Educational Leaders' Interpretation of and Response to the Every Student Succeeds Act and the LOOK Act in Massachusetts:

Author: Caitlin E. Long

Boston College

Lynch School of Education

Department of Teacher Education, Special Education, and Curriculum and Instruction

EDUCATIONAL LEADERS' INTERPRETATION OF AND RESPONSE TO THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT AND THE LOOK ACT IN MASSACHUSETTS

Dissertation by

Caitlin E. Long

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Dr. C. Patrick Proctor, Chair

Dr. Lauri Johnson, Reader

Dr. Rebecca Lowenhaupt, Reader

December, 2019

ABSTRACT

EDUCATIONAL LEADERS' INTERPRETATION OF AND RESPONSE TO THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT AND THE LOOK ACT IN MASSACHUSETTS

Caitlin E. Long, Author

C. Patrick Proctor, Ph.D., Chair

Schools, districts, and states are at a time of transition from the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) to The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and this change comes alongside evolving state policy landscapes. Since NCLB and the epoch of English-only education in Massachusetts, which ended after the passage of the Language Opportunity for Our Kids (LOOK) Act in 2017, have been shown to have a primarily negative impact on emergent bilingual students, a historically marginalized group of learners, there is a need for educators and researchers to understand how educators are comprehending and responding to policy changes. Yet processes of policy interpretation and implementation are often not straightforward and many factors from the location of an organization to an individual's role, connections, and prior professional experiences (Burch & Spillane, 2005; Spillane, 1998) can impact policy understandings and implementation. The purpose of this qualitative dissertation was to understand how educational leaders interpreted and responded to ESSA and the LOOK Act in Massachusetts.

Utilizing sensemaking theory as a theoretical framework (Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002), analysis of 17 participant interviews as well as state documents demonstrated that district, state, school, and organizational leaders were optimistic about the educational future of bilingual children in Massachusetts. They viewed the LOOK Act as offering needed flexibility for designing educational programs, as better aligning with participants' beliefs about bilingualism

and language learning, and as potentially facilitating the increased engagement of bilingual families as stakeholders with a voice. Educational leaders understood ESSA in relation to how they understood NCLB. They also viewed ESSA primarily as a compliance mandate. Participants responded to ESSA and LOOK by defending their intentional focus on the immediate: the policies, initiatives, and practices that aligned with their beliefs about what is best for bilingual students. These priorities included reconceptualizing programs of education for bilingual students and launching English Learner Parent Advisory Councils, both made possible by the LOOK Act, as well as hiring and retaining equity-minded district leaders, advocating at the state and district levels around funding structures, building teacher capacity to teach emergent bilingual students, developing multiple pathways for children, and shifting belief systems around bilingualism and bilingual children. Developing understandings of how educators interpret and respond to ESSA and LOOK can further inform educators' crafting of policies and programs that can benefit bilingual children.

Acknowledgements

I am beyond fortunate in my life to have such a loving and supportive community. To Patrick Proctor whose committed support of and belief in teachers has impressed and motivated me for five years. I am impressed by your belief in your students and your encouragement of each of us to find our own path. I am thankful for your teaching, for your coaching that helped shape this project, and for your support of my completing it while learning how to be a school leader. To Becca Lowenhaupt and Lauri Johnson for being models of strong women leaders, fierce advocates for teachers, and generous thought partners and guides for doctoral students. To Pat DiNatale for mentoring me into this profession and for teaching me to create sustainable structures and to fight to best support all children. To Andy Hargreaves for teaching me what educational change can and should look like at the macro level and for encouraging me to grab a seat at the table. I feel honored to have worked with each of you.

To the other doctoral students at Boston College who not only pushed my thinking but provided needed camaraderie and support, as well as journal articles and cups of coffee. I am so appreciative for the accompaniment and encouragement of fellow graduate students. It is a special and unique community.

To the teachers, coaches, and administrators in my district that I have been privileged to call colleagues—you impress me with your skill, your compassion, and your drive for betting the lives of children. I thank you. You do the work of superheroes every day.

