Secondary English Language Arts teachers' perceptions and implementation of change policy

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SECONDARY ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND
IMPLEMENTATION OF CHANGE POLICY

by

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ABSTRACT

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by

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Research regarding educational reform in the United States has examined change in public schools, including changes in the role of the teacher. Secondary teachers have been studied regarding school leadership, work atmosphere, and resource availability, but research specific to secondary English Language Arts teachers’ perceptions of how policy implementation affects them in their day to day practice is lacking. Factors of change and the effects on teachers’ attitudes reflect how teachers as participants of change cope with change reform.

This qualitative research study sought a descriptive understanding of practicing secondary English Language Arts teachers and their perceptions regarding the scope and goals of curriculum reform policy through a multiple case study design viewed through a critical perspective. The principal methodological instrument for study is focused interviews and observations with teachers who had been teaching eight-10 years within the district to identify what they knew regarding curriculum policy changes within the
past five years of curriculum at the state, district and site level, their current ways of practice, and then assessed how they perceive the impact of curriculum change on their practice. This research examined on a holistic level, the issue of change as it was perceived by the teachers. Furthermore, it examines specific policy implementation related to the role of change, its implementations, and the way in which teachers’ perceptions influenced the implementation.

The case study sought to gain insights into the ways in which teachers themselves viewed their practice and how their perceptions impacted their classroom teaching. The principal methodological instrument for this study was focused interviews utilizing Fisher’s (1999) model of policy evaluation. Five questions directed the research: 1) What counts as change to secondary English Language Arts teachers? 2) In what ways do secondary English Language Arts teachers implement change in the metropolitan schools in which they work? 3) What becomes altered or modified in the classroom materials when secondary English Language Arts teachers implement policy as the basis for change? 4) What are the values or goals that underlie teacher’s perceptions of the change relationships between the secondary English Language Arts and policy implementation? 5) How is the secondary English Language Arts teacher’s perceptions affected by the implementation of policy change?

Key words: teacher perception, teacher beliefs, policy implementation, implementation, policy formation, policy process, curricular reform, social context, case study, policy analysis, organizational behavior, legitimacy, alienation, secondary education.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Study


To provide insights on teacher perceptions of their roles, the purpose of this study was twofold, 1) to identify perceptions of change in curriculum reform policy by secondary English Language Arts teachers in metropolitan schools and 2) to determine the degree that change in curriculum reform policy impacted their practice. Change reform policy was a term used throughout this study to refer to particular mandates imposed upon educational systems. Change was used to refer to the overarching scope, reform was the variable, and policy was the vehicle in which the information is imparted.

This evaluative case study modeling Fischer’s Logic of Policy Evaluation (1999) with a critical perspective sought to provide insight into the perceptions of secondary English Language Arts teachers in metropolitan schools and their practice in light of change reform. Critical perspective was that set of reasoning skills that interpreted and evaluated claims made by inferences (Scriven, 1983; Walton, 2000). The case study design of
research utilized Fischer’s framework and specifically selected because it allowed the study of contextual insight into perception on practice within metropolitan secondary English classrooms. This research first examined concepts of change that related to policy implementation. Furthermore, it examined specific policy implementation related to the role of change, its implementations, and the way in which teachers’ perceptions influenced the implementation.

The goal of this study was to understand perceptions that teachers had regarding educational policies that were to be implemented within their classroom practice. Evaluating the impact of teachers’ engaged practice was important because “change processes are affected” by behaviors (Hall and Hord, 2001, p. 174). Factors of change and the effects on teachers’ attitudes reflected how teachers as participants of change coped with change reform. “Participants in a change process develop a wide range of impressions and interpretations about what the change effort is about” (Hall and Hord, 2001, p. 171). Understanding how change affected English Language Arts teachers may provide new information as to why reform is difficult within public education.

The purpose of this study has been discussed. The research questions, the objective and the importance of this study will directly follow. The Background, theoretical framework, definitions and summary will conclude chapter 1. Chapter 2 will review the pertinent literature and chapter 3 will discuss the methodology for this study. Chapter 4 focuses on the findings of the study and Chapter 5 contains the conclusions and implications.
Research Questions

The following questions served as the research framework and were the research questions for this study:

1. What counts as change to secondary English Language Arts teachers?
2. In what ways do secondary English Language Arts teachers implement change in the metropolitan schools in which they work?
3. What becomes altered or modified in the classroom materials when secondary English Language Arts teachers implement policy as the basis for change?
4. What are the values or goals that underlie teacher’s perceptions of the change relationships between the secondary English Language Arts and policy implementation?
5. How does the secondary English Language Arts teacher’s perceptions influence the implementation of policy change?

Appendix C is the research questions data table.

Objective of the Study

The primary objective of this study was to evaluate secondary English Language Arts teachers’ perceptions regarding the impact of curriculum reform on their classroom practice. This evaluation provided a critical context to illuminate a segment of reform participants, namely secondary English Language Arts teachers who have not yet been fully discussed in change and reform research.
Prior research studies have addressed secondary teachers’ perceptions regarding healthy and unhealthy work environments and organizational culture (Hoy & Feldman, 1999), leadership skills and school climate (Hall & George, 1999), professional development (Birman, Destimone, Porter & Garet, 2000), assessment issues (Fraser, 1999), “teacher as professional” (Conley & Muncey, 1999) and teachers’ attitudes regarding the lounge (Ben-Peretz, Schonmann, & Kupermintz, 1999). Secondary teachers have been studied regarding school leadership, work atmosphere, and resource availability, but research specific to secondary English Language Arts teachers’ perceptions of how reform policy implementation affects them in their day to day practice was lacking.

Teachers are integral to the change process and thus credible agents of change. They are an active force in shaping the classroom environment (Smyth, 2000). The activity between teacher and student is one of shared culture, in which a dual process of exploring, questioning, evaluating, and responding occurs (Smyth, 2000). Teacher work is an intellectual endeavor that is active, critical, immediate and participatory within the classroom (Giroux, 1985; Popkewitz, 1993; Smyth, 2000). Investigating how this work stimulates change is an area that will benefit from further research.

Those in the classroom are the ones conducting the implementation of the policy, and yet their voice is not utilized in the assessment process. Strangely, they are often the overlooked party regarding change and reform.

There is a tacit understanding here of an almost coercive relationship between the institution and the teacher as the agent of curriculum change: the teacher is required to translate policy into practice for the well-being and success of the
students and is thereby forced into a position of subjugation with respect to the institution. Clearly, it is the case, that some teachers experience this as professional disempowerment (Manuel, 2001, p.20)

The perceptions and feelings of the English Language Arts secondary teachers are important in change research, as they are participants of change and implementation. Hoy and Feldman (1999) assert “the feelings of teachers are real and based on something [as] teachers act on their beliefs and perceptions” (p. 99). The documentation of teacher’s perceptions is important as teachers directly affect classroom reforms (Adams, 2000).

Fullan (1996) argued that teachers “cannot express themselves adequately” when “evaluating systematic reform” because they are only allowed to utilize abstract language to respond to specificities (p. 423). The reform Fullan (1996) discussed remained in the realm of objective alignment, school procedure, administration assessment, professional development, and district communication; each of those abstract as compared to the learning relationship inside the classroom. That type of reform does not directly address teachers’ impressions and thoughts regarding the day to day implementation and practice of change reform policy.

The area selected for study was a large southwestern metropolitan area, ranked among the top ten largest school districts in the United States, with approximately thirty public secondary high schools. Within the past five years, English Language Arts standards in grades kindergarten through 12 had been implemented requiring alignment with district syllabi, content standards and individual teacher’s lesson plans. The 2003-2004 school year brought a new district policy, Power Standards, into the English Language Arts and Math curriculums In the 2003-2004 school year the curriculum was
undergoing a complete revision in light of H.R.1, *No Child Left Behind Act of 2000.*

Since teachers were the implementers, they provided a population directly related to this study’s design.

*Importance of the Study Through the Entities Involved*

This study contained consideration of complex entities that converged in the daily practice of education. It involved secondary English Language Arts teachers and their personal perceptions and daily practice. This study also brought conceptualizations in the form of change, policy, and ethics directly into the classroom. The entities involved were multifaceted and a broad description of the entities involved follows in order to fully illustrate the importance of this study. A demographic description of the United States will be followed by policy involvement, and finally a brief description on implementation.

*United States.* The United States is such a culturally diverse and heterogeneous country, with more than 98% of its residents tracing their ancestry from other nations within the last three generations. An overall description of the demographics assist in understanding the complex environment in which public education exists and operates.

Mazurek, Winzer and Majorek (2000) report that 275 million people populate the U.S and of that, the wealthiest 2% control “ten times more resources than the poorest 20%” (p. 18). Approximately 75% of the citizenry are of white, European descent. Christian religious beliefs are in the majority, with a significant number of adherents practicing Judaism and Islam. Home ownership has remained a steady 65% for the past thirty years. The homeless population hovers at approximately twenty million or 13.
75%. America has two main centrist political parties, democratic and republican, that govern at the national, state and local levels and reflect the paradigm of pragmatism.

"Direct political jurisdiction extends from Pago Pago in American Samoa to San Juan, Puerto Rico, to Point Barrow, Alaska" (Smith & Marcano, 2000, p. 18). The social fabric of the nation reflects a heavy tendency to consumerism and media influence.

Education also reflects extremes. One fourth of the 45 million students who attend public schools do so in 100 of the largest districts in the country. Those in public schools attend 85,000 schools in 15,000 independent school districts. The public school system in the United States currently employs nearly five million professional educators, not including those who attend parochial or independent schools, their staffs and/or the support staff, or home schoolers.

Schooling within the United States is funded primarily through state and local taxes, with only six percent coming from the federal government. Still, more than three-quarters of a trillion dollars is spent yearly on public education (Smith & Marcano, 2000). The right to an education is not granted federally, allowing states educational control per the Tenth Amendment of the United States Constitution. The Fourteenth Amendment stipulates that if education is provided by the state, then the educational instruction must be delivered to all on an equal basis:

No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person with in its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.
Despite state governing of education, curriculum often follows federal guidelines as specified through the U.S. Office of Education.

*Policy Involvement.* Schools within the United States are funded through public dollars, either state, local or federal. Public policy analysts evaluate the use and appropriateness of policy creation, implementation, successes and failures. Fischer (1999) described the creation of a policy as following four very specific guidelines. The first addresses a problem to be concentrated upon. This could be “individual, environmental, political, economic, social, or moral” (Fischer, 1999, p.3). In the case of public schooling, the problem could be a combination of factors that are perceived as needing adjustment. The second guideline refers to defining the problem; “the participants to be involved in the policy program and the ways the policy is to affect them” are indicated (Fischer, 1999, p.3). In public schools, participants are those working within the schools and implementing the policy. The third component of policy creation specifies “its intended effects on the society as a whole” (e.g. increased proficiency, higher tests scores, increased competencies, or lower drop out rate) (Fischer, 1999, p.3). The fourth element “should include a declaration of the basic social and political values which it seeks to promote” (Fischer, 1999, p.3). In schools this can be illustrated by mission statements, district policy, state policy, and even federal policy or outcomes of implemented education policy changes.

Fischer (1999) also illustrated that public policies generally specify the level of authority that exercises control over the policy. In addition, the policy identifies the principal sources of funding such as Title I funding for public schools which is based in federal legislation. In addition to authoritative responsibility, Fischer (1999) also
indicated that those responsible for implementing the policy and the administrative
techniques to be utilized should be indicated. "Moreover, there should be some indication
of who is to be involved in the formulation and evaluation of a policy (the general public,
clients, experts, or elected officials)" (Fisher, 1999, p.3). In understanding how English
Language Arts teachers implement reform policy, the roles of policy formation may be
better understood.

The communicative entities that contribute to educational policy development,
legislation and implementation within the public school system of the United States are
large and often overlapping. Berkhout and Wielemans (1999) asserted that this “process
continuously concludes within a complex, differentiated, interrelated, and dynamic
context of interactive societal fields enfolded in an increasingly interdependent tendency
toward globalization” (p. 416). The various agencies that create, implement, govern and
assess educational policy can be numerous, but at the broadest level can be best described
as the dominant western culture. The dominant culture in turn impacts supranational
organizations (e.g. International Organizations such as the World Bank, OECD, OAU,
UNESCO, EU, IMF) which in turn affect social subsystems that influence education and
schooling. Social subsystems, according to Berkhout and Wielemans (1999), can be
comprised of familial, economic, social, judicial or political systems, including one’s
religion and ideology.

Following social subsystems is the formal juridical processes, relating to legal
proceedings, that have implicit interactive networks and “contesting discursive practices”
(Berhkout & Wielemans, 1999, p. 417). Within this juridical process lie policy creation
and implementation at the community, regional, and/or state level. The institutional
patterns in which learning is embedded in the administrative schooling community are
directly impacted by the local, state and federal legislating bodies that make up the
juridical system. In educational change policy, the interrelated and diverse nature of
learning between the teacher and student(s) is the target of these communicative entities
which have already defined a problem, created a policy, indicated the participants, and
specified the goals (Fischer, 1999). This description of the communicative entities that
contribute to educational policy development should not be read as a complete list,
merely an attempt at visualizing the multiple participants involved in educational policy
and practice (see Appendix A).

Reform Implementation. Adams (2000) stressed that implementing reforms required
teachers to “acquire new knowledge about subject matter, change materials, reorganize
classrooms, adopt new instructional roles, even change their relationships with students,
none of which can occur without substantial learning and adaptation” (p.1). Historically,
educational policy has operated from a top-down process rather than bottom-up or looped
process (Fischer, 1999; Habermas, 1979, 1990; Nielsen, 1996; Scriven, 1983).

A looped organization is one in which dialogue occurs among those involved (Nielse,
1996). Nielsen (1996) defined such dialogue in terms of single, double and triple loop
communication for reciprocity among members of an organization. Each type of loop is
important for full information flow. Mutual action learning and criticism through the
looping process can reveal “a) the effectiveness of the action strategy (single loop), b) the
appropriateness of the governing value (double-loop), and c) positive and or negative
biases in the embedded social tradition (triple-loop)” (Nielsen, 1996, p.38). It is through
fluid communication that members can interact.
The top-down process within educational environments is not a looped one and maintains a traditional hierarchical command, preserving existing structures of authority (Berkhout & Wielemans, 1999; Fullan, 2001; Popkewitz, 2000; Powers, 1994; Scott, Stone, & Dinham 2001). Walton (2001) argued that “once policies are legitimately produced by a political body, the results or implementation of these laws and policies is rarely discussed” (p. 113). Change is often initiated without proper planning, and commanded via a “sluggish and conservative system” (Papert, 2000, p. 244). Fullan (2001) argued that change is notoriously top down, illustrating consistent failure because there is a disconnect between the authority structure and the teachers practicing within the classroom. “The teacher is required to translate policy into practice for the well-being and success of the students and is thereby forced into a position of subjugation with respect to the institution” (Manuel, 2001, p.20). Adams (2000) asserted that change demands that teachers manage materials, strategies, students, and the classroom environment simultaneously.

Classroom teachers implement policy, and yet their voice is not utilized in the process of change (Fullan, 1996). “Change is inherently, endemically, and ineluctably nonlinear” (Fullan, 1996, p. 421). Teachers facilitating policy change and struggling with its impact on daily classroom activity and experience have the smallest voice in the process. The secondary teachers become mere “implementers,” performing routine activities and “applying” the policy. “There is no role . . . for questioning whether or why or when the original intent of the policy does or does not produce the intended effect” (Walton, 2001, p. 113). Information flow is lacking in these situations. The “implementation” is mechanism, not skillful.
Fullan (2001) stated “we have to know what change feels like from the point of view of the teacher if we are to comprehend the big picture” (p.xi). Questions concerning how teachers a) adapt to change, b) learn their expected role, c) respond to the implications of a policy, or d) react within the classroom, all contribute to teacher competency. “Given the limited utility of typical professional development activities, what kinds of experiences help teachers negotiate the shifts in expectations, knowledge, and practice that arise from consequential school reform?” (Adams, 2000, p. 2). This was important because research regarding secondary English Language Arts teachers’ perceptions of change reform policy implementation and their practice are areas that will enhance change theory studies.

Background

Critics of public education call for major or continual reform, reinvention, or change to correct its problems. According to Fullan, (2001) this “has become the new challenge-overtaking the false choice between local innovation and macro, superficial reform” (p. xi), one that is “dangerously seductive and incomplete” (p. 96). There is a desire for continual change implementation by those creating policy, but rarely do the policy makers address the need for assistance and knowledge to work through the process of change (Fullan, 2001). Adams (2000) reports that six years after implementation of a mathematics framework in California, the largest implementation problems included basic issues such as lack of course knowledge and understanding among practitioners [teachers], lack of district commitments to attempt implementation, lack of district support for teacher
release time and staff development training, and inappropriate assignment of students to the course. (p. 14)

Many participants in schooling, namely those who must effect the change, express discontent with the never-ending drive for change implementation. The claim is that those who dictate the change do not fully question or understand whether or not the change is good or necessary nor do they take into account whether the change is voluntary or imposed (Fullan, 2001). Evaluating change is important because long-range effects on the microcosm of the classroom can potentially predict larger issues of change and its effects on those involved.

Change presents itself as "technically simple and socially complex" (Fullan, 2001, p.69) because of the intricacies involved with initiation, implementation, institutionalization and their interconnectivity (Fullan, 2001). The thrust to continually adapt, implement, and account drives educational bureaucracy. Those at the political policy level want change and base their numerous platforms on obtaining change. Early (2000) and Randall, Cooper and Hite (1999) asserted that the value- laden nature of educational research provides policy makers with a resource to further their own political agenda and therefore, the policy process has several levels of bias in an asymmetrical structure. Mazurek, Winzer, and Majorek (2000) stated that the information flow has always been driven by a top-down bureaucracy. The state board informs the school board, the school board informs the superintendent, who in turn informs the principal, who informs the teacher, who exercises the directive on the students. There is very little discourse from the bottom up. Dialogue regarding teachers’ perceptions of curriculum
incorporation or students' voice in day to day activities is strikingly absent (Mazurek, Winzer, & Majorek, 2000).

Typically, when a policy is decided, staff development days are relied upon to create teacher competency (Adams, 2000). Staff development is utilized to ensure that teachers have the subject matter knowledge and instructional skills required to teach the content of a curriculum framework (Smith & O'Day, 1991). Adams (2000) contended that teacher training is a limited utility often failing “to foster the professional capacities needed to support emerging educational reforms and improved practice (p.2). This is a problem for educators implementing change policy in their daily practice as staff development often is perceived as a superficial and vague treatment of the needs and concerns of the teachers.

Several political stances affect education externally and several internal educational factors contribute to the status quo including “the way teachers are trained, the way schools are organized, and the way the political decision makers treat educators” (Fullan, 1993, p. 12). Within the actual dynamics of change, the movement becomes fraught with the “excruciatingly slow pace of reform” (Fullan, 2001, p. 271) due to the weight of the bureaucratic hierarchy of the educational system.

When education policy is mandated within the asymmetrical schooling structure, it arrives at the local level without explanation. An interpretative process occurs as to the intent of the policy. Popkewitz (1993, 1997, 2000, 2001) viewed the interpretative process as part and parcel of the power exerted by the ‘governmentality’ of schools and those wishing to exert and illustrate their control. Berkhout and Wielemans (1999) consider written communication as an extension of politics, and utilize the phrase ‘symbolic contestation’ to illustrate that because the policy to be implemented comes
from the authority above, it carries political doctrinal attitudes. Change can be dictated by superintendents, district administrators, or principals, and any or all of these can communicate the reform through memos, mandates, curriculum changes, or staff development, many of which are adopted, but not implemented (Fullan, 2001). The pattern of adopting but not implementing change not only serves to maintain the status quo, but also illustrates the poor way in which change has been conducted in school districts. Historically, educational change creates a multidimensionality concerning content, objectives, structure and personalities that have been “adopted at superficial levels, dropped as soon as the newest improved solution comes along, or adopted (through teacher staff development and directives) yet not implemented. Such historical patterns create a climate “rife with suspicion, social inertia, and fragmented authority structures” (Hatch, 2000, p. 38). These conditions further create confusion among those interpreting and implementing the latest change effort.

Hall (1999) theorized that the disconnect between adoption and implementation stems from “giant leaps” of assumptions without serious consideration for the steps in between (p.1-2). This latter attitude of “giant steps” Hall saw as inherent in the stereotypical American fast paced lifestyle. A sense of hurriedness pervades the education community often demanding immediate quantifiable results despite the research that supports time as a necessary agent for effective or successful change (Papert, 2001; Sandholtz, Ringstaff, & Dwyer, 2001; Strudler, 1995-1996). Fullan (2001) further argued that change must have a combination of pressure and support, for “pressure without support leads to resistance and alienation; support without pressure leads to drift or waste of resources” (p. 91-92). Fullan additionally theorized (2001), that change requires preparation,
something that is simple in statement but almost void in practice. Precise needs are
generally not considered; the complexity of the issues is glossed over, and clarity of
purpose remains shallow. In short, the difficulties inherent in the process of change are
not well understood or carried out (Fullan, 2001, p. 65-80). For all these reasons, “policy
has a poor record of changing practice” (Adams, 2000, p.14). These descriptions seem
common in literature discussing the contemporary complexion of American schools.

Theoretical Framework

Appropriate and purposeful policy evaluation must move from mere theoretical
critique to a blending of the realities with the intentions. A methodological reconstruction
where the informal logic of policy deliberation places evaluation within socially relevant
arenas must move, to allow “normative inquiry on an equal footing with empirical
analysis” (Fischer, 1999, p. 20). Fischer (1990) created a holistic design for policy
analysis that is rooted in Habermas’ (1971) concept of comprehensive rationality,
Taylor’s (1961) logic of evaluative discourse and Toulmin’s (1958) informal logic of
practical discourse.

Fischer’s design (1999) contains four interrelated phases of inquiry: verification,
validation, vindication, and social choice. These phases seek to incorporate and
illuminate basic discursive components. Each phase participates and interacts with the
other phases of inquiry and applies first and second order evaluations. The framework
contains first and second order evaluations designed to reveal answers to concrete
empirical questions up through abstract normative issues. First order evaluation centers
around concerns “with a program, its participants, and the specific problem situation to
which the program is applied” (Fischer, 1999, p.19). Second order evaluation focuses more on the abstract societal system in which the program(s) takes place. For example, a policy to introduce a reading curriculum in a particular school district to improve standardized test scores in reading would indicate specific course offerings, but also would address the larger requirements of the community, such as a need for a common set of agreed upon values that complement the social system. The research objective overall is one of clarification and understanding pursued and initiated through reasoned dialogue.

The goal is not to ‘plug in’ answers to specific questions or to fulfill prespecified methodological requirements. It is to engage in an open and flexible exploration of the kinds of concerns raised in the various discursive phases of the probe. The questions do not constitute a complete set of rules or fixed requirements that must be answered in any formal way. Rather, they are designed to orient evaluation to a particular set of concerns. The goal is clarification and mutual understanding among the parties engaged in deliberation (Fischer, 1999).

Table 1 is an illustrative example of Fischer’s framework for policy analysis.
Table 1

Fischer’s Outline of the *Logic of Policy Evaluation*

Levels, Discourses, and Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level: First Order Evaluation</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Technical-Analytic Discourse</strong></td>
<td>Program Verification (Outcomes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organizing question: Does the program empirically fulfill its stated objectives?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Contextual Discourse</strong></td>
<td>Situational Validation (Objectives) Organizing question: Is the program objective(s) relevant to the problem situation?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level: Second Order Evaluation</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>C. Systems Discourse</strong></td>
<td>Societal Vindication (Goals)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organizing question: Does the policy have instrumental or contributive value for the society as a whole?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D. Ideological Discourse</strong></td>
<td>Social Choice (Values)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organizing question: Do the fundamental ideals that organize the accepted social order provide a basis for a legitimate resolution of conflicting judgments?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


A. Verification is a first order inquiry and is expressed most often through technical-analytical discourse and quantitative measurements (Fischer, 1999). Fischer (1999) asserts that verification inquiry “is the most familiar, addressing the basic technical-analytic or methodological questions that have dominated the attention of empirical policy analysis” (p.20). An example of verification inquiry in public education might concern itself with research as to whether or not a reading program fulfilled its goals as measured by reading test scores. Verification addresses the measurement of the efficiency of program outcomes. Verification research questions include the following:

1. Does the program empirically fulfill its stated objective(s)?

2. Does the empirical analysis uncover secondary or unanticipated effects
that offset the program objectives?

3. Does the program fulfill the objectives more efficiently than alternative means available? (Fischer, 1999, p. 20).

In this study regarding secondary high school English Language Arts teachers, a specific example of verification inquiry research would question whether or not the newest curriculum reform fulfills its goals of change. It would also ask whether or not the newest curriculum reform is more efficient in achieving the desired goals than an alternative.

B. Validation, a contextual discourse inquiry using qualitative methods, naturally follows verification and focuses on whether or not the “program objectives are relevant to the situation” by examining the conceptualizations and assumptions about the “situation which the program is designed to influence” (Fisher, 1999, pp. 20-21). Was the object realistically framed? An example of validation inquiry might question whether reading scores are the most important criterion, or whether the focus should be on general learning achievement. Validation inquiry focuses on such questions as:

1. Is the program objective(s) relevant to the problem situation?

2. Are there circumstances in the situation that require an exception to be made to the objective(s)?

3. Are two or more criteria equally relevant to resolving the problem situation? (Fischer, 1999, p. 21).

Validation utilizes qualitative methods. Questions for validation inquiry focused on practicing teachers and their perception of whether and how policy transfers their classroom practice.
“Second order inquiry,” comprising vindication and social choice, shifts from the concrete particular setting to the societal system as a whole, and seeks to “show that a policy goal addresses a valuable function for the existing societal arrangements” (Fischer, 1999, p. 21). Vindication and social choice assesses the instrumental consequences of a policy goal within the society.

C. Vindication empirically assesses the “instrumental consequences of a policy goal in terms of the system as a whole” (Fischer, 1999, p. 21). A question from vindication inquiry might ask whether or not educational programs geared to test scores “tend to facilitate a class-oriented meritocratic social order (as opposed . . . to a society that fosters greater social equity and racial justice)” (Fischer, 1999, p.21). Vindication is organized around the following questions:

1. Does the policy goal have instrumental or contributive value for the society as a whole?
2. Does the policy goal result in unanticipated problems with important societal consequences?
3. Does a commitment to the policy goal lead to consequences (e.g., benefits and costs) that are judged to be equitably distributed?

Vindication can test a policy’s underlying assumptions about a system’s functions and values and uncover unanticipated consequences. It also explains the wider question of the legitimacy of the policy.

D. The final discursive phase of Fischer’s policy analysis framework examines social discourse through “ideological and value questions” (Fischer, 1999, p. 22). Social choice concerns itself with ideological and value questions:
1. Do the fundamental ideals that organize the accepted social order provide a basis for a legitimate resolution of conflicting judgments?

2. If the social order is unable to resolve basic value conflicts, do other social orders equitably prescribe for the relevant interests and needs that the conflicts reflect?

