that clarified their stance towards the program.

"Be aware of what's there, what's not there and how you're going to fill the holes." As a first grade teacher, Michelle is always looking for a way to "break it down" for beginning readers. OCR's systematic approach to introducing each sound and its corresponding symbol or spelling pattern suited her desire for explicitness and structure. Before OCR, the district used a core reading program that featured suggested activities she described as "kind of whole language." She found the lack of structure "piecemeal" and unsupportive to her as a teacher. When the district shifted to a system-wide focus on literacy using a more structured approach, she was open to getting on board. She recalled that she had neither a "love it or hate it" reaction. She appreciated the initial training that was offered by the local Reading First Technical Assistance Center and was motivated by the feeling of shared purpose. Her students' strong results on the fall district benchmark assessment given in November of the first implementation year sold her on the "explicit step-by-step process" taken by the phonics component of OCR. Her first graders were decoding simple words earlier and more and accurately than Michelle had seen in past years. At the time of my observation, Michelle continued to follow this section closely

Table 4-1

Adaptations Using Pedagogical Knowledge (PK) or Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)

Adaptation	PK	PCK
Emphasis on prosody		X
Grade level exposure balanced with actual reading levels.		X
Use of relevant text	X	
Making word work meaningful	X	
Membership in a learning community	X	
Student accountability for active participation.	X	
Learning from errors.	X	
Building resilience.	X	
Involving students' families in the learning community	X	
Formative assessment and immediate feedback.	X	
Connecting to students' prior knowledge and experience	X	
The importance of student interaction.	X	
Concrete/abstract, SDAI, gradual release of responsibility	X	
Understanding word meaning as well as word structure		X
Guided practice of English reading fluency.		X
Independent reading and choice.		X
Formative assessment that informs teaching and learning.	X	

because she felt OCR had done a good job with it. In fact, anticipating the next textbook adoption and some teachers' hope that OCR would be replaced, Michelle said that she would be "kind of sad to see it go because after this amount of time, I've found good ways to work to make it effective." She felt it was important to recognize that "there is never going to be a perfect program; it's not going to happen. So, you always have to be aware of what's there and what's not there, and how you're going do to fill the holes."

The training that Michelle received by attending Reading First workshops and by reading and using the text expanded her knowledge of reading instruction and made the process of learning to read much clearer to her. Thinking back to her teacher preparation coursework, she said she would sometimes reflect, "oh, that's what they were talking about." Michelle appreciated how she had developed as a reading teacher using the program and recognized that as a new teacher ten years ago, "it definitely gave me a lot of tools; if I had been left on my own, I don't know if I would have come up with everything in there."

In contrast, some aspects of the reading program felt forced and overly teacher-directed. Michelle arranged students desks in groups of four so that students could collaborate as teams, rather than the U-shape focused on the front of the room that OCR recommends. Instead of a "stand and deliver" approach from the front of the room, she had students come to a carpeted area for whole group work that didn't require a writing surface, such as read alouds, reading decodables and working with spelling patterns. To keep students physically active, she frequently moved whole group activities back and forth between the table groups and the rug.

The OCR Concept/Question Board felt too "teacher-driven" to Michelle. The Concept/Question Board is a bulletin board constructed around questions and emerging concepts related to the theme of the literature unit. It has a similar purpose to the strategy well known to teachers as "KWL" (Ogle, 1986) where students share what they know, want to know and what they learned about a topic. With the Concept/Question Board, students post their questions about a theme and any information they might come across such as newspaper articles, etc. As their questions are answered by reading the story selections, they post notes about their new understandings. Michelle found this to be an "inauthentic, teacher thing" and said she would not put it up just to satisfy an external checklist.

Utilizing the program to achieve larger goals. Susan's stance towards OCR can be summed up by her sense of responsibility for her students that she expressed when she said,

> "my responsibility is not to OCR. My responsibility is to the twenty students sitting in from of me who need to not finish OCR or do all the pages in the workbook. They need to learn the standards. That's my responsibility."

When Susan found a teaching strategy that would serve her students, she embraced it. One of the OCR routines that Susan found very effective was the "Preparing to Read" section that provides daily practice with phonemes, blending and segmenting. When asked the most pervasive reason some students had trouble learning to read, Susan replied, "they don't have the key that unlocks the words which is phonics." She uses the term "phonics" to signify more than knowing the sounds of the alphabet. As she described, "they haven't had the opportunity to learn it, to use it, to interact with it; I've seen kids who know all the phonics and haven't interacted with text and they still can't read."

Susan's commitment to the OCR blending routine had been inspired by her previous work as a reading intervention teacher when the program was first introduced in the district. Working with a spectrum students across grade levels, she noticed that many of them lacked awareness of how to blend sounds into words, and how to break down sounds in order to write words they didn't already know how to spell. Charged with working with students to diagnose and fill in gaps, she went back to the OCR Teachers Edition to review the lessons they had received and to design new ways of approaching the same concepts. Before OCR was adopted, Susan had successfully taught reading using guided reading groups and reading centers, and couldn't imagine using any other method. Thinking she would avoid implementing OCR by opting out of classroom teaching by taking the reading position, Susan actually ended up knowing more about OCR than she might have as a single-grade teacher. As she said jokingly, "it backfired on me." When she returned to the classroom, she vowed to implement the parts of the program that she felt comfortable with. She recalled herself thinking "I'm just going to do it, I'm going to go in there and do it." She was determined that her students would receive constant opportunities to learn how to blend sounds and encode sounds because she had seen older children struggle as non-readers as a result of not grasping this concept. She felt this was a consequence of not being offered enough practice in blending and segmenting sounds in words. Her strong feeling about the importance of blending practice was exemplified in her response to a student who requested permission to go to the restroom during a phonics routine when she replied, "Bathroom? During blending? Is it an emergency?"

"Can't assume anything." Sonia's teaching career began the year OCR was adopted by her district. She related that the first year she implemented the curriculum "word for word" and found that "the script didn't work by itself." She noticed that the curriculum made a lot of assumptions about students' prior knowledge and did not provide adequate scaffolding. As she said, "you can't just say something and assume they know it and keep on going." However, she felt it was irresponsible to complain about the program without raising specific issues and proposing specific solutions. "I asked myself why I didn't like the program, what are the reasons," she remembers, and those reasons motivated the changes she made to the reading program. When asked if OCR increased her ability to teach reading effectively, she thought she could probably do better without the constraints but conceded that it helps her stay on track with the standards and the pacing schedule. In addition, she believed that the research into

alternative methods that she conducted to explore her reservations about OCR made her a more effective teacher.

In contrast to Michelle who welcomed repeated small doses of instruction, Sonia questioned the effectiveness of the spiraling approach where a concept is introduced without time for adequate practice. This may have been due to the greater demand for performance on third graders as opposed to first graders. She was adamant that students need to focus on one idea at a time, rather than the OCR practice of including several comprehension strategies or spelling patterns in one lesson. Sonia also questioned OCR's reliance on "think alouds" for comprehension strategy instruction. "Think aloud" is a strategy where a reader voices the thoughts and questions that come to mind as he/she reads. It is used to model what proficient readers do to monitor and clarify meaning. In OCR, teachers are directed to use think alouds to describe their use of comprehension strategies as they read but there is no provision for practice beyond the demonstration. Sonia felt that unless students had been introduced to comprehension strategies with concrete experiences and ample opportunities for guided practice, they would not have a context for understanding what a teacher was doing when he/she shifts out of reading mode and "goes off" into a think aloud. I asked Sonia why her third graders would not have already been introduced to comprehension strategies. She thought it was because teachers in previous grade levels had stuck too closely to the OCR think aloud scripts without directly teaching the strategies and thus the students had not yet really learned and internalized them.

Exercising Prerogative Through Variations in Implementation

Professional prerogative exists in reciprocal relationship with responsibility (Pearson, 2007). Teachers are trusted to use their pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1987) to design instructional practices that will effectively convey a body of content to a particular group of students. At the same time, they are obligated to continue to develop their expertise in order to offer the best program possible to their students based on the most up-to-date knowledge in the field. Sonia spoke of the time and investment it takes to develop as a teacher. She estimated that if a new teacher actively researched best practices, it might take until the fifth year of teaching to be fully productive; "it could take longer if based on trial and error alone," if it occurred at all. In her own case, even while pursuing an active agenda of professional reading, she felt it wasn't until the fifth year that she started "actually teaching." Michelle kept her eyes open for workshops, conferences and teacher magazines where she could gather more ideas to add to her "big files of things I'm going to try" in addition to participating in formal and informal collaborations with teacher colleagues. All three case study teachers mentioned collaboration with colleagues as a factor in curriculum implementation, a practice that is outside the scope of this study but has been documented by Coburn (2001).

Susan spoke of prerogative in terms of being clear on your "purpose" in making pedagogical choices, an ideal she learned as a student teacher. As she recounts, "I always think about that when I do these kind of wacko things. Why am I doing it? What's the

purpose? And I always have a purpose for putting it out in front of them." In the this section, I describe teachers' expressions of prerogative as reflected in their practice through compliance with the OCR program, adaptation to the program or omission of activities in the program. In my analysis, I coded classroom vignettes as either "no change" indicating compliance with the program or "change" indicating adaptation and/or omission. Within these categories, I further analyzed whether teachers maintained or changed the content of the program or the pedagogical strategies prescribed by the program. I found that the case study teachers generally accepted the content of the program, which included both the lesson objectives and the story selections, but made changes to the pedagogy when they felt they had stronger approach. Sometimes they supplemented with texts in order to build background knowledge for the OCR text.

Exercising Prerogative Through Compliance

Susan saw the OCR routines as helpful to students because they knew what to expect and time was not lost in transitions from one activity to the next. In addition, she appreciated not "reinventing everything for every day and every lesson." The consistent daily OCR routines freed Susan up to actually observe while she was teaching. Based on these observations, she could then "bump it up when I can see that they can take in more." Michelle had a similar response when she contrasted the supportiveness of OCR compared to a previous core reading program.

As mentioned earlier, Susan's attitude about blending was completely in concert with the OCR approach. The OCR "word knowledge" and "phonics and fluency" routines are designed to "teach students that they have strategies for figuring out any unfamiliar words they encounter as they read the selection" (SRA/McGraw Hill, 2002a, p. 222K) by reinforcing particular spelling patterns and providing regular practice in blending words. The objective of phonics instruction in second grade is to "move from word fluency to sentence fluency" (SRA/McGraw Hill, 2002a, p. 222K). OCR methodically introduces sound/symbol correspondences in kindergarten and first grade in a prescribed sequence using a consistent routine where the sound is represented by a pictorial cue. The system is predicated on hearing individual phonemes and then learning the spelling patterns that represent each sound. However, in order to move forward in this system, students must understand how to blend sounds together to make words. In OCR, "blending is the heart of phonics instruction and the key strategy students must learn to open the world of written language" (SRA/McGraw Hill, 2002b, Appendix p. 17). For students who experience beginning reading instruction using a part-to-whole approach, blending can be a stumbling block to moving forward.

Susan agreed that the key to decoding is blending sounds. In her view, "if students can't blend, they can't read." She noticed that although some children can recite the sound of individual letters or letter combinations, when those same letter combinations appear in a word, they cannot read it. As she said, "they are giving you sounds letter by letter but then they are not able to blend it into a word." This can be a pitfall of teaching emergent readers sounds in isolation. For this reason, Susan felt that the way OCR explicitly blends sounds was essential. OCR uses a blending routine where

the teacher has children pronounce individual sounds and then "sweeps" his/her hand through the letters to indicate a blending action as they pronounce the word. She thought that OCR's "dictation" routine was equally essential because it required students to encode the sounds they hear in a dictated word or sentence. These routines allow children to practice both decoding and its reverse operation, encoding. As Susan said, "you have to do both to be fluent."

Exercising Prerogative through Adaptation

Past studies on teacher implementation of curriculum have described curriculum enactment in terms of a continuum of acceptance (Coburn, 2004; Smagorinsky et al., 2002) or hybridization with past practices (Kersten & Pardo, 2007). These conceptualizations imply a sort of hedging or resistance to the curriculum. The interviews and observations in this study uncovered a different response. When the teachers made adaptations, they either layered on their own strategies to "boost" the power of prescribed activities or they approached the prescribed objectives in an alternate way. In adaptation through layering, teachers placed an additional strategy on top of the OCR strategy. With adaptation using an alternative method, they substituted a different approach in place of the OCR strategy (S. Woulfin, personal communication, November 1, 2009).

Adaptation through layering. Michelle's instruction was fast-paced and participatory. She used the OCR phonics routines of "Blending" and "Dictation" to teach spelling patterns but layered on her own delivery style. In interviews, Michelle referred several times to the tension between the attention span of a first grader and the amount of content in an OCR lesson. She addressed this in her instruction by maintaining an enthusiastic tone, challenging her students to take on the content ("are we ready to tackle five new spellings, can we do it?"), pacing the lesson with a timer ("can we do it in only fifteen minutes?"), and deleting some of the suggested activities ("they'd be rolling on the floor if it went any longer"). She communicated a sense of "we" in her classroom by transforming solitary tasks into supportive group efforts, similar to the way that the individual performance of runners or swimmers is supported by their team. She guided, coached, and affirmed.

Leading her students through the reading of a list of words designed to practice a particular spelling pattern in the OCR Blending routine, Michelle used a sequence of repeated readings. This entailed reading the list together, reading it together a second time at a faster pace, reading it to yourself, reading it to a neighbor and then asking students to indicate with thumbs up when they thought they could read the list aloud independently, all in rapid succession. She then chose a volunteer to read the list to the class. This volunteer had had the benefit of repeated practice and feedback from a neighbor before performing for the class. The technique of reading and rereading chorally followed by checking with a neighbor before going "public" kept students socially engaged in the activity, thereby minimizing off-task behavior. Like the other teachers in this study, Michelle felt that engagement was key to equitable access. It was

her job to insure that students stayed on-task by both opening the door and making sure students walked through it.