To my friends—a caring and impressive group of women— you make me believe in the power of public education and you move me with what you choose to do and how you choose to be in the world. Adele, Anna, Bridget, Caitlin, Caroline, JoAnn, Kim, Laura, Lauren, Matt, Meaghan, and Meredith, as well as my Rostro community, are a few for whom I am most

thankful. To Veronica for your infinite faith in me, your patient and consistent support, and your accompaniment through each step of this and every other journey.

And to my family—my mother, father, James, Tricia, Paul, a loving community of aunts, uncles, and cousins, and four grandparents I was privileged to spend many years with— for giving me all the support and tools to make this and other dreams possible. This work was undertaken from its inception with the love and support of Papa; I hope and believe he is proud to have another educator in the family.

My father once wrote a poem for a school event when I was in elementary school. Roughly, it read:

Pencils, crayons, and markers,
all packed into a backpack,
with hope and love.

They still are, and I am so grateful.

Table of Contents

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE:

Missing Perspectives, Negative Legacies, and an Unchartered Policy Landscape

The 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which greatly expanded the federal government's role in education, was reauthorized as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) under George W. Bush in 2001, and as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) under Barack Obama in 2015. ESSA rolls back some of the federal power over education, allowing potential opportunity for decisions to be made at the state and district level (Saultz, Fusarelli & McEachin, 2017; McGuinn, 2016). Yet many reforms, and perhaps most famously No Child Left Behind, were determined with little input from educators and two years after the transition to ESSA little is known about how educators are grappling with the policy. The paucity of school and district-based perspectives is problematic considering many scholars argue that educators are the most crucial part of all education reform and policy (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2011).

Notably, ESSA differs from NCLB in a number of ways for one of the U.S.'s historically underserved student populations: bilingual students classified as emergent bilinguals (referred to in policy documents and by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in Massachusetts as English Learners). Emergent bilingual students face social and institutional barriers to learning within an evolving policy landscape focused on accountability and standards-based reform. Since the 1980s, high-stakes accountability policies have been holding teachers, schools and districts accountable for student performance. Research demonstrates that NCLB strengthened federal control over education and had a number of impacts on emergent bilinguals and the schools and districts that educate them. NCLB was found to increase the visibility of emergent bilinguals (Haneda and Nespor, 2013; Hopkins et al., 2013; Liggett, 2010). Yet the impacts of NCLB on emergent bilingual students and their teachers have been shown to be

primarily negative (Menken, 2006, 2008, 2010; Palmer & Lynch, 2008; Reyes & Rorrer, 2001; Valenzuela, 2005; Wright, 2002; Wright & Choi, 2006) and for this reason, critical examinations of its successor, ESSA, and its interactions with other policy initiatives, are needed in its first years.

Yet policy implementation is never straightforward. Layers of stakeholders create and interpret policy. Policy implementation research suggests that how professionals interpret policy varies depending on a variety of factors, including the organization's location as well as the individual's role, connections, and prior professional experiences (Burch and Spillane 2005; Spillane 1998). These variations impact how policy is enacted by professionals within a system of education. School leaders interpret policy concerning emergent bilinguals in various ways (Revilla & Asato, 2002). These individual and collective interpretations have an impact on how educators implement policies. How leaders understand and respond to ESSA, as well as the policy's differences from NCLB, are significant since we know that practitioners' beliefs impact how they implement new policy (e.g. Coburn 2001; Guthrie 1990; Spillane et al. 2002), and it is still unclear how district leaders will implement ESSA for their emergent bilingual students.

Policy does not roll out in a vacuum, or even one at a time. Educators constantly interpret and respond to multiple policies and reforms simultaneously. In addition to ESSA, educators in Massachusetts were faced with another new policy, passed in November of 2017, called the LOOK Act, which must be discussed in conjunction with federal policy for the implications it could have on emergent bilingual students and teachers. LOOK drastically reversed the approach the state had sanctioned for educating bilingual students in MA since 2002 and has the potential to change how districts educate bilingual children.