3. Do normative reflection and empirical evidence support the justification and adoption of an alternative ideology and the social order it prescribes? (Fischer, 1999, p. 22).

Interpretive critiques of social and political theories and philosophies would elicit such questions as “what kinds of social values should the educational curriculum be built upon and toward which end?” (Fischer, 1999, p.22). These larger inquiries promote a sense of purposeful and more encompassing change.

Each phase of the policy evaluation is fluid and open rather than following a single calculus. The four phases participate and interact with each other phase of inquiry. They do not exist in isolation. The research objective overall is one of clarification and understanding pursued and initiated through reasoned dialogue as illuminated by all four discursive phases. (Fischer, 1999). Table 2 utilizes the information in Table 1 of Fischer’s framework for policy evaluation adapting it to the objectives of this study.
Table 2

Fisher’s Outline of the Logic of Policy Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level: First Order Evaluation</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technical-Analytic Discourse</strong></td>
<td>Program Verification: Does the program empirically fulfill its stated objectives?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sample Question: Does the reading program fulfill its goals as measured by test reading scores?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contextual &amp; Conceptual Discourse</strong></td>
<td>Situational Validation: Is the program objective(s) relevant to the problem situation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sample Question: Are reading scores the most important criteria, or what should be the focus in the general learning achievement?</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level: Second Order Evaluation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Systems Discourse</strong></td>
<td>Societal Vindication (Goals)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the policy have instrumental or contributive value for the society as a whole?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sample Question: Is this program geared so as to facilitate and maintain a class-oriented social order or an order based on merit? “As opposed to a society that fosters greater social equity and racial justice?” (Fischer, 1999, p.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideological Discourse</strong></td>
<td>Social Choice (Values)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do the fundamental ideals (or ideology) that organize the accepted social order provide a basis for a legitimate resolution of conflicting judgments?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sample Question: Does the reading program’s social justification include ways to resolve conflicting judgments about its intent or impact?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extensive description and purposeful sampling of the breadth and wealth of the information is paramount to explicating the rich thematic context within any policy implementation process with this framework of policy analysis. The abstract dimensions
of the themes, or issues, are complexities that connect ordinary practice in natural habitats to the abstractions and concerns of diverse academic disciplines. The dimensions are also “problematic circumstances that draw upon the common disciplines of knowledge” (Denzin, 1998, p. 92). For example, everyday occurrences within the classroom would be ordinary practice in public education. The complexity lies in the teacher’s lesson, interaction, and discussion of the material with students concerning the diverse academic discipline in its theoretical framework. Therefore, observation, discourse analysis, and artifact analysis will illuminate and describe this intricacy. The study of this complexity is important to understanding policy implementation since it analyzes the theoretical framework through practical application, and this kind of analysis is typically absent in change research.

In this study, the focus on high school English Language Arts teachers and their perception and interpretation of how policy affects their daily preparation, planning and classroom practice was designed to further our understanding of how teachers cope with change reform. As participants of change their self-perceptions of change reform policy were important to understanding education policy in action. Davey (1991) viewed program implementation case studies as a method of learning about complex instances through extensive description, contextual analysis and as helpful in discerning whether implementation is in compliance with its intent. The description of this complex environment came through interviews, observation, and analysis of documents (state standards, district syllabi, and individual secondary English Language Arts teacher’s lesson plans).
In the discourse of policy, the verification, validation, vindication, and social choice qualitative tools described how the particular policy applied to the social rules available to society’s members. This study sought to understand and comprehend empathetically the subjective views of the practicing English Language Arts teachers involved in the policy, the institutional support and opposition of the policy, and how perceptions and behaviors helped define public policy positions (Fischer, 1999; Schneider & Ingram, 1993).

**Definition of Terms**

Definitions of key terms were provided in order to assist the reader with understanding the information within this study:

1. **Change**: Change is a complex dynamic process that seeks quickly to put the latest innovations and policies into place (Fullan, 1999).

2. **Reform**: Reform is a developed set of initiatives created outside of the classroom (Goodlad, 2000) that seeks to implement and reconfigure every level of the education enterprise (Jenkins Norman, 2003).

3. **Policy**: Policy is legislation that is adopted either at the federal, state, or local level and is mandated for implementation at the individual school level.

4. **Teacher Perception**: Teacher Perception describes the conceptual attitudes and impressions teachers have about their ability to cope with curriculum change reform (Hall and Hord, 2001; Pajares, 1996).
5. *Secondary school English Language Arts teacher:* A secondary school English teacher is a teacher of students in grades 9-12 within a designated secondary-school environment. Grammar, literature and writing are the focus of curriculum.

6. *Metropolitan secondary school:* A metropolitan secondary school is a ninth through twelfth grade institution located in the inner portion of a large, densely populated city.

**Summary**

Fullan (2001) contended that within the last decade change reform agenda within public schools took place within “nonlinear fragmented demands,” creating “overload” (p.xi). Teachers, the implementers of policy and change within the classroom, operate within a myriad of tasks. They must deal with managing discipline, managing interpersonal conflicts, contend with collecting money, announcements, answering questions about extraneous classroom events and issues, attendance, the curriculum, social behaviors, principals, parents, and central office staff. Huberman (1983) summarizes the daily activities of teachers as a sense of immediacy through spontaneous exchanges and actions that rely upon multitasking. Within these daily activities exists policy reform issues that focus on educational goals and expectations of schools in a thrust for continual change.

And while change is a constant factor of life, and as Hall and Hord state, “a process not an event” (2001, p. 4), teachers, the implementers of policy and change, are not asked regarding their experiences with policy as to its success or failure. Therefore this study explored how secondary English Language Arts teachers, as participants of change, coped with change reform and how their self-perceptions of change reform policy
affected their practice within the metropolitan schools in which they were employed. This study also allowed those concerned with change to anticipate and make generalizations regarding how change affected teachers in general. The next chapter will review current literature on change reform policy.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE INTERVIEW

The purpose of this study was to identify secondary English Language Arts teachers’ perceptions of changes in curriculum reform policy and their classroom practice. Five questions that served as the basis for study were:

1. What counts as change to secondary English Language Arts teachers?
2. In what ways do secondary English Language Arts teachers implement change in the metropolitan schools in which they work?
3. What becomes altered or modified in the classroom materials when secondary English Language Arts teachers implement policy as the basis for change?
4. What are the values or goals that underlie teacher’s perceptions of the change relationships between the secondary English Language Arts and policy implementation?
5. How does the secondary English Language Arts teacher’s perceptions influence the implementation of policy change? (Appendix C)

These questions were based on the theoretical framework from Fischer’s (1999) policy analysis design with four interrelated phases of inquiry: verification, validation, vindication, and social choice.
Chapter 1 discussed the purpose, objective and importance of this study and described the background, theoretical framework, and research questions to be studies. This chapter is a review of significant current literature associated with change reform policy. Fischer’s theoretical framework is examined and related to the objective of this study. The literature to support this study is discussed and includes, change reform policy, its influence on secondary English teacher perceptions and how teachers view themselves as participants of change within change reform will be discussed. Topics include; a) change, b) reform, c) policy, d) critical perspective, and e) teachers. Within each topic are influencing sub topics that will be discussed. A summary of this literature review concludes the chapter.

Change

Change that occurs through all aspects and levels of the educational process, affects; a) students, b) teachers, c) parents, d) administrators, and e) community, and also carries implications for curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development. Those prominent in the field of change research assert that change is an inevitable, omnipresent fact of life (Fullan, 2000, 2001; Strudler, 1995-1996) that “is a process, not an event” (Hall & Hord, 2001, p. 4). Change is a synergistic, intricate, vigorous, multi-variable process effecting and affected by reform. Those involved in the process of change gradually “come to understand and become skilled and competent in the use of the new ways” (Hall & Hord, 2001, p.5).

Goodlad (2000) classifies two contrasting epistemologies of educational change; linear and ecological. Linear, the traditional theory, is input-output based and sought by
individuals in positions of authority external to the school, and measured by standardized testing. “The linear model of change, as used in externally driven school reform, has commonly ignored the context of school and classrooms in which an educational mission presumably is being advanced” (Goodlad, 2000, p. 11). The ecological model of educational change is an alternative epistemology “that focuses primarily on the school as an ecosystem composed primarily, but far from exclusively, of classroom ecosystems” (Goodlad, 2000, p. 11). Fullan states that change is either voluntary or involuntary. Involuntary change is change that is imposed, either through “natural events or deliberate reform” (Fullan, 2001, p. 30) and voluntary change is personally initiated.

Jenkins Norman [sic] (2003) emphasizes that real “change in a school involves the alteration of beliefs and assumptions about education, the implementation of new instructional strategies, and/or the use of a new curriculum” echoing Patterson’s (1997) declaration that change occurs only when people within the organization critically examine their personal and social beliefs and change their practices to correspond with these revised principles. Those within the organization are primary participants and effectors, the human aspect, of the change. Problematic to change is that it is too “often treated as a product and tends to overlook the human component (Evans, 1993; Jenkins Norman [sic], 2003).

In an effort to provide clarity from such a shifting concept as change, many contributing factors are still being researched, discovered, and defined. Because of the overarching breadth of change, research possibilities abound. With a brief definition of change and its applications to education outlined, the literature regarding change research within the field of education will be discussed.
Change literature. Hall and Hord (2001) state specifically that “one of the problems in the field of change is that there is no agreement on the meaning of commonly used terms” (p. xv). The word ‘change’ can be utilized as a noun, a verb or a representation of the systemic process of reform, just as patterns, principles, participants, and problems that emerge throughout the effort may be encountered within the process (Hall & Hord, 2001, p.xv).

Components within change can also create misunderstanding through definition. Often, the terms culture and climate have been used synonymously when referring to change research, but Hoy and Feldman (1999) define the latter as “shared patterns of behavior” (p. 85). This subtle differentiation may appear semantic but illustrates the difficulty in discussion and research when concrete terms can connote a myriad of definitions, beliefs and attitudes regarding change.

The phrase “school culture” has been used by researchers to define and describe the unique distinctiveness of the workplace. Although Ashforth (1985) defined culture as shared assumptions, values, and norms, Hoy and Feldman (1999) refer to school culture as the “shared orientations that bind the organization together and give it its distinctive identity” (1999, p. 84). Hall and Hord (2001) assert that culture is individually as well as socially constructed within the organization and “can be measured only by observation of the setting using qualitative methods” (p. 194).

Reform

The inevitableness of change is an important concept for education because it forms the foundational goals in which reforms are created, introduced, implemented and
evaluated. The word ‘change’ often operates as the impetus for reform. For this reason, reform belongs in its own category. Just as change is a field of study, so is reform. Therefore, a brief discussion of the term reform and how it applies to education will be described, followed by supporting literature on the subject of reform.

Reform is an increasingly rapid force, seeking to put the latest modifications and guidelines into practice. The conceptualization of educational goals functions as a theoretical framework in which educational reform is developed, implemented, and evaluated. The discussion concerning educational problems and reform escalated during the 1990's and created a now often accepted and stressed opinion that public education needs major or perpetual reform, reinvention, or change to correct its problems.

According to Fullan, (2001) this “has become the new challenge- overtaking the false choice between local innovation and macro, superficial reform” (p. xi) one that is “dangerously seductive and incomplete” (p. 96). The thrust to continually adapt, implement, and account drives educational bureaucracy.

Shen (1997) relates that educational goals of American schools have historically shifted with the evolution of society. The shift has been from discipline to vocational responsibility, to worthy citizenship, to concern for justice, to appreciation for democratic values to self-respect and development of individual talents (Shen, 1997; Goodlad, 1994).

Levins and Wiens (2003) state that the specifics of education reform vary from setting to setting and are shaped by particularities of history, culture, political structures, demography, and other factors. Common elements in education reform exist across English-speaking industrialized countries. Levins and Wiens (2003) argue the six following common elements to education reform:
1. Greater specification of curriculum standards and outcomes, with more focus on reading, writing, mathematics, science, and technology;

2. More assessment of student outcomes and public reporting of the results on a school-by-school basis;

3. Greater opportunity for parents and students to choose the school the student attends;

4. More pressure on teachers through measures that control their work, limit their pay, test their competence, and so on;

5. Altered finance structures to reward schools that are able to increase academic results or attract more students or both; and

6. Greater decentralization of managerial responsibility to individual schools.

The common elements of educational reform are relevant for understanding the way in which change is shared throughout educational systems.

Goodlad describes education reform as reform developed by a set of initiatives that are “driven by individuals or groups outside of what or who is to be reformed, but which has to be implemented by the latter” (2000, p.12). Jenkins Norman [sic] (2003) describes education reform in implementation as a deep change, that does not simply alter the form and structure of schooling, but a fundamental reconfiguration at every level of the educational enterprise affecting “beliefs and assumptions about education, the implementation of new instructional strategies, and/or the use of a new curriculum” (Jenkins Norman, 2003). Birman (2000) argues that the evaluation portion of education reform emphasizes program outcomes in education. It is this evaluation that drives the concept of continual change in education.
Reform literature. Reform literature discusses the attempts of change through multiple voices and those interested in education. “Education reform is the comprehensive and prioritized change within the field of K-12 education that promotes the overall improvement of student performance and academic achievement” (Rajela, 2003, p.31).

Goldberg (2000) takes issue with the word “reform,” stating people: "should stop talking about reform because it's a nasty concept that suggests bad people and bad conditions that must be reformed in somebody else's image. Renewal is much more elevating of the human spirit" (p. 82). Goldberg’s statement is important as it illustrates the often controversial atmosphere surrounding issues and those involved with decision making within public education. Priorities from the worlds of business, politics and culture construct visions and attitudes of education (Giroux, 1996). Within these attitudes includes beliefs about schooling, knowledge and practice (pedagogy, administration, practice) that formulate written and unwritten policy about education (Giroux, 1996; Green, 1997; McCarthy & Dimitriades, 2000).

A Nation at Risk (1983) is often viewed as the catalyst for the contemporary waves of reform (Hall & Hord, 2001; Lusi, 1997; Marzano & Kendall, 1996; Wixson & Pearson, 1998). During the 1980's public educational reform manifested itself in the forms of schedule adjustments, tougher graduation requirements, more challenging teacher practices, organizational management modifications, and assessment expansions. Researchers were divided on the successes of the reforms (Firestone, Rosenblum, Bader & Massel, 1992; Wixson & Pearson, 1998). Other researchers viewed them as cosmetic (Hall & Hord, 2002), easily manageable (Firestone, Fuhrman, & Kirst, 1989),
disconnected (Cohen & Spillane, 1992), and avoiding complex real issues that encouraged new behaviors from those within the daily system. These piecemeal attempts encouraged internal conflicts and undermined real improvement rather than supported true reform (Cohen & Spillane, 1992; Wixson & Pearson, 1998).

Thus, school restructuring in the 1990’s emerged through systemic changes. Phrases such as ‘decentralized power,’ ‘site-based management,’ ‘higher student expectations for all students,’ ‘curriculum and instructional alignment,’ and ‘more challenging teaching practices’ fell into common change discourse (Cuban, 1988, 1990, 1998; Hall & Hord, 2001; Luisi 1997; Raywid, 1990; Smith & O’Day, 1991; Wixson & Pearson, 1998). According to Hall and Hord (2001), the contemporary trend in educational reform movements is toward increasingly broader change.

Policy

Policy, like change and reform, is an intersecting participant in contemporary education. It is a broad term often used with varying definitions. A brief description of how the term policy is utilized for this research study is discussed followed by detailed supporting policy literature in the sub topics of educational policy, change reform policy, and purposeful policy evaluation.

Education, with its value laden nature, has long provided competing political agendas on education (Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Early, 2000; Fischer, 1999; Spring, 1994, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000a, 2000b). Early (2000) Randall, Cooper and Hite (1999) assert that the value-laden nature of educational research provides policy makers with a resource to further their own political agenda and, therefore, the policy process has several levels of
bias. Education policy is “contested or affected in such a multiplicity of ways by various forces, groups, and actors at various moments that power cannot be considered to be exerted unidirectionally” (Berkhout & Wielmans, 1999, p. 407). Externally, education policy mirrors the asymmetrical structure of schooling:

Top-down bureaucracy comes from the state to the school board to the superintendent to the principal to the teachers and is exercised on (sometimes against) the students. Information flows the same way. Directives can be issued, offices reorganized, strategic plans redone, but little dialogue occurs. (Mazurek, Winzer, & Majorek, 2000, p. 28)

The attitude that the change will improve student achievement surrounds attitudes of change implementation (Sheingold & Frederiksen, 2000). This thrust comes from goals set by national political interests within the United States. The drive to compete on standardized tests often propels change in policy within the public educational system (Hall, 1999; Sachs, 2001; Spring, 2001). Proponents of contemporary reform utilize “evaluation” as a change agent for pedagogical strategies to improve educational quality (Popkewitz, 1998). For many critical theorists, evaluation and testing illustrate an effect of power, authority, control, and value allocation (Giroux, 1991; Hoy, 1994; McCarthy & Dimitriades, 2000; Popkewitz, 2000a, 2000b; Spring, 1997, 1999).

Spademan (1999) views change and assessment as synonymous in the reform discussion and process. “The assessment process is defined as requiring on-going revision of the goals and instruments” (Spademan, 1999, p.27). Persichitte (1999) echoes this and adds that change is generally “embedded in ambiguity and risk” (p.1). By this definition, change is perpetual with a never ending sense of closure or accomplishment.
because a new change will supplant the current trend. In this context, change is seen as a constant pressure to:

demonstrate innovation, even though ‘innovation’ may be nothing more than a claim on paper, a fabrication, or may be entirely inappropriate. Change for the sake of change has thus been institutionalized, in a way reminiscent of the drive for innovation for the sake of innovation and capital accumulation in market society as a whole (Spademan, 1999, p.27).

This attitude can create an over-whelming atmosphere for all involved within the change process, one in which change is given a cursory nod or superficial implementation where agents within education remain disconnected, fragmented, superficial, and meaningless (Fullan, 2001; Persichitte, 1999).

*Education policy.* The contemporary educational landscape of the United States consists of complex multiplicities formed out of social and philosophical thought within American culture. Apple (1987), Giroux (1996), Popkwetiz (2000a), and Spring (1997) contend that the politicizing of the educational curriculum has also been a collaborative effort from many voices. Berkhout and Wieleman (1999) argue that:

policy processes reveal both formal or overt (e.g. the organizational structures, rules, and communication patterns, delegated competencies, and flow of information) and covert or implicit power structures (e.g. micropolitics, informal networks, and discursive practices). (p. 404)

Political influences exist that exert pressure on schools externally and internally (Fullan, 1993).
Internal change can be dictated by superintendents, district administrators, school boards, principals, community pressures, or parents and any or all of these can communicate the reform through memos, mandates, curriculum changes, or in-services, many of which are adopted, but not implemented (Fullan, 2001). And “schools that take on or are forced to take on every policy and innovation that comes along may look innovative at a distance but actually have a severe case of ‘projectitis or meaninglessness’ (Fullan, 2001, p.21). The schools that continually add new initiatives leave little to no room for proper implementation and illustrate the poor way in which change has historically been conducted.

Change reform policy. Jenkins Norman [sic] (2003) argues that school reform is more than superficial alterations in schooling; it is a deep fundamental change in “reconfiguration at every level of the educational enterprise.” Deep change “touches the heart of organization structure and system character and must be more than a mere re-arrangement which is simply intended to help an organization function more effectively” (Beach, 1999, p. 233).

Systematic school reform seeks to reform education as an entire system, where there is “coherence across the systems components” (Wixson & Pearson, 1998, p.206). Shen (1997) views such alignment as problematic because the difficulties of systemic reform are embedded in the needs and nature of the system itself.

Those in support of systemic reform view it as ‘bottom-up’ in design and support (Lusi, 1997; Wixson & Pearson, 1998). Teaching is redesigned with the attitude that all students strive for content knowledge and higher order skills (Smith & O’Day, 1991), and teaching has the most direct impact on student learning (Cohen, 1995).
The measurement of such reform utilizes policy instruments that continually refer to content standards or instructional frameworks. Assessment that focus students’ and teachers’ work on intellectually authentic tasks must align with the content standards, curricula must reflect and be consistent with the standards, and changes in both pre-service teacher and in-service teacher education must assist in understanding and implementing the standards or instructional frameworks (Cohen, 1995; Wixson & Pearson, 1998).

However, curriculum reform carries its own set of problems. Kyriakides (1997) states that curriculum reform has been difficult to effect “because its success is not dependent on the substantive content of the reform alone,” (p. 40) it relies upon the human component of those within the classroom on a daily basis.

Purposeful policy evaluation. Policy evaluation seeks to ascertain the success or failure of change in innovation in educational systems. Rogers (1995) proposes the first model for describing such evaluation. Although external to education, Rogers’ research encompasses a multitude of disciplines and outlines the elements of change that influence the success or failure of innovations and assists in understanding the application of innovations in educational change and reform (Robinson, Baker & Clegg, 1998). Briefly, the four fundamental principals of change are: 1) the innovation itself, 2) the communication channels, 3) time used in adopting or rejecting the innovation, and 4) the social system in which decisions are made regarding the innovation.

Cuban (1998) argues that education policy evaluation is difficult because “schools change reforms as much as reforms change schools” (p. 453). Shen (1997) further suggests that “the difficulties of systemic reform are embedded in the needs and nature of
the system itself” (p. 353). For, “in educational practice and particularly in various reform agendas, there is a tendency to emphasize certain aspects of educational goals” (Shen, 1997, p. 353). This practice has occurred while researchers have neglected empirically testing the validity of the different conceptions of educational goals” (Shen, 2000, p.353). The need for such information would illuminate “the connect or disconnect” between the goals “and the conceptual framework that are often both discrete and overlapping (Shen, 1997, p. 353).

Goodlad (1984) researched the comprehensive, differentiated expectations for educational goals by those within the system and reported that the “we want it all” attitude captures the essence of the multidimensionality of the participants' expectation for educational goals. Sashkin and Egermeier (1992) identified four policy approaches to school change, 1) ‘fix the parts,’ 2) ‘fix the people,’ 3) ‘fix the school,’ and 4) ‘fix the system.’

The latter, a restructuring of the system, would result in successful change, whereas the three other approaches illustrated failure as they represented isolated parts of the system (Hall and Hord, 2002; Sashkin & Egermeier, 1992). “There appears to be a trend of wide agreement, especially from writers promoting restructuring, that bigger is better and that if the target for change is sufficient in scope, reform will be successful and schools will be improved” (Hall & Hord, 2002, p.25).

Wixson and Pearson (1998) assert that government policymakers exercise their authority predominantly though curriculum and instruction reform. Systemic school reformers see government as the vehicle for creating coherence across the system, striving explicitly to redesign teaching and learning (Lusi, 1997; Smith & O’Day, 1991;
Included in this focus is the creation of new policy instruments for evaluation:

content standards or instructional frameworks, assessments that focus students' and teachers' work on intellectually authentic tasks (and that are 'aligned' with new content standards) more ambitious curricula that are consistent with new standards and assessments, and changes in both preservice and inservice teacher education that would improve enactment of the new standards. (Wixson & Pearson, 1998, p. 206)

Cuban (1998) believes that the standards often used are unarticulated and too vague for accurate public debate. "It is crucial to evaluate school reforms by identifying the criteria used to make judgments, whose criteria they are, and how schools change reforms as they are implemented" (p.477).

Critical Perspective

The theoretical roots of critical perspective originate in Kant, Hegel, Marx, and Habermas (Lynch, 2001; Rasmussen, 1996). Habermas (1971, 1979, 1990) proposed a theory of communication that sought to provide a non-instrumental theory of reason in which "consensus is a by-product of verified knowledge claims" (Lynch, 2001, p. 353). This critical theory links reason with transformation and thought with emancipation (Rasmussen, 1996).

Welton (2003) defines critical perspective as thinking that "requires consideration of all sides of an issue" (p. 48). Kaufmann (2000) identifies the philosophical and social scientific tradition of critical theory for his definition; "pedagogy of liberation, focus[ing] on educating the subject to think, react, and act, in order to create a more democratic
egalitarian society” (p.492). Consideration of secondary English Language Arts teachers and their view of the issues of change would present a new voice in change literature, providing more holistic and encompassing information.

In educational research literature, Lynch (2001) views critical theory as a research paradigm “which uses its work for the purposes of social and cultural criticism” (p. 353). Lynch further illustrates six summarized beliefs of noted critical theorists Guba (1990; 1994), Kincheloe and McLaren (1994):

1. All thought is fundamentally mediated by power relations that are social and historically situated;
2. Facts can never be isolated from the domain of values or removed from some form of ideological inscription;
3. The relationship between concept and object and between signifier and signified is never stable or fixed and is often mediated by the social relations of capitalist production and consumption;
4. Certain groups in any society are privileged over others . . . and the oppression that characterizes contemporary societies is most forcefully reproduced when subordinates accept their social status as natural, necessary or inevitable;
5. Oppression has many faces and that focusing on only one at the expense of others (e.g., class oppression vs. racism) often elides he interconnections among them; and
6. Mainstream research practices are generally, although most often unwittingly, implicated in the reproduction of systems of class, race, and gender oppression. (Lynch, 2001, pp. 139–40)
Lynch (2001) also states that such a perspective can often appear just as political and oppressive as the forces it seeks to confront and condemn, acknowledging that critical pedagogy can take a patronizing, dogmatic tone in relation to the issues.

Teachers

Change, reform, and policy externally contribute and influence the educational environment in which teachers work. The settings in which teachers conduct their practice and their perceptions regarding change are important internal components to this research study. The focused group of secondary English Language Arts teachers were also explored and discussed.

Fullan (2001) states that, “teachers carry the dubious honor of continually being labeled the scapegoat for the ills of education. Often, they are alienated from change discussions, rather than viewed as participants. They are treated as implementers, or reactors, to be trained and carry out the mandated change, but are seldom consulted for their proactive input (Fullan, 2001 p. 86). The way in which teachers are trained carries its own political agenda, one that occurs through district or school level in-services. These workshops are rarely conducted by the individual teacher’s choice and more often than not, teachers are expected to donate their time without compensation (McKenzie, 1999). These professional development seminars add to the already overburdened schedule and overloaded improvement agenda, but never eliminate (Fullan, 2001).

The purpose behind staff development, according to Smith and O’Day (1991) and Adams (2000), is to ensure that teachers have the proper knowledge and tools to implement reform. Adams (2000) reports that staff development practices often do not
achieve the support necessary for “emerging educational reforms and improved practice” (p.2). Rather, the training is unrelated often presenting a mixture of abstract ideas that is disconnected from the ongoing classroom exchange between student and teacher (Lieberman, 1995).

Adams (2000) reports that motivation contributes greatly to teachers’ willingness to change. “It is the foundation upon which implementation builds. Each teacher possesses values, goals, interpretations, and emotions that fuel the direction, persistence, and vigor of his or her behavior” (p. 116). Capacity for change relies upon “experience, credentials, and expertise” (Adams, 2000, p. 116), and both motivation and capacity rely upon the environment. Fraser (1999), Hoy (1990), Hoy and Feldman (1999), and Lampert (1988) reveal the effects of environment on enhancing motivation and developing capacity as “environment provides the material, information, support and opportunities to practice” (Adams, 2000, p. 116).

