

Valuing Language Diversity: A Critical Discourse Analysis of the English Language Arts
Standards of the Common Core Concerning English Language Learners

By

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Abstract

Valuing Language Diversity: A Critical Discourse Analysis of the English Language Arts Standards of the Common Core Concerning English Language Learners

Kristopher Stewart

This study investigates whether the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) recognize and address the native language and literacy skills of ELLs. The study also examines, from the perspective of three different social actors: (1) the authors of the CCSS, (2) academic researchers, and (3) practitioner advocacy organizations, whether or not the Common Core English Language Arts Standards (ELA-CCSS) promote an ideological viewpoint about what constitutes a “literate individual.” Finally, the study ascertains whether the ELA-CCSS convey an ideology of language and literacy skill development that is counter to the interests of ELLs, and ESL and content educators.

A rich body of literature is available on English language proficiency standards, academic content standards, educational policy, and teacher effectiveness as it relates to language and literacy development for ELLs. A fundamental argument advanced by the literature is that the development, designing, and implementation of standards by dominant social actors inhibits the classroom practices of teachers not engaged in the development of those standards for ELLs.

The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 2001, titled, *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) and the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) of 2015 sought to reduce, if not eliminate educational barriers for English Language Learners (ELLs). Yet, the implementation of ESEA’s accountability provision which requires states to ensure academic achievement for ELLs, the newly initiated Common Core State Standards (CCSS)-introduced in 2010 have added an unforeseen wrinkle on how it may be enacted by ESL and content educators.

CHAPTER I. Introduction

Background

The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 2001, aptly titled, *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) and the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) of 2015 sought to reduce, if not eliminate educational barriers which would impede specific student subgroups from succeeding in the elementary and secondary schools of the United States. Specific subgroups of students were delineated not only by race/ethnicity, and poverty level, but also by English proficiency level. These students, commonly referred to as ¹English Language Learners (ELLs), are one of the fastest growing student populations in the country (NCELA, 2011; NCES, 2015). However, years since the implementation of NCLB's accountability provision which requires states to ensure academic achievement for ELLs, the newly initiated Common Core State Standards (CCSS)-introduced in 2010 have added an unforeseen wrinkle.

The Common Core State Standards are a set of academic content standards in reading, mathematics, and literacy in the sciences and social studies that 43 states and the District of Columbia have adopted as their academic content standards. They were designed and developed as international benchmark standards by the National Governors Association (NGA Center), the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), and Achieve, Inc. (NGA Center & CCSSO, 2010). Dismayed by the performance of American students on academic assessments in comparison to their international peers based on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS),

¹ The term *English Language Learner* is a term referenced in the 2001 ESEA Reauthorization commonly known as No Child Left Behind. A more appropriate term for this group of students is *Emergent Bilinguals*. This is a term proffered by language and literacy scholar, Kathy Escamilla in her 2006 article, *Semilingualism Applied to the Literacy Behaviors of Spanish speaking Emerging Bilinguals: Bi-illiteracy or Emerging Biliteracy?* (Citation in Reference section of this document).

NGA Center, CCSSO, and Achieve, Inc. sought to “develop consistent, real-world learning goals to ensure all students, regardless of where they live, are graduating high school prepared for college, career, and life (NGA Center & CCSSO, 2010d).”

Consequently, the NGA Center, CCSSO, and Achieve, Inc. gathered scholars, state superintendents, corporate and nonprofit executives, content experts and teachers to draft a set of academic content standards that would make American students more competitive globally. In doing so, their charge was not to look at the differences or specific needs between student populations, but explore those content areas where American students were adrift, i.e., reading, mathematics, and science. The report drafted through the collaboration of the three organizations, titled, *Benchmarking for Success: Ensuring U.S. Students Receive a World Class Education*, (NGA Center, CCSSO, and Achieve, Inc. 2008), hoped to highlight various educational indicators in which the United States once excelled in, but has since lagged, such as high school graduation. In essence, the report intimated the notion that American schools needed to “catch up” with other postindustrial nations, including Japan, Finland, the Netherlands, and other nations because our education system was failing to show progress on international assessments (NGA Center, CCSSO, and Achieve, Inc. 2008).

Thus, in 2009 a committee was created to be comprised of members from the NGA Center, CCSSO, Achieve, Inc., and the Gates Foundation to develop common content standards for grades kindergarten through the 12th grade. These common content standards would be referred to as the Common Core State Standards, and the inherent promulgation of these standards would be referred to as the Common Core State Standards Initiative. However, as many reform-minded educators, policymakers, and parents embrace this initiative, others believe: (1) commercial publishers will garner considerable influence when it comes to

developing English Language Arts (ELA) assessments, and (2) the learning process, and particularly, English language arts, cannot be taught by rigid prescription, Schmoker (2011).

Problem Statement

Although NCLB, and now ESSA prescribe academic achievement requirements respective to student subgroups, including ELLs, and considers their distinctive native language and literacy skills, the CCSS acknowledges language difference, but it does not provide a comprehensive pathway of success in the English language arts classroom (NGA Center & CCSSO, 2010c). Thus, the incongruence between federal requirements and state adopted academic standards, particularly when referencing the ELA, leaves many educators without respite to address the specific needs of this burgeoning population.

Further obfuscating the landscape with federal accountability provisions and attempts to meet the needs of ELL students, is the fact that many federal funding programs, i.e., Race to the Top, require participation from states only if they adopt rigorous academic content standards which address the learning needs of *all students*. Ultimately, the conundrum created by federal legislative edict and state “agency” may hinder CCSS from being a tool to advance the academic needs of ELLs; because ELLs truly have unique language and academic needs that must be recognized (Escamilla, 2006).

Another interesting aspect of the CCSS is that they stipulate what every American student should know by the time they complete a particular grade, not on the methods, processes, or procedures a teacher should implement to ensure that all students are engaged and learning. In other words, the CCSS illustrate the “what” and not the “how” a student learns. Many scholars perceive this as a practical method of letting state educational agencies and their respective school districts craft curricula that will incorporate the CCSS while providing latitude to teachers

on how they teach the standards (McLaughlin & Overturf, 2012). However, this nuance has led to a criticism that the CCSS are academic content standards that privilege the language and literacy skills of students from certain socioeconomic, racial/ethnic, and linguistic communities.

This problem is not a new phenomenon among educational researchers and policymakers, including the community of practitioners from elementary, middle, and high school. Gumperz (1962), long ago stated that specific linguistic communities (white, male, college educated, and typically a Northeastern resident) position themselves as the arbiter of the “correct” way to speak, behave, and value within our society.

Purpose of Study and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to (1) investigate whether the standards minimize the native language and literacy skills of ELLs, (2) assess whether they promote an ideological viewpoint on what constitutes a “literate individual,” and (3) scrutinize the ELA-CCSS to ascertain if they convey an ideology of language and literacy skill development that is counterintuitive to the interests of ELLs, parents, and ESL and content educators. The questions guiding my research are:

Research Questions:

1. In what ways, given the linguistic and cultural needs of English Language Learners, do the English Language Arts Standards of the Common Core State Standards address language and literacy learning for ELLs?
2. In what ways do the English Language Arts Standards of the Common Core State Standards prescribe the institutionalization of power structures and privilege particular ways of learning language and literacy for ELL students and teachers?
 - a. What was the impetus for the design and development of the CCSS?

- b. Who are the social actors and what is their positioning in the larger social order?
 - c. In what ways does institutional funding impact these power structures?
3. How do the English Language Arts Standards of the Common Core State Standards attempt to dictate the practices of teachers with respect to English Language Learners?

Design and Overview of Study

In framing the answers to the research questions, it is important that viable, practical, peer-acknowledged, and accepted theories and methodologies, including critical discourse analysis, be used to address the sociocultural and sociopolitical constructs of power, position, and privilege which, according to Woodside-Jiron (2011), are inherent within any public policy document that seeks to change the behavior of citizens, especially children. It should be noted that the ELA section of the CCSS is of greater, since it is language and literacy which are in the scope of this paper to illuminate power, positioning, and privilege within the standards, and inevitably throughout society. This by no means minimizes the necessity of American students to acquire the knowledge, skills, and abilities of math, science, and social studies to be well-rounded individuals; it is simply a constraint of this paper's theories, research focus, and space limitations.

Finally, this study employs a qualitative research design-critical discourse analysis to uncover some possible understandings of the questions previously outlined. Fourteen source documents, listed below, were analyzed to determine the cultural, social, and educational implications derived from the implementation of the ELA-CCSS throughout the consortia of states and their respective school districts.

Common Core State Standards Initiative Documents (4)

1. Introduction to the CCSS

2. *ELA-CCSS Standards for K-12*
3. *Application of CCSS to ELLs*
4. *Appendix A: Research Supporting the CCSS*

Academic Researcher's Critique of the ELA-CCSS (4)

1. *Common Core Standards: The New U.S. Intended Curriculum* by Andrew Porter, Jennifer McMaken, Jun Hwang and Rui Yang
2. *Organized Interests and the Common Core* by Lorraine M. McDonnell and M. Stephen Weatherford
3. *Investigating the Language Demand in the Common Core State Standards for English Language Learners: A Comparison Study of Standards* by Mikyung Kim Wolf, Yuan Wang, Becky H. Huang, and Ian Blood
4. *Educating Language Minority Students and Affirming Their Equal Rights: Research and Practical Perspectives* by Kenji Hakuta

Practitioner Advocacy Organization Viewpoint (6)

1. *Position Statement on Common Core State Standards* by the American Federation of Teachers
2. *AFT & the Common Core State Standards: a work in progress* by the American Federation of Teachers
3. *Position Statement on the Common Core State Standards* by TESOL
4. *Implementing the Common Core State Standards for English Learners: The Changing Role of the ESL Teacher* by TESOL
5. *Position Statement on Common Core State Standards* by the NEA
6. *Common Core Toolkit* by the NEA

These fourteen documents were coded and analyzed using the computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) NVivo according to a priori themes and grounded codes, the result of these analyses were used to develop theoretical concepts for further study using Norman Fairclough's three-stage critical discourse analysis methodology of description of the text, interpretation of the text, and explanation of the text.

Chapter II. Review of Literature

Introduction

The literature concerning academic content standards, particularly with regards to federal intervention is quite recent (National Commission of Excellence in Education, 1983).

Throughout the history of the United States of America, the federal government has played little role in *how* states educate their citizens. However, starting in the late twentieth century, the federal government decided to play a more direct role in the *how* and *what*. The current role of the federal government not only requires explicit fiscal accountability for federal title programs, like Title III-Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students within NCLB, but also in terms of their consultation on “rigorous” academic content standards that states adopt (NGA Center, CCSSO, and Achieve, 2008).

An extensive historical examination of the introduction of academic content standards in the United States is not in the purview of this research endeavor. However, it is important that this chapter provide a brief overview of how and why academic content standards became an important component of the standards movement within the modern era-1960’s – 2016’s.

This chapter employs a chronological approach in reviewing the literature available on the history of federal intervention and ELA academic content standards, the history of federal intervention and ELA standards for ELLs, and finally, literature concerning the ELA-CCSS and ELLs. The purpose for employing a chronological approach to this chapter is based on the fact that a preponderance of academic literature available underscores the importance of ELLs as a school subgroup in American classrooms. This particular aspect is indicative of the political and social power their proponents, as well as their opponents-English-only language advocates have

historically garnered and continue to garner in the field of education, and especially language education (Bethel, 1979; Krashen, 1996; Pease-Alvarez & Hakuta, 1992).

Furthermore, as exemplified in this review, the inclusion or exclusion of ELLs (and their language and literacy skills) in language classrooms has involved a systematic process based on the cultural mores of American society at various points in our history (Cummings, 1979; Porter, 1990). Hornberger (1987) called attention to the success of bilingual education for ELLs in the classroom but the failure of bilingual education as a federal policy, beginning with the implementation of the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 (BEA). This language policy, in America, is one of many issues concerning standards, curricula, and the teaching of English to ELLs and where the exploration of the academic literature begins.

Historical Development of Academic Content Standards

In 1983, a critical report of the American education system, titled “A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform” (National Commission of Excellence in Education, 1983), highlighted the disparity in academic achievement among various student populations. The word “standards” was mentioned several times throughout the report. In the context of the report, standards were used to refer to rigorous academic standards and high expectations for the American educational system (National Commission of Excellence in Education, 1983). Ultimately, for policymakers and educational professionals, the term standard would become and remain a word associated with political partisanship.

After the release of the report in 1983, the United States Department of Education, under President Ronald Reagan did not initiate moves to propose legislation or interact with state educational agencies to ensure that appropriate academic content standards were developed (Finn, 1993). There were two reasons for this inaction by the Reagan administration. First, the

President had campaigned for the abolishment of the Department of Education during the 1980 election; and second, President Reagan also believed education-was the province of the state (Cannon, 2000). Consequently, there was no significant federal role in the development of uniform academic content standards during Reagan's Presidency.

Kolb (1998) argues that it was President George H.W. Bush who campaigned as the "education president" in 1988 when the federal government would enter the public discourse on academic content standards. It was President H.W. Bush's intention to use the Nation at Risk report to garner support from governors and business leaders and assist in drafting educational standards that would ensure all students meet minimal academic requirements in seven core academic subjects (arts, civics and government, English language arts, foreign languages, geography, history, and science) as proposed in the Nation at Risk Report (Kolb, 1998). Hence, in September of 1989, President H.W. Bush, members of the National Governor's Association, Senator George Mitchell (ME), and Representative Richard Gephardt (MO) met and established the National Educational Goals Panel.

The panel's primary task was to draft ideas for the federal government to assist states in transforming education. Ultimately, the National Educational Goals Panel proposed three major recommendations for the federal government, states, and business leaders. The first recommendation was for policymakers, along with the academic community, to develop academic content standards that would incorporate viable educational objectives that each state could adopt to ensure academic achievement for all students. The second recommendation that the panel proffered involved national assessments to track student performance on content exams. Third, the panel recommended federal financial and technical assistance be provided to states and external organizations throughout the entire process of creating standards and

assessments (Kolb, 1998; Finn, 1993). Later, these recommendations would be codified into President H.W. Bush's K-12 educational policy known as America 2000.

Although establishing the National Educational Goals Panel's and its concordant organization, the National Council on Education Standards and Testing's efforts were hailed by some state officials and business leaders as an accomplishment which would benefit America's school children, political partisanship would emerge as both houses, advocacy groups, policymakers and scholars debated the merits of creating a national standards and assessment system (Stedman & Riddle, 1992). In essence, many traditionally Democratic organizations, such as the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association, and the National School Board Association distrusted the efforts of some right-wing dogmatic groups and declined involvement in drafting national standards, and in particular, a national assessment.

With the political maneuvering by various parties continuing throughout President H.W. Bush's term (1989-1993), the likelihood of nationally developed standards seemed dim. The consternation between the various parties centered on the federal government's role in administering a national assessment (Ravitch, 2000). Despite the efforts of President H.W. Bush to encourage states, Congress, and certain advocacy organizations to draft, develop and administer academic content standards and subject assessments, the federal appropriation of the standards movement was derailed. In some circles, the federal intervention of states' education and civic responsibilities had been usurped by parents and educators, states' rights groups, and teacher-scholars; whereas in other circles, textbook publishers, test developers, and school choice proponents, the efficacy of national standards and assessments were critical to providing a fundamental shift in educational reform (Ravitch, 2000).

Nevertheless, the standards movement, along with its allies and proponents would each continue to promote its agenda concerning the development of national academic content standards and assessments. It was President William J. Clinton that furthered the push for rigorous academic content standards for all students. However, under President Clinton, the shift toward cooperation among the states, Congress, and the Department of Education centered primarily on the development of academic content standards as described by educational policy scholar, Kevin Kosar (2005). As mentioned before, the major issue that many states and their allies were concerned about was federal intervention into testing. Under President Clinton, that was no longer be the case. His primary goal was for all parties to unite in order to draft voluntary academic content standards, in the same seven subject areas as proposed by President H.W. Bush. Yet, President Clinton encouraged the federal government to assist states in the development of their *own* [emphasis added] assessments (Kosar, 2005).

In 1994, newly elected President Clinton formulated an educational policy for which much of the framework had been crafted under President H.W. Bush, whereby States could receive federal funding for participation in the development of academic content standards and state approved and administered content assessments. Kosar (2005) emphasized that President Clinton's effort to re-energize the standards movement would seek the codification of his educational policy from three initiatives: Goals 2000: Educate America Act, the Improving America's Schools Act, and voluntary national tests.

Two educational initiatives had already been proposed by President H.W. Bush-the voluntary national tests and the America 2000 legislation which was reframed reiterated by President Clinton as Goals 2000. However, Kosar (2005) noted that President Clinton's proposal did not only call for continued funding for technical assistance, standards and assessment

development within Goals 2000, but required those assessments to align with a “coherent curriculum (pg. 105).” He also required states and their school districts to be held accountable for the academic performance of all students in those content areas.

Yet, the academic literature illustrates that President Clinton’s efforts to create national standards, local assessments, and incorporate school accountability into a viable national educational policy was hindered by a Congress more concerned with the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA) minus his signature provisions (Johnston & Diegmüller, 1995; Kosar, 2005; Ravitch, 2000). However, in 1994, Congress and their various allies and proponents (Apple, 1993; Darling-Hammond, 1994; Hirsh, 1996; Ohanian, 1999; Tucker & Coddling, 1998) did agree that the federal government could and should continue to assist and fund states in the development of their own standards and assessments, they stressed the importance of them remaining a responsibility of the state.

Surprisingly, the one initiative that did pass was the requirement that states and their respective districts and schools be held accountable for students’ academic achievement, as outlined in the Improving America’s Schools Act (Kosar, 2005).

Scholars Murmane and Levy (1996), Ravitch (2000), and Kosar (2005) argued the merits of President Clinton’s educational policy, particularly as it related to the funding states to develop standards and assessments. Their contention is that after the passage and implementation of President Clinton’s three major educational initiatives, 47 of the states received federal funding for technical assistance to develop standards and assessments, as long as they adhered to the accountability provisions in Improving America’s School Act; yet, many of the states still did not employ either accountability provisions or models to measure student performance (Ravitch, 2000; Kosar, 2005).

There were two significant achievements of President Clinton's educational policy during his tenure. First, was the fact that many national professional organizations, such as the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), the International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Council of English Teachers (NCTE), and the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences (NRC) drafted academic standards of which elements continue to influence state policies (Murmane & Levy, 1996; Kosar, 2005). Second, even today, accountability for student performance on content assessments has remained an important, if not controversial, component of what is perceived to be academic achievement (Kosar, 2005).

The activities of the standards movement under President George Bush, as well as the actions of President Bush were minimal based on the fact that many states had worked with national professional organizations and adopted their academic content standards. Among the various allies and proponents of national standards and assessments, there was less disagreement on standards development, and the call for a national assessment had partially diminished, since President Bush's educational initiative centered on continuing to hold states accountable for student achievement for all students, and especially certain demographic subgroups (Kosar, 2005).

In 2001, President Bush signed the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) as a reauthorization of ESEA, which called for the continued technical assistance of states for the development of standards and assessments. However, the U.S. Department of Education would now hold states accountable for the academic achievement of all subgroups of students with punitive consequences if they did not demonstrate a significant increase in the number and percentage of students achieving proficient scores on content exams. This caveat would apply to states, districts, and their schools (NCLB, 2001).

As such, NCLB has been the standard bearer of educational reform in the United States for a decade and a half. Although, it did not compel states to adhere to national standards or assessments, the literature suggests that it has caused considerable damage to the effectiveness of schools in socioeconomically deprived areas that typically serve students who are low-income, ELLs, and/or have special-needs while also bolstering the school-choice movement (Darling-Hammond, 2007; Kosar, 2005; Ravitch, 2011; Sunderman et al, 2005).

The current literature investigating President Barack Obama educational policies is sparse, considering his main objective since taking office has been to reauthorize the ESEA. However, he has also endorsed national academic content standards, as have his predecessors. This particular refrain of President Obama's educational policies will be examined later in the Common Core ELA Standards and ELLs section.

Historical Development of Academic Content Standards and ELLs

The federal government's first encroachment into advancing the English language skills, and native language skills of students—who were then referred to as limited English speaking ability (LESA) students, was with the passage of the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 (BEA). It was this bill that began the debate on how standards would impact a population of students whom were typically overlooked. This section addresses literature concerning the recognition of ELLs as a distinct population within American schools warranting a different language policy and instructional strategies.

Gloria Stewner-Manzanares provides a thorough history of the BEA and its expectations for what was considered a burgeoning Hispanic and Latino population during the 1960's. The enactment of the bill set forth provisions to primarily teach Spanish as a native language, and English as a second language, as well as develop and implement programs designed to give

Spanish-speaking students an appreciation of their ancestral language and culture (Stewner-Manzanares, 1988). Ultimately, before its passage in 1968, the BEA would be re-drafted to include more than thirty-seven other languages. It should be noted that the passage of this bill was the first federal recognition of students who spoke a language other than English; as having special language and literacy needs. Furthermore, the bill also stated that it was in the best interest of the nation's schools to promote bilingual programs that provided educational opportunities for bilingual students (Stewner-Manzanares, 1988). Most importantly, the BEA encouraged classroom instruction in a language other than English as a practice of instilling the development of language and literacy skills and cultural awareness.

As reiterations of the bill would come to light, particularly with their reauthorizations in 1974, 1978, 1984, and 1988, the act offered very few guidelines for the implementation of academic content standards relative to the language and literacy skills of non-native English speakers (Stewner-Manzanares, 1988). Also, it became evident after several legal cases, (*see Lau v. Nichols 1974; United States v. Texas, 1971, 1981; Serna v. Portales, 1974, Aspira v. New York, 1978, and Rios v. Reed, 1978*) that some districts and schools were segregating their LESA students from their non-LESA peers. Examples of the illegal practices included: not providing adequate instruction in their native language, using textbooks and curriculum resources that were woefully inadequate to develop proficiency in either their native language or English, and not following instructional guidelines to ensure “success” [emphasis added] on summative academic content assessments (Glazer, 1988; Levy, 1984; Stewner-Manzanares, 1988).

Despite the poor federal guidance and technical assistance throughout the implementation of the BEA during its reauthorizations, a major revelation that occurred among scholars, teachers, and policymakers during the mid-70's, 80's, and early 90's, it was argued standards of language

proficiency do not ensure the development of native language and literacy skills, or English, when there are only English language arts standards, (Wilson, 2010). As stated earlier, the consternation between developing English language and literacy skills and aligning them with English language development standards, as well as doing the same for bilingual learners, who come to school with their own language and literacy skills would encourage political and cultural wars which came to a head in the 1990's under President Clinton.

Interestingly, as the U.S. courts, parents, educators, and policymakers debated the value of drafting curriculum and content standards to support the language and literacy development of ELLs during the 1980's and early 1990's, Bernard Mohan (1986), a prominent second language acquisition scholar from Canada, wrote about the need for standards, curriculum, and teaching to connect second language learning with the subject areas. As a researcher who investigated language teaching methods for bilingual learners, Mohan sought to define effective teaching methods that language and content teachers could both employ, which would cultivate the native language and literacy skills of their students, while learning English and the required academic content. His influential text, *Language and Content*, was written after the Bullock Report (1975); a government report from the United Kingdom that explored not only the teaching of English to immigrant children, but the need to ensure that content teachers were trained in delivering instruction and content to bilingual learners, without alienating them from their native peers and communities.

Mohan proposed four guidelines, which oddly enough, were not revolutionary in regard to second language acquisition. First, as evident in the U.S. court case, *Lau v. Nichols*, Mohan believed it was pedagogically inefficient to separate second language learners from their regular classroom peers. As Mohan (1986) explained, the separation of second language learners from

the content area classrooms did nothing but support the “deficit model” of language learning, and delayed content acquisition for students because they would always lag behind their peers. This instructional “pull-out” method of the language teacher arriving at the classroom door and removing second language learners from the content classroom, undoubtedly inhibited the progress the content teacher made as he/she attempted to help ELL students learn in math, science, or social studies.

Second, the practice of keeping second language learners in the regular classroom as their peers, led to another perspective which is still considered important in second language acquisition—developing a framework for reading and writing across the curriculum. Mohan (1986) touched upon the importance of language and content teachers working collectively to ensure that second language learners would not fall behind in content knowledge—assuming that the curriculum was constructed to accommodate diverse language skills. This idea is no different from the suggestion that Mohan’s research counterpart, Jim Cummins (1979; 1981) advocated.

Third, Mohan posited that second language learners brought language, culture, and transnational experiences that they could share with their peers in the language and content classroom; and likewise, their native English peers had valuable experiences to share. Mohan (1986) insisted that these cross-cultural, language, and in-and-out of school experiences could be exploited by language and content teachers to bridge differences, support peer collaboration, and promote language development.

Fourth, building on some of the suggestions, Mohan (1986) thought it would be prudent for academic content standards, language proficiency standards, curriculum, and assessments to be cohesive. Academic content and language proficiency standards should be aligned to a curriculum for bilingual learners, and summative assessments should measure the amount of

language a student had acquired in order to reach proficiency in their new language, thereby, confirming that student had the language skills to fully participate in their classrooms.

Unfortunately, while these ideas would encourage a new manner of actualizing second language acquisition instruction, curriculum development, and standards among educators and researchers, the political climate in America continued to stagnate.

By 1994, it became apparent that many states had sought to incorporate the best instructional practices in their content areas for ELLs, as directed in the BEA of 1994, in which local districts were then able to apply directly to the federal government for funding to develop academic standards for ELLs (Kosar, 2005). Combining the new BEA legislation with the reauthorization of the ESEA, which included the provision of accountability for student success (Improving America's Schools Act), it became imperative that the academic success of all students be achieved.

Yet, the literature suggests that although professional organizations, like the NCTM, NCTE, IRA, and others, were contracted to work with states and districts to consider the language and literacy skills of ELLs, many scholars, policymakers, and some states still had reservations or lacked the capacity on how to connect academic content standards with language proficiency benchmarks for ELLs (Chavez, 1996; Roth, 1996). In fact, many critics debated whether it was even necessary to create language proficiency standards and/or maintain bilingual programs if professional associations were working with states to ensure that academic content standards fostered differentiation of instruction for ELLs (Guadarrama, 1996; Peterson, 1996; Portes & Schaufli, 1996).

Thus, the battle would rage on during the 1990's about how to best develop academic content standards that considered to the native language and literacy skills of ELLs; and tie those

standards to language proficiency in both the student's native language and English. Inevitably, the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) would be the first organization to develop language proficiency standards for ELLs in 1997 (TESOL, 1997). These addressed English language development, but unfortunately were not aligned to specific academic content areas.

The alignment of academic content standards and English proficiency development, along with valuing the native language and literacy skills would eventually arrive just a few years after the passage of NCLB in 2004, when the WIDA Consortium, a University of Wisconsin allied-research organization, developed English language proficiency standards that were linked to content areas, such as mathematics, language arts, science, and social studies (WIDA, 2004).

This document was the first of its kind to acknowledge that ELLs have distinct language and literacy skills, and that academic content standards must be aligned with language proficiency standards (WIDA, 2004). The research supporting how academic content standards could be aligned with language proficiency standards had been based on years of accumulated knowledge regarding second language acquisition (WIDA, 2004). Furthermore, this document was created during the Bush administration, who through the Department of Education funded Enhanced Assessment Grants (EAG), which were used to create assessments that would ensure all student subgroups, including ELLs, achieved academic success in two particular content areas: reading and math. Ultimately, the WIDA Consortium sought to draft English language development standards that would be beneficial to classroom teachers by encompassing several academic content areas.

The Development of the Common Core State Standards

It is well documented that the CCSSO and the NGA's Center for Best Practices were the primary social actors in the development process that proffered the Common Core State Standards to states and their districts (2010d). Ultimately, the rationale of these two organizations was consistent with their claims that students in the U.S. were falling behind their international peers on international assessments, the TIMSS and PISA, but also that students would fall further behind if their performance on these assessments was not addressed (NGA Center, CCSSO, & Achieve Inc., 2008).

American student performance on the TIMSS and PISA was the primary motivation for the two organizations, along with Achieve Inc., to draft a report titled, *Benchmarking for success: Ensuring U.S. students receive a world-class education*, and this document cited that American students were 25th in math, 21st in achievement, and 14th in college graduation, out of 27 of the highest gross domestic producing countries in 2006 (NGA Center, CCSSO & Achieve, Inc., 2008). These organizations were not content with the American education system lagging behind other countries, particularly China, whose gross domestic product was rapidly increasing in comparison to the USA's. This poor assessment performance by American students was perceived as an indicator that the US would eventually fall further behind *economically* and *educationally* if action was not taken to address both of those factors. Interestingly, Ravitch (2011) argued that the linking of these two indicators was based on a faulty assumption that would further obfuscate the issue of educational equity within the US. She stated in her text, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System: How Testing and Choice Are Undermining Education* that policymakers should be more concerned with addressing issues of poverty, teacher training, educational funding, and student engagement, rather than solely on assessments.

Berliner and Glass (2014) also challenged the notion that assessment performance on the TIMSS and PISA should drive educational reform in the United States. In their text, *50 Myths & Lies That Threaten America's Public Schools*, they addressed many of the claims that prompted the development of the CCSS. First, they noted that the CCSS would not grow the economy, as some have claimed. They posit that the American economy is a function of creativity, ingenuity, and entrepreneurship. American student engagement would diminish if an education system was built around the Common Core standards and its high stakes tests.

Second, Berliner and Glass (2014) suggested that the CCSS would not create high paying jobs. It is the investment of capital that creates jobs. Contrary to the belief of some, merely educating a person does not necessarily create a job for that person. The authors note that if it did, there would be much lower unemployment in many poor nations around the world. Further, because of curriculum standardization, the Common Core may make experienced teachers less necessary and certainly less costly.

Third, the authors identified the use of the term “rigor” in the CCSS. While the term "rigor" is constantly used throughout the CCSS, the application of "rigor" is sometimes used to keep poor and minority students out of college preparatory and AP courses because it is assumed that the courses would be too hard for them. To them, rigor is often a code word for discrimination. Correspondingly, Berliner and Glass (2014) felt that the Common Core would not reduce the achievement gap. The standards were not written by experienced educators, and so they do not consider the individual needs of students of varying abilities who populate the classes in our public schools. Some students might need to be challenged more, some students need to be challenged with a different curriculum, and there are those who face challenges in

learning at the levels expected at each grade. As Berliner and Glass say, “The CCSS do not have much to say about these realities of classroom life.”

Fourth, Berliner and Glass (2014) debunk the myth that American students are less successful on achievement assessments like PISA, particularly considering our diverse population. Although we are constantly benchmarking American school performance against the Finns, we might be better served by benchmarking our school policies and social programs against theirs. For example, Finland’s social policies result in a rate of children in poverty, those living in families whose income is less than 50% of median income in the nation, is estimated at well under 5%. In the USA that rate is estimated at well over 20%. The achievement gaps between blacks and whites, Hispanics and Anglos, English language learners and native speakers, the poor and the rich, are hard to erase because the gaps have only a little to do with what goes on in schools, and more to do with social and cultural factors that affect student performance.

How does this relationship between poverty and achievement play out? It is quite clear that America’s students score remarkably high if they are in schools where less than 10% of the children are eligible for free and reduced lunch. The data presented are fourth-grade mathematics data, but eighth- grade mathematics, and science data at both the fourth and eighth grades, provide the same pattern. If this group of a few million students were a nation, it would have scored the highest in the world on these tests in mathematics and science. Our youth also score quite high if they are in schools where between 10 and 24.9% of the children are poor. These two groups of youth, attending schools where fewer than 25% of the students come from impoverished families, total about 12 million students, and their scores are exceeded by only four nations in the world: Shanghai-China, Singapore, Finland, and South Korea.