Michelle's theory of action was illustrated in the way she approached "Dictation," the OCR routine that is the inverse process of Blending. Following the direct teaching of a featured spelling pattern and practice decoding, the OCR routine shifts to encoding the same spelling pattern. At this point, the teacher dictates words that have the featured pattern and students encode them by applying their knowledge of the spelling pattern. As stated in the Teacher's Edition, "reflecting on the sounds they hear in words will help students develop writing fluency as they apply the strategy to writing unfamiliar words" (SRA/McGraw Hill, 2002b, Appendix, p. 18). I would add that this inverse process solidifies knowledge by asking students to flexibly switch back and forth between decoding and encoding.

Although the pedagogical routines for teaching and blending sounds is carefully laid out in OCR materials, more general pedagogical strategies for engaging students in these lessons is undelineated. Directions in the teacher's manual are vague, such as "tell the students…," "remind the students…," "have the students do...," etc. This imbalance between a high level of specificity in some areas and no direction in others creates an opening for teachers to layer on their own strategies. Therefore, although there may be rich content available about how spelling patterns function in words, the teacher must provide the pedagogical strategy that insures students access the content.

Staying true to the lesson objectives, Michelle applied her team learning style to the Dictation activity that I observed on words containing the sound of /oo/ as in the word "goo." This sound can be represented five different ways, which was the focus of the phonics lesson prior to Dictation, as in the words "true," "rude," "flute," "tuna," and "tooth." These five spellings are posted on the OCR sound/spelling card for the "goo" sound so that students can readily see that all of the spellings make the same sound and their use depends on what follows within an individual word. For example, "ue" and "ew" are usually found at the end of a word, while "u" is often used at the end of a syllable, bearing in mind that phonics rules for English have many exceptions. Experienced readers read and spell these patterns without consciously thinking about them. OCR makes the patterns explicit so that inexperienced readers will have a strategy to use when encountering unknown words (SRA/McGraw Hill, 2002b; Appendix, p. 18). It can be argued that the same effect can be achieved incidentally with plenty of time spent reading. However, in the OCR approach, each English spelling pattern is presented directly and systematically using the Blending and Dictation routines.

Michelle began "Dictation" by reading the first of six words aloud, then asking students to repeat the word. As a group, they segmented the word into onset and rime using a gesture where they put two fists together and then broke them apart while saying the word. As students wrote the word, Michelle circulated and coached individuals, telling them whether she agreed or disagreed with their spelling and calling attention to the sound/spelling card. She asked for a student to volunteer their spelling ("who thinks they got it?") and asked students to put thumbs up if they got it, followed by thumbs up

"if you were super close and almost got it." As she worked through the list of six words, sometimes she gave a clue, for example, "my clue is 'oo,' use my clue to write 'booth' as in 'I went to a carnival booth.'" Other times she asked students to explain how they spelled a word ("how did you do 'new?'") or "who was able to use a rhyming word to spell 'tooth?'" Noticing how students responded to the clues gave Michelle an on-the-spot observational assessment about the level of support students needed with the focal spelling pattern. As she said, "you can tell a lot by whether they pick up on the clues and realize, 'she's giving the answer!'"

Adaptation using an alternative method. Susan faithfully implemented the objectives of the OCR curriculum so when she found their pedagogical approach to be ineffective, she redesigned it to insure that her students would achieve the lesson objectives. The OCR prescription for vocabulary instruction had not been successful with her students. OCR has a protocol for introducing "selection vocabulary" from the story selection by reading each word in a sentence and asking students to determine the meaning through context clues, apposition or word structure. Susan felt that these strategies did not give enough support when students had no prior experience with a word. Apposition was unreliable because the focal words were not always followed by an explanatory phrase. Context and word structure were not necessarily helpful when a student had no idea what a word or word part meant.

Susan invented an alternative approach where the class would share their ideas about what a selection vocabulary word might mean, look the word up in their textbook glossary and compare to the definition she found it in the Teacher's Edition, discuss the glossary meanings by drawing parallels to their experience and then propose a definition in their own words. Each child then illustrated the word and noted the agreed-upon definition in their writing notebook. They entered the definition with an illustration that would remind them of the meaning on a sheet from their word notebooks. As they did this, Susan completed her own sheet on the overhead projector as a model. The idea of discussing shades of meaning and creating a student-friendly definition is reminiscent of Beck and McKeown (2002) who promote nuance rather than static definitions in vocabulary instruction.

Susan sometimes disagreed about the usefulness of the words that were featured. If a featured word was so common that all the students would already know it (such as the word "beautiful" from a Cinderella story) she would substitute a word that she thought would better add to students' comprehension of the story. In the Cinderella unit, she added the word "ball" because it has multiple meanings, including the meaning it has in the story that students may not be familiar with. For multiple meaning words such as "ball," students "webbed" the word in their writing notebook by writing it in the middle of a page and illustrating the various definitions on spokes emanating from the word. In the second grade Fossils Unit, Susan threw out the word "difficult" and added the words "chisel" and "paleontologist" because of their usefulness to comprehension of the story selection. Most words on OCR's selection vocabulary lists were what Beck and McKeown (2002) call "tier two" words, or new words for known concepts that would expand students' academic vocabularies. When OCR featured "tier one" or everyday

words, Susan took the opportunity to substitute "tier three" words that contribute specialized meanings. Because anonyms and synonyms are included in the second grade standards but are not practiced enough in OCR in Susan's judgment, she added an antonym/synonym routine to vocabulary time. For example, in the Fossils unit, she pulled out the word "enormous" and the students generated synonyms and antonyms in their writing notebooks.

The OCR approach to vocabulary instruction did not reflect current innovative strategies for developing academic vocabulary or learning about shades of meaning and word usage. When one aspect of the program worked so well, as with Michelle and Susan's experience with the phonics component, there was a tendency to trust that the other components would be equally effective. At first Susan thought there was something about the OCR vocabulary routine that she was missing because it was neither engaging nor productive for her students. Working with her site reading coach and using her own expertise, Susan invented her own approach to vocabulary instruction that achieved the OCR objectives while fostering her students interest in words and confidence as word detectives.

Adaptation through invention. Teachers found the OCR curriculum offered rich sites for learning they could use to go beyond the surface prescriptions. Each unit is organized around a literature-based, social studies-based or science-based theme. In addition, comprehension strategy instruction and literature discussions offer endless opportunities for delving into text. However, the amount of content provided in an OCR unit and the district pacing schedule discouraged many teachers from venturing beyond minimal requirements for fidelity. This had the ironic effect of more rigorous content actually limiting the teaching of more rigorous content, an absurd situation when the goal of the curriculum is specifically to raise achievement. In the next chapter, I describe how Susan, the second grade teacher extended the thematic potential of OCR units with vignettes from her "Kindness" unit and her "Fossils" unit. I also relate how Sonia, the third grade teacher, takes comprehension strategy instruction beyond what is prescribed in the OCR teacher's manual.

Exercising Prerogative through Omission

Although Susan dedicated ample blocks of time several days each week to making sure her students understood the story selection through repeated re-readings and extension activities, I noticed that she did not utilize the comprehension strategies instruction detailed in "think alouds" in the Teacher's Edition. In fact, none of the teachers in this study used them. Sample dialogues for think alouds are provided for the teacher throughout each story selection to illustrate what might be said when modeling one of the six OCR comprehension strategies. These are "strategies good readers use to comprehend the text" such as summarizing, monitoring and clarifying, asking questions, predicting, making connections, visualizing and monitoring and adjusting reading speed (SRA/McGraw Hill, 2002b, Appendix p. 22). Susan felt that focusing on the comprehension strategies would interfere with students' understanding of the text. "I never do those things on the first read," she said, "I want them just to think about what

they're reading." When commenting about how she focuses on the content rather than comprehension strategies when reading about the work of paleontologists in the Fossils Unit, Susan said, "if they don't understand the scientific process that we're reading about, none of it's going to make much difference." She added, "summarizing doesn't exist in a vacuum, you're doing it about something."

Susan seemed very committed to the meaning of the text and ambivalent about using text in the service of comprehension strategy instruction. She said, "its hard for me to use the dialogue they have there because for me, what I see my children doing is how I respond." She conceded that the sample think aloud dialogue could be helpful for new teachers, but that she didn't think a discussion that was not based on her students' responses would be effective. She used the Teacher's Edition to glean general guidelines for comprehension instruction by looking for "what the topics are and what kinds of questions we should be asking" but she did not use the designated comprehension strategy for that story or the sample think alouds. She said she always used questioning and making connections to the selection vocabulary but "not as scripted as in the book," and then she used her "teacher sense" when she thought students were not understanding and then they stop and talk about it. She preferred to ask herself, "what do you need to do? What do you need to do so that they understand this?" When probed, she questioned whether the designated comprehension strategies were the best match for their respective stories and felt she would be a better judge of which strategy to focus on to connect her students to a particular story. She expressed skepticism about the prescribed strategies, saying she suspected that "they're covering all the strategies to be covering all the strategies, but they're not always a match with the text."

Overall, the teachers utilized the content of OCR – the themes, texts and objectives – but varied in their use of the prescribed pedagogy as shown in Table 4-2. The first and second grade teachers followed "Preparing to Read," the OCR phonics segment, but the third grade teacher did not. None of the teachers used the OCR approach to vocabulary or comprehension. All of them gained content knowledge from reading the OCR teacher's manual and attending training, either by picking up new knowledge and strategies or by doing further research to make the curriculum more effective.

Findings and Discussion

When an externally-designed curriculum meets students in a classroom setting, its strengths and limitations are exposed. The teacher plays the role of mediator between the abstract curriculum as imagined by policy and the curriculum enacted in the classroom, as explained in Chapter 3. Interweaving how teachers conceptualized more equitable student outcomes with their actual classroom practice created a more complete picture of how they understand the relationship between professional prerogative, prescriptive curriculum and equitable outcomes.

Table 4-2.

Elements of OCR Directly Implemented (not changed)

Element of OCR program	1st gr	2nd gr	3rd gr
U-shape configuration of desks			
Concept/Question Board			
Sound/Spelling cards	x	x	
"Preparing the Read" section (phonics)	x	x	
Selected vocabulary words	x	x	
Technique for teaching vocabulary			
Selected comprehension strategies			x
Technique for teaching comprehension strategies			
Scope and sequence keyed to standards	x	x	
Lesson objectives	x	x	x
Themes	x	x	
Student anthology	x	x	x

Relationship Between Desired Outcomes and Conceptions of Equity

There was a direct relationship between the choices teachers made in their implementation of OCR and how they conceptualized equitable outcomes in reading. Because OCR was presented as standards-based, the teachers in this study were in accordance with the "theory of content" (Doyle, 1990) embodied in the program and generally agreed with its goals and principles. This aspect of the curriculum represented what Coburn (2005) referred to as "coherence," one predictor of the likelihood that a policy will be implemented at street level. The value that the teachers placed on the standards-based objectives of the curriculum as a measure of equity may partially explain their cooperative rather than resistance stance.

Analysis using the Four Resources Model of Reading showed that teachers built students' capabilities as code breakers, meaning makers and text users. Michelle's theory of action to increase access to the first grade curriculum included initiating students into the behaviors practiced by fluent readers and providing regular opportunities for both exposure to grade level curriculum and development at their reading level. She believed that increased opportunities to practice and apply new skills and concepts would more likely result in deeper understandings that underlie mastery of grade level standards. Although as a first grade teacher Michelle felt tremendous pressure to "get decoding going," she introduced prosody early in the reading process to hedge against word-calling. By having her students look for meaning in punctuation, dialogue, and rhythmic chanting, she launched them as readers who expect text to make sense and who know that they play an active role in meaning-making (Tierney & Pearson, 1983). Michelle recognized that her students came into first grade with different types of pre-reading experiences, levels of English proficiency and stages of maturity required for attending to text. She used both observation and formal assessment to keep track of students' understanding so that she could maximize opportunities presented by OCR's spiraling presentation of curriculum content.

For Susan, making connections was a major goal of her second grade reading program, evidenced by her challenges to her students in questions such as, "where have you seen that before?" "how did you know that?" "what should you do when you come across that?" "how can you find out?" By sharing the results of formative assessment, capitalizing on the windows into thinking that errors provide and organizing her students to work collaboratively, she modeled strategies used by successful learners. In her theory of action, equitable outcomes could be realized by students taking an active role in their own development as meaning makers.

Sonia also believed that her third graders had to be actively engaged as text users in order to become independent, proficient readers. She felt that the gradual release of responsibility, executed by moving from concrete experiences to abstract text was essential to reach desired outcomes. Short of using that framework, teaching was merely telling and assuming students understood because a topic had been covered. It was in their conscious movement from guided to independent practice that students build a

situation model that linked their prior knowledge to new concepts. Relevance to students' experience and ample practice made new knowledge belong to the learner.

None of the teachers in this study took a "color-blind" approach to reading instruction. Each of them recognized the unique challenges involved for students who had language and literacy experiences that may not match the mainstream expectations of schooling. They saw their tasks as taking responsibility for connecting students' prior experiences and school experiences with new learning. Within the confines of the demands of their respective grade level standards, they stretched beyond technical skills to develop students' repertoires as code breakers, meaning makers and text users. However, none of the teachers ventured into the role of text critic with their students. This could be because it is not required by the content standards at these grade levels, or that it was not addressed in the OCR curriculum.