The relentless press for accountability and the continual change additions from attribute to the competing visions of what should be done in schools. Most of the time, this degenerates into a quick-fix mentality (Fullan, 2001) and teachers utilize what fits into their “familiar routines and classroom procedures. The rest they ignore” (Tyack & Cuban, 2000, p. 248). Deep understanding is never attained as teachers are consistently called upon to enact change, but do not share ownership in the desired outcome.

Teachers’ psychological state of mind and precise needs are often overlooked or ignored (Fullan, 2001; McKenzie, 1999). Hall and Hord (2001) view the psychological state of teachers in terms of stages of concern. These stages of concern reinforce the personal nature of change and affect the success or failure of change reform (Adams, 2001; Hall &
Hord 2001, Fullan, 2001). Lampert (1988) reports that teachers change their practice "when they can observe new practices being used in actual classroom situations . . . when they can try them out and get feedback on their attempts . . . when they can discuss new techniques with peers" (p. 158). Adams (2000) reinforces this concept that change occurs when teachers “network” sharing understanding and investment and can identify solutions with peer support.

Occasionally, politically fallacious rhetoric surfaces which disguises itself as sympathetic to the teacher’s needs. In reality this rhetoric may enforce totalitarian instruction through hidden political agendas. Birman, Desimone, Porter, and Garet (2000) and Spring (2001) illustrate this point by discussing professional development seminars that assert consistence “with teacher goals.” However, upon completion of the workshops, these researchers state: “teachers understood which state and national standards” were addressed “and what goals for student learning each kit embodied” (Birman, Desimone, Porter, & Garet, 2000 p. 31). Such co-opting of real concern by educators in the practice of teaching further alienates and marginalizes real discussion and interaction. “Teachers as a group have less opportunity to come into contact with new ideas and less time and energy to follow through on those that they do become aware of” (Fullan, 2001, p. 59).

There are some teachers who “privatize teaching” (Papert, 2000, p. 244). They have good ideas, invent, create and engage students actively. These are the teachers who allow "children to be active builders of their own intellectual structures” (Papert, 2000, p. 229). Yet, these teachers feel the external drive of conformity and the thrust for accountability. Internally, lack of support from colleagues who view the inventors with suspicion and
administrators who simply want them to “conform” exert pressure to maintain the status quo (Sandholtz, Ringstaff, & Dwyer, 2000; Sheingold & Frederiksen, 2000).

Another issue is that the teaching profession is flat in hierarchy; there are few promotions, pay raises, or “perks” for going above and beyond in the capitalistic sense of the term (Sandholtz, Ringstaff, & Dwyer, 2000). Lack of recognition, collaboration, and support (either from colleagues or administrators) comes at a high personal cost; one in which the teacher who is exacting change will abandon the effort due to frustration (Sandholtz, Ringstaff, & Dwyer, 2000, p. 274). “Teachers need to be included and feel as if they are an important part of influencing change within a school” (Riehl & Sipple, 1996). Teachers need to feel their contributions to the school are valued and respected, and these perceptions have an impact on school climate. For Adams (2000) teachers are the “conduit of reform” (Adams, 2000, p. 9), and as such are a necessary component for any successful change to occur.

Perceptions of change. Accountability immediacy exerts pressure on educational practice (Hall, 1999, 2001), causing many worthwhile programs to capitulate within one year. Yet research illustrates that successful change is a process that takes time (Fullan, 1999, 2001; Papert, 2000, 2001; Persichutte, 1999; Sandholtz; Ringstaff, & Dwyer, 2001; Sheingold & Frederiksen, 2000; Strudler, 1995-1996). Hall (1999, 2001) states for successful change to occur, it takes three to five years in unchanging conditions and five to eight with a fluctuating change participant group. Politicians want results before the next election (Hall, 1999) and school districts do not want bad media publicity. Therefore, the urgency of change and the rapidity in which programs revolve create “innovation overload” (Fullan, 2001 p. 52) of immense proportions.
Researchers who surveyed teachers participating in professional development that intended to implement federal policy (Hiebert, 1999; Lieberman, 1996; Louck-Horsley, Hewson; Love and Stiles, 1998) report that reform approaches to professional development allows teachers "time" to foster change, and understand what state and national standards address over and above traditional methods of professional development (Birman, Destimone, Porter, & Garet, 2000). They did not address teacher perceptions regarding utilization of the professional development within the classroom.

Prior studies have addressed teachers' attitudes toward professional development (Birman, Destimone, Porter & Garet, 2000), teachers' perceptions regarding healthy and unhealthy work environments and organizational culture (Hoy & Feldman, 1999), and teachers' perceptions on leadership skills and school climate (Hall & George, 1999). Hoy and Feldman (1999) describe teachers' perceptions and attitudes regarding healthy and unhealthy work environments and organizational culture and climate. Their purpose was to not indicate a "right or wrong," but to illuminate the quality of health within a school and demonstrate how that mirrors school interaction. In researching school leaders and climate, Hall and George (1999) report that the principal establishes the climate of the organization and makes a significant difference in the perception of school proficiency, climate, and morale. Jenkins Norman [sic] (2003) contends that essential components to successful change include the teachers' perception and comprehension of their roles of the targeted modification and voluntary participation.

Secondary English Language Arts teachers. Secondary English Language Arts teachers are an important group for this study as English is a mandatory subject in the United States. Students typically complete four full years, or credits, of English Language
Arts courses in secondary high school. Because of this, numerous administrative tasks are conducted during English Language Arts classroom periods, including credit checks, registration, hearing and vision testing, school photographs, and college presentations.

In addition to the intrusions during instructional time, Schaefer (2003) reports that secondary English Language Arts teachers show higher signs of stress than do elementary teachers. They also report higher stress than their secondary colleagues (Naylor & Malcolmson, 2001). Naylor and Malcolmson (2001) indicate that English Language Arts teachers work on average 53 hours per week and describe that tasks expected of them were ever-present, constantly growing, and collectively becoming increasingly unmanageable.

Metropolitan school environment. Smith and Marcano (2000) describe the American public school system as having nearly five million employees, with forty-five million students enrolled. “One-fourth of these 45 million students go to school in the 100 largest local districts in the country” (Smith & Marcano, 2000, p.20). Further, in 1992-1993:

The 10 largest districts had seven percent of the students; nine of these 10 reported minority students made up more than 50 percent of their pupils. Half of the hundred largest districts have more than 50 percent black, Hispanic, or Asian/Pacific Islander enrollments. Chicago reported that 88.4 percent of its pupils were from minority groups. (Smith & Marcano, 2000, p. 20)

Within these metropolitan, multi-ethnic environments exist the secondary, or high schools in which 3,500 to 5,000 students may be enrolled to 200 to 300 teachers. (Smith & Marcano, 2000).
School environment encompasses numerous tangible and intangible members that contribute to the *esprit de corps* (Freiberg, 1999). Tangible members include those who daily interact, work and attend the school, the building(s), lights, and chemicals. Intangible members include social and psychological attitudes, beliefs, and routine structures between those who interact daily at the school. In discussing school environments, researchers have utilized metaphors that range from comparing schooling and schools to factories, complete with economical, financial and market terminology to comparing them to communities and families, with language such as nurturance, growth and familial relationships (Freiberg & Stein, 1999).

Within these wide-ranging comparisons, the phrases “school climate” and “school culture” have become common usage within the discussion of school environment research. To simplify, climate is viewed as behavior, while culture is viewed in terms of values and norms (Creemers & Reezigt, 1999, Freiberg, 1999; Hoy, 1990; Hoy & Feldman, 1999). “Organizational culture refers to the shared orientations that bind the organization together and give it its distinctive identity” and “climate is a characteristic of the entire organization,” each contributors to the overall environment (Hoy & Feldman, 1999, p. 84). It is relevant to note the semantic subtlety of the definitions as those differences can offer important information and understanding of the attitudes and knowledge, regarding change.

**Summary**

Researchers agree that numerous factors contribute to the success or failure of educational change. The literature discussed and debated the meaningful and important
foundational aspects that contribute to change theory. The definitions involved can be nebulous and overlapping, but research continues to expand the understanding and various dimensions within a) change, b) reform, c) policy, d) critical perspective, and e) teachers.

Limited research exists specifically directed at teachers’ attitudes regarding day to day implementation, practice, and interaction within the school (Goodlad, 1984; Hargreaves, 1994; Lortie, 1975; Rosenholtz, 1989; Scott, Stone & Dinham, 2001). Few studies exist focusing specifically on secondary school teachers (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001), and still fewer focus on English Language Arts teachers in the metropolitan high school setting. As perception issues regarding secondary school educators are further explored, a greater understanding regarding change may be enhanced. This dissertation study describes how secondary English Language Arts teachers, as participants of change, coped with change reform in their high school classrooms and how their self-perceptions of change reform policy affect their practice within the metropolitan schools in which they worked.

Having reviewed the literature associated with change reform policy and Fischer’s theoretical framework in relation to this study, the next chapter will focuses on outlining the methodology of this study. The survey instruments are discussed as well as the methodology for obtaining research information and the data for this study.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Chapter 1 described the purpose and importance of this research study regarding secondary English Language Arts teachers and their perceptions. Chapter 2 reviewed the literature. This chapter discusses the methodology to evaluate teacher perceptions of change reform policy by secondary English Language Arts teachers within the metropolitan schools in which they worked. Participant information followed by a brief premise discussing how critical perspective supported policy analysis as a methodological template for education studies leads to a description concerning the benefits of using qualitative tools for this study. A depiction of the educational setting for this study follows. Data collection and the limitations of the study conclude this chapter.

Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative research study was to identify secondary English Language Arts teachers' perceptions regarding changes in curriculum reform policy at the secondary school level as it has been influenced over the past ten years and to determine how such perceptions impacted their practice. A case study design was based on interviews and documents that provided an analysis of themes so that a detailed description would be understood through a critical perspective. The following five
questions served as the focus of this research that addressed Fischer’s model of policy evaluation:

1. What counts as change to secondary English Language Arts teachers?
2. In what ways do secondary English Language Arts teachers implement change in the metropolitan schools in which they work?
3. What becomes altered or modified in the classroom materials when secondary English Language Arts teachers implement policy as the basis for change?
4. What are the values or goals that underlie teacher’s perceptions of the change relationships between the secondary English Language Arts and policy implementation.
5. How does the secondary English Language Arts teacher’s perceptions influence the implementation of policy change? (Appendix C)

Participants

The study examined five secondary English Language Arts teachers practicing within a large southwestern metropolitan setting comprised of five different secondary high schools, from each of the five represented regions of the school district. The fictitious Cedar County School District is located in the State of Brooks and primarily serves the metropolitan community of Delbruck. The sampling of participants was based on purposeful sampling. As the study addressed policy changes within the past five years within the district, those participating in the study had been teaching English Language Arts within the large southwestern metropolitan school district for at least eight to 10 years. Brooks added mandatory state standards for all public schools in the year 1998.
Therefore it was necessary to have research participants who have been teaching within the secondary English Language Arts classroom prior to this change in order for the participants to comment fully regarding policy changes. Appendix D is the Participant Criteria Table. The principal methodological instrument for study was two focused interviews with teachers who had been teaching eight to 10 years within the district to identify what they knew regarding curriculum policy, changes within the past five years of curriculum at the state, district and site level, their current ways of practice, and then an assessment on how they perceived the impact of curriculum change on their practice.

Access. The schools selected for participation in this research study were within a large metropolitan school district in the Southwest United States, called Delbruck for the purposes of this study. Appropriate approval from the research institution and the school district involved were obtained prior to initial study. This approval was also for a pilot study (Appendix E). This study was limited to the data obtained from within the one district, Cedar County School District. An example of the informed consent letter for the participants is illustrated in Appendix F. The researcher addressed any questions or concerns regarding the purpose of the study and their individual involvement. The interview sessions took approximately 45 to 60 minutes to complete.

Premise of Critical Perspective

Initially, policy analysis was designed as a practicality; to inform decision makers with useful information for guidance. The methodological foundations for conducting such an inquiry have historically been technocratic in orientation according to Fischer (1999) and Stone (1997). A qualitative approach has risen with social science research
and seeks a more comprehensive approach (Grauhan & Strubelt, 1971; Fischer, 1999). Contemporary thought views policy analysis as assisting in identifying “the processes of choice, experimentation, and struggle through which societies transform and conduct their policies over time” (Dodd, 1991, p. 277). This study was to examine how secondary high school English Language Arts teachers, as participants of change, cope with curriculum change reform and how their perceptions of curriculum change reform policy affect their practice. Fischer’s (1999) policy analysis paradigm was used as the theoretical framework.

Fischer (1999) argued that appropriate and purposeful evaluation should move from mere theoretical critique to a blending of the facts with the values, a methodological reconstruction where the informal logic of policy deliberation places evaluation within socially relevant arenas, allowing “normative inquiry on an equal footing with empirical analysis” (Fischer, 1999, p. 20). This holistic design incorporated and illuminated basic discursive components, and extended from concrete empirical questions to abstract normative issues.

Critical perspective. A critical perspective supports social critique, legitimating the participants’ voice and locating the participants’ meanings in larger impersonal systems of political economy and ideologies (Anderson, 1989). In-depth inquiry through interviews, observations, and artifact analysis (state standards, district syllabi, and individual secondary English Language Arts teacher’s lesson plans) with secondary English Language Arts teachers allowed a magnified lens to look at the particular group. The research allowed broader statements concerning other academic disciplines and
teacher perceptions in secondary high schools. The findings may also prompt other research in this area or promote further studies. (See Tools of Inquiry Table Appendix G).

Critical qualitative research raises questions about the influence and the nature of truth and the construction of knowledge (Starling, 1989). Case study research also provides a sharpened systematic understanding of multiple sources of information gleaned through the traditional qualitative instruments of interview, observation, and document analysis of state standards, syllabi, and lesson plans. Traditional case study examines major or central characters whose actions and context are being examined to form conclusions about their particular situation. Traditional case study observes the subjects multiple times to provide a central context in which information concerning the certain issues, problems, and patterns become apparent (Stake, 1998; Starling, 1989; Yin, 1989). In this study, the policy was the case study to be examined through the lenses of the secondary English Language Arts teachers. The teachers’ experience within the classroom represented the policy over time. For this reason, participants were required to have been teaching at least eight to 10 years. The operation of the curriculum reform policy was the case study in place over time, the teachers’ experience served as vehicles for the patterns that develop as the policy is implemented. The consistency, sequentialness and detail of the activities, the depth of the contexts supplied the focus for the complex interpretive framework of the education policy environment (Starling, 1989; Yin, 1989). This complexity required acute understanding of the intricacy of the symbiotic bodies involved. The interaction between the teacher(s) and student(s) was where adoption and implementation (Hall, 1999) could fully be seen as successful or not successful.
Fischer’s *Logic of Policy Evaluation* (1999) is used to provide insight into the epistemology and ontology of program implementation as viewed through social and cultural issues and patterns. The case study design of research using Fischer’s policy framework was specifically chosen for this study because it promoted questions concerning the larger systems of society, the culture and institutions that shape educational practice as well as exploring the structural conditions framing practice (Merriam, 1992). Fischer’s policy paradigm (1999) seeks to understand how policy cycles and issues become identified and formulated in the organizations the policy is placed.

The metropolitan secondary schools in the Delbruck community served as the educational setting in which to place Fischer’s framework. The secondary English Language Arts teachers formulated the case studies, operating as a “functioning specific” (Stake, 1998, p. 87). The teachers’ culture provided an ethnographic perspective on curriculum policy change implementation (Spradley, 1980). The teachers’ responses were integrated and formed a bounded system with patterned behavior, consistency and sequentialness (Stake, 1998). The culture of the teachers’ collective experience was viewed through Fischer’s (1999) paradigm and functioned as the case study for this research.

*Qualitative tools.* Qualitative tools seek to understand and comprehend empathetically the subjective views of those involved, the institutional support and opposition of the policy, and how perceptions and behaviors help define public policy positions (Fischer, 1999; Schneider & Ingram, 1993). Qualitative research reaches beyond phenomenal explanation in what Carnini (1975) borrowed from ethno-
methodological techniques as “documentation.” Documentation is a process of revealing the multiplicity of meanings by selecting and juxtaposing recorded observations continuously throughout the research in order to reveal reciprocities and approach the integrity of the phenomena.

Multiple sources of information gleaned through the traditional qualitative instruments of interview, observation, and document analysis occur through critical qualitative case study. Research for this study concerning the perceptions and change among secondary English Language Arts teachers was conducted through two formal interviews, one observation during the 50 minute English Language Arts class period, and analysis of state standards, district syllabi and the lesson plans of each case represented in the case study. The interview timeline is illustrated in Table 3 and Appendix H.

Table 3
Interview Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview I</td>
<td>60 minutes</td>
<td>Gather initial information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>One 50 minute class period</td>
<td>Verify alignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview II</td>
<td>60 minutes</td>
<td>Query secondary English Language Arts teacher regarding interaction between Interviews and observations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A critical perspective legitimates the participants’ voice and located the participants’ meanings in larger impersonal systems of political ideologies (Anderson, 1989).
Typically, such research is conducted through the qualitative structure of case study, which Yin (1989) applauds for furthering policy formation and evaluation. Starling (1989) states that case study is the strongest evaluative methodology. Critical case study reflects seriously on cultural hegemonic practice, documenting the importance of attitudes that collectively contributed to a given situation. Cultural hegemonic practice in this chapter was defined as the policy and practices that drive public and political educational beliefs, attitudes and perceptions formulated through historical, social, economic, and cultural educational reform. Appendix I is a visual representation of the foundational theorists utilized to direct the critical perspective for this study.

**Ethnographic perspective.** An ethnographic perspective allowed the research to utilize the culture of the teachers as a means of observing the policy change through implementation. Spradley (1980) defined culture as springing from "what people do, what people know, and the things people make and use" (p.5). Secondary English Language Arts teachers collectively share cultural behavior, knowledge and artifacts, both explicitly and implicitly. The explicit and tacit cultures of the English Language Arts teachers’ belief system regarding policy change implementation. Spradley (1980) asserts that explicit culture is “what we know, a level of knowledge people can communicate about with relative ease (p.7). Tacit culture however is not overt. It is “outside our awareness” (Spradley, 1980, p.7), acquired and interpreted through social interaction and social experience.
Setting

States within the United States maintain a bureaucratic management style to the governing of schools. It is top down and largely disconnected from the daily student-teacher relationship. School boards decide the local policy of the school district. The school boards derive their power not from the electorate, but from state constitutions that govern individual school districts within states (Mazurek, Winzer & Majorek, 2000). Local school boards interact with the superintendent, not with the schools. “Most superintendents (90 percent) are males; 97 percent are white, non-Hispanic” (Mazurek, Winzer & Majorek, 2000, p. 22). In turn, superintendents interact with principals or in larger districts, area superintendents.

Principals answer to superintendents but work with schools. School climate research indicates that the principal’s leadership style is the single biggest variable to smooth school operations (Sandholtz, Ringstaff, & Dwyer, 2000). Assistant principals report to the principal and teachers are supervised by assistant principals; the larger the school district, the larger the hierarchy (see Figure 1).
Figure 1. School District Hierarchy
State. An example of this hierarchy was the southwestern state chosen for this study. Five hundred sixty-one thousand, five hundred and one (561,501) children age 18 and under lived in this southwestern state, identified as Brooks for purposes of this study. In the 2001-2002 school year, 356,762 children were enrolled in the K-12 public school system. An estimated 16,500 were enrolled in private schools and an unknown number were home schooled. Seventy-four thousand, two hundred eighty-five students were reported as not attending public schools in 2000, due to graduation, private schooling or home schooling programs. In 2005, Brooks projects an estimated 400,000 students will be in K-12 public education (see Table 4).

Table 4

Brooks' Counties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2001-2002</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ash</td>
<td>8,763</td>
<td>12,195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beech</td>
<td>4,724</td>
<td>5,326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cedar</td>
<td>245,604</td>
<td>330,023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogwood</td>
<td>6,989</td>
<td>9,133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elm</td>
<td>9,847</td>
<td>10,370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fir</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gum</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hickory</td>
<td>3,616</td>
<td>3,616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivory Silk</td>
<td>1,357</td>
<td>1,357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juniper</td>
<td>1,014</td>
<td>1,023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kousa Dogwood</td>
<td>7,046</td>
<td>9,031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lacebark Elm</td>
<td>774</td>
<td>1,076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnolia</td>
<td>5,279</td>
<td>5,279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Plum</td>
<td>898</td>
<td>1,391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olive</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palm</td>
<td>58,533</td>
<td>67,888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redwood</td>
<td>1,464</td>
<td>1,077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>356,624</td>
<td>459,761</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The 2000 Census data described the nation's diversity: White, 56.71%; Hispanic, 25.74%; Black, 10.15%; Asian/Pacific Islander, 5.66%; and American Indian/Alaska Native, 1.74% (Figure 2).

Figure 2. National Diversity, 2000 Census

Brooks' student population reflected greater diversity than the United States, especially with regard to Hispanic students who went from 11.3% in 1990 to 25.7% in 2001. In 2005, it is estimated that 150,000 Hispanic students will attend Brooks' K-12 public schools. The majority of Brooks' state LEP students (limited English Proficiency) speak Spanish (87%) with four percent speaking Asian languages and 9% speaking a language other than Spanish or any of the Asian languages (Figure 3).
The National Center for Education Statistics reports Brooks’ overall high school completion rate to be approximately 64.5%, with 62.9% receiving a diploma. Louisiana was the only state with a lower completion rate. North Dakota and Wisconsin reported the highest percentage of completion rates with 88.8% and 89.3% respectively. The mode completion rate was reported at 80.8%, the median 81.2%, and the mean completion 80.6%. These percentages were derived from those states providing information to the National Center for Education Statistics. “The completion rates for race/ethnic groups were 70.7% for Asians/Pacific Islanders; 69.4% for whites; 56.8% for blacks; 54% for American Indians/Alaskan Natives; and 49.4% for Hispanics. Brooks’ grade 9-12 dropout rate hovers around 6.1%” (see Figure 4) (Brooks Department of Education, 2002, p. 16).
Hispanics, American Indians/Alaskan Natives, and African Americans have the highest dropout rates at 9.2%, 8.3%, and 8.0%, respectively. Asians/Pacific Islanders and whites have the lowest rates at 4.6% and 4.9% (Figure 5). The percentage of dropouts receiving special education services was 11.7% in 1999-2000.
The Brooks State Board of Education reports that Brooks’ children come from families with a median income of $44,900, slightly below the national average of $45,600. Twenty-eight percent live in female-headed families receiving child support or alimony, and this is below the national average of 34%.

From 1984 to 1999, Brooks’ public school enrollment grew by 115% compared to the nation’s 19% growth; in each five-year period, Brooks’ student growth ranged from 24% to 34%. The average size of schools varied dramatically throughout the State with the smallest being four students at Wilder Elementary in Elm County and the largest being 3,434 at Feldman High School in Cedar County. One hundred and sixteen schools were on partial or full year-round schedules. Brooks had ten charter schools.

Figure 5. Dropout Rates
Local. Cedar County is the largest school district in the state of Brooks with 245,604 students. The district is broken into five regional areas headed by regional superintendents (see Figure 6). There are 35 secondary schools in Cedar County. The average size of a Cedar County high school in the Delbruck metropolitan area is 2,336 with a teaching staff of approximately one hundred thirty-five. Student disciplinary needs are controlled by two deans, who answer to assistant principals, who in turn answer to the principal. Teachers are supervised and observed by assistant principals as well.

![Regional Service Districts](image)

Figure 6. Regional Service Districts

Testing has escalated in American public schools within the last twenty-five years and Brooks is no exception. Testing occurs in the state of Brooks much like other states. Brooks' testing of its student population is represented as follows in Table 5.
Table 5
Brooks’ Testing Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Standardized Tests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Standards-Based Assessment in reading, math and science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Standards-Based Assessment in reading, math and science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, State Criterion-Referenced Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, Brooks Proficiency Examination in writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, State Criterion-Referenced Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, Standards-Based Assessment in math and science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, Standards-Based Assessment in math and science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>Brooks Proficiency Examination in Writing, Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, State Criterion-Referenced Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 9</td>
<td>Iowa Tests of Educational Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 10</td>
<td>Iowa Tests of Educational Development, High School Proficiency Exam in reading, math, writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 11</td>
<td>High School Proficiency Exam in reading, math, and writing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the secondary school setting, proficiency testing begins in the student’s sophomore year of secondary school. If a student passes proficiency, he/she does not have to take the examination again. Students have one opportunity to pass the proficiency test in their sophomore and junior years. In their senior year, they have up to eight opportunities to meet the proficiency requirement. If a student does not succeed in passing the proficiency test, he/she will receive a certificate of completion stating that he/she attended four years of secondary high school.
Data Collection

A critical perspective as a methodological tool was of significant importance. A critical perspective allowed the data to demonstrate the complex and symbiotic environment of policy and implementation. Data for this study emerged from the traditional sources of interviews, direct observation, and document analysis of state standards, district syllabi, and individual lesson plans. One teacher participant from each of the five regions within the Delbruck school district comprised the research pool.

Inquiry into and across the multiple data sources examined the key questions raised by Fischer’s policy evaluation (1999). In using a critical perspective, the initial set of research questions shaped the hermeneutic used to guide data collection and assist in the illumination of issues.

The initial phase of the study addressed curriculum policy change within the past five years of secondary high school English Language Arts teachers in a large metropolitan setting from various schools within the Delbruck community. Interview questions were designed from Fischer’s paradigm (1999) and utilized to question participating English teachers:

I. Verification

A. What are the different kinds of curriculum change?

B. What were some of the ways you were informed regarding curriculum change?

C. What has been your experience in implementing curriculum change?

D. Do the programs fulfill their objectives?

II. Validation
A. In what ways are the curriculum changes relevant to the problem situation?

B. How is the set of curriculum changes relevant to correcting the problem(s) it was designed to resolve?

III. Vindication

A. How do the curriculum changes contribute directly to the society as a whole?

B. In what ways do the curriculum changes foster fairness of the curriculum?

IV. Social Choice

A. What kinds of social values should the curriculum be built upon?

B. What do you do when you are asked to implement a change that you feel is not in the best interests of yourself or your students?

C. If you were going to implement policy change how would you go about doing that?

(see Appendix J)

A list of the questions were typed prior to the interview so that all interviewees were provided the same opportunities to respond to the same set of questions. A sample of how these questions were provided to the participants is illustrated in Appendices K1, K2, K3, K4, K5 and K6. Appendix L aligns the research questions with the policy analysis paradigm (Fischer 1999) used as a template to research secondary English Language Arts teachers and their perceptions regarding change implementation within their classroom teaching. By interviewing the cognitive realities of those knowledgeable and involved, the study systematically “explicated the various definitions of problems” (Fischer, 1999, p. 80) and identified the social and political frameworks which provided the rules for standards. A pilot study of three secondary English Language Arts teachers was conducted to ensure the clarity and of the interview questions for the participants.
involved. The pilot study also assessed the information gleaned prior to fully researching the proposed five cases studies within the Delbruck community.