American students perform well even if they attend schools where poverty rates of youth are between 25 and 49.9%. And these three groups of students total about 26 million students, over half the U.S. elementary and secondary public school population. It is quite clear that America's public school students achieve at high levels when they attend schools that are middle- or upper-middle-class in composition.

Despite calls from educators and administrators to concentrate more on the needs of students in the classroom, in 2008 the NGA Center and CCSSO, with encouragement from American industrialists, began the process of drafting academic content standards that would alleviate some of the supposed low performance by American students. Their impetus was to create *consistent* academic content standards, align them with assessments, hold state and local educational agencies accountable, and promote curricula that enhanced student performance. Hence, the NGA Center, CCSSO, and Achieve Inc. gathered policymakers and content experts, based on recommendations from four practitioner advocacy organizations, NCTM, the NEA, AFT, and NCTE, to write and highlight the challenges they shared about America's place in the global market (NGA Center, CCSSO & Achieve, Inc., 2008).

In fact, they enumerated (see below) their proposals for moving the American educational system forward with the report, *Benchmarking for success: Ensuring U.S. students receive a world-class education*. Under the heading, Five Steps Toward Building Globally Competitive Education Systems, it was obvious that the intent of this report was to make America great again, if not the leader in all of the important social and economic indicators (NGA Center, CCSSO & Achieve, Inc., 2008). Inevitably, these five actions would become the backbone for the development of the Common Core State Standards.

Five Steps Toward Building Globally Competitive Education Systems

Action 1: Upgrade state standards by adopting a common core of internationally benchmarked standards in math and language arts for grades K-12 to ensure that students are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to be globally competitive.

Action 2: Leverage states' collective influence to ensure that textbooks, digital media, curricula, and assessments are aligned to internationally benchmarked standards and draw on lessons from high-performing nations and states.

Action 3: Revise state policies for recruiting, preparing, developing, and supporting teachers and school leaders to reflect the human capital practices of top-performing nations and states around the world.

Action 4: Hold schools and systems accountable through monitoring, interventions, and support to ensure consistently high performance, drawing upon international best practices.

Action 5: Measure state-level education performance globally by examining student achievement and attainment in an international context to ensure that, over time, students are receiving the education they need to compete in the 21st century economy. (p. 4).

Finally, the *Benchmarking for success: Ensuring U.S. students receive a world-class education* (2008) report articulated the role that the federal government should play in assisting state and local educational agencies in implementing these five actions. Specifically, the federal role would be to (1) offer funding to address each entities needs for standards and assessments, curriculum, human capital, and accountability, (2) increase funding for research and development to support the best teaching practices, (3) collect and share international and attainment data relevant to states, and (4) convene a technical advisory committee on assessment

to make recommendations for generating internationally benchmarked results by state (NGA Center, CCSSO & Achieve, Inc., 2008). Furthermore, the report emphasized the need for flexibility, particularly with funding, from the U.S. Department of Education to address regional or state specific shortcomings that only a state or local educational agency would be privy to, based on their student population.

Common Core Standards and ELLs

To this point in contemporary educational reform that pertains to ELLs and academic content standards, the debate has mainly focused on three issues: (1) the social and cultural attributes of a school population that has historically been considered the *other*, (2) the marginalization of the native language and literacy skills that ELLs bring with them into an American classroom (Mislevy & Duran, 2014), and (3) the political and policy expectations of how ELLs are required to adapt to classroom environments, and its assorted standards, curriculum, and assessments. However, these policies fail to acknowledge the language these students bring with them to the classroom (Escamilla, 2006).

In the years following the passage of NCLB, many states continue to collaborate with the U.S. Department of Education, standards and curriculum developers, including WIDA, and textbook publishers-Pearson, et al., to ensure that their academic content standards were aligned with specific English language development standards for ELLs, and that assessments were capturing the language skills ELLs would need in order to be successful in content classrooms. According to scholars, such Hakuta and his colleagues (2013) and Wolf (2014) and her colleagues, this collaborative model proved successful for ELLs in that it focused on developing the native language and literacy skills that these students brought to the classroom. It also

fostered a commitment among language and content teachers to provide effective instruction to ELLs.

However, the problem that academics, and eventually policymakers, would notice was that academic content standards many states had adopted were not as rigorous as the English language development standards that they had also adopted (Wolf et al., 2014). Thus, ELLs were obtaining language skills, but those language skills were not sufficient to enable students to excel in the content classroom, or on content assessments (Boals, Kenyon, Blair, Cranley, Wilmes, and Wright, 2015). The English language assessment, measured an ELLs knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and other skills. This caused a conundrum because ever since the passage of NCLB states who received Title III funds were held accountable for the development of English as well as the native language skills of ELLs. Thus, the focus of parents, educators, and policymakers was on educational parity across the racial/ethnic, social, and cultural student subgroups.

Inevitably, the political climate would necessitate a shift back to educational reforms that sought consistent academic content standards for all students in the U.S. The breakthrough for this new movement would come from a report drafted by the National Governor's Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and Achieve Inc. in 2008, titled, *Benchmarking for success: Ensuring U.S. students receive a world-class education*. The purpose of this document was to compare American students, in all categories and subgroups to their international peers in the areas of reading, math, and science. In particular, the report detailed how poorly American students performed in these content areas, not necessarily because of social status, income, or some other demographic factor, but because American schools fail to employ uniform academic content standards that all students, regardless of background, could meet in order to be

considered successful in the classroom (NGA Center et al, 2008). This document would eventually set the groundwork for what would become the Common Core State Standards.

The Common Core State Standards (2010c) in English language arts and mathematics were introduced in 2010 through the collaborative efforts of the National Governor's Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers. With the approval of Education Secretary Arne Duncan and President Barack Obama initiative-Race to the Top, states could apply for funding to develop computer adaptive assessments, evidence-based curricula, high-quality teaching standards and evaluations which might include value-added modeling, i.e., student assessment scores tied to teaching effectiveness, maintain accountability for all student subgroups as prescribed in NCLB, and encourage family engagement, if they adopted these college and career ready standards, otherwise known as the Common Core.

Needless to say, many states have taken the money from the U.S. Department of Education since the Common Core's inception in 2010 to achieve the educational reform goals they have set forth. Yet, the debate remains amongst advocates of national standards whether the Common Core is a viable means to ensure that all students, especially ELLs, excel in language classrooms (Filmore, 2014). Some writers maintain that the Common Core is yet another effort by the federal government and prominent well-funded advocacy groups to undermine a states' abilities and capabilities of better educate citizens, including ELLs (Rothman, 2012). Their main supposition is that academic content standards should be state-specific and based on their student population which include the needs of standards for ELLs, special education students, and gifted students. Consequently, the federal government must recognize that students' language and literacy skills grow at different rates depending on factors such as time in the U.S., parent involvement, and student engagement, and yes, sociocultural and socioeconomic characteristics.

There are academics who believe that the ideological bickering is moot and that the continued collaborative efforts of language and content teachers to cohesively work together to better serve ELLs is the most important strategy that educators and policymakers alike should encourage (Maxwell, 2014; Boals et al., 2015). For example, the State of California is perceived as an exemplar with respect to the Common Core. They have used the Common Core to develop a framework that language and content teachers can use to address the language and literacy skills of ELLs who happen to be predominantly Spanish speaking. In essence, what California has done is enhance the Common Core by adding language and content features that promote a students' native language and literacy skills, while also ensuring that they acquire the content knowledge they need to be successful in the classroom. This does not mean that ELLs' language and content teachers will only have to focus on the Spanish language, it actually means that as a student is assessed in English each year, he/she gradually moves toward a model of instruction totally in English, as bilingual education is illegal in California under Proposition 227. In other words, the more a student learns English, and the more proficient he/she becomes with content and language learning, the better schools can move the students toward instruction in English.

Some scholars (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Ravitch, 2011) believe that the government has overstepped in regard to its role in education, particularly following the adoption of the Common Core. Some researchers (Hakuta, 2013) believe that even though the federal government has created a system in which national academic content standards are essentially the norm, it is still incumbent upon states and their respective school districts to ensure that ELLs receive the language and literacy instruction they will need to navigate "post-school" environments. Hakuta believes that this may be accomplished if states use the Common Core standards alongside English language development standards, for example those developed by

WIDA. Conversely, if both sets of standards are aligned with curriculum and assessments that demonstrate language and content growth and proficiency, ELLs should have more of an opportunity to be successful in their language and content classrooms.

To date, 43 states have adopted the standards, whether in total, or with name changes. Many of these states are also using WIDA's ELPD standards to correspond with their academic content standards for ELLs, and others are not. Most of the states are involved within two different assessment consortia-PARCC or Smarter Balanced. Others are not. Despite the current debate in Congress regarding the reauthorization of the ESEA, the only resource that states have to rely on with regards to the expected development of their ELLs language and literacy skills are the WIDA ELPD standards, which are language and literacy standards that seek to determine how much English a student has acquired in terms of language, rather than content standards.

Therefore, the question remains, what do academic content standards mean to students whose native language and literacy skills are not taken into consideration when developing them? Will these students take considerably longer to acquire academic content knowledge because their native language and literacy skills are not equal to their non-ELL peers? Or, should academic content standards be developed in concert with English language development standards for ELLs? These are questions that the future holds for answers from educators, policymakers, and scholars; and the current research being conducted may provide some of these answers in the best interest of ELLs.

Native Language and Academic Language Acquisition

As has been mentioned in previous sections of this dissertation, the native language and literacy skills of ELLs are rarely if ever considered in the initial development of academic content standards by designers and developers. Even after acknowledging ELLs in the three-page

document drafted by the NGA Center and CCSSO, *Application of Common Core State Standards for English Language Learners* (2010f), the document does not explicitly highlight how the Common Core Standards may cultivate the native language and literacy skills of ELLs, promote the development of academic English language acquisition, or contribute to academic achievement in the content areas.

In recent years, several educational researchers have highlighted the need to distinguish between the acquisition of English for the sake of assimilating into the dominant discourses of US society, and the acquisition of classroom discourse for academic success (Cummins, 2008; Bailey, 2007; Bloome, 2008). These scholars emphasize that for many ELLs, their initial encounter with English (in an American classroom) is more than likely going to privilege the language and literacy demands required by specific content areas, i.e., mathematics, social studies, and science, than the language they bring to the classroom. Whereby, inevitably, because of standards and curriculum decisions made by parties unfamiliar with the local needs and abilities of culturally and linguistically diverse students, their academic needs are secondary to the needs of the state (Apple, 1995; 2004). In short, painfully, this academic socialization model is chiefly concerned with the students' rapid acclimation into academic subject based discourses, rather than the development of a teaching and learning plan that encourages language proficiency and academic success. As well as the students' use of the English language to achieve their own goals.

Cummins (2008) recognized not only the distinction between social and academic language, but also timeframes in which a second language learners are more likely to acquire these language abilities. For example, Cummins (2008) believed that Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS); these are the everyday language skills students need in social

situations, may be acquired by many students within six months to two years. Whereas, Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP); academic (content) language acquisition in the four domains of reading, writing, listening, and speaking, may take anywhere from five to seven years. The importance of Cummins's research to the academic community was to substantiate what others had also recognized-that there are multiple discourses of English; and that the acquisition of each of those discourses requires time and instructional support. Academic discourses generally require support from teachers and administrators in formal school settings (Cummins, 2008; Gonzalez, Moll, and Amanti, 2005).

Other second language researchers that have conducted studies to understand the linguistic abilities of ELLs relative to the acquisition of academic language (Anstrom, DiCerbo, Butler, Katz, Millet, and Rivera, 2010), (Gonzalez, et al. (2005). In their study which contrasted academic language to interpersonal communication, for second language learners, Anstrom et al. (2010) concluded that "the grammatical structures used in formal academic reading and writing [are] contrasted to those structures from informal written and spoken language" (p. 16). Their study further elucidated that "each discipline has its own particular norms of organizing texts. Students must learn the particular linguistic conventions for writing in the humanities, a lab report in the sciences and a proof in mathematics" (p.1). In the end, the authors assert that academic language and interpersonal communication are not opposites, but rather interrelated aspects of language for second language learners.

Similarly, Gonzalez et al.'s (2005) study, focused on second language learners and the lenses through which they acquire language in school, in the home, and throughout their neighborhoods and communities, as well as the language and literacy skills they develop with and from their peers. Their compelling research supports the sentiment that it is incumbent upon

schools to leverage the native language and literacy skills that students bring to the classroom, which can help promote the development of their second language and their native language. Moreover, Gonzalez et al. (2005), recognize that an academic language and literacy model for ELLs that focuses on the social and situated nature of learning rather than the English language deficits of second language learners benefits all students. In short, the native language and literacy skills of ELLs must be valued by educators.

There has been significant educational research into academic language and literacy for ELLs in the content areas. For example, Lemke (2002) has done research in the area of science literacy. His research has shown that rather than educators assuming that the linguistic needs of ELLs requiring an intense “dose” of academic vocabulary, educators should consider multiple semiotic systems, including graphs, tables, charts, drawings, and equations. The use of these other forms of communication encourage students to explore relationships between language and other modalities. Lemke’s (2002) contention with affording the more conventional approaches to language acquisition, (i.e., reading and writing) for ELLs, as opposed to a multimodal approach, limits the types of interactions that ELLs have with language, and ultimately, limits their self-directed forms of meaning-making.

Likewise, research conducted by Colombi and Schleppegrell (2002) illustrate the acquisition of academic English by examining context. Context for students learning academic English is viewed as a form of apprenticeship (gradual acclimation into the language) into a specific discourse community. For example, mathematics, science, or art all have distinct vocabularies, patterns of processing information, and methods of deriving answers to questions. Colombi and Schleppegrell (2002) conducted research to explore how educators approached the acquisition of academic language (in mathematics, for example) for their students. For example,

they examined whether developing a community of practice within classrooms enabled students to develop a greater understanding of social and linguistic expectations. This approach to learning academic language for ELLs proved beneficial in three ways: (1) the approach views bi- and multilingual students as capable and competent (2) it promotes a shared culture of learning in that discourse community among all students, and (3) it highlights the different types of academic discourse communities and how students would engage in those discourses.

Academic content standards and academic language acquisition for ELLs are of primary concern for Sato. In Sato's (2015) chapter, "Establishing a Foundation for Academic Literacy: The Role of Standards," Sato discusses the lengthy process of designing and developing academic standards, and how this process ultimately affected instruction and assessment. She maintained that before stakeholders outside of the standards design and development process could comprehend the impact of instruction and assessment, they needed a basic understanding of what a standard is, and what academic literacy entails.

First, Sato (2015) provides the reader with a concise definition of what an academic standard is, "[a] statement of expectations for student learning" (p. 279). Second, she clearly rearticulates what other language and literacy scholars mean when they use the term, academic literacy, "the knowledge and skills needed to read and write as well as competencies and understanding of language, its contexts, and its uses" (p. 277). Sato emphasizes that these two definitions are important in conveying the "what," that is expected in terms of academic language and literacy development for linguistic and culturally diverse students, whereas, designers and developers of instruction and assessment materials are most concerned with the "how."

Drawing on these theoretical concepts as a foundation for moving forward, Sato (2015) identifies three key recommendations of a general theory of action for developing and implementing academic content standards for linguistically and culturally diverse students. First, the theory of action must encompass the current research on the academic literacy knowledge and skills required for ELLs to be successful in the content classroom, considering their native language skills. Second, those academic literacy knowledge and skills must be reflected in the academic content standards, and third, those knowledge and skills must be associated with proficiency, or rather, clear distinctions of “acceptable” performance in the classroom and on other forms of assessments. With these three ideas in mind for the crafting of a general theory of action for connecting native language and academic language and literacy, they can assist academic content designers and developers in supporting ELL academic achievement.

Critical Discourse Analysis in Education

Thus far, much of the research discussed in this paper about ELLs has been attributed to academic content standards and the attempt by different interest groups to either acknowledge or disregard their native or heritage language and literacy skills in the development of academic content standards. It is only recently in the United States of America that some scholars have begun to employ discourse analysis or critical discourse analysis as a theoretical framework and methodology for studying education (Rogers, 2011). Several of these studies have had an impact on how scholars and practitioners view language in use, classroom dynamics in relation to discourse moves by the teacher, and of course, power, meaning-making, and agency. This section highlights education research conducted through the theoretical lens of discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis.

Allan Luke (1995) was one of the first contemporary language and literacy researchers to use critical discourse analysis to investigate constructs of power and ideology in the classroom and how they persist throughout society. His article, *Text Discourse in Education: An Introduction to Critical Discourse Analysis*, highlighted the demographic and socioeconomic shifts that placed language and difference at the forefront of education. In the article, Luke provides historical highlights on how educational researchers in the 1980's made the turn toward comprehending how language was used in the classroom, society, and in policy documents to convey how indigenous people, immigrants, women, minorities, and working-class people were outright invisible in public discourse.

With the theoretical foundation of critical discourse analysis, Luke also illustrated how from the classroom to the board room, discourse in life could be viewed as a means for the naturalization of language in use and disguise power relations that are tied to social, political, and economic inequities (Luke, 1995). The results of his study suggested that the dominant discourses in contemporary society tend to represent those social formations and power relations that are the direct result of a dominated history, culture, and disruptive patterns of allocating resources to schools filled with "others." In imparting his experience in using critical discourse analysis to other education researchers, he emphasized and reminded them that critical discourse analysis is a political act which seeks to intervene or destabilize "authoritative discourses" (Bakhtin, 1981) and bring to the forefront issues of inequality, domination, and subordination.

Following Luke's investigation into discourse, Anderson's (2001) study, *Disciplining leaders: a critical discourse analysis of the ISLLC National Examination and Performance Standards in educational administration*, used Fairclough's three-dimensional framework approach (description, interpretation, and explanation) to evaluate the Interstate School Leaders

Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards for educational administrators. These six foundation standards were first developed under Governor George Bush in Texas to ensure that all Texas education administrators were certified through testing, and ultimately, would be held accountable for student performance in their schools. Inevitably, as Governor Bush became President Bush, his accountability provisions would follow him to Washington, D.C. As a result, a consortium, with the assistance of the CCSSO, was created to use the Texas model to create a national licensing and certification body for education administrators.

The results of Anderson's (2001) study suggested that the ISLLC National Examination and Performance Standards in educational administration were filled with a language that meant different things to different people, and the language of the standards were intended to appease many constituencies. Anderson's study also stated that the standards might have been tendered to an audience that wanted to legitimize the field of education administration. Furthermore, the exam for certification itself focused more on issues of control, public relations, and educational theories that purported learning deficits in children, and blamed their communities for their lack of educational success. Anderson's critical analysis of the standards suggest that they were awash in a misunderstanding of leadership, sound education theory, and discourses of democracy and equity.

Another noted language and literacy scholar, Rebecca Rogers and her colleagues Malancharuvil-Berkes, Mosley, Hui, and Joseph (2005) conducted an extensive review of academic literature on critical discourse analysis in education titled, *Critical Discourse Analysis in Education: A Review of the literature*. Rogers and her colleagues trace the history of combining social theories with linguistic work back to Dubois (1990), Voloshinov (1973), Bakhtin (1981), Gumperz (1982), and other notable scholars. Rogers' et al. (2005) initial thesis

was that critical theory is not a unified set of perspectives, instead it is a combination of theoretical perspectives including post-structuralism, post-modernism, neo-colonial, critical race studies, queer theories, and so on. These theories are concerned with issues of power, justice, and the manner in which class, race, gender, economic status, religion, education, and sexual orientation construct, reproduce, or transform social practices and systems (2005).

The researcher's (Rogers et al., 2005) methodology involved reviewing five databases in the social sciences using the term "critical discourse analysis" from the years 1980 through 2003. The types of texts included in their search focused on peer-reviewed journal articles and books. They were chiefly concerned with studies that used critical discourse analysis in education in three areas: (1) formal education (the classroom), (2) informal education (after-school programs, family literacy programs, etc.), and (3) educational policy documents. After an initial search of 803 documents, they eventually collected forty-six documents to review.

The findings of Rogers' et al. (2005) analyses showed that there were multiple meanings of critical discourse analysis. Some educational researchers (Potter et al., 1990) defined critical discourse analysis in relation to post-structuralism, others defined critical discourse analysis in terms of goals, aims, or functions, while a third group of researchers (Van Dijk, 1985, 1993) defined it on the basis of its association to Systemic Functional Linguistics, a more text based analysis. A final group of authors (Wodak & Meyers, 1997; Janks, 1997) defined critical discourse analysis as just the descriptive stage of Fairclough's three-tiered framework, which again, only examines the linguistic features of text. Rogers and her colleagues argued that the mode of language investigated tended toward written text compared to oral text, which is more often found in classrooms, and the lack of acknowledging one's reflexivity in the articles or books by the scholars.

Following the study by Rogers et al. (2005), Burns and Morrell (2006) wrote the highly cited article, *Why Critical Discourse Analysis in Literacy Research*. This article provided the authors' perspective on the importance of using critical discourse analysis as a theoretical and methodological tool in literacy pedagogy, literacy practices, and literacy policy. Based on the writings of Bakhtin (1981; 1986) and Foucault (1972), they argued that meanings are constructed through social processes, practices, and discourse. These socially constructed meanings are not neutral and often privilege some while marginalizing or excluding others. Consequently, it becomes important for literacy researchers and educators to understand how classroom discourses shape "meaning" in ways that promote the social reproduction of inequality.

The advice Burns and Morrell's (2006) article conveys to researchers and educators has four points. First, the need to comprehend what critical discourse analysis is as a method of investigating language in use. Burns and Morrell, without diminishing other methods, relate how practical Fairclough's (1992, 2003) analytical process is useful in bridging the divide between what is truth and reality embedded with text. Second, the article emphasized the importance of becoming critical researchers beyond revealing dominant discourses. They suggested that it was important to examine the dominant discourses, but also examine how marginalized populations appropriate those dominant discourses in order to empower themselves in social and institutional life.

Third, Burns and Morrell (2006) expressed the need for teachers to understand how critical discourse analysis may be used as a pedagogical tool to restructure language instruction. Particularly, teachers should use words to position students as learners, without diminishing the language and literacy skills they bring to the classroom. This would include having lessons and conversations on an array of social issues, including race, class, and cultural awareness. Fourth,

Burns and Morrell note the need to employ critical discourse analysis as a policy tool because some educational policies intentionally and unintentionally shape, direct, sustain, and reproduce educational practices that harm marginalized and disempowered students. Critical discourse analysis can provide a set of tools and dispositions that enable various social groups involved in conversations about difference-place them on more equal footing toward the achievement of equitable outcomes.

A more poignant and pertinent text relevant to this dissertation is Taubman's (2009) *Teaching by Numbers: Deconstructing Discourse of Standards and Accountability in Education*. Artfully introducing his thesis, Taubman (2009) draws a comparison between the acts of painting by numbers and teaching by numbers. His exhaustive review of the literature covers a wide array of sources that range from policy reports, scholarly articles and books, newspaper articles, and speeches.

The primary result of Taubman's (2009) analysis, particularly concerning NCLB, is that ideologies accompany standards and accountability and they have implications for current systems of educational practices that "treat" students as observable and measurable products. Consequently, the predetermined teach by number prescriptive approach-acts in tandem with the system of standards and accountability, and it largely depicts teachers as incompetent. Finally, Taubman (2009) reiterates that fact that Americans must reflect on their own perceptions of the purpose of education, their definition of learning, and consider the heavy burden of responsibility placed on today's educators.

Chapter III. Theoretical Framework

Introduction

According to Merriam-Webster's online dictionary (2014), discourse refers to "a mode of organizing knowledge, ideas, or experience that is rooted in language and its concrete contexts," (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, n.d.). This short definition encompasses a range of human expression. Human expression which allows social scientists, and in particular, educational researchers the opportunity to investigate how words, texts, visual images, and other modes of communication contribute to discourses surrounding educational standards, curriculum, and instruction.

Within the field of education, discourse as a phenomenon has been examined by scholars in different contexts. For example, it has been studied on a micro-level to determine its impact on student performance, language used in and out of classrooms, and to analyze student-teacher interactions as they relate to student engagement. On the macro-level, discourse is studied by education scholars to determine policy intentions, power relations, and political agendas, as well as ideology, among other topics (Rogers, 2011).

In turn, discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis stem from theoretical foundations related to discourse. The fundamental principles and concepts of discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis are inherently attributed to the study of discourse, and how each of those respective theories examines language use in its respective interactions and contexts (Gee, 2011). The preceding sections will provide insight into what the theoretical lens of discourse, discourse analysis, and critical discourse analysis entails.

Discourse

A theoretical definition of discourse used by language and literacy scholars refers to discourse as involving aesthetics, styles, and language structures in oral and written text as a compilation of historical, cultural, and ideological processes. Moreover, it can also be defined by the manner in which people adopt and adapt available language and cultural practices available in response to institutional, local, social, and historical situations in which they find themselves (Bloome et al, 2005).

Discourse in language and literacy research can also be viewed as both a noun and as a verb (Potter, Wetherell, Gill, and Edwards, 1990). For example, as a noun in language and literacy, discourse is viewed as text, language in use, identity enactment that reflects a person's ideas of truth, rationality, and common sense. In other words, discourses express who we are through our language. Examples of these aspects of discourse as a noun are when language and literacy scholars examine the discourse of the federal government, mathematics, classroom discourses, web discourses, achievement discourses, and others. Discourse as a verb is viewed by language and literacy scholars when it becomes an action a person or group of people takes with others in certain social spaces. For example, a student in a classroom describing characteristics of heroism and referring to a person they know, or when a curriculum policy is implemented within a district and teachers must react to this implementation. Each of those examples illustrate how language is negotiated among people as they describe and explain the behavior or actions of individuals, groups, or institutions.

Likewise, prominent language and literacy scholars including James Gee (1999) have developed a theoretical lens in which to analyze discourse. Discourse, according to Gee, entails ways of behaving, interacting, valuing, thinking, believing, speaking, and reading and writing

that are accepted as representations of particular identities by individuals or groups. Gee states that these types of discourses can be viewed as “big ‘D’ discourse.” Whereas, “little ‘d’ discourses” refer simply to language in use; in other words, the language that is linked to everyday conversations that people engage in their respective social spaces.

Gee (1999, 2008) has also theoretically described some discourses as “dominant.” Dominant discourse is a theoretical artifact originally attributed to social theorist, Michel Foucault (1972, 1977). It refers to the notion that those in power have crafted the means by which individuals and groups accept a particular way of looking at or discussing a subject. For example, the way that educational reform is viewed by a local community, and ultimately a nation, can be shaped by dominant groups with the modes of communication and resources to explain those facets of education they deem important.

Language and literacy scholar, Rebecca Rogers et al. (2005) has significantly contributed to the theoretical body of literature on discourse, discourse analysis, and critical discourse analysis in educational research. Her focus has been on discerning the origination and intricacies of various theoretical frameworks, and illustrating how each framework contributes to the current discourses that affect language learning in schools. For example, Rogers et al. (2005) attributes the foundation of language and literacy research in the United States to Gumperz (1982) and Silverstein and Urban (1996), while in Europe she identifies Halliday (1985). In essence, their work on discourse, as it relates to language and society, has been used by others to investigate substantive concerns with regard to educational issues, and how they affect research and in educational practices.

Furthermore, Rogers et al. (2005) states that a theoretical model of discourse is comprised of several theoretical elements. Many of these theoretical elements focus on the high

level use of language, whether the use of language is conveyed through multimedia, text, or oral communication. Gee (2011) contends that regardless of the conveyance of language, it must still be viewed as discourse, even though the framework for analyses of that language may differ, (i.e., discourse or critical discourse analysis). However, there are fundamental properties that critical discourse analysis is built upon that involve the naturally occurring use of language throughout society to addresses social problems within our society, discursive power relations, discourses that constitute society and culture, and discourses as ideological. It must be understood that discourses are historical, and the links between text and society are mediated. Discourse analysis is interpretive and explanatory, and finally, discourse is a form of social action (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997). These are the fundamental properties of discourse that Rogers attributes to

Fairclough and Wodak (1997), who outlined the relevant characteristics of understanding discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis. Respectfully, many other scholars have also recognized and agreed upon these properties (Janks, 1997; Rogers, 2005, 2011; Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

To further elaborate on discourse as theory, Fairclough (2009) and Wodak and Meyer (2009) state that there are three unique spaces (among others) of investigation important to social scientists. First, discourse as a space for meaning-making within social processes. An example of this is a science classroom where a student is engaged with his/her teacher to comprehend the term and concept of “gravity.” Second, discourse is a space where language can be associated within a particular social field or practice. A poignant example of this is when special education teachers discuss instructional approaches, such as *Response to Intervention* to address the learning and behavior needs of identified students. Third, social scientists explore those spaces

where discourse construes aspects of the world associated with a particular social perspective. Political affiliation is an example of this perspective. In particular, it explores the language one uses to identify themselves as liberal, conservative, or libertarian which reflects how they view the world they live in.

This section probed the theoretical properties of discourse and how the fundamental goal is discourse analysis is to comprehend the ways in which language is used within our society, and in particular social spaces by individuals and groups. Inevitably, discourse from a theoretical perspective is concerned with the use of language as a social practice. Social practice refers to individual, organizational, and institutional behaviors shaped by the circumstances of discursive events and the inevitable effects of discursive events on those involved (Fairclough, 1992). It looks at how the social world is constructed through language. Discourse analysis invokes a theoretical model that explores how the grammatical, semantic, and textual options available to and chosen by individuals and groups serve to construct, reinforce, and at times question social roles and behaviors. Discourse analysis will be addressed in the next section of the paper.

Discourse Analysis

Recall that Gee (1999; 2008) refers to discourse as the study of language in use. He also presents discourse analysis as a theoretical and methodological approach to explore how people “make sense” of text. Text in this dissertation is a general term that refers to either oral or written language. Discourse analysis takes the five interrelated linguistic systems of prosody (ways in which words and sentences of a text are said), cohesion (how lines of text are related), discourse organization (ways in which sentences are organized into higher-order units), context signals (means of which speakers and writers “cue” listeners and readers into what they take the context to represent), and thematic organization of text (ways in which images, contrasts, focal points of

interest are signaled and developed) to uncover how language is delivered by an individual or group of people, and how it is received and interpreted by these and social actors.

Gee (2008) describes two types of discourse analysis, descriptive and critical. Descriptive discourse analysis, aptly, describes how language works in order to convey meaning, gain a deeper of how the world works, and understand why it works that way. Another type of discourse analysis which Gee calls critical discourse analysis, seeks answers to questions that address not only how language works, but seeks deeper explanations about social, economic, or political issues, and other controversies in the world. Gee iterates that some discourse analysts who use the descriptive approach often believe that a critical discourse analysis approach is unscientific because the critical discourse analyst is swayed by his or her interest or passion for intervening in some problem in the world. Likewise, some discourse analysts who take a critical discourse analysis approach often think that a purely descriptive approach is an abdication of an analyst's social and political responsibility.