Relationship Between Desired Outcomes and Stances Towards OCR

In general, the case study teachers used the California Reading/Language Arts content standards as their criterion for evaluating the content of the OCR reading program. They weighed the prescribed pedagogical strategies against what they thought would be the most effective means to support students to mastery of the standards. The first and second grade teachers found OCR's structure for teaching phonics invaluable and used it with near fidelity because it helped them break down word knowledge explicitly. This was not an issue in third grade once students were reading. Likewise, the spiral design for introducing content worked in first grade before students were expected to demonstrate independent use, but did not serve third graders well. The strength of OCR's step-by-step approach to phonics was not found in comprehension instruction where strategies were mentioned rather than directly taught. The relative strengths and weaknesses of the program caused teachers to implement different components of the program with different degrees of fidelity and adaptation.

Prerogative and Variation in Implementation

Five distinct variations in implementation show the nuanced response that the teachers had towards the reading program. None of them could be pigeon-holed as being one type of curriculum user that either completely embraced or rejected it. At various points they either appropriated, adapted or omitted individual activities or whole segments of the program according to their view of what would provide the most access to the curriculum and result in the most fruitful outcomes.

As shown in Susan's close implementation of the OCR routines, compliance with the program can be an expression of prerogative when the teacher purposefully chooses to implement a strategy that he/she finds effective. Her objective was not fidelity to the program, but rather a utilization of the program to achieve her larger goal of reading fluency for her students. She was not interested in how rapidly student could call out words, but wanted them to gain a flexible understanding of the way that sounds comprise words and how to construct and deconstruct words for themselves.

Teachers had several reasons for adaptation by layering on additional pedagogical strategies to boost OCR and increase the likelihood that students would learn the prescribed objectives. These reasons felt into two categories, strategies for engagement and strategies to increase scaffolding and practice. Engagement was a central issue because all three teachers saw active participation as a key part of their theory of action for increasing access to content. Since OCR is conducted mostly in a whole group setting where students can lose focus, teachers reframed lessons and increased engagement by giving more attention to building background knowledge or a making stronger connection to students' prior knowledge. They added student-to-student interaction, movement, hands-on experiences, visuals and fast-paced responses. Multiple opportunities to practice skills and concepts in order to incrementally develop expertise was critical for developing mastery as evidenced by independent use. To increase scaffolding and guided practice, teachers inserted additional examples, demonstrations, warm-ups and texts. I use the term "mastery" here is a relative sense; no skill or concept is ever truly mastered since the level of performance demand or the conditions under which the task is to be performed can always be made more difficult. When the teachers referred to "mastery" they meant that students would perform at the level specified in their grade level standards.

In Michelle's classroom, writing the dictated word was an individual effort accomplished in a very public space. By giving voice to the thought process involved and using choral reading, gesture, repetition and feedback, Michelle's students learned that spelling is an active endeavor where the writer summons prior knowledge and makes successive approximations. The manner in which Michelle layered strategies for engagement with peers and with one's own thinking pushes the boundaries of the term "explicit teaching" that is so central to the OCR approach. OCR defines "explicit teaching" as the direct teaching of a concept. Yet, the content of the lessons provide opportunities for students to become aware of ways of thinking about a concept that are not mentioned in the prescribed pedagogical strategies. Michelle pushed the lesson in this direction, thereby supporting students to think pragmatically about how would use the concepts in new applications. Transfer and application are evidence of the construction of a situation model because it shows that students have integrated new information into their knowledge base.

At times, each case study teacher completely revamped the pedagogical strategies recommended in an OCR lesson by using an alternative method or inventing a new approach while maintaining the OCR lesson objectives. This occurred when the teachers felt that the OCR approach would either limit access to the focal concept or skill or be insufficient to result in the desired outcome. Past studies of curriculum implementation have found teachers "finessing" prescribed activities in order to preserve their favorite practices (Kersten & Pardo, 2009) or "assimilating" new ideas into old ways of teaching to circumvent the need to change their routine (Coburn, 2005). However, because teachers maintained fidelity to OCR's lesson objectives and designed new methods specifically to meet those objectives, I did not see their adaptations as a way to avoid implementing the program but rather as an expression of professional expertise.

There were aspects of the OCR curriculum that teachers simply omitted. This occurred when they saw limited benefits for the amount of time they would have to invest, or because they found the approach to be inauthentic. The term "inauthentic" refers to teachers' feeling that an activity was included in the OCR teacher's manual as a placeholder inserted to cover an objective but without adequate development. Comprehension strategy instruction seemed to exemplify the most dramatic example of the gulf between an externally designed program and local context because reading comprehension is so situationally bound. Comprehension depends on many variables that are completely unpredictable outside of the immediate classroom experience - each reader's knowledge base about the topic at hand, the difficulty of the text in relation to each reader's proficiency, the social context in which the piece is being read and the performance demands on the reading audience.

The choices teachers made to either directly implement, adapt or omit aspects of the curriculum reveal how teachers understand the relationship between professional prerogative, prescriptive curriculum and equitable outcomes. However incremental and logical a reading program might seem on paper, learning requires scaffolding which by its nature situational. A published text cannot anticipate the responses it might engender. The options a teacher exercises comes from their experience; first in recognizing the need to stop and take stock, then in knowing what scaffold to put in place so that students can grapple with concepts that were previously out of reach. This challenges the notion that a curriculum can be teacher-proof, or that it can be successful in the hands of inexperienced or less-than-competent teachers.

In the next chapter, examples of adaptation by invention illustrate how teachers exercised prerogative to develop the OCR program beyond what was offered in the teacher's manual. These innovations challenge the claim that implementing OCR with strict fidelity can provide the range of experiences children need to develop as proficient readers. As mentioned earlier, the case study teachers added many of the same strategies that have been documented in teachers noted for their resistance to the curriculum while characterizing their work as pro-active improvements, "making OCR better."

Chapter 5: Adaptation through Invention

The previous chapter outlined the case study teachers' goals for their grade level in reading, their stances towards the core reading program and the ways they exercised prerogative through compliance, layering, alternative methods, invention or omission. Teachers generally adhered to the content of the curriculum but adapted pedagogical strategies to increase connections to students' lives, student engagement and scaffolding, elements critical to their theories of action for achieving equitable outcomes. Foregrounding students' prior knowledge and experiences increases the likelihood that they will integrate their knowledge base with the text base to form a situation model when reading. As explained in Chapter 2, new knowledge results from the integration of a reader's knowledge base with the text base. Teachers found the scope and sequence of topics and objectives useful because it was keyed to the standards that they felt each child must have the opportunity to master. However, they disputed the usefulness of the pedagogical strategies to reach those objectives.

This chapter highlights the most dramatic form of implementation - adaptation through invention (Remillard, 1999). When the case study teachers adapted the curriculum through invention, they used the themes and objectives of the mandated text as a springboard for pedagogical design that went beyond the limitations of the prescribed curriculum to deepen students' understanding.

Engagement and Participation in Second Grade

At first glance, Susan's second grade classroom does not look like an Open Court classroom. Desks are grouped into five table teams of four students each. There is a carpeted area at the front of the classroom with space for all twenty children to sit on the floor around Susan's chair and easel pad. Although OCR calls for desks to be arranged in a U-shape formation so that all students can see the blackboard at the front of the room from their seats, Susan said she retained the table group arrangement from her old "learning centers" classroom because she valued the teamwork and peer support that was fostered in small groups. As she explained, "that's kind of my tradeoff; it's in a different format and in a different way, but it's still cooperative learning and I just cannot give that up." Other requirements of the OCR classroom environment such as the sound/spelling cards (alphabet cards on which each of the 44 phonetic elements in the English alphabetic system are organized and represented), a sight word chart to support reading of words that are not phonetically decodable, and a concept/question board where students interact with the unit theme were clearly visible and central to classroom activities. This combination of direct implementation, layering of pedagogical strategies and adaptation of objectives was evident throughout my observations of Susan's program. Just as she transposed a pedagogical strategy for student interaction that she values on to the physical classroom arrangement, Susan used her pedagogical content knowledge to layer additional and alternate strategies on to the OCR lesson plan when she felt the prescribed strategies would not bring her students an understanding of the stated objectives. Similarly, she sometimes adapted the curriculum to achieve academic goals beyond what was provided for in the Teacher's Edition.

In this section, I detail how Susan exploited and expanded her students' knowledge base during two thematic units. In the first example, Susan uses her pedagogical content knowledge to layer several strategies for making connections to a narrative text in an integrated literacy-social studies unit on "Kindness." In the second example, she makes more extensive adaptations to a lesson on an expository text on dinosaur fossils to bring science objectives to the fore in an integrated literacy-science unit on "Fossils."

Creating Context by Personalizing Abstract Themes

Susan frequently stressed her commitment to motivate every student to participate actively and to find ways to "put the learning back on them." For her, this meant making subject matter fun. Fun was serious business in Susan's classroom, because that's what "gives little kids buy-in and makes it magical for them." She believes that fun leads to making connections, and making connections is where learning happens, "it's totally what brings a child from that passive learning into that whole world of an active learner." Fun often involved adding props that Susan referred to as "junk that's like gold." Through the examples that follow, Susan revealed how fun is purposeful and productive when it is planned to elicit connections between students, their experiences and text. She referred to the conscious making of connections as a metacognitive act.

One of the second grade units in OCR is organized around the theme of "Kindness" (SRA/McGraw-Hill, 2002a) The literature for this theme deals with interpersonal relationships that illustrate the consequences of kindness and lack of kindness, including a traditional version of the story of "Cinderella." In every unit, OCR utilizes a "concept/question board" where students post theme-related questions, articles, facts, findings, drawings and writings. Susan sometimes uses the concept question board as stipulated, but other times she repurposes it in a way that she thinks will lead to greater understanding of the theme. In a pre-observation interview, Susan shared that she felt "Kindness" was a bit abstract for second graders, so she introduced "kindness coupons." Students document acts of kindness by filling in a coupon-sized form and posting it on the concept question board. During the Kindness unit, the board was heavily papered with these coupons. In fact, several times during class I witnessed children silently rise to post a coupon on the board after a classmate picked up their pencil from the floor, helped them find the relevant page in a book, etc. The kindness coupons provided a sort of filter through which experiences were processed while reading texts about characters grappling with issues of kindness.

While OCR invites students to contribute to a concept question board, the week the class was reading the story selection of "Cinderella" Susan provided a small table for treasured artifacts. Students brought in books, dolls and other realia related to fairy tales and Cinderella, creating a mini-museum devoted to the topic at hand. The artifacts physically linked students' out-of-school experiences and prior knowledge about fairy tales with the story they were studying and acknowledged the expertise that they already had. For their efforts, students received "extra credit," as they did with all out-of-school literacy activities that they shared. Susan marveled at how valued "extra credit" was to

her students as an affirmation of initiative, even though the concept of "credit" is irrelevant in a setting that does accumulate points to award grades.

In addition to the Kindness coupons, Susan introduced props related to the text of "Cinderella." For the first reading of the story, she distributed magic wands. These were unsharpened pencils with ribbons attached. She was short one magic wand and asked, "who would be so kind as to share their magic wand with a classmate?" Almost all hands went up. Susan's class did the first reading of the story chorally as suggested by OCR, while tracking with their magic wands. At the end of the story, students attention was drawn to an object covered by a cloth in the center of each of their table groups. The table team leader was asked to uncover the object, revealing a small clear plastic shoe, the type of object that might used for a party favor. There was a high degree of excitement among both boys and girls as students gasped at the "glass slipper" that would reside on their table for the week.

OCR directs teachers to discuss elements of the fairy tale genre such as imaginary characters, granting of wishes, magical powers, a lead sentence that signals a mythical time ("once upon a time") and a happy ending (SRA/McGraw Hill, 2002a). The props that Susan provided while reading the story of "Cinderella" invited her students into the world of fairy tales and magic, while making a clear distinction between reality and fantasy. The students had kindness coupons, a table with artifacts from home, magic wands and glass slippers to accompany them on their journey through "Cinderella." These were enhancements to the standard routines in the core reading program that were designed by the teacher to invite students into the text as active participants. As Susan said, "even the weakest reader says, 'I want to be part of that.'" Being "part of that" reading community is what Susan is banking on to sustain the student as he/she develops reading proficiency. From the most to least proficient reader, Susan tries to include every student as an active participant with the text.

Although the Teachers Edition does not specifically preclude the kind of additions that Susan made to the unit, there are more activities provided in the manual than time realistically allows, thereby crowding out any opportunity to diverge when there is an expectation of fidelity to the program. Teachers are forced to make choices and weigh opportunity costs; if time is used for one thing, there is no time for another. I observed Susan defaulting to the big ideas of the theme. If an understanding of "Kindness" was the objective of the unit, then she used the prescribed activities she felt addressed the big ideas and made up new activities when she perceived a gap between her students' experience and the text. Curriculum materials necessarily contain a gap between the imagined and actual classroom that is filled in by the teacher (Ball & Cohen, 1996) with little or no guidance when the assumption is that the text will be implemented as written. Susan wanted her students to go beyond the story selections and understand the meaning of "kindness" and how it related to students' personal relationships. She referred to this as "metacognition" and asked herself, "how do you teach a seven year old metacognition?" Her solution was to layer additional activities on to the standard OCR lesson that she hoped would cause students to step back and see the larger ideas in the theme.

Engaging in Behaviors of the Discourse

A science-theme unit on "Fossils" (SRA/McGraw-Hill, 2002b) represented Susan's biggest departure from the OCR text. She had expressed concern that although the science themes were promoted as a way of integrating science into the literacy block, they did not teach science at all. As she said, "reading stories about science is not the same as doing science." Susan felt that unless students were engaged in the scientific process, a teacher could not claim to have "covered" science. This parallels the opportunities for magical thinking that Susan provided when reading in the fairy tale genre by introducing magic wand pencils and plastic glass slippers during the reading of Cinderella. In place of the prescribed lesson for the day, Susan invented a hands-on science activity.