*Analysis of Data.* Content analysis is the process of identifying, coding, and categorizing the primary patterns in the data in order to uncover patterns, themes, and categories within the data (Spradley, 1979). Patton (1990) stated that inductive analysis reveals patterns, themes, and categories that "emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis" (p. 390).

Each interview for this study was audio taped and later transcribed and represented as an analytic content analysis chart modeled from the work of the Santa Barbara Classroom Discourse Group (Putney, 1997). An analytic content analysis allowed the researcher to demonstrate the claims made by the interview participants and the conditions or evidence to support their claim. The chart consists of three columns. The first column contains the response to the question made by the research participant. The second column contains the claims made by the participant and the third column contains the evidence revealed by the participant. Table 6 is a graphical example of a blank analytic content analysis chart and Table 7 is an example from Mr. Wilder, a research participant from this study.

**Table 6**

Analytic Content Analysis Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Question</th>
<th>Claims made by participant</th>
<th>Conditions, for evidence of claims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This column contains the transcribed audio tape of the interviews.</td>
<td>This column contains claims made by the research participant during the interview.</td>
<td>This column contains the conditions or evidence provided by the research participant for their claim(s).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Table 7**

**Mr. Wilder's Content Analysis Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ 2. How did you find out about these curriculum changes?</th>
<th>Claims made by participant</th>
<th>Conditions, for evidence of claims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I find out about changes through department meetings. I am also fortunate in that I am a part of the new Teacher Training cadre and a lot of things that are coming down the pike I get to hear and keep abreast of first, so I was able to find out about some changes in curriculum that way. Other than that there are not huge announcements that the curriculum has been changed. There are no heralding trumpets and we gather together and go off and teach the new curriculum. I haven’t experienced that. Yeah, we have in-services if in-services actually fulfill what they were supposed to fulfill which was teaching me to do something then it would be legitimate. But that’s not the function of in-services as they currently stand where I teach.</td>
<td>I find out about changes through department meetings</td>
<td>There are no heralding trumpets and we gather together and go off and teach the new curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I haven’t experienced that. Yeah, we have in-services if in-services actually fulfill what they were supposed to fulfill which was teaching me to do something then it would be legitimate.</td>
<td>I am also fortunate in that I am a part of the new Teacher Training cadre and a lot of things that are coming down the pike I get to hear and keep abreast of first, so I was able to find out about some changes in curriculum that way.</td>
<td>But that’s not the function of in-services as they currently stand where I teach.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The individual transcribed interviews were 1) initially coded and grouped into domains (Spradley, 1979) which were used to identify the main themes present in the data. Then, another coding comparing the individual transcripts was conducted to identify general descriptive themes within Fischer’s (1999) recursive phases and the two theoretical constructs that emerged. The results of the collective coding from all the participants was then 2) used for creating themes and categories that were consistent throughout Fischer’s paradigm (1999) and formed the umbrella for the three primary organizing themes discussed in detail in Chapters 4 and 5.
Collectively, the teachers’ responses during the interviews provided a cultural description of how secondary English Language Arts teachers within the Cedar County School District perceive changes in curriculum reform policy. The relationship among what Spradley (1980) termed the implicit and tacit categories functioned throughout the participant responses and Fischer’s four phases of policy analysis; verification vindication, validation, and social choice illustrating how the components of each category or domain performed in relation to the other categories or domains within the theoretical constructs. Thematic and categorical attributes emerged and are displayed through taxonomies, content analysis, componential analysis and discussed in detail in Chapters 4 and 5 (Spradley, 1980).

Common themes emerged from the participants’ responses. Patterns of the individual teacher’s perceptions regarding curriculum policy and change implementation within the theoretical constructs were compared to the other transcriptions from the interview participants for consistency and analysis of conclusions. Data from these recordings were analyzed to determine the commonality featured among the interview participants.

Patton (1990) stated that it is important to select information-rich cases for in depth study. Information-rich cases produce a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research therefore interviews with practicing secondary English Language Arts teachers were vital for what Spradley (1980) terms “native language” and “cultural knowledge.” By interviewing teachers concerning the cognitive realities of those knowledgeable and involved about the issue, it was possible to systematically “explicate the various definitions of problems” and identify the social and political frameworks which provided the rules for standards (Fischer, 1999).

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District syllabi, course scope and goals, and state standards were documents that were the primary forms of printed artifacts. Because they were published by the school district printing offices and available to the public, they were easily obtainable. In the case of Advanced Placement courses, which were printed and distributed by the federal government, the local district office also provided these documents. The strength of public documents as a data source lie within the fact that they already existed in the situation, providing clues and insights; they did not intrude upon or alter the setting in ways that the presence of the researcher might. Furthermore, they were not dependent upon human schedules, emotions, or health issues, whose cooperation and participation is essential for collecting data through interviews and observations. Simultaneous data collection and analysis permitted continuous refinement and adjustments of emerging patterns, concepts, themes, and categories against subsequent data.

Interviews and artifact analysis formulated the data for this comparative multiple case study design through a critical perspective lens. Triangulation of the data illuminated the description of the research questions.

Limitations of the Study

Several limitations were anticipated in this study. Generalizations from the findings of this research may have been limited to populations with similar characteristics. In addition, this study on secondary English teachers’ perceptions relied upon self reporting and may not be representative of attitudes of the majority of secondary English teachers. Limited claims could be made on the culture as a whole because this was a case study
and a cultural collective. This study was further limited by the number of participants involved in the research.

The next chapter describes the case studies involved in this research study. The findings from the data collection and the information gleaned are analyzed in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results of the qualitative case study research to answer the following research questions:

1. What counts as change to secondary English Language Arts teachers?
2. In what ways do secondary English Language Arts teachers implement change in the metropolitan schools in which they work?
3. What becomes altered or modified in classroom materials when secondary English Language Arts teachers implement policy as the basis for change?
4. What are the values or goals that underlie teacher perceptions of the change relationships between the secondary English Language Arts and policy implementation?
5. How does the secondary English Language Arts teacher’s perceptions influence the implementation of policy change?

This evaluative case study research was modeled on Fischer’s four interrelated phases of inquiry (1999): verification, validation, vindication, and social choice, with a critical perspective. The research is to provide insight into the perceptions of secondary English Language Arts teachers in metropolitan schools and their practice in light of change reform. The case study design was based on interviews and documents that provided an
analysis of consistent patterns of discourse emerging from participant responses. Theoretical constructs came forward from the data, leading to the development of themes and categories. Triangulation of the data in conjunction with triangulating the data through Fischer’s policy analysis framework then led to the conclusions and implications of this research study. Figure 7 is a visual depiction of the research methodology process used for analysis of data and the conclusions for this study.

Figure 7. Research Methodology
Two theoretical constructs provided contextual insight: 1) political rhetoric and discursive construction, and 2) the role of discursive practices in the empirical process. The two theoretical constructs were consistent throughout each of Fischer’s recursive phases and form the umbrella for the three primary organizing themes discussed in this chapter: 1) foundational, 2) causal, and 3) consequential. These terms are described in detail in the “Development of Themes” section. Appendix K.1 is the interview questionnaire aligned with the qualitative interview questions used in this research. Appendix L illustrates the Fischer’s policy paradigm related with the interview questions.

The findings from the data collection are discussed in this chapter. A brief synopsis of the pilot study is followed by a detailed description of the data. Demographic data of the research participants and their everyday working environment are followed by a description of the documents used by the teachers. The themes and categories found within the two theoretical constructs and how they consistently emerged throughout Fischer’s policy analysis framework will be discussed. The information obtained from the interviews as they apply to Fischer’s four interrelated phases of policy analysis inquiry concludes this chapter.

Pilot Study

The intent of the pilot study was to assess the applicability of Fischer’s policy analysis paradigm (1999) to an educational environment in which curriculum change policy has been enacted. A pilot study of three secondary English Language Arts teachers within the Cedar County School District was conducted in February 2004 to assure clarity and answerability of questions prior to confirming research participant
involvement. The participants all had been teaching within the Cedar County School District for a minimum of eight years. One participant taught in a traditional secondary setting, one in a charter school, and one in an alternative school setting.

Each of the pilot study participants answered the interview questions in a live interview session that was audio taped and later transcribed. This one hour interview consisted of 10 questions and each question was printed individually on an 8.5 x 10.5 sheet of paper. An observation of one classroom period and a follow-up interview concluded the interview portion of the pilot study. Based on the findings of the pilot study, Fischer’s policy analysis paradigm illustrated that it was an appropriate structural framework for this study. There were no alterations in the research questions.

Interview Participants and Setting

The pilot study illuminated the setting as critical to the research participants’ perceptions of their environment and the interaction of policy in implementation. The participants’ surroundings in which they conducted their daily instructional activity with students was important in understanding the dynamics that occurred in their everyday work environment. As the research study focused on the perceptions of secondary English Language Arts teachers and their perceptions of implementing policy change, the descriptions of these research participants’ classrooms provided insight into how they construct their immediate surroundings. The participants’ setting will be described in detail to provide context for the study.

The interview participants were five secondary English Language Arts teachers from five different urban secondary high schools within a large southwestern metropolitan
setting. Participants were selected from each of the five regions that comprise the Cedar County School District serving the Delbruck community. As the study addressed policy changes within the past five years within the district, those participating in the study had been teaching English Language Arts for at least eight to 10 years. Three females and two males were interviewed. Their experiences within the classroom ranged from eight to 28 years. The teachers taught various grade levels within the 9 through twelve secondary school in which they worked. The teachers also taught various courses ranging from developmental to Advanced Placement as well as elective courses and those courses mandatory for graduation. Despite this range of courses and grade level, there was a very high level of agreement among each of the participants that exhibited itself throughout all ten of the interview questions. The following descriptions of the research participants classroom environment show the diversity among the participants and the environments in which they teach. This variety is important because despite the diverse classroom environments there was a high level of agreement amongst the participant responses to the interview questions.

An overall comparative demographic table (Table 8) illustrates the varying English Language Arts courses taught by the participants, the range of years teaching, the differences in class size, and the generational representation of age.
Table 8  
Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Number of years teaching English</th>
<th>Number of years in Cedar County</th>
<th>Number of years in current setting</th>
<th>English classes currently taught</th>
<th>Highest degree earned</th>
<th>Teaching areas other than English</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Average class size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elisabeth Kahn</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>English I</td>
<td>MA +32</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>46-53</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>31-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>American Lit. English Lit. Honors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Boyle</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>English II</td>
<td>MA +32 and beyond</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>46-53</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>25-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English II Honors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marsha Feldman</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>English II Tech Writing Business</td>
<td>MA +32</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>41-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Communications Applied Communications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Elisabeth Kahn. Elisabeth Kahn has been teaching English Language Arts for 27 years. She has been teaching within the Cedar School District for 19 years and 11 at her present high school. She taught English I (ninth grade English), American Literature (11th grade English), and English Literature honors (11th and 12th grade elective English) during this study. Her average class size was between 31-40 students and she taught five classes at 50 minutes each per day. Ms. Kahn is certified in English Language Arts, grades 7-12, and in the content area of history, grades 7-12, within the Delbruck metropolitan area. She holds a master's degree with 32 course hours beyond the masters.

Her classroom was arranged in a traditional format with the desks in rows and facing the front of the classroom. Her desk sat at an angle facing the students’ desks and directly across from the entrance. A stand-alone podium was nearest the door. An overhead and one long table were lined up with the podium and teacher’s desk and formulate the center of the student’s focus. Bookshelves lined the back and side walls. There was no pathway behind the rows of desks or on the sides. The flow of traffic was in the teacher area and between the rows for them to be seated. The classroom door remained closed during class time.

The daily expectations and an agenda for the day were written clearly on the whiteboard. At the beginning of the period, Ms. Kahn directed attention to the daily activities and read through them. Students had a packet of skill exercises under their desks on which they worked daily. These were called Skill Builders and had been created on-site. The exercises modeled the language and format of standardized testing and included a range of items tested in the English Language Arts area. The exercises focused on analogies, reading for comprehension, synonyms, spelling, and grammar. Each
exercise contained between eight and 10 items and the students were given 10 minutes to complete the assignment. The students self-assessed their progress as Ms. Kahn read the answers. There was then an opportunity for discussion if the students did not understand a particular answer.

The podium and overhead were used by Ms. Kahn and she remained in the front of the room during the class period. When students worked on their own, Ms. Kahn was at her desk and the students came to her with their questions.

I spoke with Ms. Kahn twice on the telephone prior to our interview. On both occasions she articulated her apprehension for anonymity. She also expressed this concern several times during the interview. Ms. Kahn was interviewed in the English workroom that was accessible only by key. Ms. Kahn ceased speaking when anyone entered the workroom where she was being interviewed. A few times she was startled when someone entered the room and turned the interview questions face down.

Peter Boyle. Peter Boyle has been teaching English Language Arts for 28 years. He has lived in Cedar County for 7 years and has been teaching at the same location for 26 years. He taught English II (10th grade English), and English II honors during the research of this study. He was certified only in the content area of English Language Arts, grades 7-12. He held a master’s degree with 32 course hours beyond the masters. Mr. Boyle had participated in the process of curriculum writing and adoption with the district’s multicultural high school course offerings.

He taught on a modified block schedule in which the students attended three classes a day for 110 minutes, with all classes meeting on Mondays for 50 minutes. Mr. Boyle taught the same classes on Mondays and Wednesdays, and Tuesdays and Thursdays. He
had a preparatory period on Monday and then every other day for the rest of the school week. His class size was between 25-30 students.

The classroom arrangement was traditional. Student desks were in rows and faced the front of the classroom. The teacher’s desk was on an angle toward the students’ desks at the front of the room and directly across from the entrance. A long table held papers and a desk podium. There was a large amount of space in front of this table and an overhead on a cart midway between the table and the students’ desks.

The daily objectives and agenda were written on the white board and clearly marked for each course. Assignments with their due dates were also written on the whiteboard. Mr. Boyle spoke to his students from behind the podium and also walked in and around their desks during the lecture. He used the overhead when presenting new material, a difficult concept, or new vocabulary. During student work time, he moved in and out of the student desks and observed their progress. The classroom door remained closed during class time.

I spoke with Mr. Boyle once prior to the interview and he expressed concern over his anonymity for this research. He expressed reticence over being audio-taped, and upon being assured that the audio-tapes would remain with the researcher, agreed to being recorded. The interview took place in his classroom at the long table in the front of the room during Mr. Boyle’s preparatory period. His classroom door was kept open the entire time.

*Inga Garr.* Inga Garr has been teaching English Language Arts for 26 years. She has been teaching English Language Arts within Delbruck for 25 years and six at her present high school. She taught English Literature, English literature honors, (11th and 12th grade
elective English), and Advanced Placement English literature during this study. She taught on a modified block schedule. Her class size was below 25-30 students. The largest enrollment in one class was 23. Ms. Garr was certified in English Language Arts, grades 7-12 within the Cedar County School District. Ms. Garr held a master’s degree with 32 course hours beyond the masters. She had been teaching freshman English courses at the local community college for 24 years.

The student desks in Ms. Garr’s classroom faced each other and the front of the classroom at a forty-five degree angle. The teacher’s desk, one long table, and bookshelves were in the back of the room, behind the students’ desks. The front of the room had a podium. The daily agenda and objectives were written on the whiteboard. Ms. Garr spoke to her students from behind the podium during lecture and was at her desk available for assistance during student work time. I spoke with Ms. Garr outside of school property at her request although she expressed no direct concern about anonymity.

_Victor Wilder._ Victor Wilder was interviewed outside of school property at a neighborhood eating establishment. He expressed concern for anonymity when he signed the research approval form. When informed he could choose his own name for the study, he stated that was unnecessary as long as he had confirmation his real identity would not be explicitly revealed.

Victor Wilder has been teaching English Language Arts for eight years. He taught within the Cedar County School District for eight years at the same location. He will move to a new school at the beginning of the 2004-2005 school year. He was also certified to teach in the content area of theater. Mr. Wilder had a master’s degree. His
average class size was between 31-40 students and he taught five classes on a modified block schedule.

English I (ninth grade English), English IV, (senior remedial English), and American Studies were the courses he taught during the research for this study. American Studies was a course that Mr. Wilder and his team-teaching partner created that integrated the American Literature and American history courses into one course. This course had been approved by the Cedar County School District. Students enrolled in the American Studies course and their schedules reflected the two courses taught consecutively. Mr. Wilder wrote the curriculum and received approval from the school district to have the course offered within Cedar County.

The student desks in Mr. Wilder’s class faced the front of the room in rows with a large walkway in the center. His desk was in the back of the room and faced the backs of the students. There was a short hallway in Mr. Wilder’s room before it opened into the class area. Bookshelves lined the walls in the hallway. The front of the room had a table pushed against the wall. It was brought out when using the overhead. Instead of a podium, Mr. Wilder used a music stand that rests next to the whiteboard. Often, the students were not in the classroom, but combined with the American history class and in a lecture room or outside on school grounds. Students were often working on projects cooperatively and moved between the two rooms which are across from each other.

Marsha Feldman. Marsha Feldman has been teaching English Language Arts for 19 years. She has been teaching English Language Arts within the Cedar County School District for 16 years and five years at her present high school. She was certified to teach English Language Arts. Ms. Feldman had a master’s degree with 32 course hours beyond
the masters. Her average class size ranged from 41-50. She taught on a modified block
schedule and team taught with a business teacher under a Company concept. Marsha
Feldman introduced the Company concept to the Cedar County School District and had
successfully presented the curriculum to the school board. The Company curriculum had
been approved by the district. Ms. Feldman taught English II (tenth grade English),
technical writing, business communications, and applied communications during the
research of this study. The writing and communications courses were elective English
courses offered to students of sophomore, junior, or senior standing. Students enrolled in
one of the elective courses and the companion business course and took the two
consecutively. They experience a simulated business environment while obtaining
elective credits.

The classroom was non traditional. There were no desks filed in rows. There was no
lectern or teacher desk central to the students’ focus. The main entrance opened into the
large computer room. Immediately to the left was a pony wall that separated the teacher
work area from the student work area. A student reception area was on the right. Students
answered telephones and scheduled appointments in this area. Assigned student
cubbyholes were also along this wall.

There were three rooms that comprised the Company. One room was a computer lab
where students schedule their examinations. Another was a small theater area where
students listened to guest speakers, the instructors and class peers. The third room was the
largest and where the primary activity took place. Students worked at computers that
were arranged in pods. The pods had large desk areas in which the students work
together. The students were given an agenda for what they need to complete each quarter.
They worked at their own pace and scheduled meetings with the teachers when assistance was needed. Formal instruction occurred in the theater. Scheduled portfolio checks and conferences occurred at the conference tables in the student area.

Documents

The state and district documents represented the purpose and goals of the English Language Arts curriculum. The documentation was designed to provide guidance and direction for policy makers as well as English Language Arts teachers. Documents served as a point of reference in which to gauge how secondary English Language Arts teachers interpreted and utilized the documents designed to provide an overarching rationale for the curriculum taught. The documentation examined for this study refers to Cedar County School District syllabi, state mandated Content Standards for English Language Arts, Performance Standards, and state Power Standards.

Course Syllabi. Course Syllabi were provided by the district to each English Language Arts teacher in the high school setting within the Cedar County School District. At the beginning of each course syllabus is a description called Course Scope and Goals. Each Course Scope and Goals states the length of the course, its alignment with the Brooks English Language Arts Standards (ELA) and how it coordinates the skills tested in the Brooks’ High School Proficiency Examination (BHSPE) that each student must master in order to graduate. For example, the English III, 11th grade English course scope and goals reads:

This one-year, junior-level course, which correlates directly to the Brooks ELA Standards, develops reading, writing, speaking, listening, and research skills, while
enhancing critical thinking. Various literary genres will be studied and used as models and springboards for composition. Student writing is assessed using rubrics and standards of the BHSPE in Writing. This course fulfills one of the four English credits required for graduation. (Cedar County School District, 2001, English III).

The entire Course Scope and Goals for English III is illustrated in Appendix N.

State English Language Arts Content Standards. The English Language Arts Standards are content standards published by the Brooks State Department of Education. They were adopted in 2001 and revised in 2003 for the purposes of identifying what all Brooks' “students should know and be able to do from kindergarten through twelfth grade.” The English Language Arts Standards are also referred to as ‘Benchmarks.’ The introduction to the Cedar County English Language Arts Standards explained the standards existed for grades 2, 3, 5, 8 and 12. Further:

members of a state prioritization team prioritized each of the benchmarks standards based on a three-part framework which included Enduring Knowledge, Important Knowledge and Knowledge Worth Being Familiar With. Finally, the state prioritization team also identified whether the benchmark standards in grades 3, 5, 8, and 12 would be assessed locally by school district personnel or through a state assessment. In doing so, it was assumed that all standards would be assessed at the local level but that only some of the standards are appropriate for assessment at the state level. (Brooks English Language Arts Standards, 2001)

The standards were categorized as reading, writing, listening and speaking and research. One page of the English Language Arts Standards for reading is illustrated in N.

Performance Standards. Performance Standards were linked to Cedar County English
Language Arts Standards and were numbered to coordinate with the content areas outlined in the English Language Arts Standards. The Performance Standards are considered “performance level descriptors” for grades two, three, five, eight and 12 in Language Arts literacy. Appendix O depicts the content standard of reading for grade 12 that aligns with the English Language Arts Standards exemplified in Appendix N.

Power Standards. The 2003-2004 school year brought a new policy, Power Standards, into the English Language Arts and Math curriculums to “address the goal of alignment of the ‘intended,’ ‘the taught,’ and the ‘assessed’ curriculum. Cedar County School District, in conjunction with an outside auditing group, created the Power Standards to identify:

the most critical standards that students are held accountable for mastering.

They are highly focused, specific areas of instructional emphasis and are essential for student proficiency in the identified k-12 subject areas. They are aligned with the assessments for each grade and must be used to focus and pace instruction. (Cedar County School District, 2003).

A column referred to the State Content Standards and the relationship with the district syllabi (indicated in bracketed numbers). Items that were bulleted contained no corresponding state standard. Appendix P is the Power Standards that coordinate with 11th grade English Language Arts.
Development of Themes

When this research was conducted, *Power Standards* were not yet mandated, but were left up to the discretion of site administration. Each of the five interview participants was aware of the *Power Standards* and their schools were mandating implementation within the teachers' lesson plans. The Cedar County School District required secondary teachers to illustrate the compliance of course syllabi and state content standards within the body of their lesson plans.

The secondary English Language Arts teachers for this study constituted a common view of the social community of secondary English Language Arts teachers as a whole. Statements from the participants formed a collective opinion of a community that has developed over time, supporting the theoretical construct of political rhetoric and discursive construction. The teachers in the secondary English Language Arts community have developed a sense of what their shared problems are and the conditions that created the issues within the field of policy change and implementation further reinforcing the second theoretical construct that emerged in this study: the role of discursive practices in the empirical process. Figure 8 depicts the hierarchy of the themes and categories that were revealed during the research.
Figure 8. Thematic Views of Secondary English Language Arts Teachers
Two overall interrelated theoretical constructs emerged from consistent patterns in the participants’ responses: 1) political rhetoric and discursive construction, and 2) the role of discursive practices in the empirical process (Fischer, 1999). Political rhetoric refers to how a community forms symbolic expression of views or ideologies. This common language creates an understanding within the community it is constructed. The understanding of the community through this common language is the role of discursive practices. It allows some statements to be made and sets limits of what can be practiced in this social world (Fischer, 1999). ‘Political rhetoric’ and ‘discursive construction’ formulated descriptively how the secondary English Language Arts teachers frame their knowledge about policy change and implementation. ‘Discursive practices’ focused on the role of discourse in actual practice. Fischer’s four interrelated phases of policy analysis inquiry: verification, validation, vindication, and social choice seek to incorporate and illuminate basic discursive components. Each phase participates and interacts with the other phases with an objective overall of clarification and understanding pursued and initiated through reasoned dialogue.

Emergent themes related to common responses and patterns of teachers’ perceptions regarding curriculum policy and change implementation within these constructs were compared to the other transcriptions from the interview participants for consistency and analysis of conclusions. Data from these recordings were analyzed to determine the commonality featured among the interview participants. The following three thematic areas emerged: 1) foundational, 2) causal, and 3) consequential.

Foundational refers to whom or what creates policy. It was described in terms of ‘inside the classroom’ and ‘outside the classroom.’ Causal refers to a) why policy is
created, b) how it manifests itself through the perception that policy was created to endorse change, c) illustrate accountability for a policy change, and d) to demonstrate the assessment of an implemented policy. Consequential refers to what the policy effects and how the policy is implemented. The research participants' replies were categorized into two areas, 1) ways to improve student scores and 2) the ways in which veteran teachers address curriculum change.

Triangulation of the data occurred in order to obtain a wider and richer description of the views that emerged. Through qualitative analysis data, in-depth categories became known. The themes were from the teachers' voices concerning their views of classroom practice and changing policies and implementation. These categories mirrored the two theoretical construct patterns of political rhetoric and discursive construction, and the role of discursive practices in the empirical process (Fischer, 1999). Political rhetoric operated descriptively and internally reflected the perceptions of the secondary English Language Arts teachers. Discursive practices illustrated the action or external mechanics of policy change. The categories that emerged were easiest to classify using the term 'polar opposite.' The secondary English Language Arts teachers consistently described events in terms of opposing categories: a) interactions and communication inside and outside the classroom, and b) evaluations and perceptions internal to oneself and visibly external to the self. This study refers to these oppositions using the terms 'inside' and 'outside,' 'internal' and 'external,' and 'disconnect' and 'efficacy' to reference those events and perceptions. Figure 9 is a visual representation of the foundationally thematic categories.

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The perceptions of the secondary English Language Arts teachers revealed a disconnect between the internal operation of the classroom and the external machinations between the implementers of policy change and those that create and/or enforce policy change. The ‘absence of authority’ and ‘abuse of authority’ categories validate the foundational theme. The consistent patterns that emerged illustrated a high level of consensus among the teachers within the five school district regions.

The three primary themes: 1) foundational, 2) causal, and 3) consequential and their relation to the two theoretical constructs concerning discursive patterns: 1) political rhetoric and discursive construction, and 2) the role of discursive practices in the empirical process, consistently recur throughout Fischer’s framework of policy analysis. Fischer’s four phases of inquiry: verification, validation, vindication, and social choice, describe how a particular policy applies to the social rules available to a particular society’s members. The phases are fluid and open participating and interacting with the other phases of inquiry. The objective of Fischer’s policy analysis is to clarify and understand the views of the practicing English Language Arts teachers involved in
change policy implementation and how their perceptions and behaviors affect policy change.

**Analytical Points From Fischer's Model**

**Analytical Point I.** In order to describe the teachers' responses regarding change policy on curriculum, Fischer's paradigm was used as a set of analytical points for each area of verification, validation, vindication and social choice. The research results from the English Language Arts teachers is presented within the analytical points and noted with the corresponding letter to the interview question. Each area of inquiry is presented first, followed by the interview questions, illustration of the data, and concludes with selected commentary from the research participants in order to show each phase as it contributes to the interrelatedness of the four phases of Fischer's policy analysis framework. The terms and concepts supporting the two theoretical constructs: 1) political rhetoric and discursive construction, and 2) the role of discursive practices in the empirical process, the three primary theories: 1) foundational, 2) causal, and 3) consequential and the opposing categories of 'external' and 'internal' will be discussed throughout he four phases to illustrate their applicability to this study.