Adger (2001) provides a historical perspective on discourse analysis used in educational settings by recounting the process in which teachers' elicited oral responses from students. The purpose of using discourse analysis in this research was to determine what linguistic interactions were occurring in the classroom between teacher and student that would explain student achievement. Adger (2001) explains that those early theorists, including Gumperz, Mehan, and Shuy and Griffin identified more than just the elicitation sequence of teacher initiation, student response, and teacher evaluation (IRE) as a basic unit of instructional interaction; they also noticed the importance of language in the classroom as a social function between teacher and students, as well as among students. This research in education using discourse analysis showed that classroom interactions frequently demonstrate a complex ecology of social and cognitive

relations, shared goals, classroom talk governed by timing and contextualization cues, and flows of classroom talk that facilitate the social organization of attention and action.

Second language acquisition researchers, such as Olshtain and Celce-Murcia (2001) explored discourse analysis as an important tool to understand the learning experiences of ELLs. Their support for discourse analysis as a viable theoretical framework to study second language learning was predicated on their assertion that discourse analysis was relevant to language teaching and language learning since they represent two worlds that characterize human communication in the classroom. The first world represents intended meanings transmitted within contexts, (i.e., subject area), and is concerned with sequential relationships in language production. For example, learning letter-sound relationships, word-sound relationships, vocabulary, and so forth. Olshtain and Celce-Murcia argue that the second world represents language teaching which needs to focus on strategies of message construction - in order to facilitate learner production of meaning. Interpreted meaning results from linguistic processing and social interaction, while taking into account contextual factors that affect reception; this is where instructional strategies designed to scaffold interpretation are needed in order for language learners to inferentially process a speaker's or writer's intent.

Fairclough's (1992, 2003, 2010) contribution to the field of discourse analysis is not limited to the field of critical discourse analysis, and its methodology of uncovering social practices, power relations, and the reproduction of ideology. On the contrary, Fairclough values discourse analysis and its applicability to the study of language in use. He states that discourse analysis is the tying of social theory to language analysis. Theoretically, Fairclough asserts that the concepts of discourse and discourse analysis are three-dimensional. For example, any

discursive event (i.e. an occurrence of discourse) is viewed as (1) simultaneously a piece of text, (2) an instance of discursive practice, and an (3) instance of social practice.

To Fairclough, the text attends to the descriptive analysis of language, including tone, grammar, and structure. The discursive practice aspect, specifies the nature of the processes of text production and interpretation; for example, which types of discourse (including discourses in the more social-theoretical sense) are drawn upon and how they are combined. The sociocultural practice aspect attends to issues of concern in social analysis such as the institutional and organizational circumstances of the discursive event, and how that shapes the nature of the discursive practice.

Finally, below is a graphical representation of how Fairclough's three dimensional method of discourse analysis can be conceptualized. This framework is valuable not only to theoreticians and methodologists of discourse analysis, but also critical discourse analysts because it provides more details about language in use (text) by scrutinizing power relations in its various social spaces and contexts. Critical discourse analysis will be explored next.

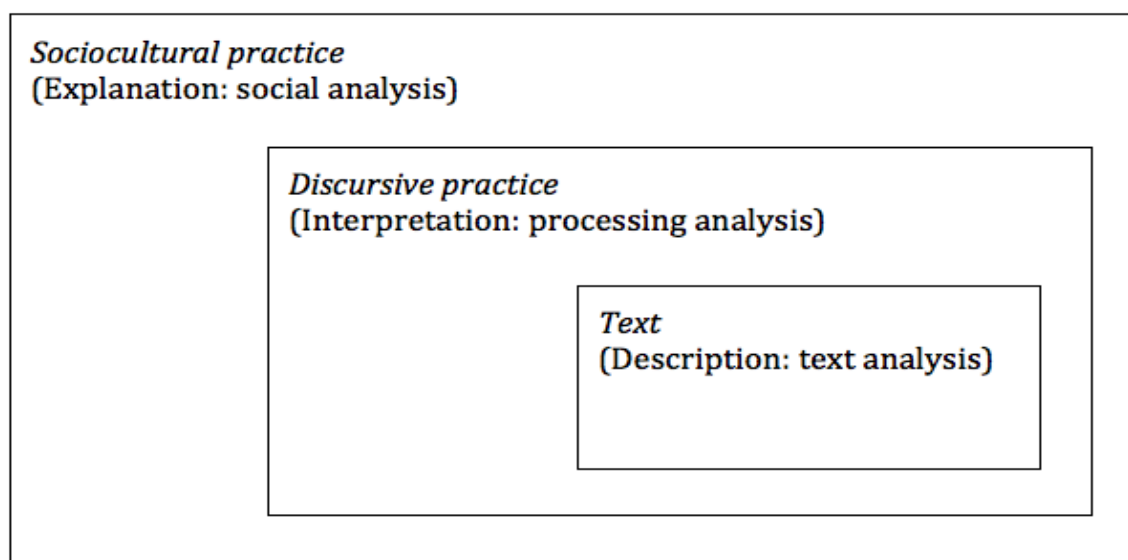


Figure 3.1 Fairclough's three-dimensional method of discourse analysis. (Adapted from Fairclough, 2010)

Critical Discourse Analysis

As mentioned in the previous sections, discourse is language in use, discourse analysis is the study of that language in use, and critical discourse analysis is an attempt to bring social theory and discourse analysis together to describe, interpret, and explain the ways in which discourse constructs, becomes constructed by, represents, and becomes represented in social worlds. Fundamentally, critical discourse analysis refers to a particular set of theoretical elements that: (1) view language as social practice which entails a discursive event and the situations, institutions, and social structures that frame it, (2) considers the context of language use, (3) examines the relationship of power and discursive events, (4) demonstrate the effects of ideology in society, and (5) scrutinizes how discursive practices sustain, reproduce, or transform social practices amongst individuals and groups (Fairclough, 2009).

During the past three decades, education researchers (and in particular, language and literacy scholars) have turned increasingly to critical discourse analysis as an approach to answer questions about the relationship between (1) discursive events and practices, (2) social and cultural structures, and (3) social relations and practices. Their motive has been to investigate how these components contribute to the language and literacy development of students in and out of classrooms, as well as teacher practices, and educational policies that are perceived to hinder or foster educational ideologies shaped by relations of power and struggles over power (Fairclough, 1992).

Again, Rogers (2011) has addressed the unique opportunities available to education researchers related to how critical discourse analysis contributes to understanding learning in two ways. First, analyzing discourse from a critical viewpoint permits an educational researcher to comprehend the processes of learning in more complex methods, i.e., within the context of

social, cultural, and identity. Second, while using critical discourse analysis, education researchers and research participants' learning is shaped by experiences; which in turn have the capacity to illustrate social transformations or shifts in manners of interacting, representing, and being.

Rogers (2011) supports Fairclough's assertion that within the context of education, and in particular, the process of learning, texts or discursive events reference to semiotic elements of social events, written texts, oral texts, or by another mode of communication. Texts encompass social events that construct social practices such as the practice of teaching language in an English as a Second Language classroom. Furthermore, as students, teachers, and groups interact with texts, they are attempting to make sense of the world around them and the appropriate social practices in these various social spaces. Ultimately, as teachers, students, and others involved in social spaces of education interact with the text, we develop our ideological positioning on what makes someone a literate individual, as defined by the ELA-CCSS.

With respect to the ELA-CCSS, it is imperative that the abovementioned theoretical elements and processes of critical discourse analysis be conceptually expounded upon to situate the ELA-CCSS as a text worthy of critical discourse analysis within Fairclough's theoretical framework.

First, within Fairclough's framework, language is represented as an abstract social structure that can be realized as potential, or as a set of possibilities. One could frame this to entail that language is an abstract social structure that gives meaning to discursive events. Meaning is interpreted differently by individuals and groups. Second, social practices can be considered the selection of certain structural possibilities and the exclusion of others. For example, the selection of a language textbook by a school district exhibits an ideology of what

aspects of language are valued and not valued within a community. Third, social events constitute what is actual, whereby, inevitably the relationship between potential and actual is mediated by social practices (Fairclough, 2003). Relating to the prior example, this nuance of Fairclough's framework would dictate that once a school board has agreed upon a language text, other social actors including students, parents, teachers, and administrators must construct a new meaning or paradigm of what language means.

Accordingly, the following paragraphs provide a more thorough understanding of three concepts in critical discourse analysis: (1) the functional approach, (2) the dialectical-relational approach, and (3) the social actor approach. While there are other approaches to critical discourse analysis that analysts employ in studying language in various spaces and contexts. For the purpose of this dissertation I have selected these three approaches to critical discourse analysis because they consider texts as more than just formal language or linguistic units, but also entailing social relationships, social practices, and the reproduction of cultural and historical traditions.

First, if one is going to examine the ELA-CCSS and associated documents as text, it is crucial that a functional approach to determining what the language of a text is attempting to declare, convey, or dictate to interested parties. A functional approach in this sense refers to exploring how the language in the standards are used, how is meaning co-constructed, what is the basic knowledge is imparted by standards, and what hidden knowledge is imparted to the readers. The functional approach of critically examining texts, such as the ELA-CCSS echoes Halliday's (1985) Systemic Functional Linguistics, where the text is thoroughly deconstructed to establish what aspects of the world are represented in the text, and thus determine the social

relations among participants, and connect parts of text to themselves (intertextual) or other texts (intratextual).

Second, critical discourse analysis involves positional perspectives embedded in communicative events. For example, the dialectical-relational approach is a positional perspective where the social conflict in discourse may be manifested and exhibit ideology, power, dominance, and resistance (Fairclough, 1989, 1995). With respect to critical discourse analysis, the dialectical-relational approach is a probing discourse that can explore major changes in social practices and social life. This approach to the social practice of language has a semiotic element that examines social relations, identity, cultural norms, political values, and social consciousness through the linguistic features conveyed in text (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

Moreover, the dialectical-relational approach is akin to the Bakhtinian (1981) theoretical framework of dialogism. Be that as it may, Fairclough (2010) stipulates that all language and communication systems are dialectical. Human beings created the different forms of communication to “speak to,” “respond to,” or “behave” in ways that bond people together or differentiate them. Fairclough (2010) understands the relationship between the communicative event and the order of discourse as dialectical. The discourse order is a system, but not simply in a structuralist sense. Namely, communicative events not only reproduce orders of discourse, but can also change them through creative language use.

Third, critical discourse analysis also acknowledges the social actor approach. The social actor approach refers to the roles that individuals, groups, organizations, and institutions may play in how language perpetuates systems of inequality (Fairclough, 1989, 1995, 2003; Janks, 1997; Van Leeuwen, 2008; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). The social actor, (i.e., the teacher, student,

parent, administrator, policymaker) attributes the social meaning of language, to the expectation of behavior tied to social status. In this model, each actor is accorded a semblance of agency that affords them the opportunity to accept, reject, or contest the social constraints that impede their language and behavior. The social actor approach, as a critical discourse method, clearly derives its foundation from the academic discipline of sociology.

Finally, the social actor approach focuses on how social actors, as language users, develop both personal cognition-memories, and social cognition-knowledge and opinions, as well as ways of thinking shared with members of their group or culture as a whole. Both types of cognition influence interaction and the discourses of individual members, whereas shared “social representations” govern the collective actions of a group (Wodak & Reisigl, 2008). These social actors can exploit linguistic, discursive resources to accomplish short as well as long-term goals, whether consciously or not. Additionally, what goes on with a society’s people has palpable, observable effects on the conditions of their lives and on the lives of others; our understanding of how things happen is inescapably enriched by seeing how they make it happen. The integration of these two cognitions provides for a socially grounded and reflexive means for building cohesiveness, as well as a conceptually informed basis for social action. (Fairclough, 1989, 1995, 2003; Wodak, 2008).

This approach will later prove useful as I present an *analytical* methodology of critical discourse analysis with respect to the ELA-CCSS.

Ultimately, Norman Fairclough’s contribution to the field of critical discourse analysis has emboldened many education scholars with tools to delve deeper into the analysis of discourse in general and especially as it pertains to language and literacy studies.

Key Constructs

Language and literacy scholars who use critical discourse analysis as a theoretical framework, there are certain social science constructs that are typically derived from the investigation of discursive practices in textbooks, standards, and policies. For the purposes of this dissertation, discourse, ideology, meaning, agency, hegemony, and power will be explored. These constructs form a foundation from which scholars can study the social world, how it is constituted, and how the social practices of individuals, institutions, and inevitably-language contributes to the shaping and reshaping of social structures (Bloome et al., 2008). Explanations of these social constructs are discussed below to emphasize their importance in the study of language in education.

One of the key constructs is discourse. Language and literacy scholars are apt to agree that discourses or discursive practices are social constructs that constitute different ways of representing aspects of the social world (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Van Dijk, 1993). Thus, for the purposes of researching the ELA-CCSS, conducting a textual analysis of the standards, and associated documents, will require that I pose a question or questions about how documents represent certain aspects related to K-12 language and literacy education. It should also be noted that discursive practices have ideological effects – that is, they can produce and reproduce an unequal balance of power between social classes, gender groups, and ethnic/cultural groups through the ways in which they represent things and position people.

It was mentioned earlier; a second key construct is ideology. With respect to Fairclough's theory, he is interested in social conflicts that are inherent in the linguistic manifestations of discourse (Fairclough, 1989, 1995). Inevitably, some of these social conflicts contribute to the production of an ideology. Ideology is a social construct that Fairclough describes as a *distorted*

representation of social relations (Fairclough, 2010). Ideology is not just a set of shared beliefs among individuals with power; it can be structured within institutions and it can act as a process within social events. Ideology can also function below the level of consciousness. Fairclough (2010) underscores the point that the aim of critical discourse analysis should be to deconstruct the ideological content of texts with the aim of ‘righting or mitigating’ social wrongs.

When language in its various forms is shared throughout a society, it is said to convey meaning through each interaction (Fairclough, 2003). This construct of meaning can be construed differently depending on how language is mediated between writer/reader, speaker/listener, and/or artist/viewer. To elaborate, meaning is the co-construction of understanding, comprehending, and making “sense” of the different spaces in which people, institutions, and texts, co-exist. For critical discourse analysis of written text, Fairclough (2003) has identified three types of meaning. Meanings in which a text represents aspects of the social world are referred to as representational, while meanings where a text has a part in social action is said to be actional. Meaning as a social construct may also be derived through the textual construction of people’s identity is known as identificatory (Fairclough, 2003). Finally, these three types of meaning are similar to the functions of language in Halliday’s (1985) Systemic Functional Linguistics.

Gunther Kress (2000) highlights agency as another construct that language and literacy scholars are carefully attuned to. Agency in its most basic form indicates a social actor’s transformation or change in behavior or perception, in which meaning-making has occurred through a social event (Kress, 2000, 2011). In addition to Kress’s notion of agency, Fairclough and Wodak (1997) believe that motivation is an important factor contributing to an individual’s or institution’s agency. Agency can be a difficult construct to measure. However, it is that

construct of agency that is of great importance in determining whether the social actors within a society are afforded the opportunity to acquire language and literacy skills. Fairclough and Wodak (1997) iterate that it is this sense of motivation that encourages social actors to ‘act.’ Texts can be a major factor in that social process; and ultimately, Fairclough and Wodak (1997) emphasize that agency is an element of meaning-making. For example, texts when viewed by different social actors, have the power to control or influence behavior. An English textbook used in the classroom has the ability to transform the behavior of students with differing levels of English proficiency. The native born English learner will have an easier time understanding or making sense of antonyms, whereas the English language learner may have a more difficult time understanding the concept and using it on an assessment.

Hegemony is a social construct, typically associated with Antonio Gramsci and other Marxist scholars that presents itself through the various means in which the ruling classes exploit and dominate all other social classes (Gramsci, 1971). Functionally, there are two modes in which hegemony is maintained, by force which involves the use of state-sanctioned violence, or by acquiescence either begrudgingly or enthusiastically (Gramsci, 1971). Hegemony is also perceived as a way to promote and maintain capitalism as a socio-economic structure that benefits the ruling class, with the illusion that other social classes have access to the same resources (Thompson, 1984). Language, and the acquisition of language and literacy skills is one form of various *social structures* where the ruling classes exert hegemony and use their resources (i.e., media, educational system, politics, financial institutions) to promote a discourse that benefits their needs and goals (Fairclough, 2003). Language and literacy scholars such as Suarez (2002), refer to this phenomena as linguistic hegemony. That being said, it is imperative to note that hegemony is not a permanent condition in a society. On the contrary, it is temporary and

constantly being challenged by the non-ruling social classes seeking to obtain access to the same resources as the ruling classes.

Power is a social construct that is closely tied to ideology. Power, as analyzed in critical discourse analysis probes relationships (Fairclough, 1992). Ideologies shape and can contribute to the reproduction of social inequality within institutions, and inevitably throughout society (Fairclough, 1992). Individuals and institutions in social classes with access to different types of capital, i.e., cultural, economic, social, or symbolic power: behave in a manner that solely benefits their interests (Bourdieu, 1986). In essence, power is the ability to exploit difference as anathema to homogeneity (Fairclough, 1992). Again, to reiterate Fairclough's (1989) notion of power, he states, "the dominance of standard English and the subordination of other social dialects was part and parcel of the establishment of the dominance of the capitalist class and the subordination of the working class" (p. 57). This lends itself to the unfortunate acknowledgement that Standard English aspires to be a national language across all social classes, when in fact-it is actually a class dialect promoting one correct way to engage in discourse.

Finally, the aforementioned constructs are in no way an exhaustive list of the constructs that may inform critical discourse analysis of the six documents proposed for this dissertation. Instead, the key constructs mentioned are representative of conceptual themes that typically emerge when critical discourse analysis is employed in an examination of education practices and documents (Rogers, 2011). Therefore, the constructs stated above provide a fundamental basis for informing grounded themes that are likely to emerge. Grounded themes are generated by data analysis, and identify the common threads that extend through the text. These themes are usually abstract, and are usually concepts indicated by the data, rather than directly evident or apparent in the text (Saldana, 2011).

Conclusion

Fairclough's theoretical framework for critical discourse analysis affords language and literacy researchers a consistent foundation for investigating the ELA-CCSS, and associated documents. Some scholars (Gee, 2011; Rogers, 2011; Woodside-Jiron, 2011) have used critical discourse analysis in the field of education. The results of their studies illustrate that critical discourse analysis is not only effective in exploring the complexities that are apparent in curriculum standards, but these scholars also highlight that critical discourse analysis is a versatile theory and methodology that it affords scholars the capability of deconstructing language use on macro, micro, and meso levels (Rogers, 2011; Woodside-Jiron, 2011; Kress, 2011; Gee, 2011).

Through critical discourse analysis, researchers can probe individual positions, power shifts, and institutional ideologies (Stevens, 2011). Stevens maintains that critical discourse analysis in the realm of education policy is capable of mediating the spaces of power to promote social and political justice. This can be accomplished by looking beyond the surface layers of language and literacy and helping policymakers understand the manner in which some cultural models of teaching and learning are reproduced and reinforced, while others are ignored. Finally, on a granular level, critical discourse analysis can be a methodology that examines the syntax and semantics of text, media, or other semiotic forms of language to highlight social relationships of inequality (Fairclough, 1989, 1995; Janks, 1997). Because the academic discipline of literacy is one of the disciplines from which critical discourse analysis can claim its lineage, it is possible for a researchers to analyze the ELA-CCSS and create grammatical representations of the nouns, verbs, and clauses, used within the document. This makes critical

discourse analysis a fundamentally strong theory and framework to answer research questions related to issues of language diversity.

Fairclough's critical discourse analysis is a most useful, practical, and relevant theoretical framework to utilize when critically delving into the ELA-CCSS. Critical discourse analysis theory provides a means to critique language in relation to sociopolitical power dynamics within various social spaces.

There are two additional reasons that Fairclough's critical discourse analysis will serve as a potent theoretical framework. Critical discourse analysis informs an analytic methodology that has been used by many language and literacy scholars to explore the power relationships operating across different mediums (classroom, texts, and policy) and contexts. For decades, language and literacy scholars have been able to analyze educational policies, whether they are in a specific language and literacy domain, such as reading, vocabulary, comprehension, or writing. These language and literacy scholars have also been able to situate the social practices embedded within the policy, and later define the stakes for various social actors. The ELA-CCSS is text designed, developed, and implemented by specific social actors with an agenda for educational reform which includes expectations for ELLs. Critical discourse analysis will permit me to investigate these power relationships and to determine its potential impact on social actors, including students, parents, teachers, administrators, and policymakers.

Fairclough's critical discourse analysis allows researchers to separate, combine, and convincingly investigate the spaces in which social actors exist. In other words, the theory allows me to place the curriculum standards in one space, the social actors in another space, and the cultural and social structures in another space, and then explore how the standards impact each of those spaces, the outcomes that the social actors would expect from the implementation of the

standards, and how the power relations in the social and cultural structures could shift.

Fairclough's (1989) theory is tied to situational and intertextual contexts, as will be described in the methods section of this proposal.

Finally, when Fairclough's critical discourse analysis is used effectively, it can communicate with different audiences. This point is not to minimize the theoretical contributions of other critical discourse theorists, but instead to acknowledge Fairclough's theoretical framework of critical discourse analysis as model that many language and literacy scholars believe conveys the intended and unintended purpose and consequences of text.

Chapter IV. Methods

Introduction

The goal of this textual analysis study was to examine to what extent the ELA-CCSS reflects the language and literacy abilities of students whose native language speaking, reading, writing, and listening abilities are different from English. The purpose of this study was not to dispute whether academic content standards are necessary in American schools. Instead, the detailed purpose of this textual analysis study was to (1) determine to what degree the ELA-CCSS are perceived as national academic content standards, (2) investigate to what degree the standards address the native language and literacy abilities of ELLs, (3) assess whether they promote an ideological viewpoint on what constitutes a “literate individual,” and (4) scrutinize the ELA-CCSS and its associated texts to ascertain if they have emboldened certain social actors, (i.e., dominant groups) to convey an ideology of language and literacy skill development that denies the interests of other social actors (i.e., immigrants, parents, ELLs, and ESL educators).

The study critically analyzed fourteen texts. First, four documents published by the National Governors Association and Council of Chief State School Officers, which comprise the corpus of what these organizations deem necessary for students to become “literate individuals,” were analyzed through the lens of standards developer.

These four texts include:

- (1) *Introduction of the Common Core State Standards;*
- (2) *The Application of Common Core Standards for English Language Learners;*
- (3) *The English Language Arts Standards;*
- (4) *Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards.*

Second, four documents were analyzed through the critical lens of academics who have offered critical insights into the Common Core. These four documents are highly cited journal articles written by prominent language and literacy researchers within the professional capacity of their university affiliation.

These articles include:

(1) *Common Core Standards: The New U.S. Intended Curriculum* by Andrew Porter, Jennifer McMaken, Jun Hwang, and Rui Yang

(2) *Organized Interests and the Common Core* by Lorraine M. McDonnell and M. Stephen Weatherford

(3) *Educating Language Minority Students and Affirming Their Equal Rights: Research and Practical Perspectives* by Kenji Hakuta

(4) *Investigating the Language Demand in the Common Core State Standards for English Language Learners: A Comparison Study of Standards* by Mikyung Kim Wolf, Yuan Wang, Becky H. Huang, and Ian Blood

The third group of documents that were analyzed from the critical lens of practitioner advocacy organizations. In particular, practitioner advocacy organizations including the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), and the National Education Association (NEA). The six documents, respective to the practitioner advocacy organizations listed above are:

(1) *The TESOL Position Statement on the Common Core State Standards* by TESOL

(2) *Implementing the Common Core State Standards for English Learners: The Changing Role of the ESL Teacher* by TESOL

(3) *Position Statement on Common Core State Standards* by the American Federation of Teachers

(4) *AFT & the Common Core State Standards: a work in progress* by the American Federation of Teachers

(5) *The Position Statement on Common Core State Standards* by the NEA

(6) *The Common Core Toolkit* by the NEA

The three principal research questions are enumerated below. Research Questions:

1. In what ways, given the linguistic and cultural needs of English Language Learners, do the English Language Arts Standards of the Common Core State Standards address language and literacy learning for ELLs?
2. In what ways do the English Language Arts Standards of the Common Core State Standards prescribe the institutionalization of power structures and privilege particular ways of learning language and literacy for ELL students and teachers?
 - a. What was the impetus for the design and development of the CCSS?
 - b. Who are the social actors and what is their positioning in the larger social order?
 - c. In what ways does institutional funding impact these power structures?
3. How do the English Language Arts Standards of the Common Core State Standards attempt to dictate the practices of teachers with respect to English Language Learners?

This research is of great importance because as stated in the introduction to this proposal, ELLs are one of the fastest growing populations in the United States (NCELA, 2011; NCES, 2015). As a result of this phenomena, state educational agencies, districts, schools, instructional leaders, and teachers are required to be responsive to the language and literacy needs of this population. Also, this research is of importance from an educational policy perspective.

Notwithstanding law, as stipulated by NCLB, which requires schools and teachers to be held accountable for the development of students' language and literacy skills, but also by the research proposed to investigate how different social actors perceive of their role in complying with policy that may be antithetical to research-based pedagogical practices that afford teachers the opportunity to instruct students in the English language arts without minimizing their native language and literacy skills (Bailey & Wolf, 2012).

Research Design

A qualitative textual analysis using data coding and critical discourse analysis was used. The analysis for this study was based on Fairclough's model of critical discourse analysis. In this study, I used Fairclough's model of CDA as both a social theory to conceptualize discourse and as an analytical method. As has been articulated, the theories inherent in critical discourse analysis are uniquely positioned to inform my analytical critique of text. In particular, I draw on Fairclough's (1989, 1995) three-stage approach of description, interpretation, and explanation.

The description stage of Fairclough's CDA methodology involves identifying and labeling linguistic features in text. This stage views the linguistic and paralinguistic properties as features that operate within social settings. Social settings in this context refers to places or spaces where social actors are engaged in the co-construction of meaning in relation to text. Accordingly, I argue these linguistic and paralinguistic features are determined to have social effects on social actors within society. The interpretation stage requires the critical discourse analyst to interpret the participants' meanings and understandings as they are manifested in social interactions. The social actors discourse choices are perceived as responses to constraints placed upon them in particularly social situations. The explanation stage involves the critical

discourse analyst reviewing the linguistic choices made by social actors in terms of theoretical orientations, including power and ideology (Fairclough, 1989, 1992).

In Fairclough's 1992 text, *Discourse and Social Change*, he described the three stages of textual analysis. His "mantra" that was expressed earlier in *Language and Power* (1989), is that language is social practice, in other words, discourse. Furthermore, Fairclough (1992) identifies three ways in which language operates as discourse: (1) as text, (2) as the social processes of producing and interpreting text, and (3) as the social conditions for the production and interpretation of the text. This three-pronged approach commits the critical discourse analyst to analyzing the relationship between texts, processes, and their social conditions.

Elements of the three analytical stages and their corresponding procedures and questions were applied to each of the fourteen texts mentioned above. In doing so, it is the intent of the research study to unearth assumptions about language and literacy, culture, social relationships, practices, and social identities as they are manifested in text; and whether or not they sustain, challenge, or change existing power relations (Fairclough, 2003).

Key Terms and Definitions

For the purposes of this study, several key terms were operationalized in order to best understand the goals and methods of this research. At this juncture, there are six terms: (1) English language learner, (2) Standard English, (3) language and literacy, (4) native language, (5) social actor, and (6) members' resources.

Prior to the enactment of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* and the use of the term ELL, the federal definition of students whose primary home language was one other than English, was language minority students (Stewner-Manzanares, 1988). This term was codified in the Bilingual Education Act of 1968. However, as was customary at the time, educators and

researchers sought to inform policymakers on terms that focused on a student's English proficiency (Stewner-Manzanares, 1988). Thus, the term limited English proficient (LEP) became prominent in policy and research.

Yet, with the passage of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, researchers and educators once again sought to reframe the discussion of students who entered American schools without a foundation of English language skills. Hence, we now have the term English language learner (ELLs) as the common term which refers to students whose native language is one other than English (NCLB, 2001). Furthermore, the current definition and practice of describing an ELL affirms that a student is acquiring English language and literacy skills, without minimizing the native or heritage language and literacy skills that are already present in a student's linguistic repertoire.

When referencing Standard English, it was prudent to employ the definition cited in *Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards* of the ELA-CCSS; since it is the form and function of English that is referenced throughout the standards. Thus, it will be defined as "the most widely accepted and understood form of expression in English in the United States...particularly used to refer to formal English writing and speaking" (Appendix A, 2010e). A term that was operationalized along with Standard English-is the term language and literacy. Again, referring to *Appendix A of the ELA-CCSS* (2010e), language is defined as the reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills that provide a foundation for the effective use of these oral and written communicative competencies. Typically accompanying the term language, literacy conveys the development of critical thinking skills (particularly in academic subjects), to compare, contrast, and analyze different forms of texts, and discern fact from opinion, or fiction

(CCSS, Appendix A, 2010e). In essence, analysis will determine whether or not Standard English is akin to power in American society.

Native language, also referred to as heritage language, is a term that was used throughout the research study, and accordingly, it was defined. Native language, for the purposes of this study will constitute the first (L1) language and literacy skills that ELLs bring to the classroom based upon their or their family's place of origin or home language use (Cummins, 1981). In addition, Cummins (1981) asserts that native language is used in reference to the historical, cultural, and psychological ramifications of how ELLs interact with the wider community, when their language is "other" than the wider community, (i.e., English [L2]-in the case of the ELA-CCSS). Moreover, an ELLs native language and literacy skills can help build competency in the four foundational skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening in L1 and L2; especially as children move toward developing literacy skills and becoming proficient in both (Cummins, 1981).

A social actor, according to Fairclough (2003), is a participant in a social process. In particular, it must be noted whether the social actor is included or excluded in the representation of social processes. If the social actor is included, (i.e., identified as doing something), they could be represented as a noun or pronoun, personally or impersonally, classified or unclassified, and as active or passive. Conversely, if the social actors are excluded from social processes, they are positioned as actors with little social significance. In other words, they are represented as being subjected to the actions of others. Finally, these social actors engage in each social process by drawing on their unique members' resources. Members' resources (Fairclough, 1989, 1992) is a term that will be used throughout the study as well, and it suggests the collective of a people's

knowledge of language, representations of language within that natural and social world, and their respective beliefs, values, and assumptions that assign meaning to the social processes.

Data Collection

Data collection for this research study included the procurement of the fourteen documents from various websites. For example, the process of collecting the four Common Core State Standards required me to retrieve them from <http://www.corestandards.org/>. The basis for collection of these four documents focused on the NGA Center and CCSSO's intention to communicate what the Standards are through the Introduction, discuss the applicability of the Standards to ELLs, illustrate student expectation of language and literacy acquisition by grade level in the ELA section of the Standards, and provide documentation into the research process of the drafting of the Standards. Furthermore, Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards also highlights support from various social actors involved in the design, development, and implementation of the Standards. Through my analysis of these four texts as data, I ascertained whether they presented a coherent message from the NGA Center and CCSSO regarding their agenda is for American schools, particularly considering ELLs.

The four documents which highlight the critical viewpoints of academic researchers have been obtained by retrieving them from the library database of the University of Wisconsin at Madison. The core education database, <http://xerxes.library.wisconsin.edu/wisc/databases/subject/education>, was selected since the database offered a vast amount of peer reviewed research on ELLs, policy, teachers, etc. Within the selected databases, a Boolean search was conducted using the following combination of phrases, "common core and ELLs," "academic research and common core," "ELLs, the common core, and language policy," "the common core as language policy," "research on the common

core and ELA,” “academic standards and ELLs,” and “the common core, standards, curriculum, and policy” Four peer-reviewed journal articles consistently appeared near the top of every search queue. That search queue tended to list well-recognized language and literacy scholars including Mikyung Kim Wolf, Andrew Porter, Lily Wong Fillmore, Kenji Hakuta, and Lorraine McDonnell. Ultimately, after their prevalence in repeatedly being noted as peer-reviewed articles referencing my research endeavor, these four documents were selected during the data collection process to represent the critical perspective of scholars.