The "Reading and Responding" segment of the OCR "Fossils" unit follows the same format as other units. A group of story selections with a variety of narrative and informational text is provided and teachers are directed through the standard "Reading and Responding" sequence. This consists of students browsing, proposing "clues, problems and wonderings," reading each selection twice, and teachers modeling featured comprehension strategies and skills. Concurrently, the students are expected to embark on unit investigations which are "student-driven and should emerge from students' interests, ignited by reading and class discussions" (SRA/McGraw Hill, 2002a, p. 13A). When reviewing the lesson in the Teacher's Edition during a stimulated interview, Susan rolled her eyes at the idea of student-driven investigations. The feasibility of having the resources for twenty students to pursue individual investigations was completely divorced from reality in her opinion. The district had dropped this aspect of the OCR curriculum, entitled "Inquiry," early in the implementation process. Teachers were left to their own discretion as to how to more deeply pursue topic investigations, if at all. While Susan's departure from the prescribed lesson sequence did not challenge her district's fidelity policy, this vignette is as an example of teachers' prerogative to determine content and objectives for their students and to reshape prescribed curriculum into a new invention when it falls short of these objectives.

After a first reading of the story selection on how paleontologists find and interpret fossils, Susan departed from the pacing guide to build background knowledge. She shifted to what she described as a hands-on experience on what paleontologists do. She didn't feel the students would truly comprehend the text - even though it was filled with all sorts of informational text features such as photographs, diagrams and maps - unless they simulated the work of paleontologists. As she said, "how can you expect children to question and think critically about something they have never seen?"

Susan had prepared her students to engage with the story selection in ways that invoke her treatment of the Kindness unit. She had her usual table of artifacts that children brought from home on the topic – dinosaur books, plastic dinosaurs, playing cards, etc. - which gave student the message that they brought knowledge and familiarity to the topic. She brought in her own collection of fossils, leaf prints and insects

preserved in pieces of amber for them to handle. She renamed each "table group" of four children for a particular dinosaur. Each table was labeled with a their own large cut-out dinosaur, the dinosaur's name and a small plastic dinosaur model. In the pre-observation interview, Susan shared that the students had discussed the characteristics of their dinosaur and then compared their dinosaur with another table listing similarities and differences. They noticed when their respective dinosaur came up in readings during the unit, signaling with the connection sign (index finger and thumbs of both hands linked). In a nod to the OCR suggested supplemental readings, Susan read the picture book, "If the Dinosaurs Came Back" (Most, 1978) and students wrote and illustrated a story on how they would interact with dinosaurs if they returned. This assignment required them to think about the dinosaurs' size, diet, ferocity and body type in relation to themselves. Through this sequence of activities, students came to the "dinosaur bones" activity where they would enact the work of paleontologists with some knowledge of the characteristics of dinosaurs.

When I arrived to observe the "dinosaur bones" activity, the classroom was a steady hum broken by occasional shouts of discovery. The second graders were digging in tubs of dark peat, white sand and orange, iron-rich clay soil for "fossils of dinosaur bones," wooden puzzle pieces that would be assembled into three- dimensional models. Each group of 4 students had a dinosaur for which they are responsible – tyrannosaurus rex, triceratops, dimetron and stegosaurus. They combed the "excavation site" with plastic spoons for remaining "bones," carefully dusting them off with small paintbrushes and laying them in place in the "laboratory," a large piece of black construction paper. Referring to an illustration of what is known about their dinosaur, they discussed how the pieces they had excavated might connect, "here's the leg, there must be 3 more," "are these plates or ribs?" "if this is a t-rex, there's got to be some big teeth in here somewhere." When the teacher called time and asked, "who wants to be a scientist?" all hands went up.

Susan had removed one critical identifiable piece from each dinosaur, such as the ruffle from triceratops, the fan from dimetron, and the jaw from tyrannosaurus rex, and asked students to determine which piece was missing. She buried the "bones" in 2-3 layers of different types of soil in tubs and asked students how many layers of soil there were and to describe them. One child noticed that the wooden pieces were stained and theorized that it was because minerals from the moist soil had seeped into them, just like she had read the day before about how bones become fossilized.

A teacher-designed note-taking sheet prompted students to discuss and write about what piece was missing and how they knew. Before asking students to collaborate on the note-taking sheet for their table group, Susan asked students to share their methods for reconstructing the dinosaur skeleton in whole group. Students responded that they referred to the illustration, or that they thought about what they knew about the dinosaur and what pieces should be there that were not there. Susan commented that was just like real scientists do when they use what is already known. They said they put the pieces together different ways to see what they had, which Susan described as being just like

real scientists using trial and error, "you make guesses but you're not always right and scientist do the same thing."

The whole group discussion sparked animated discussions at the table groups about what they would write on their team's sheet. The notes would become an outline for students to write an expository piece on their team's process for determining the missing piece of their dinosaur. In keeping with the literary emphasis of the OCR Fossils Unit, the Teacher's Edition specifies a free-verse poem about fossils or dinosaurs. Susan thought that her students would benefit more from expository writing since they were reading informational text. She could use the students' experience reading expository text to support their writing of expository text. So, rather than teaching free-verse poetry that week, Susan used the students' experience as mini-paleontologists to model how to write a simple expository piece describing the steps in their group's process.

Reinventing Comprehension Strategy Instruction in Third Grade

In Chapter 4, I described Sonia's approach to lesson planning using three intertwined approaches; the notion of moving from concrete experiences to abstract concepts, SDAI strategies, and the gradual release of responsibility. In this section, I analyze how she applied these principles to comprehension strategy instruction using two examples. First I describe how Sonia reorganized OCR comprehension strategy instruction to reflect her theory of action. In the second example, the class engaged in a sequence of activities to understand and practice how to synthesize information and identify the main idea in expository text. In both cases, the OCR program supplied a common text and prescribed comprehension strategies. Sonia designed an approach of her own invention while meeting the objectives of the OCR lessons.

Reorganizing Comprehension Strategy Instruction

As reported previously, Sonia's approach to comprehension instruction had evolved over the past five years. She initially implemented the program as written and found that although her students could read at the district fluency benchmark rate, they were disengaged as text users. One indication was her observation that the students did not open their books during the weekly open-book story tests. As Sonia recalled, they guessed, complained and voiced frustration. They did not understand that the answers to questions about the text could be found in the texts themselves. Students took a passive stance towards reading defined by competence at the decoding level. This points out that competence with a task may not be determined by the level of performance demand, but by the level of previous experience. The students did not yet understand the role of the reader despite the comprehension strategy instruction that had taken place as prescribed in the Teacher's Edition. Although Sonia and the teachers in the previous grade level had modeled the OCR think alouds, the students didn't connect that act with themselves as readers.

The OCR approach provoked Sonia to examine her beliefs about how to teach reading through professional readings and collegial discussions. For example, to inform

herself about how others had approached comprehension strategy instruction, she read practitioner-orientated resources such as *Strategies that Work: Teaching Comprehension for Understanding and Engagement* (Harvey & Goudvis, 2007) and *Mosaic of Thought: Teaching Comprehension in a Readers' Workshop* (Keene & Zimmerman, 1997). In terms of vocabulary instruction, she said, "I'm totally Isabel Beck," referencing *Bringing Words to Life*: *Robust Vocabulary Instruction* (Beck & McKeown, 2002). In collaboration with her grade level leader, she decided not to follow the OCR lesson plans for comprehension. She would use the stories and teach the particular comprehension strategies identified by OCR, but she would design her own teaching approach based on the three sets of principles she thought were most effective for her students.

Re-sequencing comprehension strategy instruction. In the OCR Reading and Responding segment, each story selection is paired with 2-3 comprehension strategies. In a previous analysis (Maniates & Woulfin, 2008), my colleague and I found that there is no detectable sequence for how the comprehension strategies are introduced in the OCR program, nor do the instructional materials include an explanation or rationale that would inform the teacher about the logic of the sequence. It is possible that in the perspective of the OCR designers, the sequence is unimportant since the program is designed to spiral. Therefore, the strategies are in a continual rotation without any real beginning or end.

To Sonia's way of thinking, the strategies could be rolled out in a logical sequence that would support students' emerging understanding. She saw how some strategies, such as making connections or visualizing, were closer to students' life experience and thus easier to apply to reading. Others, such as making inferences and predicting, built on one another. She reasoned that in order to make a prediction and anticipate what may happen next in a narrative, the reader has to make inferences based on their own experiences and what the author has shared up to that point. Finally, strategies like summarizing and identifying the main idea required the use of other strategies to build an understanding of the text base that could then be synthesized into main points.

During the year this study was conducted, Sonia and her grade level team launched comprehension instruction by introducing "monitoring and clarifying" – one of the OCR comprehension strategies – as the first strategy of the school year. This strategy is recommended by Harvey and Goudvis (2007) as a foundational strategy because it sets students up to take an active role in their reading. It forces the question, "does it make sense?" and puts the responsibility for working through the text base on the reader. To introduce monitoring and clarifying, Sonia first modeled how to stop reading at the end of each paragraph and try to retell what you have read to a partner. Next, she distributed sticky notes and asked students to place them throughout the text that they were reading. The sticky notes functioned as stop signs that reminded students to stop and think about what they had just read. After repeated practice where the external "stop signs" were moved further and further apart to build stamina, students began to internalize the practice of stopping to take stock of how they were following the text. They also began to expect text to make sense, and that they could monitor their understanding by actively questioning themselves.

Sonia noticed immediate results in terms of students' participation levels. In contrast to previous years, she saw that "even from the first story, books were open, students were flipping, they knew the story so well they knew where to look, what to reread." She attributed this change to starting the year with the idea that "you have to pay attention to what you're reading." Previously, students would read and immediately say, "I don't get it." She referred to moments when the mind wanders off as "potholes." "What do you do when you have a pothole? Go back and reread." The amount of time students need to actually take up a strategy for their own purposes cannot be overestimated. Sonia spent about three weeks on monitoring and clarifying in order to build a foundation for reading for meaning.

Teach each strategy separately, then put them together. In the OCR approach to comprehension instruction, multiple strategies are used with each story. For students who already are familiar with the strategies, this models how readers orchestrate a whole repertory of strategies in order to comprehend a text. However, because Sonia's students did not yet have that familiarity, multiple strategies were confusing and distracting. She found that the OCR think alouds that cued students to invoke a particular strategy during the first read of the story put them off course. As she observed, her students would lose the thread of the story when they stopped and reminded themselves, "ok, I gotta do that now."

Contrary to the OCR method of using think alouds to model the use of several comprehension strategies in a single text, Sonia felt it was important to gradually build a repertory by teaching each strategy explicitly and thoroughly. In discussion with her grade level team, Sonia decided to choose one comprehension strategy per selection, teach it in isolation until students were able to use it independently and then pull it forward as subsequent strategies are introduced. She planned to spend at least a week on each strategy "but always be cognizant to bring in the old ones" when relevant. Seeing the utility of strategies for which they had developed ownership gave students the confidence to try the new strategy that was being introduced. They saw how they could apply each strategy they were learning to a new text. At first glance, the OCR's use of multiple strategies seems to reflect transactional strategy instruction (Pressley, El-Dinary, Gaskins, Schuder, Bergman, Almasi & Brown,1992) which emphasizes coordination rather than accumulation of comprehension strategies. Reutzel, Smith and Fawson (2005) found this method to result in higher levels of oral retelling and knowledge acquisition than single strategy instruction. However, Sonia felt that OCR's reliance on think aloud's did not provide the gradual release of responsibility that is a key part of the transactional strategy instruction model.

After introducing "monitoring and clarifying," Sonia continued to focus on one strategy at a time in a logical sequence. Students applied previously learned strategies to text as new strategies were introduced. With each strategy, she launched the gradual release of responsibility sequence by modeling and explaining the concept using concrete objects and experiences. For each strategy, she created an anchor chart (Harvey &

Goudvis, 2007) to graphically recorded the introductory experience and then posted the chart for student reference.

Increase guided practice with rich text. Finally, Sonia did not feel that OCR offered enough guided practice with each strategy, "pretty much only the think alouds." In addition, the texts provided in the student anthology were often too short or not rich enough for strategy use. As she said, "how many opportunities are there to 'predict' in a five-page story about a cat who writes poetry?" Since her desired outcome was independent and flexible use of comprehension strategies, she would need concentrated practice with each strategy. As Susan observed, sometimes the comprehension strategy designated for a particular story seemed like a stretch. When the strategy was not really applicable to the text it was assigned to, such as visualizing with a text that does not contain much description, it offered even less opportunity to practice the strategy.

Keene and Zimmerman (1997) recommend using a set of anchor texts with which students are familiar to illustrate and practice various concepts. Because they know these texts so well, use of comprehension strategies comes more naturally. For example, Sonia pointed out that learning to "compare and contrast" using a favorite story like "Ms. Nelson" (where a teacher masquerades as an eccentric substitute) would be easily accessible. Students intuitively compare and contrast Ms. Nelson and her alter-ego, giving them that moment of self-recognition when the strategy is labeled. The cognitive activity of comparing and contrasting is separated from the challenge of decoding. Using familiar texts is an inclusive practice that allows students to participate at an age-appropriate intellectual level, regardless of their current reading level. When they later face a more difficult text, they already have facility with a strategy that can support their comprehension.