In 2002, a voter referendum entitled "Question 2" ended bilingual education in Massachusetts and required teachers to instruct emergent bilinguals and all bilingual children only in English utilizing a Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) model (deJong, 2008; Gort et al., 2008; Uriarte et al., 2010). The policy was brought forth by a campaign called "English for the Children," a national initiative led by Ron Unz that eventually brought linguistically restrictive, anti-bilingual education policies to California, Arizona, and Massachusetts in the early 2000s. The assumption undergirding the referendum and the restrictive English-only policy in MA was that bilingual education had failed bilingual children. Nearly ten years later, the U.S. Department of Justice found Massachusetts had violated the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA) by not requiring sufficient training for SEI teachers (DOJ, 2011). The DOJ found fault not with the English-only policy but with the state's failure to prepare teachers and administrators to implement SEI. In fact, the DOJ (2011) deemed the SEI requirement to be "theoretically sound," (p. 10). However, the English-only policy did not meet its goal of improving achievement for bilingual students (Viesca, 2013). In 2017, the MA legislature passed the Language Opportunity for Our Kids (LOOK) Act, which offers districts flexibility in creating programs for emergent bilingual students, including bilingual programs, requires the establishment of English Learner Parent Advisory Councils for districts educating large numbers of emergent bilingual students, and establishes the Seal of Biliteracy in recognition of students who earned the designation. The passing of LOOK represents a great shift in state policy.

This dissertation is a qualitative study of educational leaders' interpretation and response to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the LOOK Act for emergent bilingual students in districts in Massachusetts. It is an examination of how educational leaders make decisions about responding to the new federal policy for their emergent bilingual students while they navigate

other state and district level policy directives. In this study, I use sensemaking theory to inform my exploration of the link between educational leaders' understanding of policy and their enactment of policy for emergent bilinguals. The term sensemaking was coined by organizational psychologist Karl Weick as a means of explaining how human beings make meaning of their experiences. Weick compared the cognitive process of breaking down experiences into meaning-embedded parts to map-making (Weick, 1979). Sensemaking has been used in the educational literature on policy implementation and has been referred has been referred to as "the missing link" that connects policy and practice (Palmer & Rangel, 2011, p. 618).

Research Problem: Missing Perspectives and Negative Legacies

There are ample reasons to focus a study on policy interpretation and response on emergent bilinguals and their educators. Research across social science fields has demonstrated the increase of bilingual students classified as emergent bilingual students in U.S. schools (e.g., García & Frede, 2010). About one in five U.S. students speaks a language other than English at home (Shin & Kominski, 2010; Batt, 2008). In American schools, there are over five million emergent bilinguals and these students constitute 9% of the total school population for grades PreK-12 (National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition [NCELA], 2012). Emergent bilingual students are the fastest-growing population of school-age children in the country.

This demographic imperative is often invoked in the scholarly literature on emergent bilingual students, yet perhaps a more compelling reason to focus bodies of scholarship, and this study in particular, on these children is the history of marginalization these students have experienced in U.S. public schools. Emergent bilingual students often attend high-poverty schools and around 75% of emergent bilinguals are estimated to qualify for free or reduced-price

lunch (Zehler et al., 2003). The prevalence of poverty in communities where emergent bilingual students live and attend school is problematic because poverty can present serious obstacles to children's thriving (Coppel, Dumont, & Visco, 2001; Hernandez, Takanishi, & Marotz, 2009; Raphael & Smolensky, 2009; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010). Many emergent bilinguals also face institutional obstacles and inequities in schools. For example, emergent bilinguals are more likely than monolingual English-speakers to be taught by less qualified teachers (Ballantyne et. al., 2008; Darling-Hammond, 2010). While researchers have identified skills and dispositions for culturally and linguistically-responsive teaching (e.g., Lucas, Villegas, & Freedson-Gonzalez, 2008; Dilg, 1999; Liston & Zeichner, 1996) studies suggest that general education teachers, who are increasingly teaching emergent bilinguals, are not prepared to teach them (Mohan, Leung & Davidson, 2001; Valdes; 2001), including those who are considered "highly qualified" (Herrera & Murry, 2006; Ruiz-de-Velasco & Fix, 2000). This finding is problematic considering around 90% of emergent bilinguals spend most of their school day in a class taught by a general education teacher (Polat, 2010). These inequities often reinforce cycles of poverty, yet emergent bilinguals represent a crucial part of the nation's future social, cultural, and economic fabric. It is imperative that the United States produce a highly literate citizenry prepared to participate in global dialogues and to solve global problems. Thus the education of emergent bilingual children is more than a demographic imperative; it is an equity and human rights issue.