The six documents from the practitioner advocacy organizations were procured from their organization’s websites. The rationale and selection process in collecting these documents primarily centered upon how they would address the three research questions. Similar to the process of collecting viewpoints on the Common Core from academics’ perspective, one must go to the repository where these views are shared for a particular audience. Consequently, I visited several practitioner advocacy organization websites searching for not only their position statements on the Common Core, but also any guidelines, policy briefs, toolkits, or documents that were either publicly disseminated at the same time as the position statement or close to sometime after. Accordingly, there were three distinct practitioner advocacy organizations (TESOL, AFT, and NEA) that provided a position statement and ancillary materials to firmly address their reasoning. Furthermore, it should be noted that these organizations were also selected based on one of their primary missions to address the language and literacy skills of all students, with a special interest group dedicated to ELLs, or ELLs as a subgroup specifically.

Data Analysis

The qualitative software package-NVivo was used to analyze the documents. NVivo is used by many qualitative researchers when analyzing small or large amounts of text. The

software package allows for a deep analysis of unstructured data. It will allow this researcher to sort, classify, arrange, combine, determine relationships, and observe themes and concepts within the texts. A preliminary list of theoretical constructs (a priori codes) associated with the research questions will be created in an Excel® file to search the texts for themes, relationships, and links, see appendix A.

Furthermore, inductive codes were created based on the identification of themes that are discovered during the data analysis process, (see Figure 3.1). The process of memoing (recording reflective notes about what is being learned about the data) occurred throughout each of the four stages of analysis. Finally, it should be noted that Saldana's (2011) coding methods were applied, during the first stage of analysis to reflect the values, beliefs, and attitudes of a participant's worldview.

Additionally, data analysis was conducted in three more stages. Specific aspects of Fairclough's model used in the analysis are bolded and highlighted below, as well as noted in Figure 3.1. These stages required that I analyze each of the fourteen documents using Fairclough's (1989, 2003) critical discourse analysis methodology with a focus on my three research questions, which occurs in three stages: description, interpretation, and explanation. The second level of analysis, description, involved the author identifying and labeling the relevant linguistic features of the documents. Moreover, the focus of this analysis is to determine what linguistic and paralinguistic features, i.e., words, voice, tone, modes, pronouns, etc. were utilized in the texts, as well as their social determinants and social effects. The questions that one must ask pertinent to each document and linguistic and paralinguistic feature are noted below.

A. Vocabulary

1. What *experiential* values do words have?

What classification schemes are drawn upon?
 Are there words which are ideologically contested?
 Is there *rewording* or *overwording*?
 What ideologically significant meaning relations (*synonymy*, *hyponymy*, and *antonymy*) are there between words?

2. What relational values do words have?

Are there euphemistic expressions?

Are there markedly formal or informal words?

3. What *expressive* values do words have?

4. What metaphors are used?

B. Grammar

5. What experiential values do grammatical features have?

What types of *process* and *participant* predominate?

Is agency unclear?

Are processes what they seem?

Are *nominalizations* used?

Are sentences active or passive?

Are sentences positive or negative?

6. What relational values do grammatical features have?

What *modes* (*declarative*, *grammatical question*, *imperative*) are used?

Are there important features of *relational modality*?

Are the pronouns *we* and *you* used, and if so, how?

7. What expressive values do grammatical features have?

Are there important features of *expressive modality*?

8. How are (simple) sentences linked together?

What logical connectors are used?

Are complex sentences characterized by *coordination* or *subordination*?

What means are used for referring inside and outside the text?

C. Textual structures

9. What interactional conventions are used?

Are there ways in which one participant controls the turns of others?

10. What larger-scale structures does the text have?

For the interpretation part, I analyzed documents to determine the meanings and understandings of the text and how they are manifested into social processes. During this part of Fairclough's (1989, 2003) critical discourse analysis, discursive choices were viewed as responses to the social constraints that social actors are operating within. As such, these social actors rely on their members' resources to make sense of the world around them. This third stage of analysis also examines at the social practices that were produced and reproduced in relation to how one views the text. For example, if teachers view the ELA-CCSS as an instructional resource that informs their curriculum, they would teach language in accordance with the ELA-CCSS to their ELLs perhaps in a manner that may not reflect what is best for ELLs. Finally, this part of the analysis sought to comprehend how the linguistic components of the ELA-CCSS text define this social order of standards, curriculum, and student and teacher behavior. The questions for investigating this stage are listed below.

1. **Context:** What interpretations are participants (social actors) giving to the situational and intertextual contexts?
2. **Discourse type:** What discourse types are being drawn upon (hence what rules, systems or principles of phonology, grammar, sentence cohesion, vocabulary, semantics and pragmatics; and what schemata, frames and scripts)?
3. **Difference and change:** Are answers to questions one and two different for different participants (social actors)? And do they change during the course of the interaction?

The fourth stage of analyzing documents is referred to as explanation. Here, the author makes the connection between linguistic (description) and the social (interpretation) aspects of the texts. This part of Fairclough's (1989, 2003) critical discourse analytic framework is where researchers are able to elucidate on the linguistic choices made within a text in relation to power, ideology, and identity. Also, this third stage of analysis imparts the understanding that the

process of producing and interpreting texts is determined by the social and institutional structures that contextualize a situation (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). The questions for investigating this stage are listed next.

1. **Social determinants:** What power relations at situational, institutional and societal levels help shape this discourse?
2. **Ideologies:** What elements of Members' Resources which are drawn upon have an ideological character?
3. **Effects:** How is this discourse positioned in relation to struggles at the situational, institutional and societal levels? Are these struggles overt or covert? Is the discourse normative with respect to Members' Resources or creative? Does it contribute to sustaining existing power relations, or transforming them?

A graphic is presented below to illustrate the four stage process of critically analyzing the texts.

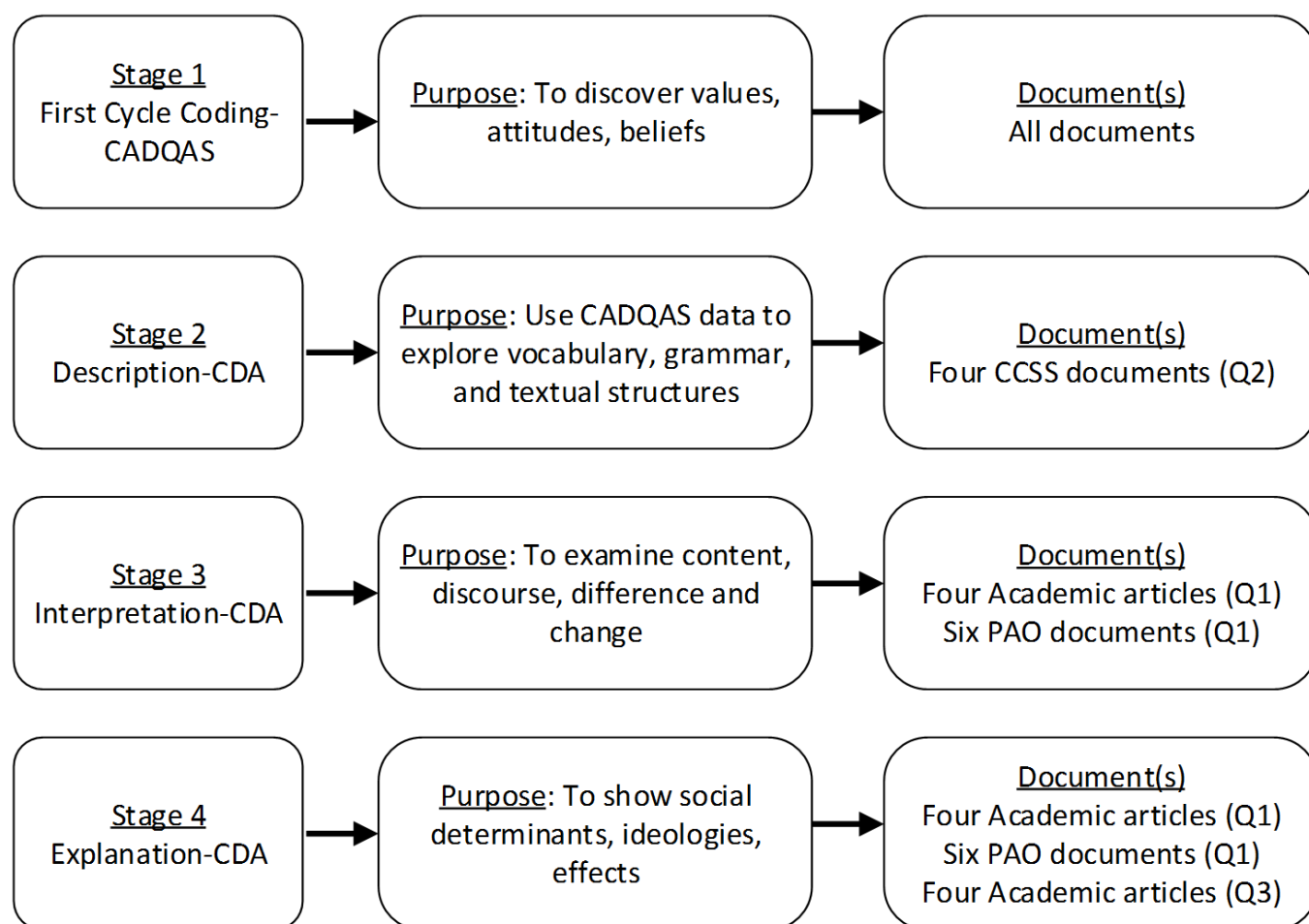


Figure 4.1 Four Stages of Critical Discourse Analysis for the ELA-CCSS

Researcher Positionality

Creswell (2003) states that researchers “position themselves [within their research] to acknowledge how their interpretation flows from their own personal, cultural, and historical experiences (page, 9).” Thus, it would be unthinkable for me not to acknowledge how my relationship to the source material, theoretical and methodological framework, social practices and processes, and organizations were pertinent to this proposed research endeavor. Accordingly, my positionality (Creswell, 2003) is of vital importance.

As a researcher of language and literacy studies, I have a fundamental professional interest in how academic content standards, like the ELA-CCSS, are viewed by various social actors with a vested interest in the education of ELLs. In view of this acknowledgement, it is my intent to clearly articulate in specific sections of the research study-instances where my positionality may be construed as critical to the analyses.

Yet, it would be incomplete for this author not to acknowledge that as an African American male who is a child of college-educated parents, a father, and currently a doctoral student, that my life experiences have shaped my own members’ resources related to how I view the world. Likewise, my professional experiences prior to my current position have also had an effect on how I comprehend education reform and public policy, as well as the manner in which language is drafted and communicated in highly politicized environments to the public.

My positionality, in particular as a policy analyst and researcher focused on the needs of English language learners in America’s classroom has shifted. Prior to my current position, I was a casual observer concerned about the needs of all students, and especially African American males in the language classroom; and I still voice care and concern about the plight of all students-including young males of color. However, during the past few years of conducting

research on the interests of ELLs I have recognized that the landscape is shifting not only in America's language classrooms, but the content classroom as well. As ELLs from all over the world migrate to the U.S.A, it is becoming apparent that some of our language policies languish, while the need for coherent and consistent policy remains imperative for students, parents, and educators. I believe it is imperative that our nation's schools focus on not only appreciating and respecting the native language skills that all student's bring to the classroom, but also promote language and literacy policies that multiculturalism and bilingualism. Thus, my perspective on the need for policymakers to acknowledge this shift is my impetus for conducting this research.

Finally, the education that this author has received, the theories and methods that I have learned while enrolled in the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Language and Literacy Studies doctoral program, and the interactions that I have had with my instructors, no doubt will shape the way I investigate the language in the fourteen texts. As a consequence, before even beginning this research, it is prudent that I acknowledge my own positionality in the context of conducting this study.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research design expects to address the research questions posed, while supporting the theory and methodology of critical discourse analysis. From a practical perspective, this research design will allow the researcher to examine socio-cultural and socio-political issues in relation to the development of academic standards congruent to or not congruent to the acquisition of language and literacy skills for ELLs.

From a policy perspective, this research design aspires to provide crucial information to academic content developers, providers, policymakers, researchers, and ELL educators on the efficacy of drafting primary resources required for the cultivation of language and literacy skills for ELLs. The potential insights drawn from this study could be used to further explore the participants (social actors), social, institutional, and organizational structures in which academic content standards are (or should be) created in the interest of marginalized populations.

Chapter V. Decoding the Common Core

Introduction

This chapter of the dissertation investigates how language is used in the four Common Core documents, and the social and political language used to persuade or inspire social actors to behave in certain ways, knowingly and/or unknowingly. Those four documents, all written by the NGA and CCSSO include:

(1) *Introduction of the Common Core State Standards*; (2010) by CCSSO and NGA

Center

(2) *The Application of Common Core Standards for English Language Learners*; (2010)

by CCSSO and NGA

(3) *The English Language Arts Standards*; (2010) by CCSSO and NGA and

(4) *Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards*, (2010) by CCSSO and NGA.

Across this dissertation, I apply critical discourse analysis to texts representing three social actor viewpoints constituencies. Four Common Core documents, four academic articles, and texts created by six practitioner advocacy organizations are analyzed. In doing so, I will highlight the themes of social actor agency, and ideology that is operate through the Common Core. Fairclough (1989) and Gee (2011a) believe discourse is always situated at organizational, institutional, and societal levels. It is how that discourse is perceived and acted upon by the social actors that dictates its effectiveness or ineffectiveness at perpetuating or disrupting social practices related to inequality, hegemony, power, or *othering*.

As debate and consternation over the efficacy, feasibility, and practicality of the Common Core State Standards continues to rage among various constituencies, the Standards have been

implemented in forty-three states. These college and career-ready standards have been used, and for the foreseeable future, will continue to be used to create content curricula for mathematics and language arts. With the reauthorization of the ESEA, now the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA), the Standards have continued to provide a business opportunity for textbook publishers and education related nonprofit organizations. Consortia (i.e., PARCC and Smarter Balanced) have been established to create summative assessments that will determine whether students have met the standards for learning academic content each academic year.

Likewise, state educational agencies and school districts are organizing professional development courses to support teachers and administrators to ensure that students meet these expectations. Ostensibly, these Standards will effect the methods by which educators teach their students, the ways parents and students view learning, and the ways policymakers view academic success. The background information provided above is essential for understanding the motivation of social actors, including the NGA, CCSSO, and Achieve, Inc. who are attempting to reform American education.

In the next section of this chapter, I provide an introduction to the four Common Core documents that are analyzed in this chapter. Information about the documents, the intended audiences, the authors, and my criterion for selecting of these articles are noted.

Document #1: Introduction of the Common Core State Standards, (2010)

The first document analyzed in this chapter was written by The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center), titled *Introduction to the Common Core State Standards*. The Council of Chief State School Officers, founded in 1929, is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization of public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the states and the

District of Columbia. CCSSO's mission is ensuring that all students participating in the public education system graduate prepared for college, careers, and life. The National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices is the allied public policy and research organization of the National Governor's Association. The National Governors Association, founded in 1908, is the collective voice of the nation's governors and one of Washington, D.C.'s most respected public policy organizations. Through the NGA Center, governors share best practices, speak with a collective voice on national policy, and develop innovative solutions to social and economic problems that improve state government. The *Introduction to the Common Core State Standards* was made available to the public in June 2010, and serves as an official introduction to the Common Core State Standards.

The CCSSO and NGA's purpose for writing the *Introduction* was to identify the contents of the Standards, describe the process involved in drafting and developing the Standards, thank stakeholders who participated in the drafting and development process, and provide website links about the criteria and considerations used to develop the Standards. The *Introduction to the Common Core State Standards* also acknowledges that the Standards encompass the best practices and research from the USA and around the world. Finally, the document was written for a general audience, it is brief, one page, and the language is easily accessible.

There are three reasons for selecting this document to analyze in my dissertation. First, the content conveyed in the *Introduction* is relevant because it highlights key issues related to my research questions. These issues include who was involved in the drafting and development of the CCSS, the academic areas the authors highlighted, allusions to research and best practices relative to the Common Core State Standards, and the claims that the Standards will prepare all students to be college and career-ready. Second, it was important to include an official statement

from the CCSSO and NGA about the Common Core State Standards. It would have been easy to disregard this document as propaganda literature that was used by the creators to substantiate their claims about the Standards. However, that would have ignored the discourses used and power of texts to engage and motivate social actors. Thus, the Introduction to the CCSS was included, just as the statements from the practitioner advocacy organizations are included in chapter seven. Third, this document establishes the CCSSO and the NGA as primary social actors in the authoring of the CCSS. It is clear from the beginning of the *Introduction* that they formally position themselves as authorities proffering the CCSS to the public.

Document #2: The Application of Common Core Standards for English Language Learners, (2010)

The second document analyzed in this chapter was also written by The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center), titled *The Application of Common Core Standards for English Language Learners*. This document was made available to the public in June 2010, and attempts to represent the authors' concerns about the fastest growing student population in American schools, ELLs (NCELA, 2011). In particular, this document avowedly addresses the linguistic needs of ELLs in the Common Core State Standards.

The CCSSO and NGA's stated purpose for writing the *Application of Common Core State Standards for English Language Learners* document is enumerated below.

1. Acknowledge the need for language and content instruction;
2. Address the heterogeneity of ELLs (ethnicity, language, status, and ELP);
3. Acknowledge the responsibility of teachers of ELLs;
4. Accentuate ELA and mathematics as fundamental content areas for ELLs; and

5. Promote English as the only language necessary for success in school (NGA & CCSSO, 2010f, p. 1).

Lastly, the *Application of Common Core State Standards for English Language Learners* was written for an audience that may perceive the Standards as ill-conceived in addressing the specific needs of ELLs that have been memorialized in academic literature over the past few decades, according to scholars (Au, 2009; Bale, 2012; Hagopian, 2014).

There are three reasons for selecting this document to analyze in my dissertation. First, this document was the only document of the four to provide substantive information regarding learning for ELLs as a student population. This was extremely important, since the principal social actor that my research questions address regarding the CCSS are ELLs. Second, the content conveyed in the *Application of Common Core State Standards for English Language Learners* is relevant because it highlights key issues related to my research questions. Specifically, issues like native language skills, second language acquisition, pedagogy, ELP, academic content areas, sociocultural factors, and the standards and expectations for all refrain are addressed throughout the document. Third, once again, this document establishes the CCSSO and the NGA as the primary social actors in the authoring of the CCSS, even with respect to the needs of ELLs and how the Standards can be applied to this population.

Document #3: The Common Core English Language Arts Standards, (2010)

The third document analyzed in this chapter was also written by The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center), it is titled *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects*. This document was made available to the public in June 2010, and is proffered as the culmination of an extended,

broad-based effort to fulfill the charge issued by the states to create next generation of K–12 standards to help ensure that all students are college and career ready in literacy no later than the end of high school.

The CCSSO's and NGA's (2010c) stated purpose for writing the *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects* document is enumerated below.

1. Builds on the academic needs for students established in the *Benchmark Report* (2008);
2. Align them with college and work expectations;
3. Lay out a vision of what it means to be a literate individual;
4. Align the standards with instruction; and
5. Highlight grade level expectations for students.

Lastly, the authors of the document, *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects* state that it was written for ELA, social studies, and science teachers with knowledge and expertise in addressing the language and literacy needs of students in grades K through 12 (NGA & CCSSO, 2010c, p.3).

It should also be noted that the authors of the Standards also enumerate what the Standards do not cover; these are enumerated below.

1. How teachers should teach;
2. The Standards are the fundamental aspects of language and literacy;
3. They do not define the nature of advanced work for students who meet the Standards prior to the end of high school;
4. Intervention methods/materials to support students below or above grade level;

5. The full range of supports appropriate for ELLs and students with special needs; and,
6. The ELA and content area literacy components do not define the entirety of what it takes to be successful for college and career readiness (NGA & CCSSO, 2010c, p. 9).

There are three reasons for selecting this document to analyze in my dissertation. First, this document officially presents our nation's first foray in drafting, developing, promoting, and implementing national academic content standards (Hakuta, 2011; Berliner and Glass, 2014; Gandara, 2015). This is of great importance, because as highlighted in chapter two, educational reformers pushed for national academic content standards thirty years earlier in the *Nation at Risk* report (1983), which proclaimed that American students were academically falling behind their international peers.

Second, the content conveyed in the *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects* is relevant and substantive because it highlights key issues and concepts related to my research questions. Specifically, I wanted to investigate issues related to language policy, literacy, Standard English, ideology, and teacher agency. Third, it was vital to critically analyze the *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts* to reveal their lack of acknowledgement of the challenges found by marginalized populations, including ELLs. Although the *Application of Common Core State Standards for English Language Learners* document acknowledges their language differences, it does not purposefully advocate for the inclusion of their native language in content instruction, nor the social uses of their native language in non-instructional situations.

Document #4: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards, (2010)

The fourth document analyzed in this chapter was also written by The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center), titled *Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards*. Similar to the publication of the other Common Core documents, this document was made available to the public in June 2010, and is proffered as research supporting key elements of the Common Core. In particular, *Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards* includes research embedded in the Common Core that supports quantitative and qualitative measures of text complexity, reading, writing, speaking, and listening foundational skills, conventions of language (Standard English), vocabulary, and grade level language progression skills. For example, the NGA and CCSSO draw research from Chall, Conard, and Harris (1977) to provide reasons for their focus on text complexity, as well as research from Garcia and Beltran (2003), Short and Fitzsimmons (2007), and RAND (2002) to provide reasons for their focus on vocabulary.

An interesting factor that must be noted is that nowhere in the body of *Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards* are there reasons provided for drafting this document. Essentially, CCSSO and NGA have no stated purpose for writing the document. One aspect of critical discourse in analyzing texts is that a researcher must also recognize what is left unsaid. Thus, when analyzing what is related in a text, one must also recognize what is unsaid, and in doing so, realize that the unstated is also as a component of power and ideology. Finally, I believe that *Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards* was written for educational practitioners to make the case that the CCSS are research-based. As well as for teachers and administrators who need research-based methods as required by the *Every Student Succeeds Act*.

There are two reasons for selecting this document to analyze in my dissertation. First, I wanted to critically analyze *Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards* to understand if the research cited supported the standards. Second, it was imperative to critically analyze *Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards* to explore how the CCSS defined terms, such as Standard English, proficiency, evidence, text complexity, and language.

In the next section of this chapter, I use discourse analysis to analyze the CCSS documents for the themes and concepts related to ideology, the social actor as an agent of change, and social practices of the literate individual.

Analysis of Common Core Documents

In conducting a critical discourse analysis of text from the four Common Core documents (*The Benchmark Report*, NGA & CCSSO (2008); *Introduction to the Common Core State Standards*, NGA & CCSSO (2010b); *English Language Arts Standards of the Common Core*, NGA & CCSSO (2010c); *Development Process of the Common Core State Standards*, NGA & CCSSO (2010d); *Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards*, NGA & CCSSO (2010e)), it became apparent that particular themes were highlighted across the documents. Specifically, I use discourse analysis to:

- Ideological Claims and,
- Social actor agency as agent of change.

The following sections discuss each concept respectively.

Ideological Claims

Ideology is pervasive and operates through language. Ideology is the prime means of manufacturing consent by the dominant class. Language is therefore important enough to merit the attention of education policy and literacy educators (Gee, 2008). Ideology works through language, thus, disguising its nature, pretending to be what it is not. For example, the text below reveals how the NGA Center and CCSSO endorse the Standards for all students and argue that all children can meet the rigorous standards, while also noting that ELLs require additional supports. However, the Standards do not identify a single instructional method that might assist ELLs in becoming bilingual and biliterate. This is particularly problematic as the Common Core Standards provide a list of exemplar texts for teachers to use in their ELA classroom (NGA & CCSSO, 2010e), which are more inclusive of texts from the Western canon, as opposed to texts from various language minority groups.

There are four ways in which the ELA-CCSS espouse an ideology about language. First, they provide a limited view of what language entails. Language involves more than reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Second, the languages and dialects that students bring to classrooms are presented in the CCSS as deficits to overcome. Third, the native language of a student is not considered a viable language that should be enhanced along with their English language development. Fourth, becoming bilingual is never mentioned as an option for ELLs, nor is learning another language by English-only students. Two of these aspects are exemplified in the first quote below, which supports more time for ELLs, but makes no mention of what those additional resources would be, or methods of instructional support, or funding to support ELLs in meeting the same high expectations.

The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers strongly believe that all students should be held to the same high

expectations outlined in the Common Core State Standards. This includes students who are English language learners (ELLs). However, these students may require additional time, appropriate instructional support, and aligned assessments as they acquire both English language proficiency and content area knowledge. (NGA & CCSSO, 2010, see Appendix F, p. 1).

This quote specifically highlights two aspects in which ideology is infused throughout the ELA-CCSS. First, the quote states that ELLs should be “**held to the same high expectations,**” but ignores the methods and materials that would allow teachers of ELLs to help their students reach those “**high expectations outlined in the Common Core State Standards.**” Second, the quote mentions nothing about the native language skills that ELLs have acquired, prior to setting foot within a U.S. classroom. Krashen (1981) and Cummins (1981) have argued for decades that ELLs are not empty vessels needing to be filled. Instead, standards that solely focus on English language acquisition, takes the voice away from non-native ELLs.

Likewise, Krashen (1996) explains, dominant actors often use particular genres of text, for example scientific research, to validate their claims. In the case of the CCSS, they identify a link between vocabulary learning and academic achievement. The quote below illustrates a limited view of language that is tied to ideology, where vocabulary is a primary concern for academic achievement.

It is widely accepted among researchers that the difference in students’ vocabulary levels is a key factor in disparities in academic achievement (Baumann & Kameenui, 1991; Becker, 1977; Stanovich, 1986) but that vocabulary instruction has been neither frequent nor systematic in most schools (Biemiller, 2001; Durkin, 1978; Lesaux, Kieffer, Faller, & Kelley, 2010; Scott & Nagy, 1997. (NGA & CCSSO, 2010, see Appendix E, p. 32).

Note in the text above how language skills related to vocabulary, and the research associated with vocabulary are used to argue that the lack of proper vocabulary instruction is a “**key factor**” in “**achievement disparities.**” Some of this research has been debunked by Dudley-Marling and Lucas (2009), who write that the Hart and Risley study (1995) is based on perceived language deficiencies that poor students, minority students, and ELLs have which inhibit their ability to succeed in the language classroom. The belief that vocabulary can be measured is emblematic of an ideology that pathologizes the language and culture of diverse students. Throughout the ELA-CCSS, research, including federally sanctioned research, is used to argue that vocabulary is a primary component of academic success in the language classroom. The third quote ties vocabulary to reading comprehension, and thus, presents another skills-based view of academic language acquisition.

Vocabulary has been empirically connected to reading comprehension since at least 1925 (Whipple, 1925) and had its importance to comprehension confirmed in recent years (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). (NGA & CCSSO, 2010, see Appendix E, p. 32).

The quote above is a prime example of how research, albeit, research almost 100 years old is still used to promote an ideology that emphasized vocabulary as “**empirically connected to reading comprehension.**” Moreover, the NGA and CCSSO link the 1925 research to the 2000 study by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development in order to validate their claim that vocabulary is the major cause for reading comprehension. Furthermore, when terms such as “**empirically**” are used, it proffers an air of authority that these studies must be correct, and those removed from the research process, should not argue with the results.

On the other hand, to counter the NGA and CCSSO's assertions about vocabulary and reading comprehension, Dudley-Marling and Lucas (2009) argue that vocabulary is indeed important, and is a significant facet of excellent instruction of students, especially for ELLs. However, they also state that other factors of language instruction including phonemic awareness, automaticity, fluency, and motivation are factors which lead to academic achievement in the language classroom.

Similarly, the quote below illustrates the challenges that accompany learning academic language orally (Krashen, 1981). Krashen (1981) notes the oral exchanges that take place in and out of the classroom, which while important, do not minimize the need for a well-balanced English language arts curriculum for ELLs (Krashen, 1981). The quote below is an example of the minimization of oral language acquisition, and the maximization of written language acquisition, which Krashen (1981, 1986) cautions against, because ELLs are most likely to acquire oral language skills before written language skills, whether in their native language or English.

Written language contains literally thousands of words more than are typically used in conversational language. Yet writing lacks the interactivity and nonverbal context that make acquiring vocabulary through oral conversation relatively easy, which means that purposeful and ongoing concentration on vocabulary is needed (Hayes & Ahrens, 1988). In fact, at most between 5 and 15 percent of new words encountered upon first reading are retained, and the weaker a student's vocabulary is the smaller the gain (Daneman & Green, 1986; Hayes & Ahrens, 1988; Herman, Anderson, Pearson, & Nagy, 1987; Sternberg & Powell, 1983). (NGA & CCSSO, 2010, see Appendix E, p. 32).

The quote above is another example of the NGA and CCSSO tying vocabulary to another language skill – writing. Again, various researchers, Escamilla (2006), Sato (2015), Suarez (2002),

and Wong Fillmore (2014) would not argue with the assertion that vocabulary is important. Yet, they have argued and continue to argue, as do I, that a well-balanced language and literacy curriculum, including vocabulary, reading, writing, speaking, listening, and multimedia engagement is essential for ELLs to flourish in and out of the classroom. In addition, when the NGA and CCSSO use clauses such as “**purposeful and ongoing concentration on vocabulary is needed,**” and reference that “**the weaker a student’s vocabulary is the smaller the gain,**” they are confounding the situation. The first statement aligning vocabulary and writing is clear. A student needs vocabulary in order to express his/her ideas in writing. However, the last statement ties “**gain**” to vocabulary. That appears to confound the issue, because although unstated, the term “**gain**” references as assessments, formal or informal.

Finally, there are two excerpts below, from Appendix E (*Appendix A: Research Supporting the Standards*) that reveal how ideology operates in the ELA-CCSS. The authors address what students must value—complex text; and valuing something is a central component of ideology according to Fairclough, (1989, 1992). The next quote references the social practices of a literate individual, inferring that if students do not engage in reading complex texts, the types of texts that they will engage with less rigorous texts.

[Students] being able to read complex text independently and proficiently is essential for high achievement in college and the workplace and important in numerous life tasks. Moreover, current trends suggest that if students cannot read challenging texts with understanding—if they have not developed the skill, concentration, and stamina to read such texts—they will read less in general. In particular, if students cannot read complex expository text to gain information, they will likely turn to text-free or text-light sources, such as video, podcasts, and tweets. (NGA & CCSSO, 2010, see Appendix E, p. 4).

In the quote above, the authors contradict themselves with the previous text exchanges about the use of technology. In the analytical section discussing the social practices of literate individual, the authors mentioned the need for students to “**effectively use technology**,” yet the text above diminishes certain forms of texts that are embodied in current forms of technology, like “**video, podcasts, and tweets.**”

This linguistic move is referred to as a contradiction by Critical Discourse Analysis scholars. The contradiction is that students are to “**effectively use technology**,” but at the same time minimizes technology such as “**video, podcast, and tweets.**” Contradiction is not occasional and accidental, but ubiquitous (Fairclough, 1989; van Dijk, 1985). It is not dysfunctional, but key to how ideology normally functions and achieves its effects. Contradictions come from the process of struggle between author and reader, speaker and listener, as meanings from other references to text are incorporated into discourse, in complex structures which risk incoherence to better manipulate the social practices of social actors.