1. **Verification.** Verification evaluation has been most often expressed through assessment of technical-analytic discourse. This first order inquiry concerned itself with the outcomes of a policy. Verification asked the following:

   1. Did the program empirically fulfill its stated objective(s)?

   2. Did the empirical analysis uncover secondary or unanticipated effects that offset the program objectives?
3. Did the program fulfill the objectives more efficiently than alternative means available? (Fischer, 1999).

Verification in this study was described summarily. The questions the interview participants answered for verification were:

   a. What are the different kinds of curriculum change?
   b. What were some of the ways you were informed regarding curriculum change?
   c. What has been your experience in implementing curriculum change?

Each transcription of the individual interview was first placed in an analytic content analysis chart modeled from the work of the Santa Barbara Classroom Discourse Group (Putney, 1997) in order to clearly demonstrate the claims made by the interview participant and the conditions or evidence to support the claim (see Appendix Q for illustration). Once each analytic content analysis chart was complete for each of the 10 interview questions, individual domains were compiled corresponding to the questions within Fischer’s framework.

(a). The first clearly defined domain was the teachers’ labels of the different types of curriculum. These were described in terms of teacher-based, site-based, district-based, and document-based. Many of the different types of curriculum overlapped into one or more areas (see Figure 10).
Figure 10. Different Types of Curriculum
Some of the curriculum types were specific to the teachers’ site and/or particular program. For example, Inga Garr taught Advanced Placement which has a specific nationally developed curriculum. Marsha Feldman taught her courses in a Company environment, a curriculum that she rallied for and moved schools to maintain. Victor Wilder’s American Studies course was one in which he created and sought implementation from the Cedar County School Board. Both Marsha Feldman and Victor Wilder participated as policy creators at the foundational level. Despite the variation in participant teaching programs there were consistent, common descriptors of the curriculum on the part of the English Language Arts teachers.

(b). How the teachers were informed regarding curriculum change followed traditional means of staff meetings, department meetings, in-services and others (see Table 9).

Table 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ways Informed of Curriculum Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator in charge of the department</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How teachers are informed about policy falls under the consequential theme, how policy is implemented. (c). The third question in the verification process, asking about teacher experience with curriculum change implementation, elicited casual categories that were expressed in terms of polar opposites. The teachers made reference to their experiences in terms of events that occurred within the classroom and those that
occurred externally to the classroom. Their responses also indicated feelings that supported the causal theme of 1) why policy is created, 2) how it manifests itself through the perception that policy was created to endorse change, 3) illustrate accountability for a policy change, and 4) to demonstrate the assessment of an implemented policy. The participants' statements manifested within their personal emotions regarding policy change implementation (see Figure 11).

Teachers' Experience in Implementing Curriculum Change

External
(Disconnect)

| Hand down | Resentment | Forced | Achievement oriented | Threatened | Negative |

Internal
(Efficacy)

| Unsupported | No follow through | Irrelevant | Flustered | Negative |

Figure 11. Teachers’ Experience in Implementing Curriculum Change

*Selected Commentary on Analytical Point I: Verification.* Elisabeth Kahn expressed her experience with curriculum change policy in terms that reinforced the foundational theme. Teachers were mandated and “told ‘this is the way you’re doing it.’ This year it seems a little more rigid and a little less input from the people who are actually in the classroom. It’s coming from up above.” Mr. Boyle stated that curriculum change was
‘superfluous,’ and further explained it as not trickling down into the individual classroom:

Once you acknowledge how the curriculum is being asked to be changed, how you amend it to your classroom is pretty much a subjective thing and does not really translate effectively into a major alteration of what your methodology or what your curriculum itself says. It all comes down to subjective interpretation of those changes. Very little of it translates into concrete objective criteria.

Ms. Garr supported Mr. Boyle’s assertion that there was no follow-through, supporting the ‘absence of authority’ category within the foundational theme:

There is not follow-through, no one has ever come in and said ‘I need to see your lesson plan.’ Sometimes there are handouts. Everyone goes and picks up the handouts. Then ignores them or throws them away. There is no follow-through.

When asked to describe her experience with implementation of curriculum change, Ms. Garr reinforced the consequential theme:

I haven’t done any curriculum changes. I don’t do curriculum change. Advanced Placement has its own curriculum that has not changed in all the years I have been teaching and English Literature is English Literature.

Mr. Wilder continued the attitude that curriculum change policy was removed from the interaction of the classroom and “handed down” externally:

It is outside forces trying to get their hands inside the classroom. Yeah, we have inservices. If in-services actually fulfill what they were supposed to fulfill which was teaching me to do something then it would be legitimate but that’s not the function of
in-services as they currently stand where I teach. We are a syllabus driven district which means as long as I am teaching according to the district syllabus I am within my right to teach curriculum the way that I see fit.

Describing his experiences with learning about curriculum change, Mr. Wilder expressed these consequentially thematic views:

*Power Standards, State Standards, this No Child Left Behind rigmarole I do not even consider to be actual curriculum change. What happens in the classroom changes very little based on what those curriculum suggestion are.*

*And so No Child Left Behind (laughs) I have made zero changes. It would be very easy to make that transition. You just ignore it.*

Ms. Feldman expressed a more inclusionary view with her Company oriented classroom. The Company curriculum was something that Ms. Feldman initiated within the Cedar County School District. It is a classroom that simulates the business workplace for students as a dual credit program for both English and business. It is described as a “school-to work transition program” experience:

*Everything we do is a change. Company broke the mold so we could self empower students. By teaching in a Company classroom setup we allow the students to be in charge of their own education. And when the students have a choice about learning what he/she wants to learn learning can take place at a greater rate.*

Yet when asked to describe her experience with curriculum change policy that was not initiated by herself or her teaching partner, she affirmed what the other interview participants had expressed, further supporting the consequential theme of ‘how policy is
implemented.’ “Decisions are made and it’s handed down and it’s not necessarily what I need or what I want to prepare the students for their future.” However, she expressed a more positive stance when aligning her lesson plans to these change policies. “I have no problems aligning whatever standards are handed down with what skills the students need to be successful for the world of work. They’re one and the same. The assignments and how the kids process that information, that’s my job as a teacher, to make those connections.”

The teachers expressed commonalities that emerged in the interviews that were not being sought with the questioning, but illuminated their view of where policy originated, the implementation purpose and the ways in which the veteran teachers addressed implementation within their own practice. Figure 12 represents each primary theme as it corresponds to these views: 1) foundational, 2) causal, and 3) consequential.
Verification Views

- Foundational
  - Who or what creates policy?
    - Outside
      - State
      - Site based
      - District
    - Inside

- Causal
  - Why policy is created.
    - Outside
    - Inside
    - Improve test scores

- Consequential
  - What the policy effects. How the policy is implemented.
    - Outside
      - Teachers
    - Inside
      - Site meetings
      - Documentation

Figure 12. Verification Views
A closer examination of the participants’ information indicated taxonomies within each domain that operated in relationship to the activity by the English Language Arts teachers. The consensus was that policy was created externally from the classroom, stemming from three different areas: the state, the district and the school site. The foundational theme of who or what creates policy is illustrated in Figure 13.

Who or What Creates Policy

![Who or What Creates Policy Diagram]

Figure 13. Who or What Creates Policy

Raising test scores through skills-based activities and interpretation of areas of need were the only two reasons those interviewed perceived as causal policy change. These perceptions reinforced the causal theme that refers to accountability and assessment of an implemented policy (Figure 14).
Ways to Improve Student Test Scores

The overall consequential manner in which the teachers described how they addressed policy implementation was to ignore it through pseudo-compliant, quasi-compliant and/or non-compliant actions (Figure 15).
Analytical Point II. Validation and verification were first order evaluations in Fischer's policy analysis framework. Validation evaluation focused on a contextual discourse in effort to assess whether or not a policy was relevant to the situation.

II. Validation. Contextual and conceptual discourse was the focus of validation inquiries. Validation used qualitative inquiry to ask:

1. Was the program objective(s) relevant to the problem situation?

2. Were there circumstances in the situation that required an exception to be made to the objective(s)?

3. Were two or more criteria equally relevant to resolving the problem situation? (Fischer, 1999).

Figure 15. Ways Veteran Teachers Choose to Address Curriculum Change
Questions for validation inquiry focused on practicing English Language Arts teachers and their perception of whether and how policy transferred into their classroom practice:

a. In what ways were the curriculum changes relevant to the problem situation?

b. How was the set of curriculum changes relevant to correcting the problem(s) it was designed to resolve?

(a). The English Language Arts teachers interviewed for this study had varied responses to the questions concerning validity of the change reform policies that were to be implemented in their classrooms. The research participants unanimously viewed actions that occurred externally to the interaction within the classroom in terms of opposites. The participants used the phrases ‘inside the classroom’ and ‘outside the classroom’ continually when discussing policy events and implementation. These polar opposite descriptors further reinforce the theoretical construct concerning the role of discursive practices. There was also an attitude of ownership that was displayed by the repetition of the phrase “my classroom.” Such domains of contrast are illustrated in Figure 16.
Validation Views

Foundational

- Federal
- State
- District
- Site

Outside

Inside

Causal

Endorse policy change

Accountability

Assessment

Standardized tests

Consequential

Ways to improve student scores

Ways veteran teachers address curriculum

Interpretive

Skills based

Scores across grades, schools, districts, states

Figure 16. Validation Views
Elisabeth Kahn expressed the contrast that occurs ‘inside’ her classroom and ‘externally’ from the classroom in terms of levels of removal. These levels of removal follow the hierarchical pattern of the educational structure, and create an environment that is less effective and less generic as the policies must apply to large groups rather than the small number of students within each class period:

More and more policies from my principal, policies from my regional superintendent, policies from my district superintendent are taking a bigger role in deciding what’s going to happen in the classroom. They [policy creators and initiators] have less knowledge and less awareness of what’s going on in my classroom and so the decisions that they make when they finally come to me and I have to implement them I find very difficult [to implement].

When asked if policy makers addressed issues of concern which she as an English Language Arts teacher had felt, she responded in reference to her students rather than herself, citing that the policy makers did not know her students. Ms. Kahn also provided insight as to how she perceived her role in the policy process, stating “I don’t see myself in the role of a teacher as much as I have been in the past. I don’t do a lot of teaching. I do a lot of facilitating policies and procedures that have been passed on to me that I haven’t created myself.”

Peter Boyle responded to the questions concerning validation for curriculum policy change and echoed the same foundational theme as Ms. Kahn’s:

I think very little of policy that originates outside the classroom. They [policy creators and initiators] are disconnected with public education and many administrators are
disconnected with public education. Anybody who is not in the classroom is
disconnected from education.

When asked if policy makers addressed issues of concern he had as an English Language
Arts teacher, he said:

I have never had anybody address an issue of concern that I have in English
Language Arts who is outside the actual arena itself. This whole abstractualized
concept is all separated by jargon. It has nothing to do with what I do in the
classroom.

Ms. Garr supported the expressions of Mr. Boyle by replying rhetorically, “Do others
really care what teachers think? It’s all political. They don’t really care what we think and
I don’t care what they hand down.” Inga Garr referenced politics throughout her answers
to the validation questions regarding curriculum policy change.

I don’t know about the politics that go on. It’s all about politics and I choose
to stay away from that. I don’t go to department meetings. If the politics get
too much I suppose I can always go to another school to teach or simply retire.

The recurring theme of disconnect between those creating or enforcing the changes in
policy and those who work directly with the students, or implement policy was
unanimous from those interviewed. This recurring theme of disconnect manifested itself
within the foundational category as 1) ‘absence of authority’ and 2) ‘abuse of authority’
(see Figure 17).
Figure 17. Categories
(b). When asked, 'how do you know if/when a curriculum change has had a positive or negative affect in your classroom?' the secondary English Language Arts teachers’ responses were linked to the three primary thematic patterns 1) foundational, 2) casual and 3) consequential. These three themes emerged consistently throughout the study and illustrated ‘external’ and ‘internal’ factions. The teachers, as immediate participants engaged in daily classroom activity, each expressed that dramatic change was not readily evident within a given year. This type of consequential change was viewed as gradual, subtle and developmental (see Table 10).

Selected Commentary on Analytical Point II Validation. The personal stance when discussing positive or negative curriculum change exemplified the conflict that was expressed throughout the polarity of ‘inside the classroom’ and ‘outside the classroom.’ These consequential dimensions of contrast defined as what the policy effects and how the policy is implemented, were clearly visible when looking at the types of curriculum the English Language Arts teachers mentioned throughout the interviews. Spradley (1980) stated the differences that exist within categories are relevant for making clear the cultural meaning of the participants, which is parallel to the theoretical construct illustrated in this study, the political rhetoric and discursive construction. A dimension of contrasts forms “the basis for making selective observations” (Spradley, 1980, p. 127) and becomes the attributive components of meaning. These attributive components are analogous to the theoretical construct concerning the role of discursive practices.
### Table 10

#### Participant Response Interpreting Policy Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Participant</th>
<th>Response to whether or not a curriculum change had been positive or negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elisabeth Kahn</td>
<td>It all depends upon whether the curriculum change was my idea or someone else's idea. I feel like we are holding our honors kids back because we are having to, because we are indoctrinating them with this agenda that doesn't apply to them. But because we've made this generic statement for the whole school, every kid is going to be doing this and then the kids who are trying to excel are going to be held back. So while we're trying to address this No Child Left Behind mandate, I think that what the policy is doing is not letting children excel either. That's why I think it's difficult for school boards or superintendents to make policies that should apply to everyone because they can't.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Boyle</td>
<td>That's like asking how do you know you've actually taught something when the year is over. There is no objective way to determine whether a student has effectively learned all that you have presented to him/her in the course of 181 days. What you are hoping for are nuances of change. Increased levels of thinking perhaps. More abstractualization of ideas. Maybe a vocabulary alteration in the course of a year. Maybe the ability to interact more succinctly and far more articulately. Maybe a more cohesive essay by the end of the year. You are not going to look for a major dramatic change at the end of the year. That rarely happens outside of elementary education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inga Garr</td>
<td>I am very neutral on curriculum change I suppose. My curriculum is really unaffected and I do not pay attention to them. I have a closed classroom. Policies do not affect me. They do not apply to me so I do not follow them. I am sure that if you ask any teacher who has been teaching for some time they will say the same thing. I will do my job and they can play politics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victor Wilder</td>
<td>I don't know if a curriculum change has a positive or negative effect in my classroom because I myself have not been trained to recognize and know there is a difference. I guess according to them if the students are doing better on standardized tests that shows a positive change and if they are doing worse that shows a negative change. But I do not believe that the two really correlate with one other. With personal positive or negative curriculum change it depends on what we are talking about. If we are talking about composition I can really see a personal growth in a student's writing. So when I am grading an essay I am looking for a thesis statement consistently. I am looking for a certain development in composition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marsha Feldman</td>
<td>I know curriculum change is successful when it is confirmed or affirmed by the student's acquiring it at a higher level in his/her life. It's negative when they (students) don't buy into it, because they know from personal experience that it hasn't worked for them or from someone else they've talked with. When I know of another policy that is going to counter act it. When I don't get the end results, the desired results that I am teaching.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 11 represents dimensions of contrast regarding curriculum policy implementation.

Table 11

Curriculum Dimensions of Contrast

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I Curriculum</th>
<th>II Initiated</th>
<th>III Implemented</th>
<th>IV Evaluations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SSR (silent sustained reading)</td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td></td>
<td>Watered down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSW (silent sustained writing)</td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td></td>
<td>Politically correct tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td></td>
<td>Remedial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td></td>
<td>Distracting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal writing</td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td></td>
<td>Interpretive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAM (Backward Assessment Model)</td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td></td>
<td>Subjective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill builders</td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>Kahn</td>
<td>Bureaucratic tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbook selection</td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>Wilder</td>
<td>Syllabus driven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realignmnet of content areas</td>
<td>Wilder</td>
<td></td>
<td>Handed down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power standards</td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>Kahn Fieldman Wilder Boyle</td>
<td>Unchanging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State standards</td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>Kahn Fieldman Wilder Boyle</td>
<td>Illegitimate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Child Left Behind</td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td></td>
<td>Foreign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP (Advanced Placement)</td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>Garr</td>
<td>Ineffective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of real assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Limited</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Divisive</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Forced</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Defeatist</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Band aid services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nothing gets changed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nothing gets implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No real change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Column I of Table 11 lists the various forms of curriculum designated for implementation. Column II illustrates who created or enforced the curriculum and makes visible with one exception, that each policy was initiated by administration. Column III indicates which secondary English Language Arts teachers implemented the curriculum policy as directed. The spaces left blank indicate that the teachers did not apply that particular curriculum policy in their classroom. Column IV illustrates summarily the discursive descriptors reflecting the internalized perceptions of the secondary English Language Arts teachers. Regardless of who initiated the policy change, or whether or not
the English Language Arts teachers implemented the policies they were directed to put into place, the evaluations regarding the curriculum as a whole was expressed in negative terms.

*Analytical Point III.* Analytical points III and IV moved from first order evaluation to second order evaluation. Vindication focused on systems discourse, while the social order inquiry concentrated itself with ideological discourse reinforcing both theoretical constructs: 1) political rhetoric and discursive construction, and 2) the role of discursive practices in the empirical process.

III. *Vindication.* Vindication inquiry shifted from a concrete situational context to a broader look at the societal system as a whole. In this study, the educational system outside the participants’ classrooms served as the system. “That is, vindication turn[ed] to an evaluation of the instrumental consequences of a policy goal and its normative assumptions for the extant social system as a whole” (Fischer, 1999, p. 112). The shift from micro-analysis to macro-analysis addressed specific questions:

1. Did the policy goal have instrumental or contributive value for the society as a whole?
2. Did the policy goal result in unanticipated problems with important societal consequences?
3. Did a commitment to the policy goal lead to consequences (e.g., benefits and costs) that are judged to be equitably distributed?

The participants were asked to assess how they perceived the curriculum policy changes as having affected schooling beyond their immediate classroom.
a. How do the curriculum changes contribute directly to the society as a whole?

b. In what ways do the curriculum changes foster social equity?

The societal system referred to interdependent relationships that commonly proceeded “with a given conception of the normative institutional goals and values of the societal system” (Fischer, 1999, p. 113). The values of the societal system are shaped by the discursive construction of rhetoric. These values define what is considered important for the society. In this study the interdependent relationships were framed by the foundational and consequential actors, or those within the educational policy process, policy implementers and those who created and/or enforced policy.

(a). When identifying the goals, values and practices that policy changes were designed to facilitate, the claims made by those interviewed produced a range of concentrations further supporting the disconnect concept that emerged throughout the study. Stanine scores, standardized tests, and grading, described the ‘external’ documentation type data fulfilling the ‘role of discursive practices in the empirical process.’ The on-site daily operation of the school’s interaction was perceived as a more discursively mutable process.

Elisabeth Kahn described this mutability in terms of a ‘pendulum swing’ that shifted each year depending upon the skill area(s) in which students scored the poorest:

the pendulum swings from one aspect of that curriculum to another. Okay now this year we are going to focus on reading and everything else kind of trickles away and then we focus on grammar and everything else kind of falls away. And our scores improve in that area while they drop everywhere else. And then we swing to another area because those scores are low and then we
swing to another area.

A high agreement among each of the five participants was illustrated when addressing empirical connections to the perceived goals, values and practices within the school settings in which they worked. The interrelationship between the 'external' visible goals, values and practices of the secondary schools manifested through courses offered and number of students in types of courses contradicted the 'internal' operations that the research participants described. The descriptions of grade inflation, promotion of students into courses in which they are not prepared, and the remediation of curriculum exemplify the disparity between system efficiency and social equity (see Table 12).

Each secondary English Language Arts teachers' commentary further supported the ongoing perceptual paradox in which the external blueprint of curriculum for secondary students conflicted with the social reality of those attending the schools (see Figure 18).
### Table 12

**Goals, Values and Practices of Policy Change**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Participant</th>
<th>Do the curriculum changes create more equity in the schools?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elisabeth Kahn</td>
<td>I’m not sure that curriculum changes have much to do with equity. Here at my school we track our kids. The read/write program is for those with stanines 1,2,3. The average classes are for stanines 4,5,6. And we have the honors classes for those stanines 7,8,9. Now we kind of use those as our guidelines, but we also use teacher recommendations, and if students choose to sign contracts, then they can choose to bump up to the next level of classes if they want to if they want to try to get that push. We try to assess how best to address the needs of our kids and as a result our English curriculum here hopefully does that. The kids are assigned to a level of class and then if they want to contract to a higher level they do have that opportunity. We do split them at the junior level in the average classes as to who is college bound and who is not. We have tried to create programs for each group of kids so that they will have the courses and preparation that they will need for whatever level of work that they’re planning to do. In that respect we create equity, I hope.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Boyle</td>
<td>Public education by definition is elitist. Public education by its very nature, by creating tracks is reinforcing this elitism. Now, is elitism wrong? No. Public education is not attending to the needs of the vocational students on the same level they are attending to the needs of the collegiate students. Collegiate students are the ones bringing the money and the attention and the notoriety with them. Therefore the kids who are in the magnet or the honors program, although they are smaller in number those are the kids that are going to become the magnifiers and the reputation of the school. The rest of the kids get lost in the shuffle oftentimes. This is not a clarion call for making it more equitable it’s a clarion call for changing public education from focusing on purely academics and expecting everyone to take algebra to a vocational mainstream where kids who are not going to college, or kids who do not have an interest in that sort of matriculation can be trained and develop to go into society, seek out viable careers, and have successful lives. Not fooling ourselves into thinking that everyone is going to abstractualize their lives because not everyone is capable of doing that or wants to do that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inga Garr</td>
<td>There has been a push for minority students to take honors courses regardless of ability. Currently the 9th and 10th grade English teachers have been told to go through their class rosters and look at students of color and push for those students who even may have “C’s” to take honors courses next year. They are encouraging teachers who have students with stanines of ‘6’ and good grades in the regular classroom to enroll in the honors courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victor Wilder</td>
<td>I don’t see the curriculum changes I have been a part of really supporting equity in the schools. Really the curriculum changes that have been made is [sic] the watering down of the curriculum to make it easier for minority and non-English speaking students and I don’t believe that that is beneficial to equity. As a matter of fact I think it causes more division than equity. It could create equity but it doesn’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marsha Feldman</td>
<td>I had the pleasure and the blessing of working with a school that went through a complete change. That was a struggle and rewarding for those who bought into the change because we could see what a positive difference it made in the students lives. So there is great benefit when the whole school agrees to change. When the whole school doesn’t necessarily buy into it there’s a lot of stress, animosity jealousy, problems, the kids feel like they are yo-yos or ping-pong balls, being thrown back and forth. Change is usually necessary, usually we need to keep up with the times, usually we need to take a look at who are our product (students), what are their needs, and we need to meet their needs. We as adults and teachers at this school, we get together and decide what type of student are we looking for in our program and we try to promote everyone’s program. We still have to recruit for our programs. We need to keep the doors open and all sections filled.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Views on the Goals, Values and Practices that Policy Changes were Designed to Facilitate

Consequential
(What the policy effects. How the policy is implemented.)

(Operating on a continuous sliding scale)

Outside

Student opportunities Social equity

Stanine scores grades standardized test scores

Higher student enrollment ratios in advanced courses

Heterogeneous enrollment in honors/AP courses

Inside

Externally visible

Social inequity Tracking Grade inflation Overall remediation

Apathy Watered down curriculum

Loss of teacher autonomy Loss of support Segmented Do more with less

Inexperienced authority Maintain status quo Frustrated Inattentive to needs

Figure 18. Views on the Goals, Values and Practices that Policy Changes were Designed to Facilitate
(b). The veteran English Language Arts teachers in Cedar County expressed collective value-laden descriptions regarding curriculum change directed at the entire population. “Their decisions are based on the needs of an entire school district population of 260,000 students instead of the 35 that are in my room” (Elisabeth Kahn, transcripts). An analytic coding of the participants’ responses revealed consequentially discrete discursive wording that further supported the perception of disconnect between the external and internal categories (see Table 13).

Table 13
Discursive Wording of Disconnect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do the curriculum changes contribute directly to the society as a whole?</th>
<th>In what ways do the curriculum changes foster social equity?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It doesn’t</td>
<td>There is no support of equity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is no change</td>
<td>Not equitable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remedial focus</td>
<td>Placement regardless of ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shifts depending upon test scores</td>
<td>Divisive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Watering down of curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tracking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Remedial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elitist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does not serve the population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Selected Commentary on Analytical Point III Verification. The participants’ responses included a collective approach to the school as a holistic setting benefiting from curriculum. “Until you have everyone believing the same way and having the same philosophy you have this kind of fighting that’s going on. I think it’s going to be a problem for a long time” (Elisabeth Kahn, transcripts). Despite the continuing concept of disconnect between the external operations of the classroom and the internal relationships the secondary English Language Arts teachers*
expressed a hopeful attitude if the change were supported and cooperatively sought.

Victor Wilder expressed it this way:

I believe that a school’s culture can change to fulfill the needs of its students. If it is followed through on. Change will work this way if we are not betrayed by our administration and our administration’s administration. If they say they are going to support us in a particular area, then they need to support us in a particular area. If the administration says that we are going to go with this instrument throughout the school then they need to make sure that that is enforced and that is done. Change happens when follow-through happens. And if we really implement and follow through on what we say then we can make a real change.

Wilder’s statement calls for a change at the foundational level. Victor Wilder also pointed out that he was moving to a new school the next year and felt that implementing system-wide change in an established setting was difficult.

Marsha Feldman had experienced the opportunity to work with a school that underwent a complete change:

That was a struggle and rewarding for those who bought into the change because we could see what a positive difference it made in the students’ lives. So there is great benefit when the whole school agrees to change. When the whole school doesn’t necessarily buy into it there’s a lot of stress, animosity jealousy, problems, the kids feel like they are yo-yos or ping-pong balls, being thrown back and forth. Change is usually necessary, usually we need to keep up with the times, usually we need to take a look at who are our product (students), what are their needs, and we need to meet
their needs. I know when we address change as a school, everyone benefits in regards to a happier climate, the students are more willing to invest interest, time, work. When students buy into the change and they can see the results and how it’s going to be needed and applied, that mentality [animosity, etc.] goes away. And then the school benefits and the individual student benefits from that.

As with each response, the inside/outside paradigm was intermingled. Peter Boyle shared his experiences:

If the curriculum is elevated from a remedial focus to a collegiate focus then you do run the risk/opportunity of elevating the whole school. If you raise the bar on expectation, if you raise the level and degree of difficulty, if you expect even the least of your group to do the minimal and best are attempting to do, you will elevate the entire quality and the atmosphere will become electrified. I have seen that happen before and it doesn’t happen a lot. But when it does happen it is truly awesome. And anyone who has seen that in the classroom would never leave the classroom.