Each day after lunch, Sonia read aloud from a popular work of children's literature. When I visited her classroom, she was reading "The Tale of Despereaux," a story of a mouse, a rat, a little girl and a princess told from each of their points of view. Students were anticipating the release of the movie version and Sonia wanted them to construct their own visualizations before they saw the movie. In addition to the many benefits of read aloud, this book became an anchor text that Sonia referenced when introducing new concepts. For example, when discussing the concept of inferencing, she asked the students, "remember when we said Despereaux was brave, how did we know that?" Students had emotionally bonded with the little mouse through the daily read alouds and were very familiar with him as a character. Making inferences about his traits had occurred as part of the social experience of sharing a story. When Sonia wanted to bring the strategy of making inferences to a conscious level so that students could invoke it deliberately when needed, she needed only to remind them of something they already knew how to do by first discussing the strategy without printed text.

Sonia was also dissatisfied with the amount of time spent actually reading in the OCR approach so she redesigned OCR workshop time using "The Daily Five" (Boushey & Moser, 2005) to increase independent reading and writing. The Daily Five structures independent work time using five open-ended activity choices; read to self, read to

someone, listen to reading, work on writing and word work. Sonia introduced her students to each of the five choices through modeling and practice at the beginning of the year. The Daily Five made for a smooth transition from whole group work to workshop time because the students knew where they wanted to pick up in their independent reading or writing projects, allowing Sonia to work with individuals or small groups for differentiated follow-up. These activities insured that regular time was devoted to reading and writing for authentic purposes, connecting school literacy with literacy as a social practice.

Social Construction of "Main Idea"

Sonia had noticed that as a whole, her students were able to pick out the main idea of a paragraph but were not yet able to synthesize a multi-paragraph passage. Identifying the main idea involves taking the perspective of the author and organizing details in the text base in such a way that reveals the author's overarching theme. The OCR lesson plan during one of my observation weeks called for students to identify the main idea in a series of four-paragraph informational pieces about young entrepreneurs. The directions in the teacher's manual are to

> "remind students that a main idea is what a selection is mostly about. Usually, the author provides a topic sentence that sums up this main idea. Sometimes, however, the main idea is implied; this is often the case with fiction. Supporting details are the smaller pieces of information that support or tell more about the main idea. Ask students to find the sentence that sums up the main idea of pages…. Then help students find three important facts that give information or support this main idea." (SRA/McGraw Hill, 2002c; p. 39)

Sonia had already observed that her students had not made the transition to synthesizing multiple paragraphs to identify a main idea. She also questioned the relevancy of the text provided by OCR for this challenging activity since she knew that comprehension is enhanced when the readers has prior knowledge of the topic. She saw this lesson directive as a further example of what she called the assumptions that OCR makes about what students already know. And finally, she objected to the implied whole group format when she believed students need to talk to construct knowledge.

Launching with literacy experiences rather than print. Interweaving the notion of concrete to abstract, the gradual release of responsibility and SDAI strategies, Sonia invented a sequence of activities that would give her students adequate practice with "main idea" before asking them to perform on unfamiliar text. She believed that students needed a warm-up to engage them in the task at hand, to "get their mind thinking about it, free to try it." She began with a metaphor for "main idea" drawn from a concrete experience common to all her students – a hamburger. She projected a Carl's Jr advertisement featuring a hamburger that was eight inches tall and layered with all sorts of condiments on the overhead and asked, "what's the main idea of this burger, is it the lettuce?" Students howled with laughter showing they realized that lettuce was a detail, as was the pickle, the tomato, etc. "If you had a turkey sandwich with mayonnaise for

lunch and someone asked you what kind of sandwich you had, would you say 'mayonnaise'?" was greeted with more laughter. The students got the joke.

After the hamburger graphic, Sonia showed a row thumbnail-sized posters of three current children's movies and asked, "what do these three things have in common, what is the main idea here?" From there she flashed thumbnails of video game equipment and asked the same question. She repeated this with pictures of sports equipment for basketball, soccer and tetherball. Students suggested the main idea of each row of thumbnails with excitement, "they're all movies," "all video games," "things you need to play sports." She complemented them on how they were able to see the main idea in the rows of pictures and said that was exactly what she had observed in their reading – they were able to pick out the main ideas in paragraphs. Then she told them that the next step was to think about what the main idea of first two rows together would be. Responding to the row of movie posters and video game equipment, students said, "you watch both of them, you do them when you want to have fun, when you are bored." She brought in the third row of sports equipment and asked partners to discuss, "does this row fit with our main idea? How are movies like video games? How is the sports equipment like the first two?" She compared this to what students would be doing when they identify the main idea of a passage.

Guided practice with high interest, easy text. From this warm-up grounded in students' experience, Sonia introduced a three-paragraph passage about dinosaurs (also high interest to third graders) at an easy reading level for partners to practice identifying the main idea. The whole group then shared out and defended what they had found. Sonia collected their papers and used them to assess whether she could move on or needed to structure additional practice at this level. The next day she challenged students to explain what a main idea is by asking them how they would explain it to a kindergartener. Students responded, "it's what the whole story is about," "the major thing" and "it's like a big burger and you have lots of details like lettuce and tomato." She put a new paragraph on the overhead and asked them to read it and whisper the main idea to their partner. "Main idea is in one breath," she said, "if there are a lot of breaths, that's probably a lot of details."

Findings and Discussion

In the hands of experienced teachers committed to increasing educational access and deepening learning outcomes, the core reading program was broadened rather than narrowed. When they invoke students' everyday literacy experiences to make connections to school literacy, teachers delimit the definition of what counts as text and what counts as literacy. In these examples, the case study teachers worked with abstractions such as "kindness," "paleontology," and "main idea" by using textual representations other than print, thereby facilitating students' construction of a situation model that then resides in their knowledge base for future use.

"Making connections" is well-known in the pantheon of reading comprehension strategies. It is widely accepted by teachers that a reader must make a personal

connection to text in order to truly comprehend it, whether it be a text-to-self connection, text-to-text or text-to-world connection as popularized by Keene and Zimmerman (1997). Connections show that the reader is relating text-based information to his/her prior knowledge and experience (Kintsch & Kintsch, 2005). Making connections is often one of the first comprehension strategies introduced to children because it comes so naturally, as illustrated by the free associations shared by preschoolers. Seemingly random associations such as "I have a dog," "my mommy makes pancakes," and "I saw a fire engine" are constant welcome interruptions to story time with young children as they invoke their schema to connect to the text. This basic human impulse to make connections also speaks to the dialogic nature of literacy events where experiences resonate over time and space.

Susan spent considerable time and energy activating students' prior knowledge and building background knowledge about the theme of each thematic unit by adding hands-on activities to the OCR lessons. She challenged herself to think of ways "to bring (themes) to life so (students) can be critical thinkers." By working with her students' knowledge base, she increased the likelihood that they would construct a situation model that integrated new information into their existing schema. Her students amassed content knowledge and knowledge of literary conventions that they could apply to future reading and writing endeavors.

Young children can be enticed into classroom activities by invoking favorite fantasy characters such as Cinderella and powerful real life subjects such as dinosaurs. However, topics that attract "universal participation" may undermine "universal access" if content is watered down for the sake of involvement (Kennedy, 2005). Basal readers provide an initial hook by providing what curriculum developers conjecture is interesting age-appropriate text, but how far the hook can bring students along may depend on teachers' ability to parlay attention-getting into deeper learning. Children's literature is filled with stories of good and evil, so it would seem logical that a theme such as "Kindness" would resonate with second graders. At the same time, kindness is a fairly abstract concept. If it is to be taught as a theme in literature that gets at the complexities of life and social interaction rather than as an admonishment for good behavior, then the gap between hypothetical classroom activities and actual classroom practice must be filled by teachers exercising prerogative to support their students to make connections.

While the strategies Susan used to engage her students in the magical thinking of Cinderella and the fairy tale genre added to their enjoyment of literature, the paleontologist simulation activity invoked the type of thinking needed to participate in scientific research. She changed the objective of the week's lesson with the text on paleontologist from a literature-based lesson to a science lesson by engaging her students in the scientific process. She also exposed her students to the real adult work of scientists, opening up an option that they might not have considered. By generating a situationally-specific interest, she set in motion the possibility that a child may develop an interest that could be pursued in the future. Susan's decisions to adapt the curriculum depend on her evaluation of the efficacy of the lesson's design for her students. When she agrees with the content and objectives but needs to ramp up the pedagogical

approach, she draws on her pedagogical content knowledge to layer on more effective strategies. When she feels the curriculum's objectives fall short of what she thinks her second graders need to experience, she takes the text in new directions.

Sonia invented an approach to comprehension strategies instruction that was informed by her reading of her students and the teachers manual, similar to what was described by Remillard (1999). Her reading of students indicated that they were not taking up the strategies. When she probed the OCR teacher's manual, she found no rationale for the sequence in which the strategies were presented or for how strategies were matched with particular text. Sonia responded by consulting teacher practitioner research. She then engaged in "curriculum mapping" (Remillard, 1999) where she reorganized the sequence of comprehension strategies instruction with an underlying rationale that stemmed from her theory of action. The first principle in her rationale was that students must be actively engaged in reading, thus she began the year by introducing "monitoring and clarifying" so that students would be aware of themselves as readers. Her reading of her students also told her that the think aloud technique used by OCR was not giving her students the clear explanation and guided practice they needed to see how the strategies could enhance their reading. Finally, Sonia knew that comprehension strategy instruction could be made more accessible if students practiced with rich text in which they already were invested.

As Sonia reflected on the main idea lesson, she said, "I think I definitely hit their zone" judging from students' conversation and behavior. "Hitting their zone" is situational and cannot be projected in a teacher's manual. Sonia used the general directive in the OCR manual as a cue to focus on main idea. Beyond that, she invented her own approach based on her knowledge of her students' interests and current level of facility with the task. She made the task transparent by sharing what she had observed of students' understanding of main idea and what they needed to take on next. Although "main idea" can be seen as a limited, literal interpretation of text, Sonia showed her students how they could be in control of this concept and use it in a variety of settings. She repeated her tried-and-true sequence of "explain, model, practice and segue into independence"- her iteration of the gradual release of responsibility - that was not present in the OCR approach. As with other examples from her practice, Sonia made the students rather than the concept the center of her instruction.

Responsive pedagogy can only be invented by the teacher in context, who appreciates the unique moment in time with a particular learning community in which he/she is operating. Regardless of whether a core reading program puts forth a broad or narrow approach, it can either expand or contract in enactment. Luke (1998) alluded to this with the phrase "getting over method (p. 305)." What a teacher's manual really offers is a set of hypotheses; that if teacher does x, students will do y and that a certain set of experiences will lead students to particular objectives. But curriculum programs are self-limited by their lack of context. The guidance for classroom activities described in teacher's manuals exist in a state of suspended animation without the encumbrance of local contigencies. The choices teachers make as they exercise professional prerogative in enactment can exploit opportunities for deeper learning. In these examples, Susan and

Sonia worked between the lines of the teacher's manual to increase the chances for engagement in deeper learning, both for individual students and for the class as a whole. As Ball Cohen (1996) have observed, "developers' designs thus turn out to be ingredients in –not determinants of – the actual curriculum" (p. 6).

As described in Chapter 4, the teachers in this study freely chose pedagogical strategies depending on their perceived effectiveness in the local context. They were not stridently resistant to the OCR program; in fact, the reverse was true. They were committed to the larger goal of the program to extend equity of access and outcomes and used OCR when it would serve this goal. Because their commitment was to the goal rather than the specifics of the program, they did not limit themselves exclusively to OCR strategies. Michelle described what the program had to offer by saying, "it's in there if you really look." When a reader "really looks," they are using their background knowledge to comb the text for meaning. If we subscribe to a transactional view of reading, we cannot see the curriculum as an autonomous text that holds meaning apart from the interpretation of each reader. In their work on the role of instructional materials in teacher learning and reform, Ball and Cohen (1996) state that the "enacted curriculum is actually jointly constructed by teachers, students and materials in particular contexts. Even close use of materials is a construction of curriculum, even if it seems to be only a partial reconstruction of received materials" (p. 7). Therefore, it is the fidelity policy, more than the curriculum itself, that focuses on the easily observable, technical aspects of the program and interfere with the teachers' ability to provide responsive instruction. Now that these policies are no longer in place and teachers can more freely improvise, innovations made by teachers such as the participants in this study can inform how to shape the next era in curriculum reform.

In light of the extensive adaptations that the case study teachers made to realize the promise of the core reading program, the question of the value of such programs arises. Returning to the tensions presented in Chapter 2, prescriptive programs provide consistency and systematicity while teacher-designed pedagogy responds to local context. The data in this study have shown that the prescriptive program is dependent upon the teacher to fill in the gap between imagined instructional moves and real educational contexts. The converse was also demonstrated; teacher-designed pedagogy benefited from using an externally-designed structure as a springboard. The curriculum provided content knowledge, materials, thematic structure, instructional routines, pacing, and standards-based objectives. This shared technical knowledge (Lortie, 1975) fosters consistency and the opportunity for teacher collaboration, and analysis of a common set of data. While the importance of these features cannot be underestimated, they are insufficient on their own to extend access or result in desired outcomes.