The next quote is imbued with an ideological tenet of Standard English that highlights the need for students to speak correctly and use proper grammar.

Students must have a strong command of the grammar and usage of spoken and written Standard English to succeed academically and professionally. (NGA & CCSSO, 2010, see Appendix E, p. 29).

This is a noble attribute any parent, teacher, and administrator would want for their children and students. The ideological aspect relates to how the authors of the ELA-CCSS define Standard English. They state that Standard English is “the most widely accepted and understood form of expression in English in the United States; used in the Standards to refer to formal English

writing and speaking; the particular focus of Language standards 1 and 2.” (NGA & CCSSO, 2010, Appendix E, p.43).

My main reason for arguing that ideology is an exercise of power is because it is increasingly achieved through the ideological workings of language, such as referencing Standard English in the CCSS as the only goal for ELLs. In particular, I have stressed how language classrooms might contribute to sustaining the dominance. In doing so, the dominant class has *colonized the tongues* of particular social actors and classes within our society. And social institutions, like schools, are deceived by maintaining class domination, which includes their language and social dialect. Ideology, as presented in the Common Core documents, legitimize these existing societal relations, and their accompanying social control on how people use language. That is the power of ideology. That is ultimately, the power of how language can be used to control by consent.

Social Actor as Agent of Change

The construct of the social actor as an agent of change refers to the roles that individuals, groups, organizations, and institutions play in the ways language is used to perpetuate systems of inequality (Fairclough, 1989, 1995, 2003; Janks, 1997; Van Leeuwen, 2008; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Social actors, (i.e., teachers, students, parents, administrators, policymakers) draw on the social meanings of language, to construct expectations of behavior that are linked to social status. Figure 5.1 below is a graphical representation of how the ELA-Standards operate as a primary social actor.

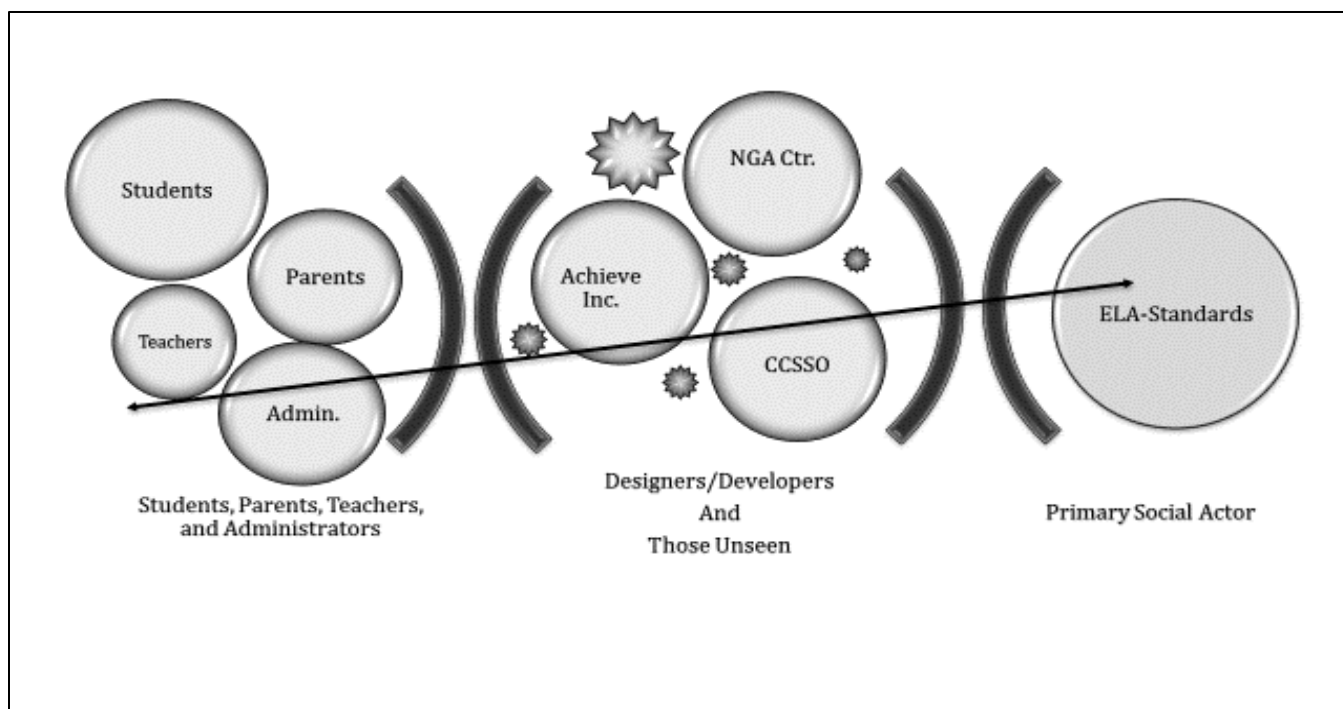


Figure 5.1 The Social Actors of the English Arts Standards of the Common Core State Standards

Some social actors who are empowered by funding, designed and developed the CCSS (i.e., the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the NGA Center, CCSSO, and Achieve, Inc.). These institutions represent the dominant class and are emboldened by unseen social institutions who had vested interests in promoting the Standards. Those social actors include the federal government, state policymakers, educational researchers, textbook publishers, and assessment vendors. The final group of social actors separated from the other two in Figure 5.1, are those most effected by the Standards: students, parents, teachers, and administrators (McDonnell & Weatherford, 2013; Porter et al, 2011).

Social actors do not necessarily have equal power. On the contrary, the Standards are privileged above the needs of other social actors, particularly students. While the Common Core texts suggest that there was a negotiation between the Standards' authors and educators, I analyze two text excerpts from the ELA-CCSS documents to illustrate the close connection between bids for empowerment and actual power, in that the right to request someone to do

something, (i.e., provide feedback, often derives from having power) (Fairclough, 1989). Sometimes these requests are direct and explicit, while at other times they are indirect and implicit. The graphic also shows an arrow that starts within the social space of students, parents, and teachers, and moves toward the Standards. The quote below claims that the “**general public, business leaders, states, and content area experts**” are social actor with equal power.

These final *standards* reflect the invaluable feedback from the general public, teachers, parents, business leaders, states, and content area experts and are informed by the standards of other high performing nations. (NGA & CCSSO, 2010, see Appendix B, p. 1).

Note how the subject of the sentence, “**Standards,**” positions the document as authoritative voice, which is claimed to “**reflect invaluable feedback.**” The term “**invaluable feedback**” is used to convey a semblance of cooperation and collaboration between teachers, parents, business leaders, states, and subject matter area experts on the content of the Standards. In actuality, the “**final**” Standards which were proffered to the public for consumption in April of 2010, were written by a working group of fifty-one individuals, only three of them with a connection to classroom teaching (Schneider, 2015). The “**invaluable feedback**” claimed to have been provided by these different constituencies was merely a public relations campaign to court individuals to be receptive to a common set of academic standards (Schneider, 2015).

The Standards were already written by NGA Center, CCSSO, and Achieve, Inc. before the working group of fifty-one *stakeholders* were invited to provide feedback. This invaluable feedback of the working group for the “**final**” Standards was an effort to prepare the public for common academic content standards and their value to the American educational system. As Gee (2011a) might claim, analysis of the text above illustrates what the text is trying to do, not what the text is trying to say. In this case, the text is trying to convince stakeholders to adopt the CCSS.

Finally, the final words of the text above: "... are informed by the standards of other **high performing nations**,"

This claim is reiterated in another section of the Common Core Introduction as noted below.

"[The *Standards* are] informed by top-performing countries, so that all students are prepared to succeed in our global economy and society. (Appendix B, 2010b, p. 1)."

These two quotes would have the reader assume that the Common Core Standards were drafted in response to the academic standards of high-scoring nations, including Singapore, China, and Finland. Those nations routinely mentioned in the *Benchmarking Report (2008)*. In reality, that is not true. There are only a select number of schools that take the TIMSS and PISA assessment within each country (Berliner and Glass, 2014; Porter et al, 2011). The point is that the American sample of students taking these assessments are very different from those in countries like China, Singapore, and Finland. In addition, one cannot compare the assessment scores from such a diverse population of students in the United States burdened with a host of other social and cultural issues including poverty, English only language policies, and access to resources, to a population of students in other countries that may not struggle with these issues. Ultimately, Berliner and Glass (2014) point out that the Common Core Standards were not actually drafted based on the standards of other high performing countries, but on the myth that the performance of students in these countries was a cause for alarm for the American educational system.

This text states the following, "so that all **students** are prepared to **succeed in our global economy and society**." This is an example of what Gee (2011b) refers to as the situated meaning tool. Situated meaning tools, direct the readers to attribute specific meanings to particular words and phrases. Knowing that the Common Core Standards are academic content standards provided to 43 states and their respective districts and schools, the meaning implicated in the statement is

that American students will be ready to succeed in this new and challenging, perhaps threatening global context. Gee argues that the text conveys the notion that if American students were engaged with the Common Core Standards, they would be able to succeed globally. This linguistic nuance reflects the NGA Center and CCSSO's insistence that engagement with the Standards are a viable pathway toward competitiveness in the global market (NGA & CCSSO, 2010d).

The need for Standards have been situated within a threatening context in which the Common Core texts highlight the necessity of competitive academic standards. Yet, the power of the discourse in the Common Core State Standards does not only mechanically follow from their existence. The idea of 'power behind discourse' (Fairclough, 1992) is that the social order of discourse is pulled together and held together through language. The text below reveals how power operates through discourse.

[The *Standards*] focus on results rather than means, by emphasizing required achievements, the Standards leave room for teachers, curriculum developers, and states to determine how those goals should be reached and what additional topics should be addressed. (NGA & CCSSO, 2010, see Appendix C, p. 4).

At times, discourse of power may seem inconsistent with the perceived goals of empowering others, especially those seeking power. For example, the text above states that “[**The Standards**] focus on results rather than means, by emphasizing required achievements.” The term “**required achievements**” is a vague term because it could mean that students reach their grade expectations each year, are prepared for college or a career, or perform better on those international assessments. These two inconsistent terms reveal textual incoherence (Fairclough, 1992). A coherent text is a text whose constituent parts (words, sentences, paragraphs, etc.) are meaningfully related so that the text as a whole makes sense. This lack of

text coherence becomes apparent when one examines the clause in the text, “**the Standards leave room for teachers...**” There is a lack of coherence in this statement because the Standards are essentially equated with achievement, and teacher empowerment to focus on social, cultural, and academic results because the implication of the text is that the Standards are the one central path to achievement for students, especially ELLs.

This lack of text coherence is seen throughout the Common Core Standards. For example, the text below discusses intervention methods and materials.

The *Standards* set grade-specific standards but do not define the intervention methods or materials necessary to support students who are well below or well above grade-level expectations. No set of grade-specific standards can fully reflect the great variety in abilities, needs, learning rates, and achievement levels of students in any given classroom.

However, the Standards do provide clear signposts along the way to the goal of college and career readiness for all students. (NGA & CCSSO, 2010, see Appendix C, p. 6).

Note the sentence, “**The Standards set grade-specific standards but do not define the intervention methods or materials necessary to support students.**” Similar to the prior text exchange, there is a lack of text coherence. For example, the phrase, “**do not define,**” suggests that the Standards are not an intervention method or material, but by virtue of existing as educational materials, they are designed to support academic achievement. Furthermore, there is a tension between the metaphor of the Standards as “**clear signposts**” and “**non-defined intervention methods and materials necessary to support students.**” The metaphor of “**clear signposts,**” is tied to the “**Standards,**” and boldly states that standards do provide information that teachers can use to ensure that students to college and career ready. Yet, what is even more important is the use of the term “**goal**” to align the first statement of what the Standards do not do (i.e., intervention

method or material) - to their vital goal of using them as “**clear signposts**” for success, which is defined as college and career-readiness. However, the conundrum to the reader is discerning whether the standards entail an “**intervention method or materials**” for teachers to use.

The Standards operate as an important social actor by promoting a discourse that emphasizes teachers as agents of change for ELLs. The text below highlights this notion, and how teachers must focus on English learning.

Teachers must build on this enormous reservoir of talent and provide those students who need it with additional time and appropriate instructional support. This includes language proficiency standards that teachers can use in conjunction with the ELA standards to assist ELLs in becoming proficient and literate in English. (NGA & CCSSO, 2010, see Appendix F, p. 1).

Modal verbs used in the text above, which are verbs that necessitate the subject’s likelihood, obligation, or permission to do something. Modal verbs in the quote above suggests that teachers “**must build**” on the talent of ELLs, and “**provide**” students with more time and support, and teachers “can use” ELA standards with the Standards. Typically, modal verbs are used when the tone of the text presents an imperative for the subjects (Gee, 2008). In this case, teachers, who are required to help their ELLs become proficient and literate in English.

Another example of the ways the teachers are positioned as agents of change is evident in the use of the modal verb, “**requires.**” This verb follows the word, “**diagnosing.**” “Diagnosing” is a medical term (Fairclough, 2010; Gee, 1999) that implies disease. Thus, the Common Core Standards suggest that with the Standards, teachers will be able to *cure* their students. These words illustrated in the next quote note the use of modal verbs and teacher agency as doctors curing their ELLs; although the quote does not declare what ailments ELLs need curing from.

ELLs are a heterogeneous group with differences in ethnic background, first language, socioeconomic status, quality of prior schooling, and levels of English language proficiency. Effectively educating these students requires diagnosing each student instructionally, adjusting instruction accordingly, and closely monitoring student progress. (NGA & CCSSO, 2010, see Appendix F, p. 3).

These two text examples position teachers as agents of change. They are also an example of how scholars (Cummins, 1981; Escamilla, 2006; Gee, 2008; and Krashen, 1981) theorize the complexities of language acquisition. These scholars highlight one of the troubling effects of educational reform in US schools - the reforms almost always overlook the impact that they will have on teachers. Teachers, whether content, bilingual, or ESL, are the primary purveyors of language instruction in the classroom, and thus, better able to discern the needs of their students than outsiders and policymakers. Consequently, (Cummins, 1981; Escamilla, 2006; Gee, 2008; and Krashen, 1981) would also argue that ELLs as unique individuals, language ambassadors, and cultural diplomats, are not diseases that need curing.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have analyzed the four Common Core documents. Two themes emerged in response to my first two research questions. Those two themes, ideology and the social actor as an agent of change, addressed the institutionalization of power structures that privilege particular ways of learning language and literacy related to the cultural and linguistic needs of ELLs.

Ideology emerged as primary as I addressed attention to the linguistic and cultural needs of ELLs in the CCSS. My analysis suggests that the CCSS provides a limited view of what language entails, and how students must negotiate complex text in order to be language and

literacy proficient, and succeed in school. As a growing body of research suggests, language and literacy learning involves more than reading, writing, speaking, and listening in English for ELLs (Thomas and Collier, 2002). It involves recognition and appreciation of children's native languages, as well as communities and cultures. In short, native languages and the dialects that students bring to classrooms are presented in the ELA-CCSS as deficits to be overcome.

My findings related to ideology also suggest that the native languages of ELL students are not considered viable, and that they must be replaced by English. The ELA-CCSS ignores the methods and materials that allow teachers of ELLs to help their students become bilingual. Becoming bilingual is never mentioned as an option for ELLs, nor is learning another language by English-only students. Accordingly, ELLs are expected to speak and write in Standard English in order to succeed academically and professionally.

Sub question "b" of research question number two explores the role played by dominant social actors as agents of change. Based on this analysis, it is evident that the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the NGA Center, Achieve, Inc., and CCSSO funded, designed, and developed the CCSS to foster their interests. These social actors (the federal Department of Education, researchers, textbook publishers, assessment vendors, and state policymakers) push or advocate for the CCSS because they bring in money, or align with an ideology of language learning. Whereas, those non-dominant social actors: teachers, students, parents, and administrators must respond to the CCSS and ultimately, implement them. In addition, I describe the Standards themselves as social actors and agents of change because they proffer not only a way of language learning, but also suggest a way of becoming successful in college, career, and society.

Ultimately, my critical analyses of these Common Core texts do not suggest nefarious attempts by prominent social institutions such as the NGA, CCSSO, and Achieve, Inc. using

their agency to subjugate certain members of society, including ELLs. Instead, my critical analyses convey a subtle and nuanced attempt, through the use of language, by dominant social actors to minimize attention to the social dialects and languages of those whom they consider to be “other,” and to standardize language for their interests in a global marketplace. This of course, is disconcerting for ELLs; not because they are unable to acquire the English language, but because the standardization of language chips away at the cultural facets of language and life unique to their respective communities.

Ideology is not mere manipulation, it is not just a means to behave in certain ways, but it exists to confirm a certain viewpoint of language. The fact that ideology is action-oriented indicates its role is not to render reality transparent, but to motivate social actors to do or not do certain things, like speak the language of their mother, father, or grandparents in or outside of the classroom. It serves the interests of certain people, typically the dominant capitalist class and performs a functional role in relation to our social, economic, political and legal institutions. Ideology is complex and contentious in all social spaces of a society, and will be examined in the next chapter from the perspective of academics who have written about the ELA-CCSS and its effects on ELLs.

Chapter VI. Critical Lenses: Views from the Ivory Tower of the Common Core

Introduction

This chapter examines the discourses operating in four peer-reviewed journal articles that express concerns, fears, or opportunities related to the Common Core State Standards. The rhetorical moves that the scholars use as they analyze the emergence and voice critique of the ELA-CCSS include economic analyses, equity analyses, and comparisons of assessment scores between American students and their international peers. These scholars note the promises of the CCSS as well as its limits in effectively addressing the needs of ELLs. The four journal articles are:

(1) *Educating Language Minority Students and Affirming Their Equal Rights: Research and Practical Perspectives* by Kenji Hakuta, (2011);

(2) *Common Core Standards: The New U.S. Intended Curriculum* by Andrew Porter, Jennifer McMaken, Jun Hwang, and Rui Yang, (2011);

(3) *Organized Interests and the Common Core* by Lorraine M. McDonnell and M. Stephen Weatherford, (2013), and;

(4) *Investigating the Language Demand in the Common Core State Standards for English Language Learners: A Comparison Study of Standards* by Mikyung Kim Wolf, Yuan Wang, Becky H. Huang, and Ian Blood (2014).

These four journal authors collectively examine the perceived effects of the implementation of the Common Core on various constituencies, including marginalized student populations like ELLs. These constituencies include students, teachers, parents, administrators, and researchers. Their analyses are obviously based on their experiences as educators, researchers, and advocates or opponents to the CCSS. Their perspectives are evident in the language they use within those documents. Curiously, several of the social actors that they

critique or support are discussed in the prior chapter, i.e., (Department of Education, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the NGA Center, CCSSO, textbook publishers, the NEA, and the AFT). However, the Department of Education, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the NGA Center, CCSSO, textbook publishers, the NEA, and the AFT are portrayed as ideological educational reformers, complicit participants, or unintentional advocates (Porter, McMaken, Hwang, and Yang, 2011).

Also, it must be noted that the discourse used within these four journal articles espouse an ideology of language, the uses and purposes of educational research, and the role of political advocacy and power. In other words, these documents, while ostensibly grounded in research, are value-laden and designed to inform and change the behavior of other researchers, policymakers, philanthropic funders, and perhaps teachers and administrators - essentially, those who are most apt to read their work.

Consequently, the forthcoming analytical sections of this chapter discuss four themes operating in the data. First, economic power references the use of financial resources to achieve one's goals, or the use of government or public resources to achieve one's goals, and the power to project particular values, beliefs, and attitudes as universal and common sense (Fairclough, 1989). Next, an equity analysis reveals the reproduction of social and political inequality based on who controls the production of laws and policies which benefit their interests (Fairclough, 1989). Third, a review of the four articles to highlight the authors' critique of ELA-CCSS in relation to American student performance on international assessments. Finally, the discourse of the marginalized is seen as a threat to the propaganda efforts of the elite (Fairclough, 2010). Thus, the discourse embedded within these academic articles is the authors' attempts to understand the marginalized population's role in society.

In the next section of this chapter, I provide a chronological introduction to the four peer-reviewed journal articles that I analyzed. Information about the articles, the audience, the authors, and reasons for the selection of each article is noted.

Article #1: Hakuta, (2011)

The first article I analyzed in this chapter was written by Kenji Hakuta and, titled *Educating Language Minority Students and Affirming Their Equal Rights: Research and Practical Perspectives*. Kenji Hakuta is a world renowned professor of educational psychology and bilingual education at the Graduate School of Education at Stanford University. This article appeared in a 2011 volume of *Educational Researcher*, a journal published by the American Educational Research Association (AERA). The American Educational Research Association, founded in 1916, is comprised of more than 25,000 members who are faculty, researchers, graduate students, and other distinguished professionals with expertise in education research. AERA is also the most prominent education research organization in the world.

Hakuta's purpose for writing this journal article was to describe his journey as an experimental psycholinguist alongside substantive changes in policy and practice in the education of English language learners in the United States. The article provides a historical perspective on the development of key issues related to ELL students including bilingualism, language of instruction, and the inclusion of English language learners in reform movements, including the Common Core State Standards. Furthermore, this article describes Hakuta's perspective on what educators and researchers might encounter as they work in an era of national academic standards, and what the future might hold for ELL students, teachers, and parents.

There are four particular reasons why I selected this article to analyze as part of my dissertation. First, Hakuta's peer reviewed article references key pertinent issues including the

Common Core State Standards, bi- and multilingualism, and educational policy. Second, in a search across several library databases for peer-reviewed journal articles, this article consistently appeared near the top of all lists as being most cited. Third, this article incorporates Hakuta's insider perspective as a former ELL and as an Asian American that has advocated for bilingual education in schools. Finally, considering Professor Hakuta's standing in the field bilingual education and policy, I considered it prudent to include the voice of one of America's most prominent educational researchers.

Article #2: Porter, McMaken, Hwang, and Yang, (2011)

The second article I analyzed in this chapter was written by Andrew Porter, Jennifer McMaken, Jun Hwang, and Rui Yang, titled *Common Core Standards: The New U.S. Intended Curriculum*. Porter is currently a professor in the Graduate School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania, and McMaken, Hwang, and Yang were doctoral students at the time of the publication of this article. Professor Porter's expertise focuses on psychometrics, student assessment, education indicators, and research on teaching and learning. This article also appeared in a 2011 volume of *Educational Researcher*, a journal published by the American Educational Research Association (AERA).

This article entails a research study conducted by Professor Porter and his students on the newly implemented Common Core standards in which they compared standards and assessments in 16 states, as well as academic standards in five top-performing countries (Japan, Sweden, Singapore, Finland, and New Zealand). The purpose of this comparison was to gauge whether state or national standards led to improved student performance in assessments. Their analysis showed revealed four distinct conclusions:

1. National academic standards in the exemplar countries are well aligned with curriculum, textbooks, and shared instructional practices consistent with the populations being served. The American states did not have such consistency, and the authors feared that this inconsistency would continue as long as the CCSS were implemented.
2. Summative assessments are a poor measure of student achievement. Teacher and student feedback, and interim and formal assessments should be included to document student success.
3. International benchmarking showed that top-achieving countries placed a greater emphasis on “performance procedures” than do the U.S. Common Core standards. Performance procedures refers to the ability of students to replicate the skillset they learned in a particular aspect of math, reading, or science (like counting, comprehension, or classifying) in another area of math, reading, or science. High-performing countries’ emphasis on “performance procedures” runs counter to the widespread call in the United States for a greater emphasis on higher order cognitive demand, which is what the Common Core requires. Porter et al, claim that it is best to combine both to measure learning instead of assessment performance.
4. Finally, the authors found that Common Core State Standards were more focused on mathematics than previously adopted math standards by various states. However, the differences in the ELA-CCSS and state ELA standards were negligible, meaning the supposed improvements in the ELA-CCSS will not increase assessment scores for students, especially ELLs.

Finally, there were three reasons why I selected this article for analysis in my dissertation. First, this article exhibited the type of research rigor exemplified in comparing academic content standards across states and countries. The use of a content analysis procedure via Surveys of Enacted Curriculum (SEC), relies on a two-dimensional framework which defines academic content at the intersections of topics and cognitive demands. Second, the inclusion of international benchmarking as an additional measure was my reason for inclusion. This reflects the Common Core insistence that the Standards were drafted based on the best practices of high-performing countries. Finally, like Hakuta's article, this peer reviewed article consistently appeared near the top of all search engines as being most cited in educational databases, i.e., (JSTOR, ProQuest Research Library, ERIC, etc.).

Article #3: McDonnell and Weatherford, (2013)

The third article I analyzed in this chapter was written by Lorraine M. McDonnell and M. Stephen Weatherford, it is titled *Organized Interests and the Common Core*. McDonnell and Weatherford are currently both professors of political science at the University of California, at Santa Barbara. Professor McDonnell's work focuses on the politics of education policies, their design and implementation, and their effects on school practice. Professor Weatherford's work focuses on research that looks at policy history and political leadership, focusing on education and economic policy. This journal article also appeared in a 2013 volume of *Educational Researcher*, a journal published by the American Educational Research Association (AERA).

This article sought to examine the role that CCSS supporters have played in developing and implementing the standards, supporters' reasons for mobilizing, and the counterarguments and strategies of opposition groups. The article draws on theories of political and policy learning and interviews with major participants, including interest groups supporting the Common Core. Political learning refers to advocacy of an idea or problem, whereas, policy learning refers to

fundamental shifts and changes in behavior based on what one learns about an issue. McDonnell and Weatherford's article tried addressed three questions:

1. What roles have groups supporting the Common Core played in moving policy beyond the stalemate over "national standards"?
2. What were their reasons for mobilizing?
3. What are the major arguments and strategies that opposition groups have used?

The results of their study show that the Common Core was the product of political and policy learning by a diverse group of supporters and opponents. Members of the most fervent political coalitions (McDonnell and Weatherford, 2013, p. 3) supported the Common Core initiative for various reasons. Each drew lessons from past failures to establish national standards. For groups representing policymakers, comparisons between the performance of U.S. students and those in other countries helped define problems, identify standards as a core policy solution, and frame standards in the context of global economic competitiveness. For groups pursuing equity goals, information about the variable quality of state standards defined the problem as one of unequal opportunities for students to learn the knowledge and skills needed to achieve an adequate standard of living.

Moreover, policy learning for CCSS supporters involved more than just a realignment of rhetorical frames. The CCSS, (i.e., national standards) had to be conveyed to the public as a transparent initiative on how they were designed, including who led that process, who participated in it, and how the Standards were adopted. Furthermore, the authors noted that those working against the Common Core emphasized the lengthy implementation process, fiscal constraints faced by states and districts, and the sheer scope and scale of what implementation of the CCSS would entail. McDonnell and Weatherford also stress the consensus among opponents

of the Common Core that research and practice over the past two decades have highlighted that incentives for high-stakes assessments that create pressure on students and teachers and have negative effects on classroom practices.

Finally, there were three reasons that I selected this article for analysis in my dissertation. First, like the prior articles, this peer reviewed article consistently appeared near the top of all lists as being most cited in the educational databases, i.e., (JSTOR, ProQuest Research Library, ERIC, etc.). Second, even though this article is not written by typical educational scholars, both authors are political scientists, it offered a unique perspective on political advocacy and policy implementation with respect to education reform. Third, this article not only includes a diverse group of social actors who either opposed or supported the Common Core State Standards, but also addressed their motivation for their stances. In highlighting their motivations and actions, this article offered a profound perspective on how the Common Core would impact different constituencies recognized by the authors of the Standards, as well as those social actors not recognized by the authors of the Standards.

Article #4: Wolf, Wang, Huang, and Blood (2014)

The fourth article I analyzed in this chapter was written by Mikyung Kim Wolf, Yuan Wang, Becky H. Huang, and Ian Blood, titled, *Investigating the Language Demand in the Common Core State Standards for English Language Learners: A Comparison Study of Standards*. Mikyung Kim Wolf is a Senior Research Scientist at the Center for English Language Learning and Assessment Research (CELLAR), at the Educational Testing Service in Princeton, New Jersey. Wolf's colleague, Yuan Wang is an Associate Research Scientist at CELLAR. Becky Huang is an Assistant Professor of Bicultural and Bilingual Studies in the College of

Education and Human Development at the University of Texas at San Antonio. Ian Blood was a Senior Research Assistant at CELLAR at the time of publication for this article.

This journal article appeared in a 2014 volume of the *Middle Grades Research Journal*. *Middle Grades Research Journal* (MGRJ) is a refereed, peer reviewed journal that publishes original research studies providing both empirical and theoretical frameworks that focus on middle school grades education. Information Age Publishing is the publishing house of this journal, which was founded in 1999. It publishes academic and scholarly book series, monographs, handbooks, encyclopedia and journals in the fields of education, psychology, management, leadership, educational technology, mathematics and Black studies.

The study written by Wolf et al (2014), provides a critical review of the language demands contained in the Common Core State Standards for English language arts (CCSS-ELA) with important implications for the instruction of English language learners. The language demands of the CCSS-ELA were compared with those of existing English language arts (ELA) and English language proficiency (ELP) standards from three states at Grade level 8. After deriving a language skill coding scheme from the CCSS-ELA, the three states' standards documents were analyzed and compared to the CCSS-ELA in order to identify similarities and differences in the language skills and tasks represented across the standards documents. In addition, the authors conducted interviews with a small group of middle-school teachers to document their interpretations of the CCSS-ELA along with their perceptions of the rigor of the standards for their ELL students. Finally, the findings of the standards analyses and teacher interviews discussed identifying important skills for ELL students to acquire in order to meet the performance descriptions in the CCSS-ELA. Furthermore, implications for the effective implementation of the CCSS for ELL

instruction included the importance of ESL and content teacher collaboration, and standards, curriculum, and assessment alignment.

In conclusion, there were three reasons for selecting this article for analysis in this chapter. First, like the previous articles, this peer reviewed article appeared near the top of all lists as being most cited in the educational databases, i.e., (JSTOR, ProQuest Research Library, ERIC, etc.). Second, this article, like Hakuta's featured keywords including ELLs, bilingual, biliterate, ESL, CCSS-ELA, collaboration, curriculum, and instructional practices, that are allied with themes and concepts under investigation in this chapter. Third, Mikyung Wolf and Becky Huang are nationally recognized scholars in the fields of bilingual education, policy, standards, and assessments. A review of their conference presentations, journal articles, and citations, underscores their knowledge in these subject areas, and thus warranted this article's inclusion in the data analysis.

In the next section of this chapter, I explore the emerging themes that arose from the author's critique of the ELA-CCSS, which include economics, equity, and comparisons of American students in relation to their international peers.

Economic Analysis

Classical Marxist theory suggests that ideologies of power distort understandings social and economic realities in the interest of the dominant class. The economic analyses presented in the academic papers analyzed in the dissertation presupposes that the dominant social actors have rational expectations. A Marxist interpretation suggests that their subjective beliefs about language and literacy are related to the financial and organizational resources that formally structure institutions in society, like schools and universities. Those dominant interests ultimately ignore marginalized populations - including ELLs (Freire, 2005; Fairclough, 1992, 1998, 2010).

This section of the chapter examines two particular economic constructs gleaned from the academic articles: 1) means of production and 2) resource allocation.

Means of Production

Accordingly, one of the critiques that the authors in three of the four peer reviewed articles note is the financial incentivizing of states, districts, and advocacy groups to either support and/or implement the CCSS. In particular, the authors discuss how CCSSO, NGA, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation employ *means of production* to finance research, drafting, development, implementation, and promulgation of the CCSS. Some of these academic writers also observed that the federal government contributed to the advancement of the CCSS through financial investment. In contrast to the other three articles, Wolf et al.'s (2014) article did not put forward ideas or notions related to the concept of means of production.