The continual pattern of competing factions illustrated the cognitive grasp of the research participants and provided insight into how they provided meaningful interpretations to reality. These interrelated patterns show how each theoretical construct: 1) political rhetoric and discursive construction and 2) the role of discursive practices in the empirical process contribute to the construction of the participants’ perceptions.
Analytical Point IV. Social choice was the final interrelated discursive evaluation of Fischer’s policy analysis paradigm. The interrelated phases sought to assess the progress of achieving the goal of the curriculum policy change and the appropriateness of the goal.

IV. Social choice. Social choice of Fischer’s framework centered upon ideological and value questions. The discourse of social choice inquiry was concerned with the ways in which the secondary English Language Arts teachers structured and restructured their classroom environment within the Cedar County School District educational setting reinforcing the theoretical constructs of political rhetoric and discursive practices. Social choice asked:

1. Did the fundamental ideals that organize the accepted social order provide a basis for a legitimate resolution of conflicting judgments?

2. If the social order was unable to resolve basic value conflicts, did other social orders equitably prescribe for the relevant interests and needs that the conflicts reflected?

3. Did normative reflection and empirical evidence support the justification and adoption of an alternative ideology and the social order it prescribed?

(Fischer, 1999, p. 22).

Social choice inquiry promotes a more encompassing view of change within the three primary themes: 1) foundational, 2) causal, and 3) consequential. To address the social choice portion of Fischer’s policy analysis paradigm, the research participants were asked:

a. What kinds of social values should the curriculum be built upon?
b. What do you do when you are asked to implement a change that you feel is not in the best interests of yourself or your students?

c. If you were going to implement policy change how would go about doing that?

The replies from those interviewed provided a more interpretive critique than prior questions, as the latter relied heavily upon experience. However, social choice evaluation “is about what kind of society we should like to live in” (Fischer, 1999, p. 156) and involved critical evaluation. Commentary from the research participants was revealed recursively during the ‘social choice’ questions. Therefore, the presentation of data within the ‘social choice’ phase will only be discussed in terms of selected commentary.

Selected Commentary on Analytical Point IV Social Choice. Ms. Kahn referred to social values in the English Arts curriculum as “opposing forces” of tradition and multicultural needs, reinforcing the causal theme. “We have even affirmative action for even the literature”. Direct discussion of social values within the English Language Arts curriculum elicited a guarded response from Elisabeth Kahn:

As education becomes more scrutinized we are less able to have open discussions in our classrooms for fear that there will be lawsuits about things that we discuss and issues that we try to address. Our administration would prefer that we steer the conversation away from those issues. It is not stated but implied. As educators we are very scared to even allow those kinds of conversations to even happen in our classroom for fear that we would not receive support from the administration. They hide their heads in the sand and pretend that it’s not happening. If I am discussing social values in my classroom, I am doing it at my own risk.
Peter Boyle’s responses were similar to Elisabeth Kahn’s, but also included comparisons to politics and political correctness in regards to social values in the curriculum. Mr. Boyle was one of the participants who had written the multicultural curriculum for the Cedar County School District. He described the collective foundational effort as one in which students from various backgrounds could encounter more ethnic and gender oriented authors. When the focus shifted to something different from the original framework, Mr. Boyle felt the curriculum became “watered down and made to be more of a politically correct tool than actual academic subject.” He further asserted:

I could care less about political correctness and I believe most thinking people don’t care too much about political correctness. We care about excellence in the classroom. When you’re going to communicate a good program, a multicultural program, and you’re going to use it as a tool to appeal politically to the people in the community and not as a tool to stimulate the people in the classroom I think you have already ruined public education, or at least one aspect of it.

Boyle’s comment supports the causal theme of why policy is created.

Peter Boyle continued his thoughts by repeating the common attitude by all of the participants that the relationship between the teacher and the student was the primary place for interaction and learning and not the things external to the classroom:

Teachers must bring in a sensitivity to the classroom and that is his/her primary responsibility. ‘Who am I teaching? What am I trying to lead them to? Where are they coming from?’ These are all part of the homework of the teacher. More so than one textbook is going to give you.
Mr. Boyle reemphasized his point by stating that there was not a “one size fits all” for education and reiterated the concept that there were clear distinctions between the events that occurred within the classroom, and those outside the classroom. The perception of disconnect between the external events and persons beyond the classroom on the one hand, and the internal processes of the daily classroom activity became apparent as the participants described the interrelationships between themselves and their students within the classroom setting. The classroom was described as having a fluidity with a continual on-going flow of communication between the students and the teacher. The rationale for the interplay between participants was described in positive terms by the English Language Arts teachers. The terms ‘external’ and ‘internal’ were utilized to display those descriptors which were visibly apparent and not obviously apparent. Figure 19 visibly demonstrates these cohesive structure described by the participants.
Figure 19. Perceptions of Classroom Interaction
The rationale section lists the reasons the participants gave for providing an interactive environment for the teachers and the students. The teachers felt that the environment within the classroom that existed between themselves and their students was 'expected,' 'positive,' 'critical,' 'effective,' and even a 'pleasure.' Those elements that are externally present within the classroom describe interactions between the teachers and students that are physically visible. The internally present elements portray components that are more subtle than visible and/or occur over time. The descriptive language depicting the research participants' perceptions of their everyday work environment contrasted greatly with their descriptions concerning the 'external' or 'outside' elements.

Victor Wilder provided a contemporary example of the tension between 'external' and 'internal' factions in regards to social values. At the time of the interview it was Black History Month. Mr. Wilder explained that traditionally multicultural issues were infused within classrooms throughout the year making it unnecessary to stop and teach Black History during Black history Month. This particular school year had introduced a new principal on campus and a conflict within past foundational decisions and current on-site creation of policy emerged. This created resentment:

Everyone on staff should now stop and teach black history. What I have seen happen to even those things that would have been beneficial to the students have been transmitted in a way that it leaves a negative taste in everyone’s mouth. Student council was just forced to do a black history month assembly. They basically refused saying that ‘we’ve planned out assemblies at the beginning of the year. We have made acknowledgements throughout the year of the different ethnic groups and we don’t want to at this particular point in
time. What do you want us to do? Dance and not really represent African American culture just for the sake of celebration so you can write it down in your papers somewhere and say ‘yes, we acknowledged this culture. Or do you really want us to talk about the issues that we are facing as a nation? And as a school? If that is what you want us to do, you can’t stop us in February and force us to acknowledge that, but it must be an on-going process.’

The example of on-site policy decision making that differed from past practices also describes the tension of the foundational theme. Victor Wilder’s anecdote further supported the discursive manner in which the research participants perceived the roles of those external to the classroom (see Figure 20).

Autonomy for the secondary English Language Arts teachers was also affected by the conflicting factions. The research participants described feelings of helplessness in regards to a relationship between themselves and ‘outside the classroom.’

Interrelationships within the classroom elicited a pride and sense of satisfaction. The continual politically rhetorical reference by the teachers to “them” as an external entity, removed from the interactions and activities of the classroom further demonstrated the research participants’ concept of disconnection. The definition of ‘them’ was never specified, but the intimation was those external to the interactions within the classroom. The word ‘them’ moved from a politically rhetorical constructed term to one that carried a particular discursive meaning for the participants. Table 14 summarily describes each of the participants’ responses.
## External Versus Internal Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outside the Classroom</th>
<th>Inside the Classroom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Macro</td>
<td>Micro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>Teachers &amp; students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totalitarian</td>
<td>Democratic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>Concrete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost benefit</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proof</td>
<td>Phronesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct/enforce</td>
<td>Implement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tests scores</td>
<td>Personal Excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External laws</td>
<td>Character/virtue ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition</td>
<td>Dialogical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ends</td>
<td>Means</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant</td>
<td>Subordinate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchical</td>
<td>Looped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals, reputation</td>
<td>Independence of judgment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obedience, control</td>
<td>Consciousness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation efficiency</td>
<td>Information flow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>Social justice/equity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 20. External Versus Internal Categories
### ANATOMY AND SENSE OF SELFE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Autonomy and policy implementation</th>
<th>Research Participant</th>
<th>Autonomy and sense of self in the classroom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I feel like I have very little autonomy in my room anymore. I feel like I have very little authority. If my ‘f’ ratio is too high, then I am called into my administrator’s office and I am asked why I have given so many ‘f’s.’ That unspoken pressure is on me. Less and less responsibility on the students, more and more onus on the teacher to prove that she/he is teaching.</td>
<td>Elisabeth Kahn</td>
<td>My autonomy and my authority has been relinquished, has been taken away from me when I implement a policy I did not create. If you hold the line with kids that’s what they will do. If you give them structure, if you give them guidelines and you tell them upfront everything that they need to do a good job for you they will do it. But if you constantly give them indecision and changing policies you take a lot of the teacher’s security away and a lot of his/her well being about her role in the classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the teacher knows his/her material and they are familiar and up to date with what they are teaching then anything outside the classroom is a distraction. They should walk into the classroom, take control of their environment, and know that their job is to disseminate as much information and stimulate as much independent thinking as possible within 181 days. Anything separate from the teacher doing that in the classroom is absolutely antithetical to the point of education.</td>
<td>Peter Boyle</td>
<td>I guess there’s a reinforcement of purpose. You feel like when you walk out of your classroom when you have implemented your own policy to the goal of achieving personal excellence for yourself as well as your students, there’s a bonding. It’s like a dialectic. You start off introducing information and you expect the students to respond to that information and by the end of the year there should be some sort of synthesis between you and the child so that there is a growth not only on their part, but on yours. There is an evolution of self.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I teach the same way that I have always taught. I do not feel threatened by administration. I never have. It’s all about politics and I choose to stay away from that.</td>
<td>Inga Garr</td>
<td>Parent Conferences have always been supportive, with parents asking what they can do to help their child. I have never sent a kid to the dean. I have never really had classroom behavior problems except maybe when I was first starting out but it was nothing I needed to send anyone to the dean for.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel a little frustrated and threatened when policies first come down I have yet to see effective change come down. I have not seen real change since I have been a teacher.</td>
<td>Victor Wilder</td>
<td>I don’t know if I implement policy change. I implement procedural changes. I’ll implement different techniques, but as far as policy; I guess policy would be ‘well you have to have an expulsion poster up in your classroom in both English and Spanish.’ Well okay, I’ll do that. But policy that directly effects my teaching it doesn’t make it across the threshold.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obviously if a new principal walked in here today and ‘said what is this- obviously it is so far removed from tradition and canon it’s gone.’ I would move because it wouldn’t be in the best interests of students and so I will fight for what I believe is in the best interests of students.</td>
<td>Marsha Feldman</td>
<td>Pride, accomplishment, knowing that yes it costs me more time, more energy, but it’s so worthwhile because it’s necessary, because it’s the right thing to do for students. I have no problems aligning whatever standards are handed down with what skills the students need to be successful for the world of work. They’re one and the same. The assignments and how the kids process that information that’s my job as a teacher, to make those connections.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These recurring categories of events and persons operating externally from the classroom and the secondary English language Arts teachers’ daily activity internally within the classroom mirror Spradley’s (1980) concept of cultural themes that function explicitly or tacitly. The participants’ perceptions serve as the cognitive principles underlying their assertions concerning the disconnect between these two factions. The teachers view their perceptions as true or valid. “It is an assumption about the nature of their commonly held experience.” (Spradley, 1980, p. 141).

Summary

Detachment between events and persons external from the classroom were visible in each of the research participants’ responses as documented throughout each of the phases of Fischer’s policy analysis paradigm. This is important as the consistent and common responses from the secondary English Language Arts teachers support their definition of social reality enveloping both theoretical constructs: 1) political rhetoric and discursive construction, and 2) the role of discursive practices in the empirical process. The participants’ discourse illustrates the link between their particular ideology, how it is constructed, and how it functions in their daily perceptions within the classroom.

Collectively, the teachers’ responses to the questions for this study provided a cultural description of secondary English Language Arts teachers within the Cedar County School District. The relationship among the implicit and tacit categories functioned on three levels: 1) as parts of the secondary English Language Arts culture, 2) interrelatedly among the various parts and 3) as parts to the whole. The attributes of the factions can be depicted as a componential analysis to illustrate how the components of each category or
domain performs in relation to each other (Spradley, 1980). A Dao symbol has been selected to visually portray these ‘internal’ and ‘external’ categories, the manner in which the secondary English Language Arts evaluate their interaction and their disconnect. Figure 21 is a holistic visual representation of the attributes of meaning brought forth by the research participants’ responses during the interviews.

Figure 21. Componential Analysis of the Explicit and Tacit Cultural Categories of Secondary English Language Arts Teachers Evaluations
Chapter Four described how secondary English Language Arts teachers responded to the interview questions. Their view reflected opposing factions, interactions and communication inside and outside the classroom, emotions and perceptions internal to oneself and visibly external to the self. The internal processes, inside the classroom and inside oneself supported the theoretical construct of political rhetoric and discursive construction. The external actions, persons and policies demonstrated the discursive mechanic in actual practice. These discursive practices supported the thematic areas of 1) foundational, 2) causal, and 3) consequential that emerged throughout the interview process and illustrated the mechanics of policy change according to the teachers. The participants’ responses illustrated how secondary English Language Arts teachers in Cedar County School District frame their knowledge about policy change and implementation within their work environment. The teacher perceptions addressed what they perceived as being affected by policy and how policy was implemented. Each theoretical construct was made visible in each of Fischer’s four interrelated phases of inquiry for policy analysis (1999): verification, validation, vindication, and social choice, with a critical perspective. Chapter Five discusses the conclusions and implications resulting from this in-depth analysis of perceptions and change among secondary English Language Arts teachers in the Cedar County School District utilizing Fischer’s policy analysis paradigm.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to identify secondary English Language Arts teachers’ perceptions regarding changes in curriculum reform policy and, 2) to determine the degree that the perceived changes in curriculum reform policy impacted the teachers’ practice. The critical perspective of the research modeled the theoretical framework of Fischer’s (1999) four interrelated phases of policy analysis inquiry: 1) verification, 2) validation, 3) vindication, and 4) social choice. The case study design of research utilizing Fischer’s framework was specifically selected because it allowed the study of contextual insight into perception on practice within metropolitan secondary English Language Arts classrooms.

This research study utilized Fischer’s policy analysis paradigm as a methodological template because it was created to assess and evaluate the implementation process of any organizational structure that uses policy (Fischer, 1999). Each of the four phases of Fischer’s framework is designed to flow into the next and fluid interaction exists when a policy is operating at maximum potential.

The four interrelated discursive phases of Fischer’s inquiry revealed two theoretical constructs in this research study: 1) political rhetoric and discursive construction, and 2) the role of discursive practices in the empirical process. Emergent themes within these constructs determined three thematic areas: 1) foundational, 2) causal, and 3)
consequential. The ‘Foundational’ theme makes reference to whom or what creates policy. ‘Causal’ refers to a) why policy is created, b) how it manifests itself, c) how accountability for a policy change is illustrated, and d) demonstrated assessment of an implemented policy. ‘Consequential’ refers to what the policy effects and how the policy is implemented. The categories of ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ were consistently described by the participants and functioned within each of the thematic areas. The terms ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ refer to: a) interactions and communication inside and outside the classroom, and b) evaluations and perceptions internal to oneself and visibly external to the self. This research first examined concepts of change that related to policy implementation. Furthermore, it examined specific policy reforms related to the role of change, its implementations, and the way in which teachers’ perceptions influenced the implementation.

In this study, the implementation process regarding the perceptions of the secondary English Language Arts teachers could not continue beyond Fischer’s initial phases of verification. The other phases, validation, vindication and social choice, recursively described the themes and categories and were consistent throughout each of the participant responses. Fischer’s areas of inquiry could not be completed beyond the initial verification phase because Fischer’s policy analysis paradigm was created as a theoretical framework to illuminate the policy implementation processes of the organization in which the framework was used to assess. Fischer’s theoretical construct could not be sustained in the secondary English language Arts curriculum policy implementation environment researched in this study.
Research regarding educational reform is an important area of change research because factors of change and the effects on teachers' attitudes reflect how teachers as participants of change and implementation cope with curriculum change reform. Five teachers from a large metropolitan school district represented a portion of the social community of secondary English Language Arts teachers as a whole. Multiple levels of interrelated processes were revealed through consistency, sequentialness, detail, and depth of the contexts as described by the research participants. These complex symbiotic processes provided insight into the logic of educational policy and the practicalities of program implementation as viewed through social and cultural issues and patterns of the implementers involved. The secondary English Language Arts teachers participating in this study supplied the focus for this complex interpretive framework of the education policy environment. Policy operated as the case study and the secondary English Language Arts teachers served as subjects for eliciting the patterns that developed as the policy was implemented. The research promoted questions concerning the larger systems of society and the culture and institutions that shape educational practice as well as exploring the structural conditions framing practice.

Five questions directed the research:

1. What counts as change to secondary English Language Arts teachers?

2. In what ways do secondary English Language Arts teachers implement change in the metropolitan schools in which they work?

3. What becomes altered or modified in the classroom materials when secondary English Language Arts teachers implement policy as the basis for change?
4. What are the values or goals that underlie teachers’ perceptions of the change relationships between the secondary English Language Arts and policy implementation?

5. How is the secondary English Language Arts teacher’s perceptions affected by the implementation of policy change?

Chapter Five provides conclusions and implications regarding change reform policy implementation by secondary English Language Arts teachers. In order to examine the complexity revealed by the research participants implementing policy change within their secondary English Language Arts classrooms, this chapter focuses on answering the research questions within the context of the following objectives:

1. Provide an analysis of the results of the research study;
2. Explore critical conclusions and policy implications related to the research findings; and
3. of the research study and provide recommendations for further research.

Analysis of the Results of the Research Study

This section is designed to provide answers to the research questions through an analysis of the results of the research study. The headings indicate the question being addressed. A synthesis of the research data and the findings to the research question will accompany each heading.
Research question one asked: What counts as change to secondary English Language Arts teachers? This research question aligned itself with Fischer’s policy analysis framework at the primary verification phase which concerns itself with the measurement of the efficiency of program outcomes. In this study the program outcomes included: 1) the successful or unsuccessful explanation of a reform policy to be implemented by secondary English Language Arts teachers; 2) the success or non-success of a policy in action, 3) and the end product of an implemented policy.

The answer to the research question, ‘what counts as change to secondary English Language Arts teachers’ revealed that teachers viewed change as self-directed control of their immediate environment. The events and structure of the internal classroom that teachers could control included:

1. The ability to determine their classroom layout;
2. The order and manner in which curriculum was imparted to the students;
3. The daily interaction between the teacher and students;
4. The activities in which the curriculum was taught to the students;
5. The manner in which mastery of the curriculum was assessed;
6. The opportunity to introduce new activities and lesson ideas to their students and
7. Internal classroom discipline.

These ‘internal’ classroom interactions were dynamic and tied to the teachers’ daily practices. The discursive construct within the classroom was created or reinforced daily
by the interaction between students and the teachers. Teachers could make changes
directly if a lesson activity was going poorly or well. Classroom activities could easily be
shortened or lengthened depending upon external or internal events, like a fire alarm or a
student interruption. Teachers could also easily and immediately adjust assessment of
student understanding by changing the types of examinations or assignments in which the
students excelled. For example, if a particular group of students expressed understanding
through oral presentation better than a written assignment, the teacher may assign more
oral presentations to the students.

Research question one asking what counted as change to secondary English Language
Arts teachers was a difficult question to answer. The teachers' discursive responses
describing events and persons 'inside' and 'outside' the classroom illustrated a general
lack of clarity regarding change. The teachers perceived policy created and/or initiated
'externally' to the classroom to be threatening to their 'internal' classroom practices. The
teachers' desire for anonymity, and expression of fear throughout the interview process
made filtering through the data difficult. The following statements by the participants
express threatened feelings:

“That unspoken pressure is on me-what have I not done to address the needs
of my students so that they will then pass.” [Elisabeth Kahn]

“I feel a little frustrated and threatened when policies first come down and we
talk about them- well if this happens then this will happen.” [Victor Wilder]
“There’s a lot of stress, animosity, jealousy, problems. The kids feel like they are yo-yos or ping-pong balls, being thrown back and forth.” [Marsha Feldman]

Teachers were informed about policy change reform beyond their immediate classroom control in traditional ways: staff meetings, department meetings, in-services, and memos. These methods established a foundation for imparting awareness and understanding of policy implementation and procedural techniques. The state and district agencies provided teachers documentation in the form of syllabi, course scope and goals, power standards, content standards, and curriculum guides. These documented artifacts served as a point of reference in which to gauge the goals and purpose of the English Language Arts curriculum changes. These standards and syllabi served as visual guides and direction for those initiating the policy as well as the English Language Arts teachers who implemented the policy. The documents provided a written reference that was upheld in each of the three thematic areas; foundational, causal, and consequential. The documents, meetings and memos explained the policies in foundational terms, provided the causal justification for the policy, and provided consequential outcomes.

The research evidence illustrated a disconnect between the creators or initiators of policy change and those implementing the policy, further reinforcing the discursive construction of the ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ categories. Teachers described the procedures for checking the implementation of policies created externally from the classroom also through traditional means. Staff meetings, memos, and visiting classes (often with advance notice) to determine whether or not appropriate practices were occurring were the ways in which administration monitored policy implementation within the internal
classroom. Such measures upheld the causal theme of policy accountability and demonstrated assessment of implementation. Some external evaluative methods were simply signing a form stating that the teacher received a copy of the policy materials, or attending a meeting. This external method of documenting the receipt of materials or attendance of a meeting further reinforced the consequential theme. Collected statements made by the participants best demonstrate the disconnect experienced with ‘external’ policy verification:

“Most of the time these changes occur when our administration comes to us and says ‘we’ve been told that we now have to focus on blank because our test scores are not good enough.’ The push has been toward teaching the test. Pendulum swinging happens. It’s all about achievement.” [Elisabeth Kahn]

"It all comes down to subjective interpretation. Very little of it translates into concrete objective criteria. It is mostly a bureaucratic tool.” [Peter Boyle]

“There is no follow through whether or not teachers are complying with the curriculum or the changes or any policy that is handed down.” [Inga Garr]

“Yes, there are school objectives and things to fulfill, and Northwest Accreditation but that does not translate into what we are doing. It’s just pistol whipping. This is what we write up over here; the rest is lip service and playing the politics of education. Change happens when follow through happens.” [Victor Wilder]
The teachers' strong language and evaluation concerning the manner in which they were apprised of reform policy change describe alienation, combative forces between themselves and anything external to the immediate classroom environment. Policy created outside of the immediate control of the teachers' internal classrooms was viewed as something 'handed-down,' coerced, and intrusive. It was disseminated in a perfunctory manner, based on the teachers' views with no legitimate follow-through. Teachers viewed 'external' change as something to either comply with in a pseudo-compliant, quasi-compliant and/or non-compliant consequential manner. The discursive construct of teachers' environments and the role in which they practice their daily activities were largely disconnected from the hierarchical structure which implements or creates change external to the control of their immediate environment. The teachers were unable to recognize where they could exert themselves in the change process. They did not see where they were active participants as change agents or policy implementers. Teachers viewed those events and activities over which they had immediate control over and participation in as real change. 'Outside' foundational policies and directives were not viewed as authentic change reform.

Dissemination of reform policy to secondary English Language Arts teachers in a manner in which they could understand, respond and provide insight using their experience and knowledge was lacking at the verification stage of policy analysis. The teachers did not perceive themselves as participants in the dialogue beyond their immediate classroom environment. Instead, the teachers viewed their role as facilitators and receptacles of perfunctory information. The categories of 'abuse of authority' and
“absence of authority” were clearly revealed foundationally when investigating whether or not the created policy was realistically framed.

In this study, the feedback loop failed at the verification phase because the teachers expressed no participation or voice at the foundational level of who or what creates policy outside of their internal classroom environment. Therefore, the teachers viewed change as something directed, irrelevant to their needs and the needs of their students, and removed from the interaction of the classroom.

This research does not indicate that the teachers would not implement policy correctly, or conform. The manner in which the teachers are currently informed, educated, and exposed to the policy change reforms does not adequately provide the teachers with the understanding or skills necessary to implement the change.

Secondary English Language Arts Teachers

Implementation of Change

Research question two asked: In what ways do secondary English Language Arts teachers implement change in the metropolitan schools in which they work? This research question aligns itself with Fischer’s policy analysis phase of validation. Validation evaluation assessed whether and how policy transferred into the secondary English Language Arts classroom practice by examining the conceptualizations and assumptions about the “situation which the program [was] designed to influence” (Fisher, 1999, pp. 20-21). It asked if the object was realistically framed.

The following ways reflect the manner in which English Language Arts teachers implemented change:
1. The teachers created and supported curriculum external to the classroom.

2. The teachers modified activities internal to their daily classroom practice.

The latter changes implemented by the teachers included: a) simulated standardized test questions; b) simulated standardized testing environments; c) adjusting daily activities to comply with on-site directives; d) implementing vocabulary specific to the on-site school’s focus within the classroom environment.

*Curriculum created external to the classroom.* Three of the five research participants created and supported curriculum change ‘external’ to the classroom. Marsha Feldman introduced the Company concept to the Cedar County School District and was successful in obtaining approval from the school board. Victor Wilder created an American Studies course which aligned American history and American literature courses together as one simultaneous course for Cedar County 11th grade students. The American Studies course was approved and implemented by the Cedar County School District. Mr. Wilder also participated on textbook selection committees and the realignment of content areas. Peter Boyle participated with three other Cedar County colleagues in writing the Multicultural curriculum for the school district. Inga Garr utilized the national Advanced Placement curriculum for her courses. The teachers did not express fear or alienation with the ‘external’ curriculum changes they participated in creating or supporting for district approval. Three of the participants discussed changing schools in order to continue or implement programs that they specifically supported.

*Activities modified internally.* The pseudo-compliant and quasi-compliant consequential actions of policy implementation that occurred within the classroom included changes in the daily ‘internal’ activities of the classroom. Elisabeth Kahn’s
school, for example had created “Self Starters.” The “Self Starters” were packets of exercises provided for each student at the school. The packets consisted of simulated standardized test activities in which the teachers were to begin every class period. Other participants described school events in which students being tested that year were placed in simulated standardized testing environment for test practice. These simulated testing environments occurred both ‘internal’ to the classroom as well as collectively by grade level. The participants explained adjusting classroom activities for events directed by the on-site administration. These included classroom activities for holidays or ethnic celebrations. Vocabulary implementation in the form of school-wide class competitions or activities that reinforced the school’s goals or missions was also described by the participants. The vocabulary classroom competition results were entered through the computer network by the teachers. Ranking of success by classroom was accessible through the computer as well. Computer entry of attendance had become a standard form of practice for the 2003-2004 school year throughout Cedar County School District. Daily announcements being available through the computer network was another shift in daily practice.