Enactment of the OCR program in the three classrooms in this study essentially came down to the use of the phonics component in first and second grade and adherence to the district pacing schedule using the OCR themes and anthology. None of the teachers used the prescribed methods of teaching vocabulary or comprehension strategies and the district did not require the use of the writing or inquiry components. Regardless of Reading First assurances to prohibit the use of supplementary materials, the core

reading program was not a complete reading curriculum. To paraphrase Ball and Cohen (1996), the program was an ingredient but not a determinant of the enacted curriculum.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This study examined the implementation of a prescriptive core reading program by three experienced primary grade teachers during the school year following the expiration of the California Reading First program. In summary, the findings show that the each of the teachers

1. Defined equity as the combination of access to the California reading/language arts standards and instructional support to realize outcomes.
2. Developed a theory of action for how to extend access to students and how to support students to accomplish outcomes which was not in opposition to OCR's theory of explicit systematic instruction but emphasized strategies that fostered student uptake.
3. Made a good faith effort to implement the core reading program while exercising prerogative to comply, adapt or omit segments based the program's effectiveness in engaging students, providing access to concepts and skills, and supporting the development of both standards-based outcomes and the larger goal of becoming an active text user.
4. Tended to utilize the content of the focal curriculum more frequently than the prescribed pedagogical strategies.
5. Gained content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge from using the curriculum "as-is" and through designing alternatives.

Policy implementation studies have documented the inevitability of adaptation of policy by street-level implementers as they strive to achieve a fit with their local context. The teachers in this study were committed to the overarching goal of Reading First to achieve more equitable outcomes for their students in all sub-groups. To achieve this goal, they assumed responsibility for both the success of their students and their own development as professional educators. The adaptations to the curriculum that they designed in order to make the program more responsive to their students were not the result of pressures for fidelity but rather the fruits of deep and flexible pedagogical knowledge.

The work of the teachers in this study is informative for understanding how teacher expertise could be better leveraged to "match kid's reading lives to their real lives" (Gerstl-Pepin & Woodside-Jiron, 2005, p. 236) and to circumvent the burst of inequality that can accompany beginning reading. A greater match would result in a reconceptualization of literacy education to more accurately reflect the role of a variety of literacy practices in children's lives and how they can bring them to bear on school literacy (Gutiérrez, 2009). A narrowing of reading instruction stands in denial of real conditions. The diversity of the student body continues to increase as children bring a wider and wider range of linguistic and cultural resources to school. Responses to advances in technology are constantly redefining the meaning of "reading" and the capacities needed to be proficient multi-modal readers with each successive innovation. Educators are becoming aware of the importance of out-of-school literacies as an expression of students' interests and expertise (Mahiri, 2004). Learning to read is at once

the most basic, time-honored and the most complex, future-focused activity of schooling. Teaching reading requires accountable innovation.

Standardization and Innovation

Schoen and Fusarelli (2008) ask whether standardization and innovation must necessarily be at odds. They implore educators to counteract the negative consequences of NCLB while retaining its positive impact on taking responsibility for raising achievement at the school and classroom level, and suggest replacing "teacher proofing" with development of teachers' pedagogical knowledge and skills. Contrasting federal education policy under NCLB with the 21st century schools movement, they advocate an emphasis on high-quality instruction rather than on content coverage. However, this may not be a false dichotomy. The teachers in this study have shown that content does not have to be placed in opposition to student-centered contexts for instruction.

The tension between consistency and rigor. A common curriculum provides a course of study that is consistent across classrooms and grade levels which may help to insure that all students receive content that is horizontally and vertically aligned. In addition, a certain degree of routinization frees teachers to focus on student responses (Berliner, 1992) rather than classroom management. However, the benefits of alignment and routinization are contingent on the quality of the program. The rigor of a curriculum varies according to whether teachers conceptualize educational equity as mastering a static body of content or gaining facility in a wide range of literacy practices. The sheer volume of content in a curriculum can suggest breath over depth and work against rigor. In this study, I used the Four Resources Model to examine whether the curriculum was enacted to impart technical skills or to develop students' competencies with a repertoire of roles as readers. For example, the OCR phonics component is structured to give students extensive knowledge of the structure and spelling patterns of English. While the teachers found this component effective, it was their implementation that pushed beyond the level of technical skills. The first and second grade teachers in this study used the phonics program as a tool not only for cracking the code, but for empowering students with an awareness of how to think about the workings of English phonetic elements and how to apply them independently for their own purposes in reading and writing. When seen in this light, the notion of "explicit teaching" is stretched beyond the direct teaching of a discrete skill or concept to encompass demonstration and practice of reflective and flexible thinking. Without these efforts, there is a danger of creating a "pedagogical divide" that is "exacerbated by federal and state policies (Cummins, 2007, p. 564).

The tension between fidelity and adaptation. The case study teachers generally adhered to the content of the curriculum because they valued its coherence with the California reading/language arts content standards. However, they exercised the prerogative to adapt OCR pedagogical strategies to increase student engagement and scaffolding, two elements critical to their theories of action for increasing equitable outcomes that they felt were not adequately addressed by the program. By rejecting a limited definition of literacy, the teachers leveraged students' funds of knowledge to expand access to new concepts and skills by using both print and non-print-based

resources. They accomplished this by layering opportunities for student-to-student interaction, participation in concrete experiences, home-school connections and membership in a learning community on to the OCR lessons. In a variety of ways, they redesigned segments of the curriculum to increase guided practice that linked access with outcomes. The teachers in this study located their responsibility for fidelity with their students' development rather than with the curriculum. Rather than thinking about whether they were implementing OCR as prescribed, their consideration was whether they were sufficiently scaffolding their students. As Sonia stated, "you can't just say you have high expectations and not do anything to get there." Structuring high expectations around rigorous content is reassuring but hollow; putting students rather than content at the center of the curriculum helps to insure rigor because it increases the possibility of the realization rather than just the expectation of outcomes.

High quality teachers and high quality instruction. NCLB established a minimum standard for teacher quality defined by degrees and licensing requirements. Obviously, these requirements are necessary but insufficient to guarantee high quality instruction. Prescriptive curriculum such as OCR can raise the floor in terms of the quality of reading instruction by providing inexperienced teachers with both content and pedagogical strategies that reflect a baseline level of cognitive demand for code-breaking and meaning-making. In some settings, this may be a profound improvement over approaches taken by credentialed but less skilled teachers. However, as dramatic as this may be in some settings, it is not enough to impact the "education debt" (Ladson-Billings, 2006) that causes a wide disparity in reading achievement across socio-economic groups. The promise of programs that claim to narrow the achievement gap lies in their dynamic and generative implementation by skilled teachers who approach the program as a set of guidelines rather than a complete reading curriculum. Teacher quality is more accurately captured in response to contingencies rather than by static qualifications.

Principled implementation. The teachers in this study were committed to the content of the program rather than the structures, activities and teaching strategies. The success of their students in acquiring independent use of the content was due in large part to the locally-adapted pedagogy. Policies requiring fidelity of program implementation seem to confuse equality with equity. If all students receive the same program, does that constitute equity? If teachers diverge in order to realize outcomes, does that compromise or enhance the program? Borrowing from Achinstein et al.'s term "principled resistance" (2006; p. 1) and Stahl's (1997) reference to "principled eclecticism" (cited in Duffy & Hoffman, 1999), the teachers in this study enacted what I call "principled implementation."

Principled implementation suggests that it is not the OCR program per se that violates teachers' drive for autonomy but rather it is the policies that mandated lockstep implementation. This is instructive for districts contemplating the use of any core curriculum program. Without the threat of enforcement, the language of its directive statements in a teacher's manual take on a different meaning. Suggestions are then truly options to consider. Prompts prompt thinking. Teachers can read critically for the values

and vested interests embodied in the curriculum. They become authors of their own curriculum, using the manual for reference, as a springboard for reflection, or to give them needed reminders in a busy day. The teacher would then be positioned as professionals, with all rights and responsibilities.

Implications

At the time of this writing, the Obama administration has proposed an overhaul of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. New federal education policy attempts to account for some of the complexities inherent in educating a diverse student body for the 21st century. For example, rather than proclaiming that all third graders will read proficiently by 2013, the new goal envisions that every student will be prepared for college or career by 2020 (Dillon, 2010). This will be achieved through a set of supports and sanctions that acknowledge a wider range of indicators of student progress than were instituted under NCLB. Yet the emphasis of the policy still remains on teacher accountability rather than on the development of teachers' pedagogical capacity. This is disheartening in light of consistent research over time showing that it is the teacher rather than the method that makes the difference in student learning. (Bond & Dystra, 1967; Duffy & Hoffman, 1999; Pearson, 2007).

While federal education policy may be shifting to a slightly more expansive view, it is unlikely that more conservative local state boards of education responsible for adopting instructional materials will follow suit. Over the past seven years of Reading First, the use of externally-adopted materials have become the norm. Therefore, this study has implications for reading instruction for school districts, teacher education and the development of curriculum materials and research on the implementation of reading curricula for the foreseeable future.

Implications for School District Policy

Fidelity is folly. A core reading program is not a complete reading curriculum. It will always require supplementary materials because it simply cannot anticipate the demands of local contexts. If the objective of fidelity of implementation is to ensure that instruction is distributed to students equitably across a school district, it would be more effective to outline clear guidelines for student outcomes, adopt a core program that provides a rich resource for instruction and develop teachers' expertise in pedagogical design.

Establish clear guidelines for student outcomes. As mentioned previously, the teachers in this study used the California reading/language arts standards to evaluate curriculum objectives. As noted by Luke and Freebody (1999), standards are not neutral but embody a particular set of skills and practices valued by the social context for which they are designed. Delpit (1988) has argued that equity demands that all students have the opportunity to master the standards valued by the larger society or "culture of power" (p. 280), a view reflected by the teachers in this study.

NCLB was criticized for allowing states to develop their own standards because some states, such as Texas, set a lower bar relative to others (Dillon, 2010). New federal education policy proposes that states adopt "college- and career-ready standards" in order to qualify for Title I funds (Dillon, 2010, para. 25). Currently, "Common Core Standards" are under development by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers which are intended to provide a "clear and consistent framework to prepare our children for college and the workforce" (National Governors Association, 2009, para. 1). However, in order for the new national standards to truly serve this purpose, the Literacy Research Association (LRA) has asked that safeguards be put in place to guard against possible conflicts of interest. LRA points out some of the authors of the Common Core Standards have ties to commercial interests that may stand to profit from choosing standards that lend themselves to alignment with their products (Zehr, 2009). Common standards can provide transparency about what competencies carry cultural capital, a key component of equity. Therefore, critiques of this process must be addressed before determining standards that will have currency for students rather than commercial interests.

Adopt a rich resource for instruction. Although generous teacher expenditures of time and funds to develop curriculum and purchase materials are legendary, this is neither a sustainable nor equitable system. Equity is further compromised because new teachers and less skilled teachers may not have the capacity to design a program of the same caliber as their expert colleagues. Therefore, some form of core reading program is essential for establishing the shared technical knowledge that forms a common base for instruction and teacher collaboration. For example, the OCR program provided standards-based objectives, text selections, a set of materials for each student, common routines, and lesson pacing which the teachers in this study found useful as a starting point for planning instruction and collaborating with colleagues. However, because a core program is so central to consistency and coherence, districts must have a robust selection of materials from which to choose the best match for their students. California's adoption of just two options for reading/language arts – Open Court Reading and Houghton Mifflin Reading – put inordinate power for determining curriculum in the hands of two companies. At the same time the state Department of Education narrowed reading/language arts textbook adoptions down to two programs, Reading First assurances demanded fidelity of implementation without the use of supplementary materials. This level of corporate control undermines the autonomy of public education (Mahiri, 2005), as well as creates an environment ripe for scandal as occurred with Reading First. When calling for transparency in the development of common core standards, LRA cited profits made by officials and contractors in conjunction with developing or recommending materials aligned with Reading First regulations as precedent (Zehr, 2009).

In addition to a wider range of choices of instructional materials, districts also must be allowed to cobble together their own core reading programs by sampling from a variety of approaches that offer expert guidance in their particular focus. For example, teachers did find OCR strong in beginning word decoding but none of the three teachers in this study thought the vocabulary or comprehension components were effective. Two

teachers substituted Beck & McKeown's (2002) approach to vocabulary and one teacher used Harvey & Goudvis's work (2007) for comprehension strategy instruction, taking advantage of some of experts in their respective fields. The adoption of one program with no supplementary materials means that for teachers who did not exercise the prerogative to adapt the curriculum, students may have received a less than efficacious instruction.

Expect and encourage adaptation. Rather than forcing teachers into a resistance stance in opposition to fidelity policies, districts could expect and encourage teacher adaptation of pedagogical strategies in order to preserve fidelity to the promised outcomes. As suggested earlier by Stein and D'Amico (2002), this would require differentiated professional development opportunities that reflect teachers' expertise, rather than universal training that is limited to the features of a particular curriculum program. Teachers could be free to invoke their own expertise to determine whether to use, adapt or omit features of the adopted curriculum. These localized pedagogical designs can be supported and shared across the district so that all students benefit from the expertise of the most innovative teachers.

Implications for Teacher Preparation and Professional Development

Adaptive implementation may leverage curriculum to benefit historically low-performing students because it matches high expectations with pedagogical strategies that support realization of outcomes. Therefore, developing teachers' expertise in pedagogical design and preparing them for their role as curriculum mediators could reap big dividends. This would involve supporting teachers to develop both a theory of action, specific subject matter content knowledge and knowledge of their students that underlies professional prerogative. Such an approach is critical because as Cohen and Hill (2001) write,

> "the norm of autonomy is especially corrosive in the U.S. where system fragmentation, weak knowledge of effectiveness, and limited opportunities to learn leave teachers with little consistent and constructive guidance. The same autonomy in a much better-informed and coherent system would almost surely yield more informed and productive decisions by teachers." (p. 174)

Support new teachers to develop a theory of action and pedagogical knowledge. Pre-service and in-service teacher education programs can expose participants to theoretical perspectives on learning and the teaching of reading that support them the development of a theory of action. A theory of action provides a foundation that guides a curricular choices and decision-making by defining the mechanism by which students learn. Teachers need to define the mechanisms that they hypothesize will increase students' access to reading instruction and result in their development as empowered text users. This theory is encompassed in their general pedagogical knowledge that informs how to present information, how to engage students and how to organize a classroom**.** In this study, for example, teachers used variations on the gradual release of responsibility as a theory of action. Furthermore, it was their

pedagogical knowledge that provided the strategies that they layered on to the prescribed strategies to increase their effectiveness. When teachers operationalize a common set of outcomes using shared technical knowledge as embodied in an adopted text, their pedagogical knowledge determines their effectiveness in adapting to the local context.