Means of production may be operationalized and defined as the investment of resources to produce socially consumable goods and materials. The socially consumable goods and materials I address are the CCSS and its ancillary materials. For example, the quote below from Porter et al. (2011) illustrates how the U.S. Department of Education, along with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation contributed to the means of production for the implementation of the CCSS.

The federal government is putting considerable resources behind adoption and use of the standards. Although the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) was not directly involved in creating the standards, developing and adopting a common set of standards is included among the criteria in the scoring rubric used to grant awards in the Race to the Top competition. (Porter, McMaken, Hwang, and Yang, 2011, see Appendix J, p. 104).

In essence, Porter et al.'s use of the term “**resources**” softens the blow to acknowledge that the federal government invested in the fostering of the CCSS. Those resources included money awarded through the grant competition and technical assistance that supported applications for funding and implementation of the CCSS. Porter et al.'s statement also recognizes that the federal government, noted by the name, “**The U.S. Department of Education (USDE)**” provided the means of production for states to build organizational (school district) capacity for implementing the Common Core Standards and assessments. Evidence supporting this claim is presented in the second sentence which begins with “**Although,**” but then goes on to note that a “**scoring rubric [was] used (by the U.S. Department of Education) to grant awards in the Race to the Top competition,**” which was then used to provide funding to school districts. Thus, that “**scoring rubric**” illustrates that the federal government played an indirect role in encouraging the adoption of the CCSS. Ostensibly, funding was based on the willingness of states to quickly adopt and implement the CCSS.

Another example of a discourse used to discuss the means of production in the peer reviewed articles appeared in Hakuta's writing:

Furthermore, the various programs funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (including Race to the Top) have added new fuel to the reauthorization discussions, including the issue of measuring teacher effectiveness and how that information might be used. (Hakuta, 2011, see Appendix G, p. 171).

While, Hakuta, who is an internationally renowned scholar of bilingual education and second language acquisition, argues that the U.S. Department of Education was not complicit in the development of the CCSS, he notes that Race to the Top funding provided “**new fuel**” to the reauthorization process of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). That “**new**

fuel” was the entrepreneurial impetus for the Department of Education to allay the financial concerns of states with regard to implementing the CCSS. In the CCSS context, new fuel funding to states for ELL instruction, was the means of production to ensure that the CCSS was developed and implemented. Even while the controversy continues over whether ELLs should be taught in English only classrooms or through the various bilingual instructional programs remains unresolved, Hakuta argues that “**measuring teacher effectiveness**” is a threat that burdens content teachers, and may hinder ESL teachers in the process of promoting second and native language acquisition in the classroom. From Hakuta’s perspective, “**teacher effectiveness**” may position ESL and content teachers as very possibly ineffective. Throughout his career, Hakuta has argued that language assessments for ELLs are but one measure of language learning. Essentially, this reliance on evaluation of teacher effectiveness based on students’ test scores as promoted by the federal government’s financing of the implementation of the CCSS may lead to unfounded conclusions about ELLs, their language learning, and their teachers (Hakuta, 1986, 1994, 2011).

Finally, McDonnell and Weatherford (2013) name the means of production provided by the Gates Foundation to promote the CCSS:

Gates is the elephant in the room: Gates funding the development of curricula; Gates trying to influence the assessment consortia. Gates helped, funding most of the people involved in the standards ... [they] went around and consciously looked at the Washington policy scene, and placed grants—we got a million dollars, others got a million dollars. (McDonnell and Weatherford, 2013, see Appendix H, p. 493).

As described in the introduction to this chapter, McDonnell and Weatherford’s article critiques the CSS by exposing the motivation and influences of dominant social actors involved

in either drafting, developing, implementing, and supporting the CCSS. They explicitly highlight the significance the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation played a significant role in “**funding,**” “**influencing,**” “**help[ing],**” and “**plac[ing]**” grant money in the coffers of national organizations that would be amenable to the CCSS (McDonnell & Weatherford, 2013).

Ultimately, “**Gates...as the elephant in the room,**” a metaphor suggesting a large, strong, but silent partner in the corner that actually controls the discourse, provided the money that financed the development of the CCSS, CCSS related academic curricula, and assessments. McDonnell and Weatherford’s quote calls out a member of the dominant capitalist class, (i.e., the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation). Consequently, in calling them out, McDonnell and Weatherford are also asking readers whether funds from the dominant capitalist class should be able to significantly control how language, literacy, and other subject areas are taught and assessed.

Means of production discourse illustrates that the authors of these articles are clearly cognizant of the role that money plays in the development of curricula and assessment. Those means of production deliver an ideology about language and literacy learning that is inconsistent with research based evidence that supports native and second language literacy instruction for ELLs and supports the continued development of bilingual and biliterate youth. The means of production, as accentuated in the articles are presented as tools that members of the dominant capitalist class use to advance their ideological narrative about what should be valued and supported in schools and society (Woodside-Jiron, 2011).

Resource Allocation

A strategy addressed by all four of the articles was resource allocation. Resource allocation differs from the means of production because it highlights the what, and the who, as

well as the how much. Whereas, the means of production is mostly concerned with the economic ideology fostering the use of capital to promote the agenda of the dominant class (Bourdieu, 1977). Resource allocation is about assigning and managing assets to strategic goals related to the allocation of funds. While means of production is about articulating an ideology, resource allocation is about achieving the concrete goals of the dominant capitalist class. For example, the quote below from Porter et al. provides an example of resource allocation.

[T]he USDE recently awarded \$330 million in Race to the Top funds to two consortia, representing the majority of states, to help develop assessments aligned with the common standards. The SMARTER Balanced Assessment Coalition, representing 31 states, received \$160 million, and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, representing 26 states, received \$170 million (12 states are members of both consortia). (Porter, McMaken, Hwang, and Yang, 2011, see Appendix J, p. 104).

Porter et al. clearly articulates that the “**USDE...awarded \$330 million in Race to the Top funds to two consortia.**” Those consortia in particular are “**The SMARTER Balanced Assessment Coalition,**” and the “**Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers.**” What should also be noted in Porter et al.’s quote is the claim that the majority of U.S. states are a part of either Consortia, whose sole purpose is “**develop assessment aligned with the common standards.**” Furthermore, the quote suggests that many of the states were committed to piloting Smarter Balanced or PARCC assessments based on the funding and assessment incentives provided to their state educational agencies. Finally, this quote provides a particular representation of what, who, and how much was allocated for a specific purpose. In other words, one aspect of Porter et al.’s analysis brought to light the small number of social

actors, two: “**Smarter Balanced**” and “**PARCC**,” who received significant funding and further pushed the CCSS into the mainstream.

A quote below from McDonnell and Weatherford (2013) identifies other social actors and resources.

[T]he Gates Foundation has spent slightly over \$200 million in support of activities advancing the CCSS and the concept of college- and career-ready standards. About half of the funds (\$98 million) have been allocated to national organizations, with much of it supporting activities related to building support and informing policymakers and their constituents about the Common Core. (McDonnell and Weatherford, 2013, see Appendix H, p. 493).

In this quote, McDonnell and Weatherford (2013) note that the “**Gates Foundation spent slightly over \$200 million**” to “**support...activities advancing the CCSS and the concept of college- and career-ready standards.**” These two clauses report the what, who, and how much. “What” references the CCSS and college- and career-ready standards, “the who” is the Gates Foundation, and the “how much” is \$200 million. Yet, their research also tells us that almost half of the funds were “**allocated to national organizations,**” which may suggest why several of these national organizations were diplomatic in their critique and analysis of the CCSS. As noted by McDonnell and Weatherford (2013, see chapter 7 and Appendix H) various organizations and constituencies received funding in exchange for supporting the CCSS. These funds were described as being used to “**support activities related to building support and informing policymakers and their constituents.**” Thus, the CCSS is treated as a product, or socially consumable good, to be sold requiring certain institutions, organizations, and individuals

to allocate resources to sell the CCSS to the public, teachers, and more specifically, districts and schools.

Resource allocation, thus far, has focused on social actors, financial funding, and the CCSS as a socially consumable good to encourage non-dominant social actors to behave in a manner that suits the interest of the dominant capitalist class. In doing so, there are socioeconomic consequences that will inherently arise and lead to ELLs being left behind. The next two quotes provide insight into this phenomenon that arose from the data.

Two articles in particular addressed resource allocation with respect to ELLs. These scholars (Wolf, 2014 and Hakuta, 2011) analyses focused on teachers, states, and schools. For example, Wolf et al. (2014) worried that teachers of ELLs in under-resourced communities would have difficulty in implementing the CCSS. In particular, they identified access to technology as a formidable threat to the success of ELLs in a Common Core era.

Another salient challenge acknowledged by the teachers was the importance of technology resources in implementing the CCSS in practice. The current lack of access to technology among ELLs was pointed out as an obstacle for ELL students who often reside in economically disadvantaged communities. (Wolf et al., 2014, see Appendix I, p. 48).

Wolf et al. (2014) conclude that the demands of the CCSS are achievable by ELLs, in spite of economic disadvantage and lack of access to computers. Their article investigated the language demands of the CCSS with respect to ELLs, but also recognized how the NGA Center, CCSSO, and Achieve, Inc. ignored the technological aspects of implementing the CCSS. Likewise, Wolf et al. (2014) argued that the lack of consideration to the technological infrastructure required to implement the CCSS in schools and classrooms disregard the

socioeconomic status of poor and marginalized students preclude them from engaging with the CCSS, to the same degree as their higher income peers. In essence, this quote voices concerns that the CCSS will perpetuate inequities in their practice, and that the lack of access to technological resources may hinder the success of their students.

This quote addresses resource allocation through the eyes of the teacher, which Wolf et al. (2014) described as a “**salient challenge**.” Salient is a strong word; it means something matters; it means that you cannot ignore it. This is further delineated with the sentence “**The current lack of access to technology among ELLs was pointed out as an obstacle for ELL students who often reside in economically disadvantaged communities.**” What McDonnell and Weatherford’s sentence reveals are the generally unacknowledged differences between economically advantaged and economically disadvantaged communities, and how those resources affect learning. They are pointing to a silence in the CCSS. In short, they reveal that poor ELL students require more than Standards to enable them to be successful in the language and literacy classroom. Words, such as, “**obstacle**” and “**economically disadvantaged communities**” punctuate the impediments that many ELLs historically and currently face in American classrooms.

Focusing on the incentives used to entice non-dominant social actors, Hakuta’s (2011) research highlights resource allocation. In the following quote, Hakuta explores how for decades the federal government has been complicit in determining who receives funding and access to resources.

The carrots and sticks of federal education policy—in this case, the carrots being funds through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the sticks being Title VI of the

Civil Rights Act interpreted through the Lau decision—worked themselves in complex ways through the 1970s. (Hakuta, 2011, see Appendix G, p. 165).

Hakuta (2011) references the Lau decision, which was a 1974 federal case (*Lau v. Nichols*, 1974) filed on behalf of Chinese American students in San Francisco, California. The case centered on Chinese American students not receiving language instruction or support to facilitate success in the content area classrooms. Ultimately, the U.S. Supreme Court held that the city of San Francisco was liable and ordered it to provide “linguistically appropriate accommodations” to all students regardless of ethnicity or native language. This case illustrates the ongoing struggle for inclusion in terms of ELL students and the CCSS.

Thus, Hakuta (2011) references the “**carrots and sticks of federal educational policy**,” and specifically references the “**sticks being Title VI of the Civil Rights Act interpreted through the Lau decision—worked themselves in complex ways through the 1970s.**” Yet, he also recognizes the federal government’s carrot being the “**funds**” through ESEA, which includes provisions for ELLs. This quote is relevant to the notion of resource allocation with the Common Core because Hakuta is implying that this process of allocating resources alongside threatening sanctions has been occurring for decades. The metaphor evokes an image of dangling gold coins in front of the poor. Therefore, the federal government has ensured that states, and inevitably districts, comply with their educational policies in order to receive federal funding and avoid punishment. The metaphors that Hakuta uses, “**carrots**” and “**sticks**” are no less poignant to the issues of resource allocation based on what the dominant social actors perceive as necessary to ensure that their wants are enacted, rather than research based policy and practice.

Through these resource allocation examples, all four authors reveal and explore socioeconomic inequity and economic power. They show that having the ability to allocate

resources to particular institutions and organizations further advances particular ideological notions of language and literacy; including who is funded and how those funds will be used, those “**carrots**” and “**sticks**.” Finally, issues related to educational experiences of ELLs, the academics are unrestrained in their ideas about economic inequality in the administration of the CCSS for communities, teachers, and ELLs. Their analyses suggest that unless educational funding, including standards development funds, serve students with the least, inequality is perpetuated (Wolf, et al., 2014).

Equity Analysis

In 1974, during reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Congress specifically incorporated language to address equal educational opportunities linked to bilingual education programs. Accordingly, the act stated that “the Congress declares it the policy of the United States to establish equal educational opportunity for all children to encourage the establishment and operation . . . of education programs using bilingual education practices, techniques, and methods” (Title VII, 1974, Sec. 702[a], p. 583). Bilingual education was defined as “instruction given in, and study of, English, and, to the extent necessary to allow a child to progress effectively through the educational system, the native language (p. 583).” Chapter two provides a detailed history of how interest groups, certain members of Congress, and the U.S. Department of Education personnel battled, and continue to battle to provide “equal educational opportunity,” “bilingual education practices, techniques, and methods,” and “native language instruction.”

Consequently, this section of the chapter examines discourses of equity as addressed in the academic articles. In doing so, the two quotes cited in this section from Hakuta (2011) and McDonnell and Weatherford (2013) expound on unique issues of equity related to access and

academic achievement, policies and practices of bilingualism, and curriculum and teacher resources. Unlike the other two articles, neither Wolf et al.'s (2014) article, nor did Porter et al.'s article put forward ideas related to equity.

Kenji Hakuta (2011) examines equity in relation to bilingual education:

Since we are fairly certain that bilingualism is of great value, and since we know that promotion of two languages does not interfere with school learning, it seems that a rational policy should encourage the development of bilingualism. Why delete the languages that are naturally spoken by immigrants and their children and then get frustrated by the poor efforts of institutions of higher education to teach those very same languages to the elites? Society admires the bilingualism of the diplomat but not the multilingualism of the cab driver. (Hakuta, 2011, see Appendix G, p. 172).

There are three aspects to consider regarding Hakuta's assertion. First, the sentence begins by stating that "**we are fairly certain that bilingualism is of great value.**" This is an attempt to alleviate the fears of English-only advocates by implying that research has shown that being bilingual has clear advantages. Hakuta acknowledges that he agrees with this sentiment by using the term "**we.**" He could have easily said that researchers believe bilingualism is beneficial, but instead he included himself in that clause because he fundamentally agrees with the idea, and his research supports bilingual education as being beneficial for all students, not just ELLs. This raises issues of educational equity because Hakuta specifically notes that being bilingual is good for all students, not just ELLs.

Second, Hakuta, who has recently attempted to influence language policy in the United States argues that "**a rational policy should encourage the development of bilingualism.**" Hakuta is advocating that states, school districts, and schools employ a language policy that

supports the development of a student's native language along with their English language skills. Yet, it must be understood from Hakuta's (2011) article, that he is not simply advocating for the development of a "**rational policy**" that caters to the whims of political expediency - as exemplified with the Common Core - for Hakuta, a rational policy for linguistic equity must be implemented to support the development of bilingualism which requires an understanding of culture, dialects, and traditions.

Third, Hakuta poignantly reminds the reader, while at the same time admonishing those inside and outside the academy, that "**Society admires the bilingualism of the diplomat but not the multilingualism of the cab driver.**" This bold statement demonstrates the dissonance that currently exists within American society and schools. For example, Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), now referred to as the *Every Student Succeeds Act*, specifically mandates provisions for non-English speaking students to obtain English language instructional support and services in American schools. However, many states have identified English as the only language of instruction, thereby totally negating the native language skills and bilingual abilities that ELLs bring to classrooms. Then, once a student enters higher education, education policy officials and politicians wonder why college students are opposed to learning a language other than English. As Hakuta explains, this conundrum is not only an example of dissonance, but also an issue of equity because schools and teachers are left to confront this irrational policy while the needs of their ELL students are ignored.

Furthermore, Hakuta's (2011) quote identifies two distinct social actors: the diplomat and the cab driver. Hakuta boldly states that Americans perceive the bilingual diplomat as a more educated, cultured and refined individual, while the bilingual cabdriver is viewed as a lowly immigrant. In short, we place a higher value on the diplomat's bilingualism and a lower value on

the cabdriver's bilingual abilities. Furthermore, Hakuta is analogizing this disparity to illustrate what language policies do to ELLs; we respect the socioeconomically privileged student who learns English in the classroom and can perform well on assessments in English, but ignore the language and literacy skills of the ELL student who arrives from another country able to fluently speak their native language and articulate his or her ideas in English at a basic level. Yet, as Hakuta explains, the language policies and instructional services in a school may not seek to support that co-development of children's native language and English.

Finally, this social perception about language acquisition, and who's language should be valued led McDonnell and Weatherford (2013) to consider how federal and state education officials presented the CCSS to the public (Berliner and Glass, 2014). In the quote below, McDonnell and Weatherford (2013) noted how research was used to push for adoption of the English Language Arts Standards of the Common Core.

Even more compelling for a number of interest groups were arguments based on data showing persistent patterns of differential achievement among students depending on their race/ethnicity, social class, and place of residence; students' lack of preparation for postsecondary education or employment; and dramatic variation among states in the rigor of their standards. Advocates noted that evidence was used strategically: "We picked and chose evidence depending on the audience." (McDonnell and Weatherford, 2013, see Appendix H, p. 491).

Two distinct facets of this quote from McDonnell and Weatherford relate to issues of equity. First, McDonnell and Weatherford claim that the authors of the Common Core used **"Arguments based on data showing persistent patterns of differential achievement"** to influence various interest groups and to elicit their support for the Standards. McDonnell and

Weatherford acknowledge that this tactic is not new to political advocacy, however, what is unique is how the authors of the Common Core and their respective organizations strategically used data, and/or empirical research, to illustrate “**differential achievement**” disparities between student groups. It should be noted, that some researchers may use data to skew the results of their analysis, however, McDonnell and Weatherford observe that the Common Core authors used their research to “persuade (p. 491), “influence (p. 493),” and “convince (p. 494)” interest groups, various constituencies, and national organizations, rather than inform them about the efficacy of the Standards and the research they are based on.

Not only do McDonnell and Weatherford (2013) focus on the role of different forms of evidence used by the authors of the Common Core, they also argue that their data (1) uses data to advance a cause rather than an effective program or policy, (2) fails to fully differentiate the needs of respective student subgroups in academic settings, especially in regards to ELLs, (3) fails to address the underlying problems of achievement disparities, and (4) the data fails to address how the Standards will promote academic achievement among these student subgroups. These points raise issues related to social and educational equity that McDonnell and Weatherford argue are either minimized or completely ignored by the authors of the Standards.

Second, McDonnell and Weatherford (2013) observe that advocates of the Common Core “**picked and chose evidence depending on the audience.**” Since McDonnell and Weatherford already established in the prior paragraph that data was used strategically, this quote informs the reader that the research was calibrated to appeal to particular audiences. The word “**audience**” is of considerable importance in the context that some information was selected and shared with certain interest groups and organizations, which means that the same information was not shared across interest groups and organizations. This raises an issue of equity that McDonnell and

Weatherford (2013) highlight in their article because they speak to the interest groups of organizations, policymakers, educators, and parents in regard to their being well-informed to make a decision about whether to adopt the Common Core State Standards. As McDonnell and Weatherford proclaim, if most interest groups, organizations, policymakers, educators, and parents knew how information was selected, framed, and presented to them, and what was not shared, would they have been as willing to promote or abstain from advocating the Common Core that only sought to influence, rather than encourage educational equity?

In the next section, I will explore how the authors of the four peer reviewed articles treated comparisons between American students and their international peers.

International Comparisons

It has been argued throughout this chapter, as well as throughout this dissertation that one major factor that influenced the NGA Center and CCSSO to draft the Common Core State Standards was the poor performance of American students on the PISA and TIMSS assessments, in comparison to their international peers. As a matter of fact, in two of the Common Core texts analyzed, (*Appendix C: Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts*, and *Appendix E: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards*), the NGA Center and CCSSO make a concerted effort to argue that common academic standards are needed to thwart America's precipitous fall into an education abyss.

Remarkably, Berliner & Glass (2014) in their text, *50 Myths & Lies that Threaten America's Public Schools*, challenge these myths. They tackle concerns about American student performance on international tests. Berliner and Glass (2014) argue that these comparisons are the proverbial apples and oranges, because the comparisons between American students and their international peers are incompatible because the United States has a larger proportion of students

at a lower socioeconomic status participating in PISA and TIMMS assessments. These assertions by Berliner and Glass informed my analysis of a quote from McDonnell and Weatherford's (2013) article that addresses international assessment data, advocacy, and national standards. It should be noted that Hakuta (2011) and Wolf et al. (2014) did not explicitly address the issue of international comparisons.

Drawing on data from Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMMS), advocates [of the CCSS] argued that the achievement of U.S. students is low when compared with the nation's global competitors and that, unlike the United States, countries with high-achieving students have focused, rigorous, and coherent national standards. (McDonnell and Weatherford, 2013, see Appendix H, p. 491).

There are three significant parts of this quote from McDonnell and Weatherford (2013). First, "**Drawing on data**" again highlights the importance that the NGA Center and CCSSO placed on using student data to make a case for the development and implementation of common national academic standards. However, what McDonnell and Weatherford (2013) note is that the data used to make decisions about the future of education reform in America were based on international assessments - the PISA and TIMMS. In essence, McDonnell and Weatherford (2013) clearly articulate that American student performance *in comparison* [emphasis added] to their international peers played a significant role in the development of the Common Core State Standards.

Second, the clause "**advocates argued**" is important because McDonnell and Weatherford (2013) situate the "**advocates**" of the Common Core as social actors intent on promoting the Common Core as a solution to the ills of American education, and particularly

assessment performance in comparison to their international peers. This is noted when McDonnell and Weatherford (2013) also use the strong verb, “**argued**” in conjunction with “**the achievement of U.S. students is low when compared with the nation’s global competitors.**” McDonnell and Weatherford (2013) recognize that two different issues are being tied together as a solution to American student performance, first, “**achievement of U.S. students is low**” with “**compared with the nation’s global competitors.**” Just by placing these two phrases together, one can see that incongruity – that is the point McDonnell and Weatherford (2013) try to accentuate, i.e., trying to equate economic competitiveness with student performance on international assessments. Likewise, they ask the reader to consider the question, how do national standards, i.e., the Common Core equate to global [economic] competitiveness? Their article and this quote highlight an incongruity between what is best for American students, including ELLs, in terms of educational reform, and the economic productivity of a nation.

Third, the phrase “**countries with high-achieving students**” does two things. First, it places an unknown and undue burden on American students. As mentioned previously, advocates of the Common Core argued about the low achievement of U.S. students, and this phrase suggests that America is a country without “**high-achieving students.**” On the contrary, our high achieving students are in classrooms with students of all abilities. Second, in conjunction with the rest of the sentence, “**countries with high-achieving students have focused, rigorous, and coherent national standards,**” the phrase purports to claim that there are high-achieving students in other nations because they have “**focused, rigorous, and coherent national standards.**”

Likewise, the quote below from Porter et al. (2011) challenges the rigor of content standards presented in the Common Core and countries that the NGA Center and CCSSO used as

benchmarks for drafting the Common Core: “Ireland, Finland, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, Singapore, the United Kingdom, and others.” (NGA Center & CCSSO, 2010, see Appendix E, p. 41). It should be noted that “perform procedures” is a term that Porter started using in 2004, which means to “do computations, make observations, take measurements, compare, and develop fluency;” (See Porter, 2005b, p. 25) which some may construe as limiting how ELLs are viewed in their content area classrooms.

Top-achieving countries for which we had content standards put a greater emphasis on “perform procedures” than do the U.S. Common Core standards. High-performing countries’ emphasis on “perform procedures” runs counter to the widespread call in the United States for a greater emphasis on higher order cognitive demand. (Porter, McMaken, Hwang, and Yang, 2011, see Appendix J, p. 116).

Porter et al. (2011) distinguishes between “**perform procedures**” and “**higher order cognitive demand**.” As Porter et al. (2011) explains, perform procedures refers to students doing things in the classroom, like “using numbers,” “organizing data,” “identifying themes and main ideas,” and “summarizing text (p. 110).” Whereas, “**higher order cognitive demand**” refers to students using their cognitive abilities in the classroom by “understanding,” “analyzing,” and “evaluating (p. 105).” Another aspect of this quote that must be taken into consideration, is how the assessment and academic achievement of ELLs factor into “**the widespread call**” when it has been proven that instruction for ELLs should include standards that align both performance procedures and high cognitive demands (Baker, 2004; Fillmore, 2014; Krashen, 1999; Pease-Alvarez & Hakuta, 1992; Suarez, 2002; Thomas & Collier, 2002). Ultimately, in Porter et al.’s (2011) conclusion, the authors emphasize the necessity of crafting academic standards that

balance perform procedures with higher order cognitive demands; something which they note the Common Core standards failed to do (Porter et al., 2011).

The next section of this chapter examines the four academic articles and how each author scrutinized the perceived threats to American education if the Common Core was not adopted and implemented in the states.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have analyzed four academic articles. In doing so, I have analyzed each scholars' critique of the Common Core to illuminate discourses and themes related to equity, economics, and international comparisons. My critical analysis of these documents addresses research question number two, sub questions "a" and "c," and in particular, the institutionalization of power. I focused on the authors' perceptions and realities about the Common Core documents that contribute to the continued discussion of educational policy, bilingualism, assessments, and academic content standards for ELLs.

Author Kenji Hakuta (2010) stated that bilingualism is a rational language policy for American public schools. However, this possibility is ignored by the authors of the CCSS. In essence, the ELA-CCSS denies the significance of home languages spoken by immigrants and their children. Findings from this chapter challenge the idea that disparities among student groups would be alleviated by implementing the CCSS, rather than by addressing social issues affect families and communities.

In regard to the development of the CCSS, (question number two, sub question "a"), comparisons between American students and their international peers were a repeated refrain across texts. For example, my findings show that comparisons between countries are based on different social demographics. The authors of the CCSS note that American students are performing poorly on PISA and TIMMS assessments in comparison to their international peers.

They argue that those countries have common academic content standards that better promote academic achievement. Yet, the authors of the academic articles made simultaneously claim that the CCSS entail higher cognitive demands than high performing nations whose standards focus more on perform procedures.

Also related to research question number two, sub question “b,” my analysis reveals that dominant social actors: for example, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the NGA Center, Achieve, Inc., and CCSSO have rational expectations for a return on investment. That is, the CCSS as an adopted and implemented educational policy that will provide workers for the future. The CCSS, the NGA Center, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation supported research, drafting, development, implementation, and promulgation of the CCSS. Above all, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation was prominent in resource allocation (\$200m) allocating funds to states, districts, and nonprofit organizations to implement and provide professional development to teachers to support them in appropriately implementing the CCSS. Similarly, the federal Department of Education was active in resource allocation (\$330m) by assigning assets to strategic goals, including allocating funds to states for technical assistance and two assessment Consortia (PARCC and Smarter Balanced).

The educational researchers viewed the Common Core texts with both skepticism, and as an opportunity for educational policy that is inclusive of the language skills of ELLs. Likewise, their social actor positionality as well-known scholars permitted them to acknowledge that educational reform initiatives like the Common Core can be used by advocates and opponents to serve institutional, organizational, political, and governmental purposes, rather than addressing the needs of ELLs. Essentially, this chapter focused on how prominent language researchers

have engaged with the Common Core State Standards. These researchers have explored the limits, gaps, and deficits as well as possibilities for the Standards and how they impact ELLs.

Finally, the peer-reviewed articles written by authors well-established in the academic community, suggest that the authors were compelled to investigate the claims made by the NGA Center and CCSSO in order to validate them or recommend changes, as well as inclusions. Their claims, with respect to ELLs, centered on issues of access, equity, bilingualism, resource allocation, instruction, and global education comparisons. My critical analysis of the discourses they used, underscores their professional caution and/or civil disagreement as scholars who are intent on providing clear, concise, and coherent information about ELL students and how the Standards may change the instructional methods by which ELLs are taught in their language and content area classes. In essence, their intent was to influence how the Common Core, as educational reform policy, changes the landscape of education in America and its classrooms, especially in terms of how it addresses the experiences of ELL students. This was evident in discourses that promoted equity.

Chapter VII. Unintentional Advocates: Practitioners of Change or Compliance?

Introduction

This chapter examines the discourses operating in six documents that either seek to interpret, comprehend, comply with, or manage the Common Core State Standards. These six documents are:

- (1) *The TESOL Position Statement on the Common Core State Standards*, (2010);
- (2) *Implementing the Common Core State Standards for English Learners: The Changing Role of the ESL Teacher* by TESOL, (2013);
- (3) *Position Statement on Common Core State Standards* by the American Federation of Teachers, (2010);
- (4) *AFT & the Common Core State Standards: a work in progress* by the American Federation of Teachers, (2013);
- (5) *The Position Statement on Common Core State Standards* by the NEA, (2010) and;
- (6) *The Common Core Toolkit* by the NEA (2014).

These documents are an attempt by three practitioner advocacy organizations, the National Education Association (NEA), the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), and Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) to comprehend the effects of the Common Core on teachers first, and then students; for these organization's main constituency is comprised of K-12 ESL and content area educators. These positions are based on the collective experiences of educators, but still these practitioner advocacy organizations function as social institutions that attempt to retain a voice and power in the educational policy field. The Common Core Standards provided an opportunity for these organizations to address issues of inequity in the social practices, i.e., language and literacy practices, particularly with respect to English

Language Learners. In doing so, the organizations proffered public documents that situated them within a larger field of educational reform, as either an accomplice or unintentional advocate. This is evident in the language used in those documents.

The discourses used within these six documents espouse ideologies about language, especially concerning the development of curriculum and instructional practices that will promote academic achievement among ELLs. In essence, these documents are ideologically driven, and purport to inform and change the behavior of the teachers and students. Accordingly, the forthcoming analytical sections of this dissertation discuss two particular discourse aspects revealed by my analysis of these six documents: (1) discourse and social order, and (2) social actor positionality. Social order refers to the relationships between social groups and individuals within the structures of institutions, while positionality refers one's own social position in relation to other individuals, groups, or institutions. Formality refers to the way in which the style or tone of language will vary in appropriateness according to the social context, the situation, and the relationships between addresser and addressee (Fairclough, 1995).

In the next section of this chapter, I provide an introduction of the six practitioner advocacy organization documents that were analyzed in this chapter by organization (TESOL, AFT, and NEA), information about the documents, the authors, the audience, and reasons for the selection of these documents. However, the position statements by both the AFT and NEA were not used to discuss the emergent themes in this chapter because they did not produce substantive information to address any of the three research questions.

Document #1: TESOL Position Statement on the Common Core State Standards, (2010)

The first document analyzed in this chapter was written by the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL) Board of Directors, titled *TESOL Comments on the*

Common Core State Standards. TESOL is a global education association representing approximately 12,000 English language educators in the United States. The mission of TESOL is to develop and maintain professional expertise among educators in English language teaching and learning for speakers of other languages worldwide. TESOL and its network of 100 affiliates represent over 45,000 English language educators working at every level worldwide. This document was made publicly available on their website and to the media in April 2010, approximately two months before the official release of the Common Core State Standards.