The teachers perceived the issues of what was focused upon ‘externally’ to be entirely different than what the teachers viewed as real issues that needed to be addressed within the classroom, school and educational setting. The participants described individual student needs and internal classroom dynamics as different from the focus of the school district as a whole:

“Their decisions are based on the needs of an entire school district population
of 260,000 students instead of the 35 that are in my room.” [Elisabeth Kahn]

“There has been a push for minority students to take honors courses regardless of ability. Currently the ninth and 10th grade English teachers have been told to go through their class rosters and look at students of color and push for those students who even may have ‘C’s’ to take honors courses next year. They are encouraging teachers who have students with stanines of ‘6’ and good grades in the regular classroom to enroll in the honors courses.” [Inga Garr]

“I don’t think that they necessarily understand the needs of our students. I have one student who can barely speak English, another that should be in an honors class but refuses because she has a message to send to her parents. The student for whatever reason chooses to not attend. It is not always realistic in regards to the concerns of the school boards or policy makers and what they place upon us in regards to the realities of the classroom. I am frustrated with this as are many teachers.” [Marsha Feldman]

The teachers described themselves as being ignored by the administrators within the hierarchy. The teachers also expressed evaluations indicating that those ‘outside’ did not understand what was occurring within the classroom, school, or educational system as a whole. The phrase ‘my classroom’ which occurred throughout the interviews, not only became the meaning for a particular setting, but also a phrase indicating ownership. The
discursive construct of ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ reinforced the theoretical construct of the teachers’ discursive practices. ‘Students’ needs, ‘best interests of students,’ and ‘individual needs’ further echoed the attitude that the classroom remained an inclusive entity within the educational system. The perception from those directly involved in the daily classroom was that they knew what their students needed and those ‘outside’ were too removed to be effective.

The teachers descriptions depicting disconnect between ‘inside’ and ‘outside,’ ‘internal’ and ‘external’ were important in this study. A personalization was revealed through the participants’ language that affected how teachers implement change within their daily environment. Their discursive roles within the second theoretical construct translated into the pseudo-compliant, quasi-compliant and/or non-compliant consequential manner in which the teachers addressed policy implementation within their classroom environment. The teachers’ actions and responses reinforced the two theoretical constructs of discursive construction and the role of discursive practices as evident through the foundational, causal, and consequential thematic areas.

Those ‘outside’ the classroom signified any person or event in the hierarchical educational system that created and/or enforced policy. This ranged from on-site administration to district administration, through to state and federal policies. ‘Outside’ concepts of what should occur with curriculum reform were evaluated to be irrelevant by the secondary English Language Arts teachers implementing the policy.

The two theoretical constructs, 1) political rhetoric and discursive construction, and 2) the role of discursive practices in the empirical process, operated simultaneously in tacit and explicit ways in the daily practices of the teachers. The discursive construction
manifested itself in the teachers' language of 'inside' and 'outside' and in descriptions of 'playing politics' and providing 'lip-service.' The discursive practices explicitly revealed consequential actions on the part of the teachers in the form of pseudo-compliant, quasi-compliant and/or non-compliant actions.

*The Impact of Policy as Change Viewed Through Alterations in Classroom Materials*

Research question three asked: What becomes altered or modified in the classroom materials when secondary English Language Arts teachers implement policy as the basis for change? This research study using Fischer’s policy analysis template (1999) related Fischer’s phase of vindication inquiry with research question three. Vindication addressed the legitimacy of a policy, examining any underlying assumptions about a system’s functions and values and revealing unanticipated consequences.

The participants described the simulated standardized testing materials as an example of curriculum materials that changed almost yearly. For example, Elisabeth Kahn’s school utilized the “Self Starters” to focus on skills that students scored poorly on the prior year. The standardized testing materials that the teachers described giving to the students included:

1. Writing prompts for proficiency examinations;
2. Rubrics for grading writing responses;
3. Samples of past writing efforts by students;
4. Test questions used on prior standardized tests;
5. Handouts containing tips on how to study and take standardized tests; and
6. Handouts explaining the importance of the standardized tests.

The participants explained:

“So we have been asked to create something that we call Self Starters. It’s an activity that we do at the beginning of the period and each month we have been told to address a different skill. This month we are addressing reading comprehension. If all of my students are scoring a seven or an eight out of eight which is about 85 to 100% they are getting. They know how to read for comprehension. And yet I’ve been told to give that amount of time to that activity instead of with an honors class moving on to a higher level of thinking-interpretation or synthesis or something else that I could spend time with them.” [Elisabeth Kahn]

“This year we have a Silent Sustained Reading and Silent Sustained Writing program throughout the day. Fifteen minutes in everybody’s classes. You are asked to increase reading for example, that may be in one class. You add an extra short story to the curriculum or unit you are already teaching. If you are asked to increase writing, you might say alright, I’ll give them another essay to write.” [Peter Boyle]

The research participants stated that the focus in ‘external’ written communication and implied importance of curriculum and classroom instruction lie with standardized test scores, stanine scores, inflated grading, and higher enrollment in honor courses.

On-site procedures for practicing, simulating and taking standardized tests were an on-going discursive construct. The written quantifiable data was the important ‘external’
documentation that fulfilled a policy's legitimacy for those 'external' to the classroom. Poor test scores, inflated grades, a thrust for higher enrollment in honors courses were perceived by the teacher as tacit discursive practices that manifested through the foundational theme of 'abuse of authority' as well as causal accountability, and consequential interpretation of student results. The teachers felt that their professional reputation was judged by how well the students performed on the standardized tests. Elisabeth Kahn expressed her view, “more and more onus on the teacher to prove that she/he is teaching.”

The pseudo-compliant, quasi-compliant and/or non-compliant actions in which the teachers implemented the discursive measures reinforced the consequential theme consistent throughout the theoretical constructs of discursive construction and practice. Mr. Boyle expressed his role in this manner: “You add an extra essay here or a short story there. You may not grade the essay, but you assign it.” Each of the teachers interviewed for this study described very little modifications or alterations to their daily routine within the classroom. The foundational, causal and consequential practices within their classroom changed very little.

Marsha Feldman, the teacher with the most non-traditional classroom setting, also reinforced the categories of ‘inside’ and ‘outside.’ Her classroom was based on the Company model in which business skills and English Language Arts were taught in a Company environment for dual credit. Students completed modules at their own pace, maintained portfolios, and completed exit examinations in which they scheduled examination time. The Company curriculum was one in which Marsha Feldman introduced to the school district and rallied to have the course approved for elective credit
within the Cedar County School District. Ms. Feldman moved schools to maintain the company classroom concept. Policies ‘external’ to her immediate classroom environment were perceived as being foundationally and causally removed from any real change. She too implemented change reform that came ‘externally’ from her classroom in the same pseudo-compliant, quasi-compliant and/or non-compliant consequential manner as the other participants.

This theoretical construct of political rhetoric was perceived by the teachers as too far removed from the ‘inside’ of the classroom to offer any legitimacy. ‘External’ policies reinforced the theoretical constructs of 1) political rhetoric and discursive construction, and 2) the role of discursive practices in the empirical process in both tacit and explicit ways. Written directives and documents implicitly reinforced the discursive constructs of the thematic areas of causality and consequentiality.

Values Underlying Teachers’ Perceptions of Change Relationships

Research Question four asked: What are the values or goals that underlie teachers’ perceptions of the change relationships between the secondary English Language Arts and policy implementation? This research question paralleled Fischer’s fourth inquiry phase of social choice. Social choice looked at the societal system as a whole, seeking to show that the policy goal addressed its function in a valuable manner for the society in which it was created. In this study, the research participants expressed over and over again the disparity they experienced between the actions within the classroom and the
events and occurrences ‘outside. The evidence illustrated that the research participants
did not feel a part of the educational society ‘external’ to their classroom.

The values and goals that underlie the teachers’ perceptions of change relationships
include a desire to:

1. Work in a non-threatening environment;
2. Control their work environment;
3. Be included in the policy reform process;
4. Feel empowered and effective in their professional practice; and
5. Have opportunities to attempt new classroom activities.

The teachers expressed most enthusiasm for curriculum changes in which they actively
sought approval or directly participated and implemented. Marsha Feldman’s Company
classroom and Victor Wilder’s American Studies course are examples of this. Inga Garr,
Victor Wilder and Marsha Feldman changed schools in order to continue programs that
they actively believed to benefit students and their own best practice. Mr. Wilder
described his upcoming school change:

“I am so excited to have the opportunity to go to a new school. We have an
opportunity to build a curriculum to do the things we talk about. We start off
optimistic enough to believe that maybe we can get a positive crew together, a
positive team and we’re going to work for our students and build the school
the way that we want it to be built.” [Victor Wilder]
Mr. Wilder’s move to a new secondary school within the Cedar County School District described how he viewed changing school to be beneficial to his personal sense of self. Mr. Wilder expressed a hope that his ideas and vision would be accepted, listened to and taken seriously within the on-site policy creation and implementation. The conflict between the ‘external’ policy creators or initiators were perceived as so far removed from what the teachers viewed as issues in the classroom, that policy reform was considered superfluous, inconsistent, vague, and without follow through. The teachers expressed the change reforms that they had experienced via external factions throughout their teaching careers as not being change at all. Victor Wilder’s direct explanation as to why he was changing schools was an example of how he perceived he could be a direct participant in the change reform process.

Fisher’s policy analysis paradigm was designed for comprehensive-critical evaluation through a progressive methodology, from verification through social choice and back. Beyond the checklists created at the foundational level from those ‘external’ to the classroom, there was no direct interaction with those implementing policy or working within the classrooms on a daily basis.

Secondary English Language Arts

Teachers’ Perceptions

Research question five asked: How is the secondary English Language Arts teacher’s perceptions affected by the implementation of policy change? This question also reflects Fischer’s social choice phase in policy analysis and assesses the societal system as whole. Fischer’s framework of policy analysis was a template in which to assess the policy
procedures as perceived by secondary English Language Arts teachers within the metropolitan schools in which they work.

The theoretical constructs of 1) political rhetoric and discursive construction, and 2) the role of discursive practices in the empirical process operated simultaneously, demonstrating the teachers' perceptions concerning fear of loss of control within the classroom. The discursive descriptors included feeling threatened from those outside the classroom in which the teachers would be held accountable for low test scores, lack of student achievement, and lack of student enrollment in honors courses. The secondary English Language Arts teachers' perceptions were revealed to be affected by a lack of:

1. Support external to the classroom;
2. On-site collegiality;
3. Participation in the change reform dialogue.

Expressions of activity and perceptions regarding curriculum policy were internalized to the classroom and to the self. There was little sense of cohesion or collegiality for the secondary English Language Arts teachers. Participation in the dialogue of education outside of the classroom did not exist for these research participants. There was no authentic exchange between the implementers of policy and the decision makers. Consequently the teachers' perceived perceptions operated discursively in a threatening manner. Teachers selected for this study were veterans in the classroom. They were experienced and educated. Yet the theme of disconnect was powerful and elicited pseudo-compliant, quasi-compliant and/or non-compliant subversive actions on the part of teachers.
Once policies were produced and directed foundationally for execution, the results of causal implementation of these policies were not discussed, merely imposed. The implementers had little or no power of a feedback loop. Rather, the perception was that their work was viewed as merely a mechanical 'application' of the policy. And as a result, the teachers unanimously felt intellectually and morally powerless, ineffective and fragmented. The consequences of such daily interaction in such an environment breeds moral pathologies (Walton, 2001).

Secondary English Language Arts teachers expressed 1) a lack of understanding regarding the reform change policy, 2) confusion of how or why the policy should be executed, and 3) uncertainty of follow-through on implementation. The primary sources of information where the teachers received the policy were not opportunities for dialogue, but rather meetings in which directives were handed down. Elisabeth Kahn illustrated this managerial connotative meaning of the word 'implementation:’

Yes, we go to in-services and meetings. But if I don't understand something
There is no one for me to talk to. The department chair? They know as much
as I do. My supervising administrator? They don’t even have an English
Language Arts background let alone an understanding of the new reform. The
district person? We don’t even know if we have one.

The interview statements made it obvious that teachers did not see their role or connection with the reform change policy process.

The secondary English Language Arts teachers who participated in this study expressed they were tacitly and sometimes implicitly required to perform in an obedient
and productive manner without voice or perfunctory comment. Some selected statements from the participants best express this ideology:

“As a staff we have been told if we don’t like the way things are done, there are other schools. It’s not difficult to infer this means do it my [administrator’s] way or leave.” [Inga Garr]

“We actually had a principal tell us [teachers] we were not allowed to come into the main office anymore. Parent-teacher conferences and picking up our mail before and after school were the only times we would be let in. And if we had a parent-teacher conference, we had to show the documentation when we entered the office. [Victor Wilder]

Statements such as these illustrate that teachers perceive their experience and expertise as marginalized from the dominant conversations and decision-making in education. The teachers’ perceptions regarding their capabilities to produce at designated levels of performance was personally questioned. They felt alienated and helpless in their ability. Tacit and implicit messages such as the examples given by the teachers created low standards of practice and attitudes of deception for both actors ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ the classroom.

The research participants’ consistent desire for anonymity was a pocket of information expressing the internalized perceptions of self and practice. Requests to be interviewed off campus, being startled if anyone entered the room, stating ‘this is only
my opinion not a condemnation of the bureaucracy that handles my checks (Boyle, transcripts) were instructive examples of fear. Walton (2001) asserted that:

The moral culture of [schools] has a language or technical jargon and connotations attached by custom and practice to certain words in that language so that one finds out fairly soon what is expected, allowed, and condemned, what is praised and what is forbidden, and what happens to those who rock the boat or are seen to be loyal and valued (p. 112).

The research participants in this study exhibited in their speech and mannerisms that they have a fear for the hierarchy external to their classroom. Negative and combative words used to describe these external entities and the teachers' statements that those who played politics were rewarded supported their perceptions. The secondary English Language Arts teachers responded to this disconnect and conflicting atmosphere by fear, anger and closed classroom doors.

The managerial way in which policy was delegated to the secondary English Language Arts teachers suppressed excellence of practice and expertise. The creators and/or initiators of the policy provided no forum for dialogue or input from those internal to the classroom at the foundational stage. The teachers did not participate as members of the society in which they worked. The teachers felt alienated and marginalized from the system. The primary source for implementation devalued and trivialized their knowledge and experience, creating virtual nullification. There was no organizational relationship between implementers and creators or initiators.

Teachers described the entities external to the classroom (i.e. administrators, documented artifacts, policy creators) as providing minimal instruction and
understanding for them concerning policy reform. This casual manner of instruction provided little professional praxis and contributed perceptions of alienation and fear. The participants moved schools, created and introduced district curriculum, and sought approval for programs within the school district in order to control their environment and illustrate their professional capabilities in attempts to raise their self-effiaacy.

Causal accountability from those external to the classroom affected the autonomy of the teachers and emerged through descriptions of helplessness. The descriptors the teachers concerning helplessness reinforced their fear and alienation within the teachers’ daily practices.

**Critical Conclusions and Ethical Considerations**

The participants’ perspective, viewed through political rhetoric, suggested that policymakers and initiators dominated the teachers through social control, thereby reinforcing their subordinate positions. The ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ descriptors that emerged through discursive construction carried through out each theme; 1) foundational, 2) causal, and 3) consequential. The secondary English Language Arts teachers who participated in this study conveyed such perceptions of inferiority as they discussed experiences illustrating that the decision makers and initiators of policy represented a normative logic that transmits arbitrary criteria from the various ‘outside’ entities. This was reinforced through the foundational themed categories of ‘absence of authority, and ‘abuse of authority.’ These conflicting objectives included the evaluative process for policy implementation, justification for policy change, and the end product of higher test scores. In this study, teachers were held to an abstract normative ideal without access to
information and without proper skills, such as: 1) proper training, 2) proper avenues for information 3) a functioning feedback loop, and 4) peer and expert support.

The policy process calls for a complex dialectical exploration that is a communicative enterprise. Any decision relationship contains tacit and implicit rules for who participates. Attitudes for the belief and value systems that govern admissibility of evidence form a communicative process also establish and certify practical knowledge and goals, well or poorly. This study revealed that the secondary English Language Arts teachers 1) do not feel any sense of belonging to the dialogue regarding policy, 2) cannot recognize policy as it is presented to them, and 3) exhibit defiant behaviors when directed to implement policy. Attributing factors to the policy implementation perceptions of the secondary English Language Arts teachers exhibited 1) a strong indication of fear, and 2) perceptions of alienation.

The literature of organizational ethics reflects two differing ways in which implementation is understood: 1) a collective agreement that something needs to be done and 2) a form of legitimacy in which policy is delegated by persons to be put into place (Fischer, 1999; Walton, 2001). The former is agreed upon by all the participants, or stakeholders. There is consensus that some procedure or device needs to be implemented and the format is shared among all stakeholders. The latter connotation of the word ‘implementation’ indicates an entity that directs a policy to be put into place, but does not provide a tangible way to make this happen. Implementers do not know how to make it happen because there is no clear procedure and no one to ask. The feedback loop is absent.
The research participants in this study demonstrated throughout the interview questions the lack of communication and dialogue between the secondary English Language Arts teachers and the makers of the events and policies directed for implementation. The teachers expressed confusion, alienation and helplessness regarding their ability to utilize the policy being implemented. They pointed to the inadequate manner in which policy was introduced and initiated as evidence for their claims.

If the teachers express lack of understanding the importance of a policy and have no dialogue, with anyone not a teacher, then it follows that the secondary English Language Arts teachers do not understand, support, or view the policy as something legitimate. Again, this disconnected perception manifested itself in the language between self and the educational community with the descriptors of ‘internal’ and external,’ ‘inside’ and ‘outside,’ ‘my classroom,’ and ‘them.’

Implicitly teachers are technically free to voice their concerns. Yet vocalizing their perceptions or engaging in the dialogue often marginalizes them from their colleagues. Pressure to conform and maintain the status quo becomes the context. The atmosphere can be combative or competitive resulting in virtual nullification rather than sharing and participating in dialectical communication. Those who are willing to not challenge the system are rewarded.

Limitations and Recommendations

This qualitative research study is intended to provide insight into secondary English Language Arts teachers’ perceptions regarding change reform policy at the secondary school level and to evaluate how such perceptions impacted their practice. Fischer’s
policy analysis framework (1999) was a holistic design applied to assess discursive components of policy implementation through 1) verification, 2) validation, 3) vindication, and 4) social choice. A case study design based on interviews and documents illuminated themes so that a detailed description would be understood through a critical perspective.

This research identifies two areas for further study. 1) Research focusing on secondary teachers' perceptions regarding the impact of curriculum reform on their classroom practice with a larger research participant group and across all academic disciplines would benefit educational policy assessment and understanding of change theory. The findings presented here were limited by sample size and included only those teaching in grades nine through twelve. Broadening the research base to teachers of grades six through 12, would allow for a larger sampling and provide additional insight into this area of research.

2) Research utilizing rural as well as urban school districts of various sizes and heterogeneity would further clarify teacher perceptions in regards to policy reform. Research from each of the 50 states and territories of the United States would further provide greater variation. Expanding the research geographically and demographically could lead to a more acute understanding of policy implementation and professional practices.

The significance of this study furthers an understanding as to why reform is difficult within public education. A synthesis of the findings in this evaluative case study modeling Fischer's *Logic of Policy Evaluation* (1999) with a critical perspective contributes to scholarly research related to 1) policymakers' roles in the process of policy
creation, 2) strategies for agencies and initiators of policy to improve the communication
process with implementers, and 3) inclusion of all stakeholders in the policy development
process.

Secondary English Language Arts teachers need to participate within the policy
making process. The disparity between the creation of the policy and the procedures for
providing information and understanding to those conducting implementation should
alert educational policy initiators to changing the manner in which the teachers
participate and are informed. Issues that are characterized by a mix of technical and
social problems need a design that would generate normative acceptability, legitimacy,
and agreement for all stakeholders. The issues and objectives important to each of the
various participating groups should be heard. Even if non-agreement occurs, this
integrative approach would provide a listening procedure and help provide limits to
proposals.

The secondary English Language Arts teachers in this study model an integrative
method within their classrooms. The fluidity and dialogue within the teachers’ everyday
work environment is illustrative of the integrative construct. The current system disallows
the policymakers and initiators practicality because it isolates and removes them from the
actual day to day events occurring at the microcosmic level of the classroom.

Creation of an integrative approach would need to be carefully constructed to avoid
replicating the current system of removed committees or more hierarchy. The integrative
approach should not consist of a few select members, or feckless participants. A stepped
process that moves from the particular to the general via steps would provide a forum for
all participants within the educational setting to be heard. There should not be a stratified
hierarchy in the integrative stepped process. This study concludes with an outline of these steps.

*Steps in the Integrative Approach*

Step 1. To begin, the deliberative process should be small in scale, at the site-level. In this manner the members of the immediate on-site community can develop a sense of their shared problems and what they have in common. Issues of concern at the site-level can be brought forth by teachers. They can be included in the dialogue by sharing their knowledge and experience. Participation can elicit a sense of ownership in solving the problems determined by the on-site community. District and state administrators and policy makers should be members of the conversation from the initiation of the integrative process. Each voice provides a unique and potentially valuable role in the process of change reform. Such dialogue about needs assessment would further enhance the planning process of reform.

Step 2. Guided discourse for the design and integration of objectives, goals, and procedures would secure normative acceptability and agreement. This integrative counsel of policy guidance would provide practical decision making with useful information. The discourse must be consistent and on-going. Professional development that is purposeful and inclusive of all participants' voices is necessary. Teachers and administrators must engage in equitable exchanges of concern.

Step 3. On-site administrators must participate in the classroom. To fully address the teachers' perception of removal, administrators should actively engage in the community in which they create policy change. Administrators should teach one class each year
representative of the community in which they facilitate. A consistent understanding of and personal participation in the fluidity and flux of the classroom environment would allow administrators first-hand exposure. This experience would create more credible sources of information.

Administrators beyond the on-site level should also participate within the communities they represent or for when they initiate policy. This includes, district superintendents, superintendents, district policy makers, state officials, and state policy makers. These external entities should spend quality time interacting within the classrooms on a regular basis. Participation by external administrators should not be routine visits. They should be consistent and extend beyond one class period.

Step 4. Plans and reports brought forth from the dialogue should be responded to in a timely and critical manner. Continuous assessment of needs would ensure responsible achievement. Progress toward the decided-upon goals would be helpful, purposeful, and consistent.

In summary, the present policy implementation system in the state of Brooks is ineffective for secondary English Language Arts teachers practicing in the five district areas of Cedar County School District. A need for a more expanded conception of evaluation through the creation of institutional and intellectual contexts would allow teachers participation in the dialogue of policy for which they are responsible for implementing. An integrative construct would disallow resistance and apathy. All voices in the educational environment of policy change would exist with a stepped process. The teachers could pose questions and examine problems applying their experience and knowledge.
APPENDIX A

COMMUNICATIVE ENTITIES CONTRIBUTING TO EDUCATIONAL POLICY
Dominant Historical Culture

Supranational Organizations
(International Organizations- World Bank, OECD, OAU, UNESCO, EU, IMF)

Social Subsystems
(Judicial, Political, Economic, Familial, Social)

Formal Juridical Process (State, Regional, Community)

Legislation
Local Administration
State Policy and Legislation

Institutional Systems
(School administration-principal, assistant principal)

Classroom Teacher
Student
10/27/2003

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Total pages: 3

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This credit line must appear on the first page of text selection and with each individual figure or photo:

Sincerely,

Dupree Barbato
Grant Coordinator
APPENDIX C

RESEARCH QUESTIONS DATA TABLE
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Kind of data to be collected</th>
<th>Process of Analysis</th>
<th>Literature</th>
<th>Time of collection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do secondary English Language Arts teachers perceive change?</td>
<td>interviews with teachers, observations, field notes, collection of artifacts</td>
<td>transcriptions of interviews, domain analysis</td>
<td>Davey, 1991&lt;br&gt;Denzin, 1998&lt;br&gt;Fischer, 1999&lt;br&gt;Hall &amp; Hoord, 2001&lt;br&gt;Merriam, 1992</td>
<td>ongoing throughout to see how discursive system is formulated and reformulated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what ways do secondary English Language Arts teachers implement change in the school environments in which they work?</td>
<td>interviews with teachers, collections of artifacts (state standards, district syllabi, lesson plans), field notes, observations</td>
<td>domain analysis, taxonomy of roles of demands, patterns of interactions</td>
<td>Bandura, 1993&lt;br&gt;Fischer, 1999&lt;br&gt;Fullan, 2001&lt;br&gt;Hall &amp; Hoord, 2001&lt;br&gt;Spradley, 1979</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What occurs when secondary English teachers implement policy as the basis for change?</td>
<td>interviews with teachers, field notes, collections of artifacts (state standards, district syllabi, lesson plans), observations</td>
<td>transcription of interviews, linguistic analysis of data collected</td>
<td>Fischer, 1990, 1999&lt;br&gt;Popkewitz, 2000a, 2000b&lt;br&gt;Stone, 1997</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is the secondary English Language Arts teacher's perceptions affected by the implementation of policy change</td>
<td>interviews, field notes, observations</td>
<td>transcription of interviews, domain analysis, patterns of perception and reality</td>
<td>Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1993&lt;br&gt;Fischer 1990, 1999&lt;br&gt;Nielsen, 1996</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX D

#### PARTICIPANT CRITERIA TABLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Teaching experience</th>
<th>District regions</th>
<th>Licenses</th>
<th>Course levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan secondary schools, population approximately 1500 and above</td>
<td>Eight -10 years within the Delbruck school district</td>
<td>1 research participants from each of the 5 regions within the school district</td>
<td>American Literature, English Literature, Composition and Rhetoric</td>
<td>Can range from development to advanced placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnet Vocational Traditional secondary environment Grades 9-12</td>
<td>Can have experience from other states</td>
<td>One participant within each of the 5 regions within the school district with a master’s degree</td>
<td>Secondary English Language Arts endorsement and/or literature endorsement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can have experience within other disciplines</td>
<td>English Language Arts district consultant will provide names</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX E

APPROVAL FOR PILOT STUDY

UNLV
UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS

Expedited Review of Social/Behavioral Protocol
Approval Notice

DATE: July 3, 2004

TO: Denise DeVito
Curriculum & Instruction

FROM: Dr. Paul Jones, Co-Chair
UNLV Social/Behavioral Sciences IRB

RE: Status of Human Subject Protocol Entitled: Teacher Self-Efficacy and Change in the
English Language Arts Secondary Classroom OPRS# 311S1003-342

Approval Date: October 22, 2003

This memorandum is official notification that protocol for the project referenced above has met the criteria
for exemption from full committee review by the UNLV Social/Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review
Board (IRB) as indicated in regulatory statues 45CFR 46.110. The protocol has been submitted through the
expedited review process and has been approved. The protocol is approved for a period of one year from
the date of this notification. Work on the project may proceed.

Should the use of human subjects described in this protocol continue beyond October 20, 2004 it will be
necessary to request a protocol extension 30 days before the expiration date. Should there be any change(s)
to the protocol, it will be necessary to request such change, in writing, through the Office for the Protection
of Research Subjects.

If you have any questions or require assistance, please contact the Office for the Protection of Research
Subjects at OPRSHumanSubjects@ccmail.nevada.edu or call 895-2794.
APPENDIX F

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

University of Nevada, Las Vegas
INFORMED CONSENT

TITLE OF STUDY: Teacher Self-Efficacy and Change in the English Language Arts Secondary Classroom
INVESTIGATOR/S: Denise De Vito
PROTOCOL NUMBER: OPRS# 311S1003-342

Purpose of the Study
You are invited to participate in a qualitative research pilot study. The purpose of this study is to understand how secondary English teachers as participants of change cope with change reform and how their self-perceptions of change reform policy affect their practice within the urban schools in which they work.