Support the development of content knowledge that underlies pedagogical content knowledge. The flexible use of instructional materials by the teachers in this study required a high level of content knowledge about reading. Teachers employed their knowledge of the structure of English, English spelling patterns, morphology, children's literature and informational text, and comprehension strategies when designing reading instruction. Teacher education cannot assume that participants already have subject matter knowledge from their previous schooling. Understanding of the content underlies teachers' ability to organize and represent content for novices, which Shulman (1986) refers to as pedagogical content knowledge. For example, when the teachers in this study found the OCR strategies weak, they layered on or substituted their own strategies. When content was missing, they invented strategies to supply it. If teacher preparation coursework and subsequent professional development opportunities include attention to content, teachers will be able to more astutely analyze the potential of teaching strategies and employ their pedagogical content knowledge to enact or redesign suggested approaches. This may required additional coursework in reading in order to develop both content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge.

Support teachers to know each student. When literacy is defined as a set of social practices, teachers are obliged to become familiar with the literacy events that their students experience in their families and communities. This awareness suggests possible entry points into the curriculum as well as forms the foundation for developing rapport with each student. The lack of culturally relevant entry points is a source of inequity in instruction. What counts as "literacy" and what is defined as "text" is in constant flux across cultures and across time. Teachers cannot be bound to a particular method that is grounded in a particular value system, but must be flexible to adapt as literacy practices evolve with cultural and technological changes. Knowing each student requires time, a school culture that values the contributions of its families and students, and an awareness of one's own cultural ways of knowing as well as an appreciation of others.

Implications for Curriculum Developers

A view of the learner as an active participant in his/her own learning dictates that teachers would "dig knowledge out of students," as suggested by one of the teachers in this study, rather than "pouring it in." Teachers learn from instructional materials as they use them to guide their instruction. In this study, teachers gained both content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge from reading the OCR teacher's manual. If the textbook was designed to be educative, this opportunity could be intentional and comprehensive rather than incidental and random.

Design instructional materials that are educative for teachers. Curriculum materials operate on a large scale with wide reach into classrooms, representing a

tremendous untapped opportunity to communicate with teachers (Ball & Cohen, 1996). However, this potential has not generally been exploited by curriculum developers who focus on directing teachers to cover a body of information without providing much background on the rationale for the choices they have made when designing the content (Maniates & Woulfin, 2008). As referenced in Chapter 2, Remillard (2000) writes that traditionally a teacher manual

> "communicated by speaking *through* the teacher, by guiding their actions. It did not speak *to* them about these tasks or the ideas underlying them. This choice of language is common among many curriculum guides, which tend to offer steps to follow, problems to give, actual questions to ask, and answers to expect. This approach to guiding teaching emphasizes the outcomes of teaching and not the rationales, assumptions or agendas supporting them, discouraging teachers from engaging the ideas underlying the writers' decisions and suggestions." (p. 347)

Program developers could acknowledge teachers as co-collaborators in curriculum design by including the behind-the-scenes rationale for what has been included and what has been omitted, such as the reason for choosing particular vocabulary words or what pedagogical possibilities the selected text for students offers. They might include scenarios of likely student responses and what they might indicate about a students' understanding along with teaching options to address them.

Implications for Research on the Implementation of Reading Curricula

The privileging of experimental control group studies by the National Reading Panel discounted the contribution of qualitative studies to the detriment of our knowledge base on reading instruction. The qualitative studies on curriculum implementation cited in Chapter 2 represent a tradition that must be continued in the current era of federal education reforms. More qualitative descriptions of daily classroom life are needed to understand how educational policies aimed at increasing equity actually affect students, teachers and communities (Valenzuela, Prieto & Hamilton, 2007).

Much has been written to caution the field on the possible effects of current curriculum policy on students, but few have specifically explored the student perspective with the exception of Spencer (2009). More information on what successful teachers do to raise student achievement is always needed as the context of students' lived experience is in constant flux in a dynamic cultural environment. Stein and D'Amico (2002) suggest a fruitful area of study in the intersection of alignment with district curriculum policy and quality. More work on the impact of curriculum policy on new teachers is needed to uncover whether the patterns discovered by Valencia et al. (2006) and Achinstein et al. (2004) hold. Since reading curriculum is highly commercialized, publishers' claims must be investigated to insure validity and expose hyperbole. The power of educative curriculum materials requires further study to determine what elements to include to speak directly to the teacher as a co-collaborator in curriculum design.

Complex educational reforms require teachers who are trained, supported and well-compensated, who have time in their work day to collaborate, design authentic assessments, plan exciting curriculum, meet regularly with parents and participate in the communities in which they teach. They need federal, state and school district policies that are flexible and reward innovation. They need curriculum that is designed and field tested by educators who are motivated by a vision of equity of educational opportunity. Although California's statewide effort to implement scientifically-based reading instruction has been multi-faceted, it has actually been a simple reform based on changes made by individual teachers. A huge infrastructure of accountability, materials, coaching and monitoring is focused on that one point of change, while keeping the structure of the system intact. Open Court Reading may have the power to temporarily interrupt a recursive cycle of early reading failure but it is just a stop-gap measure. Profound pedagogical reform in reading instruction requires marshalling human and material resources in a coordinated effort to address the structure of schooled literacy in a way that interrupt patterns of dynamic inequality.

References

Achinstein, B. A., Ogawa, R. T. & Spieglman, A. (2004). Are we creating separate and unequal tracks of teachers? The effects of state policy, local conditions, and teacher characteristics on new teacher socialization. *American Educational Research Journal, 41*(3), 557-603.

Achinstein, B. A. & Ogawa, R. T. (2006). (In)fidelity: What the resistance of new teachers reveals about professional principles and prescriptive educational policies. *Harvard Educational Review, (76)*1, 30-63.

Agnastopoulos, D. (2003). The new accountability, student failure, and teachers' work in urban high schools. *Educational Policy, 17,* 291-316.

Allington, R. L. (2002). *Big brother and the national reading curriculum: How ideology trumped evidence.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Anderson, R. C., Hiebert, E. H., Scott, J. A., & Wilkinson, I. A. G. (1985). *Becoming a nation of readers: The report of the commission on reading.* Washington, DC: The National Institute of Education.

Anderson, R. C. & Pearson P. D. (1984). A schema-theoretic view of basic processes in reading. In P.D. Pearson (Ed.), *Handbook of reading research* (pp. 255-291). NY: Longman.

Au, K. H. (1981). Participation structures in a reading lesson with Hawaiian children: Analysis of a culturally appropriate instructional event. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly, XI, 2,* 91-115.

Ball, D. L., & Cohen, D. K. (1996). Reform by the book: What is - or might be - the role of curriculum materials in teacher learning and instructional reform. *Educational Researcher, 25*(9), 6-8.

Beck, I., McKeown, M. & Kucan, L. (2002). *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction.* NY: The Guilford Press.

Bereiter, C. & Engelmann, S. (1966). *Teaching disadvantaged children in the preschool.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Berliner, D. C. (1992). The nature of expertise in teaching. In F. K. Oser, A. Dick and J. L. Patry (Eds.). *Effective and responsible teaching: The new synthesis* (pp. 227-248). SF: Jossey-Bass.

Berman, P. & McLaughlin, M. W. (1975). *Federal programs supporting educational change: Vol. VI. The findings in review.* Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation.

Bogdan, R. C. & Biklen, S. K. (2003). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods.* Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Borman, G. D., Dowling, N. M. & Schneck, C. (2008). A multisite cluster randomized field trial of Open Court Reading. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 30*(4), 389-407.

Brenner, D., Hiebert, E. H., & Tompkins, R., (2009). How much and what are third graders reading? (pp. 118-140). In E.H. Hiebert (Ed.), *Reading more, reading better.* NY: Guilford.

California Department of Education. (1987). *English-Language Arts Framework.* Sacramento, CA: Author.

California Department of Education. (1995). *Every Child a Reader: The Report of the California Reading Task Force.* Sacramento, CA: Author.

California Department of Education. (1999). *Reading/Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools: Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve.* Sacramento, CA: Author.

California Department of Education. (2002, August). *California's Reading First Plan.* Retrieved March 11, 2010 from www.cde.ca.gov/nclb/sr/rf/

California Department of Education. (2007) *Reading/Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools: Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve.* Sacramento, CA: Author.

Cambourne, B. (1988). *The whole story: Natural learning and acquisition of literacy in the classroom.* Auckland, New Zealand: Ashton Scholastic.

Clay, M. M. (1993). *Reading recovery: A guidebook for teachers in training.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Coburn, C. (2001). Collective sensemaking about reading: How teachers mediate reading policy in their professional communities. *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis 23*(2), 145-170.

Coburn, C. E. (2004). Beyond decoupling: Rethinking the relationship between the institutional environment and the classroom. *Sociology of Education, 77*(3), 211-244.

Coburn, C. E. (2005). The role of non-system actors in the relationship between policy and practice: The case of reading instruction in California. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 27*(1), 23-52.

Cohen, D. K. (1990). A revolution in one classroom: The case of Mrs. Oublier. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 12*(3), 311-329.

Cohen, D. R. & Hill, H. (2001). *Learning policy: When state education reform works.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Cohen, D.K. & Spillane, J. P. (1992). Policy and practice: The relations between governance and instruction. *Review of Research in Education, 18*, 3-49.

Crocco, M. S. & Costigan, T. (2007). The narrowing of curriculum and pedagogy in the age of accountability: Urban educators speak out. *Urban Education, 42*(6), 512-535.

Cummins, J. (2007). Pedagogies for the poor? Realigning reading instruction for low-income students with scientifically-based reading research. *Educational Researcher*, *36*(9), 564-572.

Datnow, A. & Castellano, M. (2000). Teachers' responses to Success for All: How beliefs, experiences, and adaptations shape implementation. *American Educational Research Journal, 37*(3), 775-799.

Diamond, J. B. (2007). Where the rubber meets the road: Rethinking the connection between high-stakes testing policy and classroom instruction. *Sociology of Education, 80*(4), 285-313.

Delpit, L. D. (1988). The silenced dialogue: Power and pedagogy in educating other people's children. *Harvard Educational Review, 58*(3), 280-298.

Dewitz, P., Jones, J. & Leahy, S. (2009). Comprehension strategy instruction in core reading programs. *Reading Research Quarterly, 44*(2), 102-126.

Dillon, S. (2010, March 18). Obama calls for major change in education law. *New York Times.* Retrieved March 19, 2010 from http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/14/education/14child.html?scp=4&sq=education&st=cse

Doyle, W. (1990). Classroom knowledge as a foundation of teaching. *Teachers College Record, 91*(3), 347-360.

Doyle, W. (1992). Constructing curriculum in the classroom. In F. K. Oser, A. Dick & J. Patry (Eds.). *Effective and responsible teaching: The new synthesis* (pp. 66-79). SF: Jossey Bass.

Duffy, G. G. & Hoffman, J. V. (1999). In pursuit of an illusion: The flawed search for a perfect method. *The Reading Teacher, 53*(1), 10–16.

Duke, N.K. & Pearson, P. D. (2002). Effective practices for developing reading comprehension. In A.E. Farstrup, & S. Samuels (Eds.), *What research has to say about reading instruction* (pp. 205-242). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Erickson, F. (1986). Qualitative methods in research on teaching. In M. C. Wittrock (Ed.). *Handbook of research on teaching* (3rd ed., pp. 119-161). NY: Macmillan.

Fountas, I. C. & Pinnell, G. S. (1995). *Guided reading: Good first teaching for all children.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Fullan, M. (2001). *The meaning of educational change.* New York: Teachers College Press

Gee, J. P. (2008). Learning in semiotic domains: A social and situated account. In M. Prinsloo & M. Baynham (Eds.). *Literacies, global and local* (pp. 137-151). Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Glaser, B.G. & Strauss, A.L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory.* Chicago: Aldine.

Glesne, C., & Peshkin, A. (1992). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction.* White Plains, NY: Longman.

Goody, J. & Watt, I. (1968). The consequences of literacy. In J. Goody (Ed.). *Literacy in traditional societies* (pp. 311-357). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Grubb, W.N. (2007). Dynamic inequality and intervention: Lessons from a small country. *Phi Delta Kappan, 89*(2), 1050-114.

Gutiérrez, K.D. (2009). A comprehensive federal literacy agenda: Moving beyond inoculation approaches to literacy policy. *Journal of Literacy Research, 41,* 476-483.

Gutiérrez, K.D., Baquedano- López, P. & Turner, M. G. (1997). Putting language back into language arts: When the radical middle meets the third space. *Language Arts, 74,* 368-378.

Gutman, A. (1999). *Democratic education.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Harvey, S. & Goudvis, A. (2007). Strategies that work: Teaching comprehension for understanding and engagement (2nd ed.). York, ME: Stenhouse.

Hassett, D. D. & Curwood, J. S. (2010). Theories and practices of multimodal education: The instructional dynamics of picture books and primary classrooms. *The Reading Teacher, 63*(4), 270-282.

Heath, S.B. (1983). Ways with words: Language, life and work in communities and classrooms. Cambridge University Press.