TESOL's purpose for writing this position statement, as they describe it on their website, is to address the needs of English language learners in the U.S in a new era of educational reform. Their hope is that the Common Core Standards consider the native language skills of ELLs to be successful in their preparation for college or a career. Furthermore, they cite specific areas that must be addressed by policymakers, as well as ESL and content teachers with respect to ELLs, including: (1) implementation of Common Core Standards with English Language Learners; (2) assessments of Common Core Standards with English Language Learners; and (3) English Language Proficiency Standards. In other words, their statement highlights the realization that all teachers must work together in meeting the needs of English language learners – not simply the (ESL) and bilingual specialists who often work most closely with these students.

There are two particular reasons for selection of this document for analysis in my dissertation. First, TESOL has a long history, dating back to the 1960's of addressing the needs of bi-and multilingual learners (Alatis, 1976). Thus, it seems prudent to include the position statement from an entity that has had a history of providing curriculum and policy guidance to ESL and content teachers around the world for decades. Second, TESOL is a major practitioner advocacy organization comprised of educators with expertise in second language acquisition that

was not included in the drafting or development process of the CCSS. As it has been acknowledged by TESOL (2010), researchers (i.e., Escamilla, 2006), and other organizations, (i.e., NCELA, 2011), ELLs are the fastest growing population in the nation. Yet, TESOL was not consulted regarding the writing or content of CCSS. Considering that TESOL has consistently provided curriculum and policy guidance, engaged in partnerships with schools, districts, and countries, and published numerous resources for parents, this is alarming. This fact encouraged me to include their position statement, and ponder why they were not invited to participate in the drafting and development of the CCSS, as well as investigate TESOL's response to the CCSS.

Document #2: Implementing the Common Core State Standards for English Learners: The Changing Role of the ESL Teacher by TESOL, (2013)

The second document analyzed in this chapter was written by the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL) Convening Committee on the Common Core, titled *Implementing the Common Core State Standards for English Learners: The Changing Role of the ESL Teacher*. The Convening Committee on the Common Core was an ad hoc committee comprised of 30 ESL teachers and administrators, education experts, researchers, and thought leaders from Maryland and the District of Columbia. Their charge was to initiate a conversation on how the CCSS will change the roles of educators who teach ESL. The TESOL Convening Committee on the Common Core was chaired by Diane Staehr Fenner. Diane Staehr Fenner earned her doctorate in multilingual/multicultural education from George Mason University with an emphasis in literacy. She is president and founder of DSF Consulting, a firm that specializes in the achievement of ELs in K–12 settings in the United States, and she is the TESOL National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) program coordinator.

TESOL's purpose for writing this guidebook was to address an urgent need to give ESL teachers a venue to speak about the CCSS. ESL teachers were absent from the conversation

around this important education reform, yet they will play a critical role in its successful implementation. Their report, three years after the implementation of the CCSS, summarizes the discussions that took place at the meeting and highlights the topics that emerged from the conversation. It provides background on the role of the ESL teacher in the CCSS, especially for the ELA Standards, and then shares findings that arose from the convening. It also weaves in authentic ESL teacher and administrator voices from convening participants.

There are three reasons for selection of this guidebook for analysis in my dissertation. First, in this guidebook, TESOL offers extensive guidance for not only ESL teachers, but content teachers as well. Second, I wanted to include a substantive document, like this guidebook, that aligned with TESOL's position statement on those items that should have been incorporated into the CCSS. As well as highlight how ESL and content teachers will have to engage their students in order to be successful on the CCSS and its corresponding assessments. Third, this document includes the voices of various constituencies: teachers, administrators, federal, state and district education officials, and educational researchers. Consequently, their input on the CCSS as educational policy must be valued and analyzed.

Document #3: Position Statement on Common Core State Standards by the American Federation of Teachers, (2010)

The third document I analyzed was written by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Ad Hoc Committee on Standards Rollout, titled *Position Statement on Common Core State Standards*. However, this position statement was not used to discuss the emergent themes in this chapter because it did not produce substantive information to address any of the three research questions. The American Federation of Teachers is a national education union founded in 1916 which represents approximately 1.6 million educators in the United States. The mission of AFT is to champion fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public

education, healthcare and public services for American students, their families and their communities. The AFT is also committed to advancing these principles through community and parent engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism.

AFT's purpose for writing this position statement in 2010 was precipitated by President Randi Weingarten who created the AFT Ad Hoc Committee on Standards Rollout to initiate a plan to ensure that all levels of the union would implement the CCSS are implemented as a comprehensive standards-based system. This committee, which consisted of AFT state and local presidents, higher education representatives, state education issues coordinators and classroom teachers, met with the writers of the standards, representatives of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), members of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) and other experts to develop recommendations for the appropriate rollout of the standards. These recommendations, which were adopted as an AFT resolution on May 19, 2011, were divided into six broad categories:

1. Standards design
2. Shift in culture
3. Curriculum
4. Professional Development
5. Instructional Tools, Time, and Resources
6. Assessments

There are three particular reasons for analyzing this document. First, AFT was one of two practitioner advocacy organizations that participated in the development process of the CCSS. The AFT's involvement in the development process consisted of refining and providing feedback on resources and supports for successful implementation of the CCSS after they had been drafted. Second, AFT is one of the oldest practitioner advocacy organizations in the United States

supporting the efforts of teachers, promoting the profession, and advocating on behalf of sound educational reform. Third, AFT and its cooperation (or collaboration) with the NGA and CCSSO were mentioned by other authors whose documents were analyzed in this dissertation; particularly those analyzed in chapters five and six. This fact encouraged me to include their position statement, and ponder why these two national practitioner advocacy organizations were invited to participate in the development process, as well as to analyze AFT's reaction to the CCSS.

Document #4: AFT & the Common Core State Standards: a work in progress by the American Federation of Teachers, (2013)

The fourth document analyzed in this chapter was written by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Ad Hoc Committee on Standards Rollout, titled *AFT & the Common Core State Standards: a work in progress*. This document from the Ad Hoc Committee on Standards Rollout was published almost three years after the national implementation of the CCSS. It sought to provide guidance for the continued implementation of the CCSS and provide resources to teachers. Furthermore, the *AFT & the Common Core State Standards: a work in progress* document focuses the successful implementation of the CCSS through the cooperation of teachers and administrators.

AFT's purpose for writing this resource guide was to ensure that the implementation of the CCSS included input from teachers, particularly teachers associated with the AFT. As such, another reason for the writing of this resource guide was to tout the AFT Innovation Fund. The AFT Innovation Fund provides grants to support local and state AFT affiliates as they developed CCSS lessons and units in academic content areas, prepare future teachers to work in Common Core classrooms, and ensure that the needs of particular groups of students, such as English language learners, are met as the standards are taught.

There are three reasons for selection of this document for analysis in my dissertation. First, I wanted to include a substantive document, like this resource guide, that aligned with AFT's position statement, and addressed how content teachers and administrators would need to engage with each other to successfully implement the CCSS. Second, AFT was one of two practitioner advocacy organizations that participated in the development process of the CCSS. Again, AFT's involvement in the development process consisted of refining and providing feedback on resources and supports for successful implementation of the CCSS after they had been drafted. Third, AFT and its cooperation (or collaboration) with the NGA and CCSSO was mentioned by other authors whose documents are analyzed later in this dissertation; particularly in chapters five and six.

Document #5: The Position Statement on Common Core State Standards by the NEA, (2010)

The fifth document analyzed in this chapter was written by the National Education Association's (NEA) President Dennis Van Roekel, titled *Position Statement on Common Core State Standards*. However, this position statement was not used to discuss the emergent themes in this chapter because it did not produce substantive information to address any of the three research questions. The National Education Association is the largest national education union, founded in 1857, which represents 3.2 million elementary and secondary teachers, higher education faculty, education support professionals, school administrators, retired educators and students preparing to become teachers. The mission of the NEA is to advocate for education professionals, unite its members and the nation to fulfill the promise of public education, and to prepare every student to succeed in a diverse and interdependent world.

The NEA's stated purpose for writing this position statement in 2010 by President Dennis Van Roekel was to support the draft Common Core State Standards. In fact, in the position

statement, President Van Roekel noted how two NEA members served on project committees and an advisory group of NEA teachers had provided input on several occasions for the implementation of the CCSS. In addition, within the statement, President Van Roekel acknowledges the attentiveness of CCSSI leaders (NGA Center and CCSSO) to the ideas of the NEA to provide real classroom grounding for the learning progressions and ideas in the standards.

Yet, President Van Roekel's position statement also states that "While there are still areas that can be improved, these standards are beginning to articulate education goals that encompass high level, complex knowledge and skills... They can serve as a core framework for language arts, subject-based literacy, and mathematics curricula in great public schools (p. 1)." This suggests that even after being a part of the development process, the NEA still may have had reservations, but continued to advocate for the development of the standards, and therefore, this ambivalence served as a reason for the selection of the document for analysis.

There were three other reasons for selecting this document to analyze in my dissertation. First, like the AFT, the NEA was one of two practitioner advocacy organizations that participated in the development process of the CCSS. The NEA's involvement in the development process consisted of providing feedback on the CCSS after they had been drafted. Second, the NEA is the oldest practitioner advocacy organization in the United States specifically supporting the work of teachers, promoting public schools, and advocating on behalf of their members for effective educational policy. Third, the NEA is a well-connected union; meaning that politicians, policymakers, and educational entrepreneurs routinely ask for votes or support on issues that are important to them. This fact in itself was a reason to include their position statement on the CCSS in my analysis.

Document #6: The Common Core Toolkit by the NEA, (2014)

The sixth document analyzed in this chapter was written by the National Education Association's (NEA) Common Core Working Group in 2014, titled *The Common Core Toolkit*. The Common Core Working Group was comprised of 56 members appointed by the NEA Executive Committee. The purpose of the group was to prepare educators to implement the CCSS. The group had three primary responsibilities: (1) maintain educators' presence throughout Common Core implementation; (2) facilitate communication about the Standards; and, (3) assist in the development of educational tools.

The NEA's stated purpose for writing the *Common Core Toolkit* was to provide information and resources to teachers, administrators, and parents. Moreover, the NEA developed this *Toolkit* with resources to implement the Standards and positively impact student achievement by: (1) facilitating a feedback loop of information about the Standards and corresponding assessments; (2) informing instructional practice with strategies and curricular design methodologies; and, (3) providing a continuum of support for implementing the Standards, along with strategies for advocacy, and family and community engagement. Finally, the *Toolkit* provides general background and links to information about the CCSS, as well as practical assistance and curriculum planning.

There were four reasons for selecting this *Toolkit* to analyze in my dissertation. First, the NEA was one of two practitioner advocacy organizations that participated in the development process of the CCSS. The NEA's involvement in the development process consisted of providing feedback on the CCSS after they had been drafted. Second, NEA and its cooperation (or collaboration) with the NGA and CCSSO was mentioned by other authors whose documents were analyzed in this dissertation; particularly in chapters five and six. Third, the NEA is the

oldest practitioner advocacy organization in the United States specifically supporting the work of teachers, promoting public schools, and advocating on behalf of their members for effective educational policy. Fourth, the NEA is a well-connected union; meaning that politicians, policymakers, and educational entrepreneurs routinely ask for votes or support on issues that are important to them. This was the final reason to include their *Common Core Toolkit* in my analysis.

Discourse and social order

Discourse can be understood as language in use (Fairclough, 1992; Gee, 1999, 2008) and in combination with other social practices (behavior, values, ways of thinking, food, and customs) within specific social groups. For those of us interested in problems of social order, discourse analysis provides a way to accomplish three goals. One is to discover how words capture particular ways of knowing and being that contribute to the construction of a social order that extends far beyond a particular interaction. Second, discourse analysis allows us to examine the relationships between social actions and social structures and how those relationships and individuals come to know and act in their worlds. The third is to identify the interactional manifestations of social problems, in which interactions are seen as potential sources of problem, and as potential sites for intervention (van Dijk, 1985).

Social order emphasizes the role of coercion and power producing fragmented and unequal social groups (Fairclough, 1989). This perspective is derived from the works of Karl Marx, who viewed society as comprised of classes that compete for social and economic resources. Social order is maintained by domination, with power in the hands of those with the greatest political, economic, and social resources. Language use, discourse, verbal interaction, and communication refer to the micro-level of the social order and are used by all people. Power,

dominance, and inequality between social groups are typically terms that refer to a macro-level of analysis. Ultimately, this means that CDA has to theoretically bridge the “gap” between micro and macro. The quote below from *TESOL’s Position Statement* raises issues related to power, class, and language at both the micro and macro levels; because it demonstrates how TESOL must address what was not stated by the authors of the CCSS - the specific language and literacy needs of ELLs. Specifically, this quote underscores ideas/concepts of what constitutes language learning for ELLs, but not other aspects of language learning (in the ELA-CCSS) that TESOL values. Elements of social order that are not embodied in this quote, or what TESOL perceives as unsaid by the CCSS authors include: ELLs’ culture, community, and transnational experiences, professional development for ESL and content teachers of ELLs, and differentiating between academic and social language (TESOL, 2013, see Appendix P, p.11).

In particular, TESOL appreciates and supports *some* of the key points addressed in the introduction, such as discussion on the heterogeneity of the population of English language learners, the strong case that is made for using prior student’s knowledge, the points on the need for professional development for teachers and personnel on working with English language learners, and the discussion on language in mathematics for English language learners. (TESOL, 2010, see Appendix O, p.1).

It should first be noted whom the addressee and addresser are in this quote. The practitioner advocacy organization, TESOL, is addressing the authors of the Common Core Standards. This is witnessed with the clause, “**TESOL appreciates and supports *some* of the key points** addressed in the **introduction.**” The introduction that is being referenced is the Common Core Introduction. TESOL claims to be the premier organization in providing English language standards, research and advocacy, curriculum resources, and professional development for ESL educators (TESOL,

2010), but in this document use the word “*some*” to establish that they do not agree with other portions of the Common Core.

In fact, TESOL was among the major practitioner advocacy organizations that was not consulted on the language and literacy components of the Common Core (NGA Center & CCSSO, 2010d). Hence, they only support some “**key points**” of the Common Core. These points include **heterogeneity** of the population, **prior student knowledge**, **professional development for teachers**, and **language** instruction in **mathematics**. These are indeed admirable considerations for all students, yet, what this text reveals are some of the tensions that exist among TESOL, the NGA Center and CCSSO. TESOL is positioned as a reactive or passive social actor, not the active social actor who actually crafted the CCSS (Fairclough, 1989, 1995). In other words, the interests of TESOL were marginalized, while the interests of the NGA Center and CCSSO were privileged. TESOL was not included despite the skill and knowledge prevalent among members of their constituency. This knowledge includes insight into advancing ESL practitioner practices, advocacy, and increasing student performance on assessments. For example, their collaboration with the WIDA Consortium on standards and effective ESL teacher practices, as well as creating a summative assessment that aligns to ELP standards (TESOL, 2014). Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999), emphasize the contingent nature of discourses and social orders, arguing that not all groups, like TESOL, have equal access to producing and distributing key discourse genres (Common Core Standards) that make such attempts at hegemonic interventions possible. Thus, discourses reveal where organizations are located in a social order that creates a hierarchical structure of unequal access, and inequality.

Likewise, teachers are situated as knowledgeable social actors by TESOL. Teachers embody another layer of the existing social order. The quote below highlights the omission of teachers' voices.

Although ESL teachers *have not been part of policy* conversations, the CCSS presents an opportunity to use ESL teachers' expertise in ways that the field of English language teaching has been discussing for some time. (TESOL, 2013, see Appendix P, p.4).

This quote is from *Appendix P- TESOL: Toolkit on Implementing the Common Core*. It argues for the potential of ESL teachers, to bring about change through the re-articulation of elements into new social orders. This is contrasted with the phrase, "**ESL teachers have not been part of policy conversations.**" This is a blunt and poignant statement that accentuates the discursive realization that ESL teachers have not been included in the policy conversations about the language and literacy skills of ELLs. Inevitably, the larger social order needs to include the voices of teachers.

However, what is also quite unique about the quote above, is the text that follows this statement, which says that the "CCSS presents an **opportunity** to use **ESL teachers' expertise.**" The TESOL organization strives to redirect the discussion by stating that the Standards present an **opportunity** for ESL teachers to be perceived as value assets. The implications in this statement clearly delineate the fact that TESOL views its members-teachers, as assets in the field of English language teaching, even if the authors of the Common Core ELA Standards do not. Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) argue that discourse theory explains how social forces - like the standards based reform movement - have a greater capacity to effect articulatory changes and why social actors, like ESL teachers, are limited in their attempts to affect policy. They argue that these differences do not emanate on the discursive level but from the larger social order of

dependency on practitioner advocacy organizations to buttress interests that antithetical to their mission.

The nexus between the social order and linguistic practices is pivotal to Fairclough's (1989) analytical framework. It is the basis for making claims about the social order based on the language people and institutions use to either separate or link themselves. Discourse mediates the link between social order and linguistic practices. Social meanings are determined by understandings of the prevailing social order and realized discursively in particular ways of acting and interacting, of representing the social and physical worlds, and of being and self-identifying (Fairclough, 1989). These meanings are, in turn, realized linguistically in text as particular mixings of genres, discourses and styles. Power is not something you can make disappear: we are dependent on living in a social order and the social order is always constituted in power. But we are not dependent on living in a *particular* social order, and the exclusion of other social orders is also one of the effects of power.

Another example below specifies the possibilities the CCSS offers TESOL educators. Specifically, the authors address instructional differentiation, while surreptitiously advocating for the Common Core Standards provide a means to address several language components.

While some of this information might be developed separately, the Common Core Standards *can* and *should include*: (a) the linguistic demands for each of the content areas to aid all educators working with English language learners, and (b) information on how English language learners at different proficiency levels might equitably attain specific standards. (TESOL, 2010, see Appendix O, p.2).

TESOL utilized metapositional verbs. Recall, metapositional verbs are verbs that are used to assert, direct, or express the actions of the subject or primary social actor in a sentence

(Fairclough, 1995). In the quote above, the words “**can**,” and “**should**” are assertive and directive verbs that are followed by an enumeration of what teachers need to include in their instructional practices. Those characteristics including understanding the “**linguistic demands**” of the various academic content areas, and the need to provide “**information**,” (i.e., research), on how ELLs achieve English language proficiency at a different rate of language acquisition.

Additionally, TESOL is not just advocating for ESL teachers, but “**all teachers**” to employ instructional practices in the content and language classrooms that will promote language and literacy acquisition for ELLs. Yet, by focusing on the social role of the CCSS and teachers, what can also be referred to as subject positions within the larger social order, we might argue that the CCSS *are* limited by *what they do not do*. The classroom discourse roles provide subject positions for teachers and pupils, and it is only by occupying these positions that one becomes a teacher or a pupil. Occupying a subject position is essentially a matter of doing, or not doing certain things, which is in line with the rights and obligations of teachers and pupils - what each is allowed and required to say, and not allowed or required to say. Thus, being a teacher includes doing and saying some things and not others.

Thus, in this case, social order and particular discourse conventions, influence discourse and the behavior of all social actors within the larger social order. But it is also the case that in occupying particular subject positions (i.e., teachers in accordance with the CCSS) teachers *reproduce* the ways of being and thinking related to those standards. Consequently, it is only through being occupied by operating in a social order whereby teachers are not viewed as equals, nor are they allowed to disrupt the existing social order (Fairclough, 1989). Having provided examples of discourse and social order, in the next section I now turn to the concept of subject positions or positionality.

Social Actor Positionality

The concept of the "individual" or social actor, is a relatively recent historical construction of discourse that serves particular political and governmental purposes (Foucault, 1977). Foucault's work offers educators a fundamental shift in the way that they view educational texts and discourses. It invites analysts to attend to essential characteristics of the text and its producers. In short, the CCSS is an artifact that presents the intent of its authors. In addition, Foucault pushes us to understand that texts are constructs of particular social formations, communities, and individuals' social identities. Similarly, schools and other significant social institutions are also productive contexts constituted by discourse and discursive relations. Inevitably, by recognizing the individual, we can explore discourse constructs and position us as human subjects across our life trajectories.

Drawing on Foucault (1972, 1977), Fairclough (1992) identifies three constructive effects of discourse. First, discourse contributes to the construction of social identities and subject positions, interpolating social actors in a certain way. Second, discourse helps to construct social relationships among people. Third, discourse contributes to the construction of systems of knowledge and belief. These three effects correspond to what Fairclough calls the identity, relational, and ideational functions of language.

The quote below illustrates how discourses contribute to the construction of social actors who recognize the need for "**great public schools.**" In short, the NEA presents itself as a social actor that is cognizant of what constitutes a great public school. While the NEA is an institution that represents the interests of thousands of teachers. In the text below, the NEA appears complacent in regards to historical shifts, in other words, they argue that organizations must change in response to the larger social order.

NEA's vision of what great public schools need and should provide acknowledges the ever-changing world in which we live—and *public education must change along with it*. (NEA, 2014, see Appendix N, p.27).

The text begins with the clause, “**NEA’s vision**,” which best supports the notion “that effective instructional practices for English language learners (ELL) that incorporates their first language which benefits foundational literacy skills, and when schools incorporate their primary language and culture into the classroom” (NEA, 2014, p. 42). Unsurprisingly, NEA’s vision recognized the significance of “**great public schools**.” It would imprudent for a large national practitioner advocacy organization, like the NEA to not value “**great public schools**,” but the word “**acknowledges**” points to leading to the phrase “**ever-changing world**.” This reference to change represents their acknowledgement that their position, with respect to the larger social order (i.e., education reform policies), has been diminished in being recognized as the primary provocateur of educational reform and teacher professionalism. Furthermore, there is a defeatist sentimentality in which language like “*public education must change along with it*” is used; as if to imply that their role as representatives of educators is abandoned and they need to accept a changing world. In the quote, they assume the role of followers, rather than as agents of change in the current wave of educational reform.

Moreover, this example illustrates how social actors create a reality based on their own goals and purposes. They rely upon collective frames of perceptions, or social representations, which are shared amongst members of their social group, (i.e., ESL educators). Thus, forming a core element of their social identity (Foucault, 1977).

Unlike the NEA which positions NEA members as social actors who need to adjust to larger policy changes, TESOL focuses on the particular role of the ESL teacher. Thus, the quote

above illustrates an effort to present an alternative vision in response to historical changes in educational policy and a changing social order.

The text below speaks directly to teachers as social actors. In this text, the social actor is the ESL teacher. Foucault argues that ‘discourse is not the majestically unfolding manifestation of a thinking, knowing, or speaking subject’ (Foucault, 1972: 55); rather, it is a process that can be referred to as interpellation in which language constructs social positions for the individuals which constrain how they speak and act.

ESL teachers *can play* a critical role in helping content teachers analyze the academic language demands of their content areas, design lessons that teach academic language and content simultaneously, and implement CCSS-based instruction for ELs. (TESOL, 2013, see Appendix P, p.9).

While also suggesting that educators need to accommodate the CCSS, TESOL focuses on ESL teachers as social actors. They are recognized as vital experts in helping students meet the demands of the CCSS in relation to academic language instruction for ELLs. They describe ESL teachers as playing a critical role, “**in helping content teachers analyze...academic language demands.**” The phrase “*can play*” introduces a metapositional verb, “**can.**” “**Can**” as a verb signifies power or the means of a social actor to effect the outcome of a particular activity. In this case, it is the capability that ESL teachers “**can**” use their expertise. Also significant in this text is the use of the term “**role.**” “**Role**” positions “**ESL teachers**” as social actors with a defined expertise that enables them to assist other content teachers by providing proper instruction in academic language. This passage also suggests that their position as language and literacy educators is valuable to content area teachers. While there is an implication that ESL teachers are not considered equal to their content teaching peers, (i.e., they are contributing to the teaching of

others) the passage does identify professional skills that ESL teachers can contribute like, “**design lessons,**” and “**implement CCSS-based instruction**” with content teachers for the benefit of ELLs.

The next quote below reiterates TESOL’s insistence that ESL teachers are critical social actors who can help academic content teachers to provide effective instruction for ELLs; this is represented in the phrase, “**all teachers must work together**...in meeting **the needs** of English language learners.” The language used implies that teachers are not already collaborating. There is also an assumption that teachers are not meeting the needs of ELLs.

In other words, all teachers must work together in meeting the needs of English language learners – not simply the English as a second language (ESL) and bilingual specialists who often work most closely with these students. (TESOL, 2010, see Appendix O, p.1).

Throughout this dissertation I maintained that discourse embodies ideological assumptions, and these sustain and legitimize existing relations of power and positionality among the social actors, (i.e., policymakers, organizations, teachers, and scholars). If there is a shift in power relations through a social struggle, one can expect social transformation throughout society, especially in institutions like schools. Similarly, if power relations between ESL teachers and content teachers remain unstable, there is a constant need for all teachers to renew themselves (as professionals) in a constantly changing world, while also changing the discourses that allow the dominant social groups to keep their positions (Fairclough, 1989).

We must also acknowledge what is missing from the last two excerpts are the unique collaborative benefits that ESL and content educators bring to schools. While these examples highlight the roles of professional organizations (i.e., NEA and TESOL), they do not underscore how critical both social actors are in creating opportunities for ESL teachers and content area

teachers to collaborate. Nonetheless, the example above also suggests that the relationship of power between ESL and content teachers develops in the course of social struggle for recognition of their expertise, and is a key determinant of the transformative nature of discourse.

In the following two text excerpts, I show how two statements position ESL teachers in relation to the CCSS. Luke (1995) argues that the representational function of texts do not simply portray or mis-portray social relations of domination/subordination. Texts actually constitute inter-subjective relations of power, proposing particular social relationships between texts and readers, speakers and listeners. The texts below suggest a lack of social relationships. Critical discourse analysis makes transparent asymmetries by revealing discourse moves that attempt to position, locate, define, and, in some instances, enable and regulate readers and addressees, as illustrated in the next quote.

ESL teachers have been *largely absent* from the conversation around this important education reform, *yet* they *will play* a critical role in *its* successful implementation for English language learners. (TESOL, 2013, see Appendix P, p.1).

Taking into consideration Luke's (1995) notion of texts as constituting inter-subjective relations of power. I argue that this example highlights the idea that "**ESL teachers have been largely absent...from the conversation...around this...educational reform.**" This "**conversation**" is not limited to the publication of the Common Core Standards by the NGA Center and CCSSO for state, district, or school consumption. TESOL is referring to the conversation that the design and development of the CCSS without collaborating with them, led to standards that did not appreciate the language and literacy expertise of their members, which benefits ELLs. As a practitioner advocacy organization that represents hundreds of thousands practitioners and researchers, TESOL was positioned in a subordinate and reactive role to the

content of the Common Core. Rather than being included in the design and development of the language and literacy aspects of the Common Core for ELLs, they are left to express their discontent as non-agential social actors about educational policy that effects their constituents and primary student population. This is why the words, “**largely absent**” are stressed to boldly state that they were “absent” from the process of drafting standards that were supposedly inclusive to the needs of ELLs.

Despite this subordinate role that TESOL practitioners and researchers have been forced to assume, the authors of the *TESOL Toolkit* continue to recognize their role in the Common Core’s implementation. This is established with the phrase, “**yet they will play a critical role in its successful implementation.**” The “**they**” refers to ESL teachers, and its successful implementation refers to ensuring that ELLs are attaining the academic language capabilities to be successful in the language and content classroom (Wong Fillmore, 2014). As Luke (1995) argues, there is no social space, domain of practice, or world outside of educational research where curriculum and instruction can begin to move forward without a concern for the behaviors, skills, and minds of teachers. Teachers greatly influence the practices related to language acquisition. Yet, as social actors, they place a moral imperative upon themselves by stating that “**they**” will play a critical role in its “**successful implementation**” to ensure academic success for their students.

Foucault described the constructive character of discourse, in this case, how both in broader social formations, discourse actually defines, constructs, and positions teachers. According to Foucault (1972), discourses "systematically form the objects about which they speak (p. 49)," shaping grids and hierarchies for the institutional categorization and treatment of people. These knowledge-power relations are achieved, according to Foucault, by the

construction of accepted *truths* about the social and natural world, *truths* that become the taken-for-granted definitions and categories by which governments rule and monitor their populations and by which members of communities define themselves and others. (Luke, 1995). The quote below is an example of this notion.

ESL educators have not had a *voice* in policy decisions related to implementing the CCSS. For example, although many current initiatives focus on CCSS and English language development standards and their accompanying assessments, there are *no guidelines* for how to use these standards to instruct ELs efficiently. (TESOL, 2013, see Appendix P, p.7).

In this example, TESOL reiterates that “**ESL educators have not had a voice in policy decisions related to implementing the CCSS.**” This time they are using the term “*voice*” to convey the experiences and knowledge of TESOL members/ESL teachers. As Voloshinov (1973) noted, the social world is connected with their individual world through the use of language. In other words, what the authors of this passage are saying is that the ideas, experiences, and knowledge of ESL teachers have not been heard and are not included in the discussion of the construction or implementation of the Common Core. In addition, the authors emphasize that there are “*no guidelines*” to meaningfully and progressively develop curricula and instructional practices “**to use these standards to instruct ELs efficiently.**” Without the voice of ESL teachers and their expertise in English language development, TESOL worries ELLs will have a significantly difficult time in achieving the goals of the Common Core. This reveals how the ways social actors are positioned affects their actions and inevitably educational outcomes for students.

Finally, Fairclough (1989, 1992) notes that a manifestation of tensions between social actors can be central to how each social actor uses text to position the discourse in their favor. Particularly, when these discourses from practitioner advocacy organizations, such as the AFT, are able to project an appearance of power in how the CCSS were proffered to the public. The next example illustrates this phenomenon.

In 2010, President Randi Weingarten created the AFT Ad Hoc Committee on Standards Rollout to initiate an action plan so that all levels of the union—and our partners at the local, state and national levels—can ensure that the CCSS are implemented as part of a comprehensive standards-based system. This committee, which consisted of AFT state and local presidents, higher education representatives, state education issues coordinators and classroom teachers, met with the writers of the standards, representatives of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), members of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium and other experts to develop recommendations for the appropriate rollout of the standards. (AFT, 2010, see Appendix L, p.1).

The words in this example show how the AFT positioned themselves as dominant social actors, when they formally state that “**In 2010, President Randi Weingarten created the AFT Ad Hoc Committee on Standards Rollout.**” It should be noted that the NEA and AFT are the only two practitioner advocacy organizations that were invited to review the draft versions of the Common Core Standards in early 2010 before they were made publicly available in June of 2010. The words in the text are a subtle way of acknowledging that the AFT included their constituents-teachers, in evaluating an action plan to implement the Standards in their states, districts, and classrooms; thus, an “Ad Hoc,” (i.e., temporary committee) was created to discuss

these matters internally on the best possible methods of “coming to terms” with the Common Core Standards.

This text excerpt also shows how AFT sought to position themselves as partners in the development of the CCSS when they state that they “**met with the writers of the standards,**” so as not to convey that power of discourse was flowing in one direction, (i.e., downward from the NGA and CCSSO to AFT and NEA). In doing so, they list other social actors that they engaged with: “**AFT state and local presidents, higher education representatives, state education issues coordinators and classroom teachers...and...representatives of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), members of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium and other experts.**” This is another example of a practitioner advocacy organization attempting to minimize the social distance between themselves and the NGA and CCSSO. Ultimately their interest is in how the role out is perceived by the public and local constituents. The rhetoric suggests that the AFT is among a group of constituents who had a significant voice in the implementation of the Common Core Standards.