Participants
You are being asked to participate in the study because you have been teaching for 8 or more years within the Clark County School.

Procedures
If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to do the following:
Complete a consent form and participate in oral interviews. The total time commitment will be approximately 10 hours.

Benefits of Participation
There may be no direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. However, we hope to understand how perceptions and change affects teacher classroom practice. This study will enhance the body of knowledge concerning change research. This will not only add to the field, but also to the practitioners and those that create change policy.

Risks of Participation
There are risks involved in all research studies. This study may include only minimal risks. You may become uncomfortable when answering some questions.

Cost/Compensation
There will be no financial cost to you to participate in this study. The study will take approximately 5 hours of your time. You will not be compensated for your time. The University of Nevada, Las Vegas may not provide compensation or free medical care for an unanticipated injury sustained as a result of participating in this research study.

Contact Information
If you have any questions or concerns about the study, you may contact me, Denise De Vito (Principal Investigator), at 895-1540. You may also contact Martha Young, (faculty advisor) at 895-0836.

For questions regarding the rights of research subjects, any complaints or comments regarding the manner in which the study is being conducted you may contact the UNLV Office for the Protection of Research Subjects at 895-2794.

**Voluntary Participation**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study or in any part of this study. You may withdraw at any time without prejudice to your relations with the university.

You are encouraged to ask questions about this study at the beginning or any time during the research study.

**Confidentiality**

All information gathered in this study will be kept completely confidential. No reference will be made in written or oral materials that could link you to this study. All records will be stored in a locked facility at UNLV for at least 3 years after completion of the study. After the storage time the information gathered will be destroyed.

**Participant Consent:**

I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study. I am at least 18 years of age. A copy of this form has been given to me.

______________________________
Signature of Participant

______________________________
Participant Name (Please Print)

______________________________
Date
### APPENDIX G

**TOOLS FOR INQUIRY TABLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artifact</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Alignment with Research Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| k-12 State Standards | Basis for policy implementation (Fischer) | 2. In what ways do secondary English Language Arts teachers implement change in the metropolitan schools in which they work?  
3. What becomes altered or modified in the classroom materials when secondary English Language Arts teachers implement policy as the basis for change? |
| District course syllabus | Interpretative process of policy implementation | 2. In what ways do secondary English Language Arts teachers implement change in the metropolitan schools in which they work?  
3. What becomes altered or modified in the classroom materials when secondary English Language Arts teachers implement policy as the basis for change? |
| Individual secondary English Language Arts teacher’s lesson plans | Evidence of policy implementation in the day to day | 1. What counts as change to secondary English Language Arts teachers?  
2. In what ways do secondary English Language Arts teachers implement change in the metropolitan schools in which they work?  
3. What becomes altered or modified in the classroom materials when secondary English Language Arts teachers implement policy as the basis for change?  
4. What are the relationships between the secondary English Language Arts teachers’ perceptions of change and policy implementation?  
5. How is the secondary English Language Arts teacher’s perceptions affected by the implementation of policy change? |
| Interviews | Gain specific knowledge of subject’s awareness/understanding of change issues | Questions 1-5 |
| observations | Verify alignment between policy implementation | Questions 2-4 |
**APPENDIX H**

**INTERVIEW TIMELINE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview I</td>
<td>60 minutes</td>
<td>Gather initial information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3 Observations</td>
<td>One 50 minute class period</td>
<td>Verify alignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview II</td>
<td>60 minutes</td>
<td>Query secondary English Language Arts teacher regarding interaction between Interviews and observations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theorist</th>
<th>Aligning with</th>
<th>Illustrating or Extending from data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fischer, 1980</td>
<td>• Multimethodological comparative case study utilizing a critical lens that</td>
<td>• Describe where policy deliberation places evaluation within socially relevant arenas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fischer, 1999</td>
<td>seeks to provide intrinsic insight into the issue of federal educational policy</td>
<td>• Incorporate and illuminate basic discursive components and extend from concrete empirical questions to abstract normative issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone, 1997</td>
<td>and program implementation as viewed through social and cultural issues and</td>
<td>• Provide intrinsic insight into the issue of federal educational policy and program implementation as viewed through social and cultural issues and patterns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>patterns</td>
<td>• Identify the social and political frameworks which provide the rules for standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sociolinguistics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ethnography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Moral epistemology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davey, 1991</td>
<td>• Learn about complex instances through extensive description and contextual</td>
<td>• Discern whether implementation is in compliance with its intent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>analysis.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carnini, 1975</td>
<td>• Moving from epistemology to ontology.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fischer, 1999</td>
<td>• Reveal the multiplicity of meanings by selecting and juxtaposing recorded</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schneider and Ingram,</td>
<td>observations continuously.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>• Reach beyond ethnomethodological techniques through documentation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anderson, 1990</td>
<td>• Legitimate the participants' voice and locate the participants' meanings in</td>
<td>• Seek to understand and comprehend the subjective views of the stakeholders involved with H.R.1, the institutional support and opposition of the policy, and how perceptions and behaviors help define public policy positions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starling, 1989</td>
<td>larger impersonal systems of political economy and ideologies.</td>
<td>• Provide cross-case analysis with examples.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yin, 1989</td>
<td>• Select information-rich cases for in depth study that illustrate issues of central importance.</td>
<td>• Illustrate the collective and individuals developing through discourse and text analysis of written or drawn artifacts and dialogue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patton, 1990</td>
<td>• Reflect seriously on cultural hegemonic practice, documenting the importance and reflection of the historical factors and socio-cultural attitudes that collectively contribute to the situation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spradley, 1980</td>
<td>• Government officials and agency personnel at the federal, state, and local level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX J

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS DATA TABLE
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
<th>Kind of Data to be collected</th>
<th>Process of Analysis</th>
<th>Literature</th>
<th>Time of collection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are the different kinds of curriculum change?</td>
<td>Field notes, interviews with teachers, artifacts</td>
<td>Domain analysis, transcription of oral text, linguistic analysis of data collection, taxonomy of roles or demands</td>
<td>Aligns with Fisher's (1999) policy analysis paradigm of verification</td>
<td>Ongoing throughout to see how discursive system is formulated and reformulated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What were some of the ways you were informed regarding curriculum change?</td>
<td>Field notes, interviews with teachers, artifacts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What has been your experience in implementing curriculum change?</td>
<td>Field notes, interviews with teachers, artifacts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what ways are the curriculum changes relevant to the problem situation?</td>
<td>Field notes, interviews with teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is the curriculum change relevant to correcting the problem situation?</td>
<td>Field notes, interviews with teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do the curriculum changes contribute directly to the society as a whole?</td>
<td>Field notes, interviews with teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what ways does the curriculum change foster social equity?</td>
<td>Field notes, interviews with teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What kinds of social values should the curriculum be built upon?</td>
<td>Field notes, interviews with teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you were going to implement policy change how would you about doing that?</td>
<td>Field notes, interviews with teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Aligns with Fischer's (1999) policy analysis of validation

Aligns with Fischer's (1999) policy analysis of vindication

Aligns with Fischer's (1999) policy analysis of social choice
APPENDIX K 1

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Demographic Data

1. Name ________________________________________________
2. Number of years teaching English _______________________
3. Number of years teaching English in Brooks County ______
4. Number of years teaching English in the current setting ____
5. What kinds of English classes do you currently teach? _____
6. Name of college from which you graduated _______________
7. What is the highest degree you have earned? ______________
8. Teaching areas other than English _______________________
9. Age (circle one): 27-35 36-45 46-53 54-60 over 60
10. Average class size (circle one): 25-30 31-40 41-50 over 50

Interview questions aligned with research questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Interview Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. What counts as change to secondary English Language Arts teachers? | 1. What different curriculum changes have you experienced in your teaching? (An example of the type of change is the addition of state standards benchmarks to the curriculum frameworks.)
2. How did you find out about these curriculum changes? (Some will respond they learned about them in an in-service, others will indicate they read about them, and others may say they heard about them from another teacher.)
3. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 highly difficult to 10 highly positive), how would you rate your experience in implementing curriculum change? Explain what occurred. |
| 2. In what ways do secondary English Language Arts teachers implement change in the | 4. School boards think policy implementation such as regulating textbooks in the curriculum will benefit the teaching of English language arts.
4a. What do you think about policy that originates in settings like the school board?
4b. How do these policy makers address issues of concern |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What metropolitan schools in which they work?</td>
<td>that you have about teaching English language arts. (For example, there are no ELL services available to seniors.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What do you have about teaching English language arts. (For example, there are no ELL services available to seniors.)</td>
<td>5. How do you know if/when a curriculum change has had a positive or negative affect in your classroom?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What becomes altered or modified in the classroom materials when secondary English Language Arts teachers implement policy as the basis for change?</td>
<td>6. How does the school, as a whole, benefit from curriculum change? 6a. What contributions to the school are made by these changes? (An example might be the lowering of the drop out rate.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What are the relationships between the secondary English Language Arts teachers’ perceptions of change and policy implementation?</td>
<td>7. Do these curriculum changes create more equity in the schools, i.e., who gets to take which classes, who is given which opportunities? If they do how?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How does the secondary English Language Arts teacher’s perceptions influence the implementation of policy change?</td>
<td>8. Currently the field of English language arts is dealing with a debate about the nature of its curriculum, i.e., should it be based in the canon or should multicultural education be infused. This debate also addresses social values. 8a. Where are you in this debate? 8b. What do you do when you are asked to implement a change that you feel is not in the best interests of yourself or your students? 8c. How should social values be considered within the English Language Arts curriculum?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. How does the school, as a whole, benefit from curriculum change? 6a. What contributions to the school are made by these changes? (An example might be the lowering of the drop out rate.)</td>
<td>9. Now that you have defined social values that underlie the curriculum, what steps would you take to implement that curriculum?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Do these curriculum changes create more equity in the schools, i.e., who gets to take which classes, who is given which opportunities? If they do how?</td>
<td>10. In what ways is your sense of autonomy and authority influenced by policy change and implementation? 10a. What occurs within your sense of self when implementing policy change within your classroom?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX K 2

WARM UP QUESTIONS

1. How did you become a secondary English Language Arts teacher?
2. What do you like most about teaching English Language Arts classes?
3. What do you consider your strengths in the classroom?

Verification Interview Questions

Fischer (1999): Verification is a first order inquiry and is expressed most often through technical-analytical discourse and quantitative measurements (Fischer, 1999). Verification addresses the measurement of the efficiency of program outcomes. It asks:

1. Does the program empirically fulfill its stated objective(s)?
2. Does the empirical analysis uncover secondary or unanticipated effects that offset the program objectives.
3. Does the program fulfill the objectives more efficiently than alternative means available? (Fischer, 1999, p. 20).

Curriculum interpretation:
A. What are the different kinds of curriculum change?
B. What were some of the ways you were informed regarding curriculum change?
C. What has been your experience in implementing curriculum change?
D. Do you have anything else you would like to add?

Interview questions for participants:

1. What different curriculum changes have you experienced in your teaching? (An example of the type of change is the addition of state standards benchmarks to the curriculum frameworks.)
2. How did you find out about these curriculum changes? (Some will respond they learned about them in an in-service, others will indicate they read about them, and others may say they heard about them from another teacher.)
3. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 highly difficult to 10 highly positive), how would you rate your experience in implementing curriculum change? Explain what occurred.

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Fischer (1999): Validation uses qualitative methods and focuses on whether or not the “program objectives are relevant to the situation” by looking at the conceptualizations and assumptions of the “situation which the program is designed to influence” (Fisher, 1999, pp. 20-21). It asks:
1. Is the program objective(s) relevant to the problem situation?
2. Are there circumstances in the situation that require an exception to be made to the objective(s)?
3. Are two or more criteria equally relevant to the problem situation? (Fischer, 1999, p. 21).

Curriculum interpretation:
A. In what ways are the curriculum changes relevant to the problem situation?
B. How is the curriculum change relevant to correcting the problem situation?
C. Do you have anything else you would like to add?

Interview questions for participants:
1. School boards think policy implementation such as regulating textbooks in the curriculum will benefit the teaching of English language arts.
   1a. What do you think about policy that originates in settings like the school board as opposed to classroom policy that is teacher generated?
   1b. How do these policy makers address issues of concern that you have about teaching English language arts. (For example, there are no ELL services available to seniors.)
2. How do you know if/when a curriculum change has had a positive or negative affect in your classroom?
APPENDIX K 4

VINDICATION INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Fischer (1999): Vindication empirically assesses the “instrumental consequences of a policy goal in terms of the system as a whole” (Fischer, 1999, p. 21). Vindication is organized around the following questions:

1. Does the policy goal have instrumental or contributive value for the society as a whole?
2. Does the policy goal result in unanticipated problems with important societal consequences?
3. Does a commitment to the policy goal lead to consequences (e.g., benefits and costs) that are judged to be equitably distributed?

Vindication can test a policy’s underlying assumptions about a system’s functions and values and uncover unanticipated consequences.

Curriculum interpretation:
A. How do the curriculum changes contribute directly to the society as a whole?
B. In what ways do the curriculum changes foster social equity?
C. Do you have anything else you would like to add?

Interview questions for participants:

1.a How does the school, as a whole, benefit from curriculum change?
1.b What contributions to the school are made by these changes? (An example might be the lowering of the drop out rate.)
2. Do these curriculum changes create more equity in the schools, e.g., who gets to take which classes? Who is given which opportunities? If they do how?
Fischer (1999): Social discourse occurs through "ideological and value questions" (Fischer, 1999, p. 22). Social choice, concerns itself with ideological and value questions:

1. Do the fundamental ideals that organize the accepted social order provide a basis for a legitimate resolution of conflicting judgments?
2. If the social order is unable to resolve basic value conflicts, do other social orders equitably prescribe for the relevant interests and needs that the conflicts reflect?
3. Do normative reflection and empirical evidence support the justification and adoption of an alternative ideology and the social order it prescribes? (Fischer, 1999, p. 22).

Curriculum interpretation:
A. What kinds of social values should the curriculum be built upon?
B. If you were going to implement policy change how would you go about doing that?
C. Do you have anything else you would like to add?

Interview questions for participants:
1. Currently the field of English language arts is dealing with a debate about the nature of its curriculum, i.e., should it be based in the canon or should multicultural education be infused. This debate also addresses social values.
   1.a Where are you in this debate?
   1.b What do you do when you are asked to implement a change that you feel is not in the best interests of yourself or your students?
   1.c How should social values be considered within the English language arts curriculum?
2. Now that you have defined social values that underlie the curriculum, what steps would you take to implement that curriculum?
   3.a In what ways is your sense of autonomy and authority influenced by policy change and implementation?
   3.b What occurs within your sense of self when implementing policy change within your classroom?
APPENDIX K 6

TEACHER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS IN THEIR ENTIRETY

1. What different curriculum changes have you experienced in your teaching? (An example of the type of change is the addition of state standards benchmarks to the curriculum frameworks.)

2. How did you find out about these curriculum changes? (Some will respond they learned about them in an in-service, others will indicate they read about them, and others may say they heard about them from another teacher.)

3. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 highly difficult to 10 highly positive), how would you rate your experience in implementing curriculum change? Explain what occurred.

4. School boards think policy implementation such as regulating textbooks in the curriculum will benefit the teaching of English language arts.

4.a What do you think about policy that originates in settings like the school board as opposed to classroom policy that is teacher generated?

4.b How do these policy makers address issues of concern that you have about teaching English language arts. (For example, there are no ELL services available to seniors.)

5. How do you know if/when a curriculum change has had a positive or negative affect in your classroom?

6. How does the school, as a whole, benefit from curriculum change?

6a What contributions to the school are made by these changes? (An example might be the lowering of the drop out rate.)

7. Do these curriculum changes create more equity in the schools, e.g., who gets to take which classes? Who is given which opportunities? If they do how?

8. Currently the field of English language arts is dealing with a debate about the nature of its curriculum, i.e., should it be based in the canon or should multicultural education be infused. This debate also addresses social values.

8a. Where are you in this debate?
8b. What do you do when you are asked to implement a change that you feel is not in the best interests of yourself or your students?
8c. How should social values be considered within the English language arts curriculum?

9. Now that you have defined social values that underlie the curriculum, what steps would you take to implement that curriculum?

10. In what ways is your sense of autonomy and authority influenced by policy change and implementation?
10a. What occurs within your sense of self when implementing policy change within your classroom?
## APPENDIX L

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS ALIGNED WITH FISCHER’S POLICY ANALYSIS PARADIGM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
<th>Literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are the different kinds of curriculum change?</td>
<td>Aligns with Fisher’s (1999) policy analysis paradigm of verification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What were some of the ways you were informed regarding curriculum change?</td>
<td>1. Does the program empirically fulfill its stated objective(s)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Does the empirical analysis uncover secondary or unanticipated effects that offset the program objectives?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Does the program fulfill the objectives more efficiently than alternative means available? (p. 20).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What has been your experience in implementing curriculum change?</td>
<td>Aligns with Fischer’s (1999) policy analysis of validation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Is the program objective(s) relevant to the problem situation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Are there circumstances in the situation that require an exception to be made to the objective(s)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Are two or more criteria equally relevant to resolving the problem situation? (p. 21).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what ways are the curriculum changes relevant to the problem situation?</td>
<td>Aligns with Fischer’s (1999) policy analysis of vindication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Does the policy goal have instrumental or contributive value for the society as a whole?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Does the policy goal result in unanticipated problems with important societal consequences?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Does a commitment to the policy goal lead to consequences (e.g., benefits and costs) that are judged to be equitably distributed?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| What kinds of social values should the curriculum be built upon? | Aligns with Fischer’s (1999) policy analysis of social choice.  
1. Do the fundamental ideals that organize the accepted social order provide a basis for a legitimate resolution of conflicting judgments?  
2. If the social order is unable to resolve basic value conflicts, do other social orders equitably prescribe for the relevant interests and needs that the conflicts reflect?  
3. Do normative reflection and empirical evidence support the justification and adoption of an alternative ideology and the social order it prescribes? (p. 22). |
| What do you do when you are asked to implement a change that you feel is not in the best interests of yourself or your students? |
| If you were going to implement policy change how would you go about doing that? |
APPENDIX M

ENGLISH III 432

ENGLISH III - 432

Course Scope:

This one-year, junior-level course, which correlates directly to the Brooks ELA Standards, develops reading, writing, speaking, listening, and research skills, while enhancing critical thinking. Various literary genres will be studied and used as models and springboards for composition. Student writing is assessed using rubrics and standards of the NHSPS in Writing. This course fulfills one of the four English credits required for graduation.

Course Goals:

1. To know and use word analysis skills and strategies to comprehend new words encountered in text. (Standard 1)
2. To use reading process skills and strategies to build comprehension. (Standard 2)
3. To comprehend, interpret, and evaluate literature from a variety of authors, cultures, and times. (Standard 3)
4. To comprehend, interpret, and evaluate informational texts for specific purposes. (Standard 4)
5. To write a variety of texts that inform, persuade, describe, evaluate, or tell a story and are appropriate to purpose and audience. (Standard 5)
6. To write with a clear focus and logical development, evaluating, revising, editing, and publishing for organization, style, tone, and word choice. (Standard 6)
7. To write using standard English grammar, usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. (Standard 7)
8. To listen to and evaluate oral communications for content, style, speaker's purpose, and audience appropriateness. (Standard 8)
9. To speak using organization, style, tone, voice, and media aids appropriate to audience and purpose. (Standard 9)
10. To participate in large and small group discussions to offer information, clarify ideas, support a position and understand group protocol. (Standard 10)
11. To formulate research questions, use a variety of sources to obtain information, weigh the evidence, draw valid conclusions, and present findings. (Standard 11)
12. To enhance awareness that literature both reflects and influences changes in society, culture, and history.
13. To develop an understanding of good character and ethics by responding to a wide variety of written and oral communication.
14. To develop an awareness and appreciation of other cultures.
15. To think logically and to apply those skills in new learning situations.
16. To expand study and organizational skills.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Students Know and Are Able to Do Everything Required in Previous Grades and:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>E/S 4.5.4 Draw conclusions and make inferences about text supported by textual evidence and experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>E/L 4.6.4 Verify information from one source by consulting other sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>E/S 4.7.4 Assess the reasonableness and adequacy of the evidence used to support an author's position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>E/L 4.8.4 Identify and assess the validity, accuracy, and adequacy of evidence that supports an author's ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>E/L 4.12.4 Critique the power, logic, reasonableness, and audience appeal of arguments advanced in texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>C 4.8.5; H 2.8.2; M 5.8.5; S 19.8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>E/S 4.6.5 Evaluate how authors' ideas and purposes shape the content of texts, such as advertisements and public documents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>E/S 4.7.5 Identify unsupported inferences, faulty reasoning, and propaganda techniques in texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I/S 4.8.5 Summarize authors' ideas and information in texts, including advertisements and public documents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>I/L 4.12.5 Analyze how historical and cultural contexts influence the content and validity of informational texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>C 4.12.5; H 1.12.2; H 2.12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>E/L 4.5.6 Read and follow multi-step directions in order to perform procedures and complete tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>E/L 4.6.6 Read and follow multi-step directions to complete a complex task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>E/L 4.7.6 Read and follow multi-step directions to complete a complex task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>E/L 4.8.6 Read and follow multi-step directions to complete a complex task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>E/L 4.12.6 Read and apply multi-step directions to perform complex procedures and tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>M 6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>M 6.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### CONTENT STANDARD 4.0

Students read to comprehend, interpret, and evaluate informational texts for specific purposes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Standard 4.0</th>
<th>EXCEEDS STANDARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Determine authors’ purposes in informational texts and public documents through substantial and convincing analysis of text features, rhetorical strategies, and historical and cultural contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Locate, effectively organize, and interpret information in multiple primary and secondary sources, creating a novel and compelling synthesis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Efficiently read and apply multistep directions to perform complex procedures and tasks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEETS STANDARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Determine authors’ purposes in informational texts and public documents through analysis of text features, rhetorical strategies, and historical and cultural contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Locate, organize, interpret, and synthesize information in multiple primary and secondary sources to support ideas and positions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Read and apply multistep directions to perform complex procedures and tasks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPROACHES STANDARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Make simple inferences about authors’ purposes in informational texts and public documents, but do not connect those purposes to text features, rhetorical strategies, and historical and cultural contexts without assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Locate and organize information in multiple primary and secondary sources, but do not interpret or synthesize to support ideas and positions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Read, but may not apply, multistep directions in procedures and tasks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BELOW STANDARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Do not determine authors’ purposes without focused, guided instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Locate information in multiple primary and secondary sources, listing examples, but do not organize, interpret, or synthesize.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Read multistep directions, but do not follow them to perform the task.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX P

POWER STANDARDS

Power Standards are based on the Brooks State Standards, ITBS, and the Brooks High School Proficiency Examination.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strand</th>
<th>Brooks</th>
<th>CCSD Power Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Word Analysis and Decoding</td>
<td>1.12.3</td>
<td>Apply knowledge of Greek and Latin roots, affixes to determine word meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.12.4</td>
<td>Discern subtle differences between closely related words; use references.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.12.4</td>
<td>Apply knowledge of syntax and literary allusions to understand word meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Skills and Strategies</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>Apply the steps of the reading process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
<td>Determine main ideas in various types of reading selections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
<td>Make inferences. [6.6]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
<td>Select and apply graphic organizers to aid in comprehension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read to Comprehend, Interpret, and Evaluate Literature</td>
<td>3.12.1</td>
<td>Analyze character, plot, setting, theme, and point of view in any piece of literature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.12.2</td>
<td>Make supported inferences, predictions about plot, setting, characters, and theme.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.12.4</td>
<td>Use textual evidence to analyze theme or meaning of a selection.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.12.5</td>
<td>Analyze ways authors use imagery, figures of speech, and sound to elicit response.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.12.6</td>
<td>Analyze how irony, tone, mood, syntax, and language sounds are used aesthetically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read to Comprehend, Interpret, and Evaluate Informational Text</td>
<td>4.12.1 &amp; 4.12.2</td>
<td>Analyze use of text features and rhetorical strategies in primary source documents (policy statements, speeches, debates, diaries, platforms).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.12.3</td>
<td>Locate, synthesize multiple primary and secondary sources to support positions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.12.4</td>
<td>Critique the power, logic, and appeal of arguments advanced in texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.12.6</td>
<td>Read and apply multi-step directions to complete complex procedures or tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Genre</td>
<td>5.12.1</td>
<td>Write a research paper using 10 sources, develop a thesis, and use style manual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.12.2</td>
<td>Produce subject specific technical writing (shop manual or science field report).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composition Skills</td>
<td>6.12.2 Organize ideas through cause/effect, compare/contrast to enhance central theme.</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.12.3 Write compositions that present complex ideas in a compelling manner.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.12.4 Revise writing to improve word choice, organization, and point of view.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.12.5 Edit for use of Standard English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventions of English Language</td>
<td>7.12.1 Apply the rules of usage, grammar, and capitalization; use modifiers, parallel structure, and subordination correctly in writing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.12.3 Use rules of punctuation; manipulate conventions for emphasis in writing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.12.4 Use rules of capitalization.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.12.5 Demonstrate conventional spelling.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening Skills</td>
<td>8.12.1 Summarize and evaluate communications that inform, persuade, and entertain.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.12.2 Analyze the effect of language and dialect on audience response.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking Skills</td>
<td>9.12.1 Use specific and varied vocabulary; apply Standard English to communicate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.12.4 Read aloud or recite literary, dramatic, and original works.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing</td>
<td>10.12.1 Participate in discussion by identifying, synthesizing, and evaluating data.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.12.4 Justify a position using logic and refuting opposing viewpoints.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locating Information</td>
<td>11.12.1 Formulate research questions and use a research design to gather information.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.12.3 Cite sources of information using a standard form of documentation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX Q

ANALYTIC CONTENT ANALYSIS CHART

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 highly difficult to 10 highly positive), how would you rate your experience in implementing curriculum change? Explain what occurred.</th>
<th>Claims made by participant</th>
<th>Conditions, for evidence of claims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Like most things in education on a scale of 1-10 I would rate implementing curriculum change, I guess right in the middle. You know you hear about it and some things make sense and you implement it, and if they don’t you say “oh well that’s what they’re doing out there.” And so “No Child Left Behind” (laughs) I have made zero changes. It would be very easy to make that transition. You just ignore it.</td>
<td>Like most things in education on a scale of 1-10 I would rate implementing curriculum change, I guess right in the middle. And so “No Child Left Behind” I have made zero changes.</td>
<td>You know you hear about it and some things make sense and you implement it, and if they don’t you say “oh well that’s what they’re doing out there.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Brooks Department of Education.


http://www.doe.nv.gov/admin/reports/index.html.


Delbruck, Brooks: Cedar County School District.


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Dissertation Committee:
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Committee Member, Dr. Linda Quinn, Ph.D
Committee Member, Dr. Judy Pollak, Ph.D
Committee Member, Dr. Craig Walton, Ph.D
Committee Member, Dr. LeAnn Putney, Ph.D