Helsby, G. & McCulloch, G. (1996). Teacher professionalism and curriculum control. In Goodson, I. F. & Hargreaves, A. (Eds.). *Teachers professional lives* (pp. 56-75). London: Routledge.

Honig, M. I. (2003). Building policy from practice: District central office administrators' roles and capacity for implementing collaborative education policy. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 39*(3), 292-338.

Keene, E. O. & Zimmerman, S. (1997). *Mosaic of thought: Teaching comprehension in a reader's workshop.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Kennedy, M. (2005). *Inside teaching: How classroom life undermines reform.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Kersten, J. & Pardo, L. (2007). Finessing and hybridizing: Innovative literacy practices in Reading First classrooms. *The Reading Teacher, 61*(2), 146-154.

Kintsch, W. (1998). *Comprehension: A paradigm for cognition.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kintsch, W. & Kintsch, E. (2005). Comprehension. In S. G. Paris & S. S. Stahl (Eds.), *Children's reading comprehension and assessment* (pp. 71-92). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2006). From the achievement gap to the education debt: Understanding achievement in U. S. schools. *Educational Researcher, 35*(7), 3-12.

Little, J. W. (1993). Teachers' professional development in a climate of educational reform. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 15*(2), 129-151.

Lipsky, M. (1980). *Street-level bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the individual in public service.* NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Lortie, D. (1975). *Schoolteacher.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Luke, A. (1992). The body literate. *Linguistics and Education, 4*, 107-129.

Luke, A. (1998). Getting over method: Literacy teaching as work in new times. *Language Arts, 75*(4), 305-313.

Luke, A., & Freebody, P. (1999). Further notes on the Four Resources model. *Reading On-Line.* Retrieved January 9, 2010 from http://www.readingonline.org/research/lukefreebody.html

Mahiri, J. (1998). *Shooting for excellence: African American and youth culture in new century schools.* NY: Teachers College Press.

Mahiri, J. (2004). *What they don't learn in school: Literacy in the lives of urban youth.* NY: Peter Lang.

Mahiri, J. (2005). From 3 R's to 3 C's: Corporate curriculum and culture in public schools. *Social Justice, 32*(3), 72-88.

Maniates, H. (2007, March). *Teacher beliefs and prescriptive curriculum.* Paper presented at the 7th Annual Research Day of University of California - Berkeley Graduate School of Education, Berkeley, CA.

Maniates, H. & Pearson, P. D. (2007). The curricularization of comprehension strategies instruction: A conspiracy of good intentions. In Y. Kim, V. J. Risko, D. W. Rowe, R. Jimenez, D. Dickinson, K. Leander & D. Compton (Eds.). *National Reading Conference Yearbook 2007* (pp. 271-282). Oak Creek, WI: National Reading Conference.

Maniates, H. & Woulfin, S. (2008, March). *Is OCR an ECM? Determining the professional development potential of a teacher's manual.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York.

Manzo, K. K. (2009, September 9). California budget troubles fuel curriculum crisis. *Education Week.* Retrieved March 6, 2010 from http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/09/04/03califtexts_ep.h29.html?tkn=LX PFrcurhwNsNeknOJRODhC6Z8IMGBH6K3IF&print=1

Matland, R. E. (1995). Synthesizing the implementation literature: The ambiguity-conflict model of policy implementation. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 5*(2), 145-174.

McCullough, G., Helsby, G. & Knight, P. (2000). *The politics of professionalism: Teachers and the curriculum.* London: Continuum International Publishing Group.

McGill-Franzen, A. (2000). Policy and instruction: What is the relationship? In M. Kamil, P. D. Pearson, & R. Barr (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research* (Vol. III, pp. 889-908). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

McGill-Franzen, A. (2005). In the press to scale up, what is at risk? *Reading Research Quarterly (40)*3, 366-370.

McGill-Franzen, A., Zmach, C., Solic, K. & Zeig, J. L. (2006). The confluence of two policy mandates: Core reading programs and third grade retention in Florida. *The Elementary School Journal, 107*(1), 67-91.

McGregor, T. (2007). *Comprehension connections: Bridges to strategic reading.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

McLaughlin, M. W. (1987). Learning from experience: Lessons from policy implementation. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 9*(2), 171-178.

Miles, M. B. & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Most, B. (1978). *If the dinosaurs came back.* San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace.

National Governors Association (2009). Common core standards initiative. Retrieved March 27, 2010 from http://www.corestandards.org/

National Reading Panel. (2000). *The report of the National Reading Panel. Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction.* (National Institutes of Health Publication No. 00-4769). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

National Research Council (1998). *Preventing reading difficulties in young children*. Washington, DC: Author.

Ogle, D.M. (1986). K-W-L: A teaching model that develops active reading of expository text. *Reading Teacher, 39*, 564-570.

Olson, D. (1977). "From utterance to text: The bias of language in speech and writing," *Harvard Education Review, 47*, 257-281.

Pearson, P. D. (2001). Life in the radical middle: A personal apology for a balanced view of reading. In R. Flippo (Ed.). *Reading researchers in search of common ground* (pp. 78-92)*.* Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Pearson, P. D. (2007). An endangered species act for literacy education. *Journal of Literacy Research, 39*(2), 145-162.

Pearson, P. D. & Gallagher, M. C. (1983). The instruction of reading comprehension. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 8*, 317-344.

Pease-Alvarez, L., Samway, K. D, Almanzo, M. & Cifka-Herrera, C. (2007). Making sense of Open Court: Teachers negotiating top-down reform in literacy instruction for English language learners. Retrieved March 5, 2010 from http://lmri.ucsb.edu/publications/finalgrantreports/peasealvarez2.pdf

Pease-Alvarez, L. & Samway, K. D. (2008). Negotiating a top-down reading program mandate: The experiences of one school. *Language Arts, 86*(1), pp. 32-41.

Pressley, M., El-Dinary, P.B., Gaskins, I., Schuder, T., Bergman, J.L., Almasi, J., & Brown, R. (1992). Be-yond direct explanation: Transactional instruction of reading comprehension strategies. *Elementary School Journal, 92*(5), 513-555.

Pressley, M., Duke, N.K., & Boling, E. A. (2004). The educational science and scientifically based instruction we need: Lessons from reading research and policymaking. *Harvard Educational Review 74*(1), 30-61.

Remillard, J. (2000). Can curriculum materials support teachers' learning? Two fourth-grade teachers' use of a mathematics text. *The Elementary School Journal, 100*(4), 331-350.

Reutzel, D. R., Smith, J. A., Fawson, P. C. (2005). An evaluation of two approaches for teaching reading comprehension strategies in the primary years using science information texts. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 20*, 276-305.

Rosenblatt, L. (1978). *The reader, the text, the poem: The transactional theory of the literary work.* Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Sabatier, P., & Mazmanian, D. (1980). The implementation of public policy: A framework of analysis. *Policy Studies Journal, 8*(4), 538-560.

Sen, A. (1992). *Inequality reexamined.* NY: Russell Sage.

Shannon, P. (2007). *Reading against democracy: The broken promises of reading instruction.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Schoen, L. & Fusarelli, L. D. (2008). Innovation, NCLB, and the fear factor. *Educational Policy 22*(1), 181-203.

Shulman, L.S. (1986). Those who understand: Knowledge growth in teaching. *Educational Researcher, 15*(2), 4-14.

Sikes, P. J. (1992). Imposed change and the experienced teacher. In Fullan, M. & Hargreaves, A. (Eds.). *Teacher development and educational change* (pp. 36-55). London: Routledge.

Slavin, R. E., Madden, N. A., Dolan, L. J., & Wasik, B. (1996). *Every child, every school: Success for All.* Newbury Park, CA: Corwin.

Sloan, K. (2007). High-stakes accountability, minority youth, and ethnography: Assessing multiple effects. *Anthropology & Education, 38*(1), pp. 24-41.

Smagorinsky, P., Lakly & Johnson (2002). Acquiescence, accommodation, and resistance in learning to teach with a prescribed curriculum. *English Education, 34*(3), 187-213.

Spencer, T. G. (2009). Complication what it means to 'struggle:' One young child's experience with a mandated literacy initiative. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood, 10* (3), 218-231.

Spillane, J. (1999). External reform initiatives and teachers' efforts to reconstruct their practice: the mediating role of teachers' zones of enactment. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 31*(2), 143-175.

SRA/McGraw Hill. (2002a). *Open Court Reading Level 2, Unit 2: Kindness.* Columbus, OH: SRA/McGraw Hill.

SRA/McGraw Hill. (2002b). *Open Court Reading Level 2, Unit 4: Fossils.* Columbus, OH: SRA/McGraw Hill.

SRA/McGraw Hill. (2002c). *Open Court Reading Level 3, Unit 4: Money.* Columbus, OH: SRA/McGraw Hill.

Stein, M. K. & D'Amico, L. (2002). Inquiry at the crossroads of policy and learning: A study of a district-wide literacy initiative. *Teachers College Record 104*(7), 1313-1344.

Stodolsky, S. S. & Grossman, P. (2000). Changing students, changing teaching. *Teachers College Record 102* (1), 125-172.

Strauss, A. (1987). *Qualitative analysis for social scientists.* NY: Cambridge University Press.

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1994). Grounded theory methodology: An overview. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 273-285). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Street, B. (1984). *Literacy in theory and practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Street, B. (2000). Literacy events and literacy practices: Theory and practice in the New Literacy Studies. In M. Martin-Jones & K. Jones (Eds.). *Multilingual literacies.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Co.

Sweet, A. P. & Snow, C. E. (Eds.). (2003). *Rethinking reading comprehension.* NY: Guilford.

Tierney, R. J. & Pearson, P. D. (1983). Towards a composing model of reading. *Language Arts, 6(5), 568-580.*

Underwood, T., Yoo, M. & Pearson, P.D. (2007). Understanding reading comprehension in secondary schools through the lens of the Four Resources Model. In L.S. Rush, A.J. Eakle, & A. Berger (Eds.). *Secondary school reading and writing: What research reveals for classroom practices.* Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, pp. 90-116.

United States Department of Education. (August 23, 2002). Paige Announces $132.9 Million Reading First Grant for California. *United States Department of Education Press Release.* Retrieved March 1, 2010, from http://www2.ed.gov/print/news/pressreleases/2002/08/08232002.html

Valencia, S. W., Place, N. A., Martin, S. D. & Grossman, P. L. (2006). Curriculum materials for elementary reading: Shackles and scaffolds for four beginning teachers. *The Elementary School Journal, 107*(1), 93-116.

Valenzuela, A., Prieto, L. & Hamilton, M. P. (2007). Introduction to the special issue: No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and minority youth: What the qualitative evidence suggests. *Anthropology & Education, 38*(1),1-8.

Young, I.M. (2000). Displacing the distributive paradigm. In Johnson, D. (ed). *Equality* (pp 243-265). Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing.

Zehr, M. (2009, November 9). Conflict of interest arises as concern in standards push.
    Retrieved March 27, 2010 from
    http://www.edweek.org/login.html?source=http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/20
    09/11/04/10conflict_ep.h29.html&destination=http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles
    /2009/11/04/10conflict_ep.h29.html&levelId=2100

Appendix A
Invitation to Participate in Preliminary Interview

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT BERKELEY

BERKELEY • DAVIS • IRVINE • LOS ANGELES • MERCED • RIVERSIDE • SAN DIEGO   SAN FRANCISCO • SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

June 6, 2008

Dear Teacher,

My name is Helen Maniates and I'm a PhD student at UC Berkeley's Graduate School of Education. I'm interested in speaking with teachers who are implementing the district-adopted core reading program, Open Court Reading. I'm particularly interested in learning **how veteran teachers effectively implement core reading programs** and in describing **how teachers use their professional judgment and expertise in their day-to-day classroom work**. Your literacy coach   recommended you as an exemplary teacher who is using the program, and who might consider talking with me about your work.

For my dissertation, I will be conducting a study that involves **one-on-one interviews** with teachers and one week of **classroom observations** of the literacy block during the Fall 2009 semester. The **total time commitment** for participating in the full study would be about **5 hours** of interviews over the semester and about **7.5 hours** of classroom observation.

There are no financial benefits to participating, and there are no costs to you. The main benefit would be to contribute to research on teaching beginning reading, to voice your thoughts on reading curriculum and to inform future curriculum implementation policy. Your district has given permission for me to conduct this study in their schools. Your identity would be protected and you would remain anonymous in all records of the study.

I'd like to schedule a short individual screening **interview** (20 minutes) in **September** 2008 with teachers who think they might be interested in participating in the full study. Please contact me by **June 15** at any of the numbers below if you are interested or if you have any further questions.

Thank you,

Helen Maniates
maniates@berkeley.edu
415-378-5880 (cell)
415-927-0417 (fax)

Appendix B
Teacher Questionnaire

Teacher Questionnaire

Thank you for your responses! All responses will be kept confidential.

Years teaching at this grade level_____ at this school _____ in this district_____
Year you completed your credential program_____Year you began teaching w OCR___

	Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements.	Agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree
1	I feel prepared to teach reading at my grade level.				
2	OCR has increased my ability to teach reading effectively.				
3	My beliefs about reading instruction generally correspond to the approach of my school's reading program, OCR.				
4	Using OCR has changed the way I think about reading.				
5	I feel successful providing reading instruction to average and above average students.				
6	I feel successful providing reading instruction to students who are basic and below basic readers.				
7	Sometimes I modify the activities in the reading program.				
8	Sometimes I add activities and/or books to the reading program.				
9	It is my responsibility to make diverge from the program if some of my students are not succeeding.				
10	I have leeway to make changes to the reading program.				
11	My colleagues and I share ideas for how to make the program work.				