Missing Perspectives

One crucial perspective largely missing from the policy implementation literature is that of educators charged with overseeing the education and assessment of emergent bilinguals: English Learner and bilingual directors and coordinators. The absence of these leaders' voices is problematic since these educators are often responsible for not only the implementation and

accountability of policies for emergent bilinguals, but also for the curriculum, programming, and instructional leadership of the teachers of emergent bilinguals. They also represent a crucial part of the interpretation and implementation of policies and initiatives for emergent bilingual students and their teachers.

Increasingly, scholars have become interested in how the implementation of policy supports, blocks, or interacts with the intended purpose or goals of a policy. Scholars today emphasize the complexity of policy implementation (Honig, 2006). Yet the intermediary step of interpretation remains less studied. ESSA allows more flexibility for state and district policymaking, and no studies at the inception of this dissertation had examined educators' interpretation and implementation of ESSA, then in its second year of implementation, in Massachusetts. Since thousands of educational leaders nationally will be interpreting this law in its second year of implementation, and since it differs from NCLB, which had a generally negative impact on emergent bilinguals, there is an urgent need to explore educational leaders' interpretation and implementation of ESSA. These policy changes are occurring within an increasingly heated political and public discourse about immigration. The political climate contributes to the urgency to understand the implementation of this policy within cultural, linguistic, racial, political and historical contexts of cities and towns.

The Legacy of NCLB

Since research on ESSA is limited, it is crucial to examine how previous federal legislation has been implemented for and has impacted emergent bilinguals, their teachers, and schools. The numerous impacts of ESSA's predecessor, NCLB, on emergent bilingual students and their teachers have been well documented in the literature. Researchers have examined the impact of federal policy and high-stakes accountability at the school and district level (Diamond

& Spillane, 2004; Jacob, 2004; McNeil et al., 2008; Sandholtz, Ogawa, & Scribner, 2004). Researchers have also asked teachers and administrators about the impact of policy (Achinstein et al., 2004; Finnigan & Gross, 2007; Koretz, McCaffrey, & Hamilton, 2001; McNeil & Valenzuela, 2000; Valli & Buese, 2007). Research on the impacts of federal policy on students and teachers has revealed a number of themes, including a narrowing of the curriculum (Booher Jennings, 2005; Hamilton et al., 2007; Hamilton, Berends, & Stecher, 2005; Hamilton, Stecher, & Klein, 2002; Luna & Turner, 2001; McMurrer, 2007; Nichols and Berliner, 2005; Sullivan, 2006), an expansion of the expectations of teachers' roles (Valli & Buese, 2007), less time for teachers to differentiate instruction and low teacher morale (Finnigan & Gross, 2007), as well as changes in instructional strategies, such as an increase in teacher-centered strategies (Au, 2007). Some of the research on NCLB has focused on specific aspects of the policy, such as the stipulation that all teachers be classified as "highly qualified," for example (e.g. Harper et al., 2008; Haneda & Nespor, 2013; O'Neal et al., 2008). Other work has focused on how teachers and administrators view the impact of accountability policies (Achinstein et al., 2004; Finnigan & Gross, 2007; Koretz, McCaffrey, & Hamilton, 2001; McNeil & Valenzuela, 2000; Valli & Buese, 2007.) For example, Penuel and colleagues (2016) have argued the testing requirements of NCLB signaled the importance of mathematics and ELA as discrete content areas.