To conclude this section, it is extremely difficult, if not altogether impossible, to talk or write about behaviors, beliefs and values, as well as policy and practice without comprehending how larger social orders and language position social actors. This is especially true for ESL teachers, and the critical role that they play in language instruction. In these documents, language is used to represent speakers' beliefs, positions, and ideas and to establish and build up social relations and identities. Spoken and written texts, then, are moments in which positionality, social realities, relations and identities are articulated through language and other sign systems (Luke, 1995). Consequently, the need for collaboration between ESL and content area teachers is paramount. Their effective instruction is the difference between successful implementation of the

CCSS, or another failed educational reform measure. For this reason, a critically analytical approach to discourse is not an option for educational researchers, but a necessity for the study of education in postmodern conditions, particularly when social actors (i.e., ESL and content teachers) play important roles in ELLs learning academic English.

Conclusion

For this chapter, I initially analyzed three position statements and three policy or curriculum texts drafted by either TESOL, the NEA, or AFT. My analysis in relation to the research questions proffered, highlight the institutionalization of power, the privileging of specific ways of learning language, and how the ELA-CCCS attempts to dictate the practices of teachers with respect to English Language Learners. The emerging themes that correlated to the research questions illustrate critical discourse concepts of discourse and social order, and positionality. In doing so, only four of the documents, *The TESOL Position Statement on the Common Core State Standards*, *TESOL's Implementing the Common Core State Standards for English Learners: The Changing Role of the ESL Teacher*, *AFT & the Common Core State Standards: a work in progress*, and the *NEA Common Core Toolkit*, explicitly addressed my research questions. My critical analysis of texts in this chapter examines the organizations perceptions and realities as entities comprised of professionals with expertise related to the education of ELL students.

My findings highlight discourse and social order and addresses research question number two, sub question "b." This question explores the ways these texts address social actors and their positioning in the larger social order. For example, TESOL, NEA, and AFT view the CCSS as an educational policy that failed to include their professional expertise. TESOL especially argued for inclusion in the process of properly developing and implementing the CCSS with respect to

ELLs. In the end, the practitioner advocacy organizations viewed the hierarchical design, development, and implementation of the CCSS as neglecting their professional expertise and viewed this as a slight.

This analysis also addressed research question number three by addressing the practices of teachers. For instance, practitioner advocacy organizations, especially TESOL, relish their role as professionals and advocates for ELLs in not only language classrooms, but also educational reform movements. Practitioner advocacy organizations acknowledge and reconcile their role in the history of educational reform. They recognize that some documents derived from educational reform, like the CCSS, may reproduce practices that challenge their role as advocates.

Furthermore, this chapter focused on how the NEA, AFT, and TESOL viewed the Common Core texts. This analysis revealed their ways of knowing and being social actors and their words reveal a social order in which their impact on educational reform was minimized. Social actor positionality was acknowledged in research question number two, sub question “b.” My analysis acknowledges that hierarchical positionality of practitioner advocacy organizations and how they contend with the Common Core as educational policy that serves political and governmental interests, instead of ELLs and communities.

Finally, the position statements and resources written by the practitioner advocacy organizations and analyzed in this chapter suggest that the organizations felt compelled to accept the adoption of the Common Core Standards, despite their concerns about the language and literacy learning of all students. My critical analysis of their documents related to the Common Core underline their ineffectiveness as professional organizations in influencing educational reform that seeks to change the behavior of their principal constituents-teachers. Their

ineffectiveness as professional organizations reflect how they are not viewed by dominant social actors, including the federal government, CCSSO, and NGA. My analysis of the discourses present in these document has shown that as social actors, these practitioner advocacy organizations are more reactive and marginalized, than proactive and persuasive in affecting educational policy reform for ELLs.

Chapter VIII. Conclusion

This study set out to investigate whether the Common Core standards recognize and address the native language and literacy skills of ELLs. The study also sought to determine whether or not the Common Core English Language Arts Standards (ELA-CCSS) promote an ideological viewpoint about what constitutes a “literate individual.” Finally, I scrutinize the ELA-CCSS to ascertain whether they convey an ideology of language and literacy skill development that is counter to the interests of ELLs, and ESL and content educators. Hence, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. In what ways, given the linguistic and cultural needs of English Language Learners, do the English Language Arts Standards of the Common Core State Standards address language and literacy learning for ELLs?
2. In what ways do the English Language Arts Standards of the Common Core State Standards prescribe the institutionalization of power structures and privilege particular ways of learning language and literacy for ELL students and teachers?
 - a. What was the impetus for the design and development of the CCSS?
 - b. Who are the social actors and what is their positioning in the larger social order?
 - c. In what ways does institutional funding impact these power structures?
3. How do the English Language Arts Standards of the Common Core State Standards attempt to dictate the practices of teachers with respect to English Language Learners?

In this chapter, I will discuss the major findings from each of the analytic chapters, consider the implications of these findings, and discuss limitations of this study. I will conclude with a discussion of future directions for research.

Discussion

Through my analysis, it is apparent that the discourses surrounding the Common Core State Standards establish the institutionalization of power structures and privilege particular ways of learning language and literacy for ELLs and teachers. This is affirmed in my analyses across documents created by developers of the CCSS, academics, and practitioner advocacy organizations. These actors have differing opinions on the impact and effectiveness of the CCSS for students, teachers, and administrators, as well as and how this educational policy is situated in relation to current language policies concerning ELLs. Figure 4 illustrates the social actors, the interrelated themes derived from my analysis, and relationships among those themes.

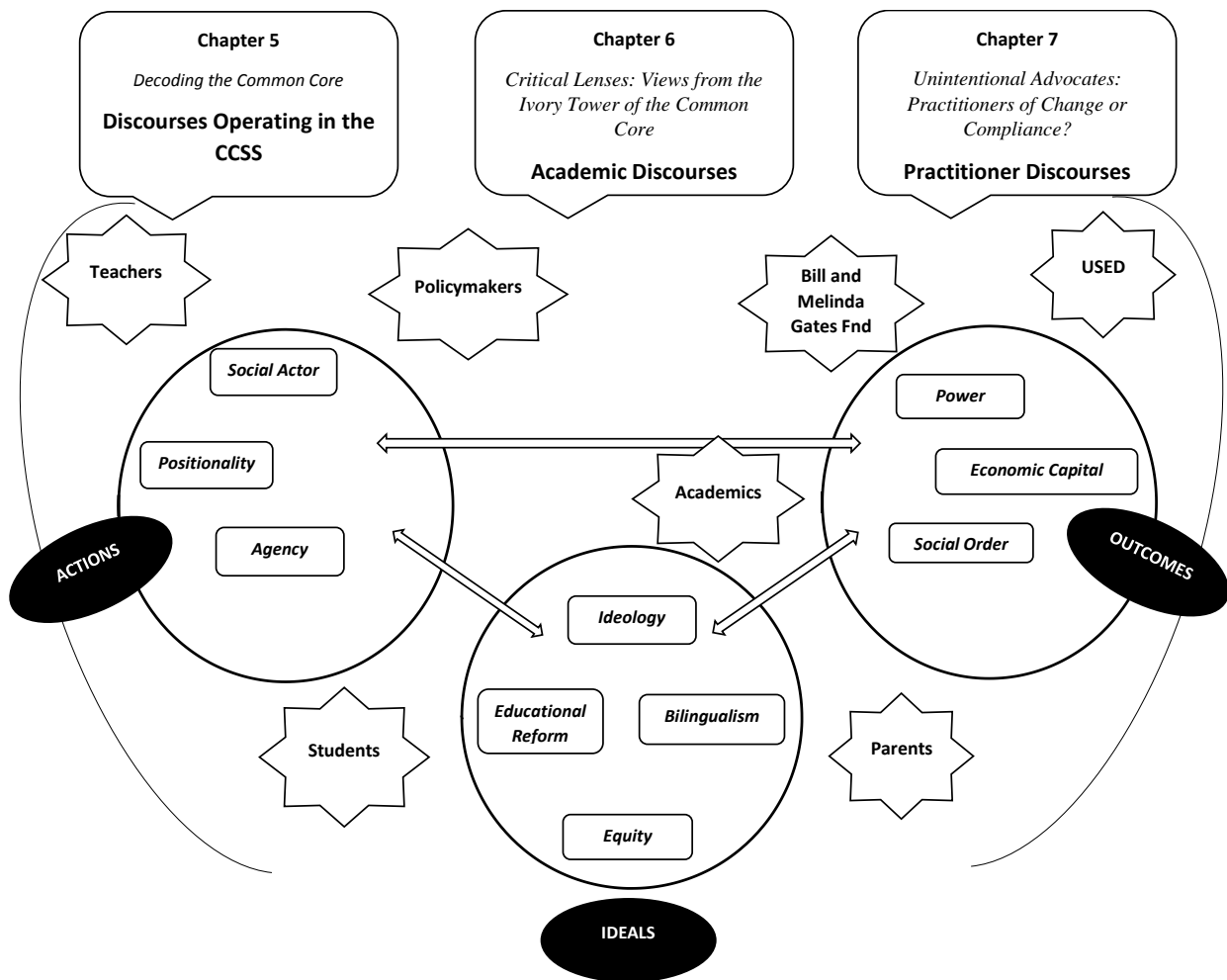


Figure 8.1 Interrelationship of Social Actors and Themes

The next sections of this chapter addresses the discourses of the social actors and the emergent themes illustrated as presented in Figure 8.1. In particular, the first section will address the themes in Figure 8.1 labeled power, economic capital, and social order. This circle encompasses the global theme “outcomes” derived from my analysis. The second section will address themes in Figure 8.1 labeled social actor, positionality, and agency. That circle encompasses the global theme “action” derived from my analysis. Finally, the third section will address themes in Figure 8.1 labeled ideology, language, literacy, and bilingualism, equity, and educational reform. The final circle encompasses the global theme of “ideals.”

Outcomes

In this section of the chapter, I address those emergent themes that were derived from my analysis. In doing so, I operationalize the global theme “outcomes.” Outcomes, with respect to the emergent themes of power, economic capital, and social order refers to the consequences that occur when educational policy, including the CCSS is enacted, as well as its impact on teachers, ELLs, academics, and practitioner advocacy organizations. Also, outcomes refer to dominant social actors, i.e., the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, CCSSO, NGA, Achieve, Inc., and the federal Department of Education aligning their resources (money and power) with their goals (universal adoption of the CCSS).

Power

Power, defined here is the sum of various other types of capital for purposive political action, or the return of an investment of political capital which is returned into the system of production (Bourdieu, 1986). From the perspective of the CCSS developers, there was considerable political and social capital used in the formation of the working groups to draft the ELA-CCSS, along with the partnerships between Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the NGA

Center, CCSSO, and Achieve, Inc. The simple act of gathering different constituencies with the goal of drafting English language standards is a purposive political action that sought to change the landscape of language instruction. The return on economic investment for these organizations is the use of the Standards by states, their school districts, schools, and teachers to incorporate their ways of being and knowing language and literacy.

Economic Capital

Based on my analysis, economic capital is the root of the transformed, disguised forms of resources, research, technical assistance, and marketing proffered to appease educators, parents, policymakers, and researchers. For example, the offering of funding by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to design and development the Standards, and funding from the federal Department of Education to states to implement the Standards, highlights the power of money to influence behavior. This assertion is not made lightly, because social actors, including the practitioner advocacy organizations and the academics in no way had or have the economic resources to mount a project as substantial and substantive as the Common Core Standards. Instead, the practitioner advocacy organization's economic capital was used to develop implementation guidelines, curriculum guidebooks, and research for their main constituencies—educators and researchers.

Social Order

The results of my analysis suggest that social order references how society organizes individuals and provides privileges for some groups over others (Fairclough, 1989). Most people are unaware of social order, as much of it operates subconsciously. With regards to the Standards, the social order privileges those with English as their first language, while minimizing the cultures and their languages of other people. Furthermore, my analysis affirmed that the Standards presented a hierarchical subordination within the educational community, as illustrated

in Figure 8.1. ELLs and their parents are most removed from decisions that affect their language learning environment, while teachers and administrators are essentially implementers of standards, curricula, and assessments. At the top of this hierarchy, are those with the capital to fund projects like the Common Core, and those government entities with the power to legislate and mandate the Standards.

Action

In this section of the chapter, I operationalize the global theme “action.” Action, with respect to the emergent themes of social actor, positionality, and agency refers to the motivation, tasks, and activities that occur when teachers, ELLs, academics, and practitioner advocacy organizations engage in behavior to promote their interests. Likewise, the global theme of action also considers the motivation, tasks, and activities of dominant social actors, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, CCSSO, NGA, Achieve, Inc., and the federal Department of Education, and how they also are concerned with promoting their interests; yet they have they more abundant resources to do so.

Social Actor

Across the analytic chapters, three distinct social actors: CCSS authors, academics, and practitioner advocacy organizations, articulated their dispositions and perceptions about the CCSS and its implications. In doing so, they highlighted models of behavior that teachers, academics, ELLs, practitioner advocacy organizations, and capitalist funders enact to fulfill determined social functions. Ultimately, these social actors engage in actions that reflect the norms and rules structurally produced through the discourses of the documents they wrote. However, what engenders or negates action among certain social actors can differ greatly. For example, with regards to the ELA-CCSS, the academics exhibited restraint in how they critiqued

the Standards, while the practitioner advocacy organizations described the Standards as intrusive, and the CCSS authors proffered the notion that the ELA-CCSS were for the greater good in American education.

Positionality

Teachers of ELLs, whether content teachers or ESL teachers, are an important component in their academic success in the classroom (Escamilla, 2006; NEA, 2014; TESOL, 2013).

Teachers are also important for ELLs' success as they navigate unfamiliar social environments. This study has shown that the ELA-CCSS are quite prescriptive in what teachers are expected to teach. Thus, teachers lose control over their own labor. This has been referred to and described by scholars Shannon (1987) and Apple (1988, 1995) as deskilling. The deskilling approach in the Common Core exists when the CCSSO, NGA Center, and Achieve, Inc. present teachers with ready-made expectations related to student performance and classroom behavior in situations where teachers are otherwise able to make their own decisions and implement autonomously.

Moreover, deskilling creates a situation where teachers are expected to serve as mere implementers of standards, curriculum, and assessments, and are increasingly expected to employ prepackaged curricula and teaching materials including guidebooks, textbooks, lesson plans and measuring tools at the expense of tailoring their programs according to local context and ELLs' needs (Gandara, 2015; Sato, 2015; Schneider, 2015).

Agency

Fairclough (1989) states that agency manifests itself when tensions arise among various social actors. For example, the practitioner advocacy organizations have large constituencies comprised of educators with the professional expertise that could provide constructive feedback about the CCSS. My analysis showed that they did not have the agency to counter the

development of the Standards, or provide substantive input for the benefit of ELLs. This was based on the fact that their subject matter expertise was not valued. Teacher agency is often mentioned in the Standards, but minimally operationalized by practitioner advocacy organizations and only sometimes discussed by the academic authors.

Agency is too often used as a catchphrase. Accordingly, many educators would agree that they feel their voices have the least amount of power, and are least heard when voicing their needs and innovative ideas for educational change. Instead, the Standards tell them that if they want to maintain their positions, they have to do what people, i.e., policymakers and capitalists who know so much less than they do about education - tell them what and how to teach. Unfortunately, teachers and the practitioner advocacy organizations that represent them, have to adjust to constantly changing political reforms that often leave them demoralized and their students struggling.

Ideals

In this section of the chapter, I operationalize the global theme “ideals.” Ideals, with respect to the emergent themes of ideology, educational reform, bilingualism, and equity refers to what dominant social actors believe are the best educational policies for America’s classrooms. These ideals are often in conflict with what teachers know to be best for ELL students, and what academics know is best from a research perspective. Finally, the ideals operationalized in this section are about what the different social actors value, i.e., what they believe is most important for ELLs and language learning.

Ideology

The English Language Arts Standards of the Common Core espouses an ideology of what being a literate individual entails. The academic success component particularly focuses on how an ELL student is capable of performing on summative content and international assessments;

whereas, the professional component focuses on preparation for college and/or career. On the surface, these attributes of the Standards are admirable. However, when the Standards are employed in American classrooms, this ideology about what constitutes a literate individual negates the vast array of native language abilities that ELLs bring to that classroom, and ignores what ELLs might perceive as academic or professional.

Education Reform

While the benefits of collaboration and integration of curricula and teaching practices have been researched and documented (Filmore & Snow, 2002; Gibbons, 2002; Akhavan, 2006; Brisk & Harrington, 2006; Davison, 2006), meaningful collaboration between mainstream classroom teachers and ESL teachers is the exception rather than the norm. With the implementation of the ELA-CCSS, enhancing such collaborative partnerships might have benefits for ELL students, teachers, and the school community, but they are not discussed in the Standards, as a form of educational reform.

Working in a collaborative manner accomplishes three goals for ELL students and teachers: First, collaboration between mainstream and ESL teachers facilitates the acquisition of language and content in the subject area for ESL students, by co-developing lesson plans that include language and culture, scaffolding language instruction, (in both academic English and their native language), and creating a classroom environment where ELLs are valued as members of their school. In addition, the dual acquisition of the English language and academic content places additional demands on ESL students and can make academic success challenging. Second, collaboration between English and ESL teachers creates a deeper and more meaningful understanding of the unique needs of ESL students in mainstream classrooms. Conversely, ESL teachers better understand the curricular goals of the content classroom and can develop ways to

support these goals using appropriate methodology and instructional strategies. Finally, this collaboration promotes the growth of a community of learners in the classroom, a community where native and non-native speakers co-construct meaning and engage in inquiry based, constructivist learning that bridges differences celebrates diversity and enhances academic achievement and language acquisition for ELL students (Hakuta, 2011; TESOL, 2013; McDonnell & Weatherford, 2013; NEA, 2014).

Bilingualism

My analysis suggests that within the Standards, bilingual education is not presented as an instructional program that would enhance the academic language and literacy skills of ELLs. Instead, the CCSS (2010f) highlights the vast differences between ELLs and their native language peers, and how instructional support ELLs should focus on learning academic English language vocabulary, rather than the co-development of English and their native language skills. Likewise, my findings confirm Hakuta's (2011) realization that the authors of any content academic standards need to consider that the linguistic demands of second language acquisition for ELLs within academic content areas. Furthermore, my analysis also shows that those who draft academic content standards must go beyond proffering academic content standards without any forethought to their effect on marginalized language populations. The authors of the CCSS need to align them with a robust curriculum that values the linguistic differences of students that most educators will experience in their classroom at some point in their career, as well as summative and formative assessments that will not negate their native language abilities.

Equity

What the ELA-CCSS fails to comprehend is that schools are unique in terms of their learning environment, because teachers, administrators, and ELLs come from a variety of

backgrounds, with different philosophies on learning as well as pedagogical practices, equity in terms of resources (financial and material), time, and input is only as abundant as the opportunities dominant social actors deem necessary to enact their goals for educational reform. In other words, as Figure 8.1 shows, teachers, parents, academics, and ELLs are most removed from the decision making process of what gets taught, how, why, and when. Instead, teachers, parents, academics, and ELLs are given mandates to either comply with or implement educational policies like the CCSS. Thus, the NGA, CCSSO, and Achieve, Inc., Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and policymakers should have considered the financial, learning, and social impact of the CCSS on ELLs, teachers, parents, and administrators.

Limitations

Limitations in any type of research, whether quantitative or qualitative, are an inherent by-product of the research design (Creswell, 2003). In other words, there is no perfect research study that will encompass every variable, question, or time constraint, one would expect to encounter. Yet, in this qualitative study, at this stage of the research process, this researcher anticipates five limitations.

First, there is the undeniable question that researcher bias may arise based on organizational affiliation, research interests, political association, and educational philosophy. These are personal characteristics that one may find impossible to shed. Thus, there is the assumption that one makes in a research endeavor, particularly from a constructivist perspective, that inquiries made in collecting data best provide an understanding of the research problem (Creswell, 2003). In other words, the purpose of the study, the types of data collected, the places where data is obtained, the methodologies used, and the philosophical and theoretical disposition one incorporates into their research study will undoubtedly frame how the results will be

perceived by one's peers. Consequently, one may presume from Creswell's perspective that it is incumbent upon the researcher to not only acknowledge his or her positionality, but accept it is a part of the research endeavor throughout all of the stages of the study, while maintaining the focus on addressing the research questions.

Second, because this study is examining academic content standards, curriculum policy, and the development and acquisition of language and literacy skills relevant to ELLs, it was difficult to support the generalizability of this research study to other subgroups. Essentially, this study is examining how texts, in the genre of education-address a particular subpopulation; in relation to the academic expectations of ELLs. Hence, this research study might be situated in the literature as a guide to academic content standard developers and policymakers to carefully draft primary language and literacy resources that address the needs of ELLs.

Third, critical discourse analysis as a methodology has the criticism that it too easily allows a researcher to uncover research findings that he or she expects or wants to find (Holmes, Marra, and Vine, 2011). However, Fairclough's (1992) outline of critical discourse analysis implies that there are already issues of disharmony, conflict, and power relationships within texts. Two methods of mitigating this limitation that I used was to ensure that the research questions are framed with as few predispositions, and that the research study findings (evidence) are communicated in an accurate, explicit, and comprehensible manner for a critical audience.

Fourth, there is also a perceived limitation to the use of social data in analyzing human behavior which is presumed to ignore the deep, structural sources of social ills (Green, 2008). For example, defining social relations as a pattern of stimulus (i.e., the implementation of the ELA-CCSS) and response (social practices from social actors) may be construed as problematic among some analysts, even though human behavior is determined largely by social norms and

the influences of our peers, groups, institutions, etc., because these norms and influences are shaped by language, history, politics, and economics, not to mention power and bias. At this time, there are no mitigating procedures to limit how data analysis social data is interpreted by peers in the academic community, only an acknowledgement that there are indeed underlying constructs of inequality, “othering,” and privilege contribute to power differentials in our society.

Fifth, although I made an attempt to include the voices of proponents, opponents, and of course those affected by the implementation of the ELA-CCSS, those voices were individuals and/or organizations with power, resources, and access to the means of communication to express themselves, as opposed to ELL students and parents who will undoubtedly have opinions and suggestions about how the ELA-CCSS affects along with its accompanying materials.

Finally, this study is somewhat limited in its scope, and that is recognized. Perhaps a larger number of texts may have been analyzed, as well as a broader representation of researchers and practitioner organizations. The study does represent a dilemma that educational researchers using critical discourse analysis may encounter in trying to incorporate as many texts, voices, and opinions as possible, and at the same time providing the most pragmatic rationale for the selection of the particular documents used in their studies.

Implications

Implications for Teachers and Students

This study suggests that teachers must recognize that the CCSS is a policy document that attempts to dictate their behavior as professionals. It is a document that prescribes what will be taught, why, and to a lesser extent how. In addition, the authors of the CCSS do not view teachers as capable social actors who have the capacity to construct and develop standards. In essence, the emergent themes of power, economic capital, and social order, illustrated in Figure

8.1, are potentially problematic for teachers because the CCSSO, the NGA Center, and Achieve, have declared that teachers have neither power, economic capital, and are low on the hierarchy of social order to provide expertise and guidance, because they were not included in the development of the Standards.

My analysis reveals that only one type of language taught by teachers, Standard American English, is viewed as important. This is quite unfortunate for ELLs, because not only do these children live in a climate where some in our culture are opposed to bi-, multilingual, and dual language instruction, but to them, language policy only refers to Standard American English. The implication of this is that the language curriculum some students are bound to encounter may devalue their native language, foster low self-esteem, and disassociate them from their non-ELL peers. Essentially, teachers should be involved in the standards development process for ELLs that aligns standards, curricula, and assessments with the needs of their state and district's demographics.

Implications for Practitioner Advocacy Organizations

For practitioner advocacy organizations, i.e., (TESOL, NEA, and AFT), the Common Core State Standards have limited the power of these organizations to fully participate in educational reform. Texts created by practitioner advocacy organizations reveal their frustrations with how the standards were developed and proffered to the public without sufficient input from those closest to the classroom and without the tools and resources educators need to make the transition to the Common Core. As Figure 8.1 shows, practitioner advocacy organizations are caught in the middle of competing interests. On the one hand, practitioner advocacy organizations attempt to voice their concern about the CCSS being implemented without their input, and try to provide guidance to their constituency on how to provide the best instruction for

their students. Practitioner advocacy organizations must not allow their voice to be minimized when it comes to educational reform in America. The NEA (2014) and TESOL (2013) are adamant that any educational reform occurring in American public schools require not only their voice in the drafting of such reforms, but also their voice on how it will affect their students.

Consequently, it would behoove practitioner advocacy organizations and academics to align themselves, and their resources to combat educational reforms they deem hasty or ill-conceived. Otherwise, education organizations are left to ask: Can the NEA, TESOL, and the AFT continue to exert influence over education reform in the best interests of ELLs?

Implications for Policymakers

My analysis implies that the act of developing, drafting, and proffering academic content standards to the American public school system is a political act. It is a political act because it embodies the values, attitudes, and beliefs of those who wish to reform education in the manner that advances their interests. This does not bode well for ELLs because as a population their specific language needs are either ignored or secondary to the goal of perpetuating American superiority in an international educational context. Moreover, Figure 8.1 shows that policymakers demonstrate considerable political and economic power to push an educational reform agenda such as the ELA-CCSS. This phenomenon demonstrates that they are important social actors in the field of education for ELL students and teachers, among others.

Policymakers must be discerning and well informed about educational policies they are expected to enact. Practitioner advocacy organizations and academics may offer important insights into educational policy that are not available to dominant social actors who bring financial resources. Second, trust is essential. Developing relationships takes time. Policymakers who seek teachers' input after policies have been formulated are less likely to be well-received

than those who have taken the time to cultivate alliances. Third, cooperation between teachers and policymakers is more likely to occur when teachers understand the political context of developing educational policy. Educational policy, especially language policy for ELLs can be complex, and educators need help in understanding how policy shapes their classrooms. Simply asking teachers and their representatives, practitioner advocacy organizations, for their perspectives absent a strong knowledge base from academics about the history of language policy, as well as how the levers and frameworks of local, state and federal law operate, will not result in a productive conversation.

Future Research

This study is the beginning of a larger research program focused on exploring discourses of the English Language Arts Standards of the Common Core on ELLs. Their implications for language policy, teacher efficacy in the implementation of these Standards, parent involvement, and accountability. Specifically, there are five additional research projects that I am interested in exploring based on this study's findings and analysis, which bear several fruitful opportunities for addressing some perplexing issues.

First, it would be prudent to conduct a quantitative analysis of ELL performance on either the PARCC or Smarter Balanced Consortium academic content assessments. In particular, I would like to conduct a statistical analysis examining the performance of ELLs on their state content assessments, the NAEP National test, and their ELP assessments five years prior to the implementation of the ELA-CCSS, and five years after the implementation of the ELA-CCSS. This would be to measure what positive or negative impact the ELA-CCSS have had on ELLs in those states that have employed the Standards.

Second, I think it is important to engage the parents of ELLs in whether they believe that their children have received the education that has been expected since the implementation of the ELA-CCSS in forty-three states. A survey designed for parents that may include such questions as: Has the ELA-CCSS being implemented in your school? Do you have any expectations of what they ELA-CCSS may do for your child? Have you noticed a change in your child's performance in school and on assessments? Have the teachers and administrators in your school addressed any concerns about your children education since the implementation of the Standards? These are sample questions that would be included in the survey to gauge parent awareness about academic outcomes for their children.

Third, another important survey to design and conduct is for teachers. As has been mentioned earlier, teachers matter. As a researcher it is important to obtain information about how the ELA-CCSS have been implemented in the classroom, and whether or not they see the ELA-CCSS changing the manner in which they teach, as well as how a revamped curriculum has changed the language classroom. Additionally, this survey would be not just for ESL teachers, but content teachers of ELLs as well. Any type of interaction that a teacher has with an ELL student is valuable information that may be used by future researchers to properly develop English language arts standards that take into consideration the needs of ELLs.

In addition to new research projects, I plan to draft a series of working papers, journal articles, and perhaps even a book about the findings from each study described above. Later, to attempt to influence the field of educational policy, it would be beneficial to partner with practitioner advocacy organizations like the NEA, TESOL, the National Association of Bilingual Education (NABE), the Literacy Research Association (LRA), the International Literacy Association (ILA), among others, and research organizations like WIDA, the Understanding

Language Laboratory, WestEd, and the Association for Institutional Research (AIR) to effectively change language policy not just for ELLs, but for all American students. This is that aspect of procuring and securing political, cultural, and social capital that these organizations have plenty of resources to align.

Finally, teachers, administrators, and especially students live in an age of educational accountability dictated by some policymakers unaware of the needs of our most marginalized groups, like ELLs, and some policymakers are more concerned with shaping policy based on their own personal ideology of what they value. Hence, I think it would be useful to draft an opinion piece for a publication that addresses to educational policymakers relative to issues related to moral and legislative accountability. What I mean by this is that policymakers need to understand what legislative accountability entails: the evaluation of schools, the allocation of sanctions and distribution of rewards. Thus, legislative accountability should allow the public to know how well their schools are working, provide information on the changes that are needed to make the schools more effective, and continually improve all students' educational opportunities (Perie, Park, Klau, and ASR SCASS, 2007). Whereas, moral accountability involves social actors interacting with ELLs depends largely on an internalized professional obligation, that requires a personal sense of responsibility and obligation for meeting the needs of ELL students (Adams and Kirst, 1999).

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Appendix A

List of A Priori Codes

Research Question	Codes
<p>1. In what ways, given the linguistic and cultural needs of English Language Learners, do the English Language Arts Standards of the Common Core State Standards address language and literacy learning for ELLs?</p>	<p>Standards, literacy, native (second) language, academic achievement, value, integration, assimilation, recognition,</p>
<p>2. In what ways do the English Language Arts Standards of the Common Core State Standards prescribe the institutionalization of power structures and privilege particular ways of learning language and literacy for ELL students and teachers?</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a. What was the impetus for the design and development of the CCSS?</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">b. Who are the social actors and what is their positioning in the larger social order?</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">c. In what ways does institutional funding impact these power structures?</p>	<p>Social practice, culture, standard American English, agency, hegemony, research-based</p>
<p>3. How do the English Language Arts Standards of the Common Core State Standards attempt to dictate the practices of teachers with respect to English Language Learners?</p>	<p>Curriculum, teacher practices, instructional policies, language and literacy skills</p>

Appendix B

List of Documents Analyzed

1. **Introduction to the Common Core State Standards**

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010b). *Common Core State Standards (CCSS)-Introduction*. Washington, DC: Authors. Retrieved from <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards>.

2. **English Language Arts Standards of the Common Core State Standards**

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010c). *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts (ELA-CCSS)*. Washington, DC: Authors. Retrieved from <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards>.

3. **Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards**

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010e). *Appendix A*. Washington, DC: Authors. Retrieved from http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_A.pdf.

4. **Application of the Common Core States Standards to English Language Learners**

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010a). *Application of Common Core State Standards for English Language Learners*. Washington, DC: Authors. Retrieved from <http://www.corestandards.org/assets/application-for-english-learners.pdf>.

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 14. TESOL. (2013). *Implementing the Common Core State Standards for English Learners: The Changing Role of the ESL Teacher*. Alexandria, VA: Author. Retrieved from <http://www.tesol.org>.