Research suggests NCLB had a positive impact specifically on emergent bilingual students in two primary ways: emergent bilinguals were included in the instructional, assessment and accountability procedures of the school, and policy makers, state and district leaders were attending to emergent bilingual students' achievement (e.g. Haneda and Nespor, 2013; Hopkins et al., 2013; Ligget, 2010). Provisions of NCLB thus resulted in increased visibility of emergent bilinguals and increased accountability of schools to educate them.

Yet, most researchers argue that the impact of NCLB on emergent bilinguals and the teachers who educate them was negative (Menken, 2006, 2008, 2010; Palmer & Lynch, 2008; Reyes & Rorrer, 2001; Valenzuela, 2005; Wright, 2002; Wright & Choi, 2006). Researchers have documented the impact of NCLB on emergent bilinguals occurred at the classroom level, resulting in a narrowing of the curriculum for emergent bilinguals (Au, 2007; Menken, 2008; Wright & Choi, 2006) and less time to differentiate instruction while preparing students for testing (Menken, 2010) as well as a loss of teaching time which was reallocated for testing preparation (Palmer & Rangel, 2011). In one oft-cited study, Wright and Choi (2006) surveyed 40 Arizona third grade teachers' views, reported impacts, and the perceived effectiveness of NCLB, Proposition 203, the state legislation restricting bilingual programs and requiring Sheltered English Immersion (SEI), and Arizona LEARNS, the state-level assessment and accountability system, on emergent bilinguals in classrooms, schools, and districts. Teachers reported confusion over what practices were permitted under the new system, expressed concern the policies were harming students, showed frustration that no guidelines had been given in the implementation of SEI, and reported believing high-stakes assessments were inappropriate for emergent bilinguals, even if the teachers generally supported accountability systems (Wright and Choi, 2006).

Other researchers have argued NCLB marginalized teachers of bilingual students. NCLB's failure to include language knowledge as a criterion for being classified as a "highly qualified teacher" was found to marginalize the expertise of the teachers of bilingual students (Harper et al., 2008; O'Neal et al., 2008). Examining the impact of NCLB on emergent bilinguals and their teachers in Florida, Harper and colleagues interviewed 52 ESL teachers in a sample representative of Florida's districts. Teachers of emergent bilinguals, who possessed skills-

oriented knowledge, were found to be less valued in schools than subject teachers who possessed content knowledge, which was positioned as more important than pedagogical knowledge. They and others have argued that knowledge of language acquisition should be part of what makes a teacher "highly qualified" to teach (Haneda & Nespor, 2008; Harper et al., 2008). Additionally, researchers in the field of language policy argue that NCLB effectively became a national language policy (Menken, 2008) which privileged monolingualism over bilingualism through the means it used to increase achievement (Corson, 1999; Evans & Hornberger, 2005; Harper, Platt, Naranjo, & Boynton, 2007), legitimizing monolingualism at the classroom and school level (Byrnes, 2005).

Finally, there is also evidence that graduation rates of emergent bilinguals have been negatively impacted by high school exit-exams. Nationally, graduation rates are lower across the country in states that require a high-school exit exam as a precondition for graduation (Dee & Jacob, 2006; Warren, Jenkins, & Kulick, 2006). Menken explains that the dropout rate in New York City for emergent bilinguals before an exit exam was required by NCLB was 21%, compared with 16% for non-emergent bilinguals. After an exit requirement became policy, the dropout rate for emergent bilinguals averaged 29%, compared to the 17% dropout rate for students not classified as language learners (Menken, 2009). While the graduation rate is generally increasing in New York, the emergent bilingual graduation rate is decreasing (Menken, 2009). Menken (2010) argues that since emergent bilinguals have lower test scores, they are disproportionately impacted by the high stakes testing requirements of NCLB.

The impacts of NCLB must be considered because, crucially, there are a number of similarities and differences between NCLB and ESSA. Potentially relevant differences between NCLB and ESSA include a change in terminology for emergent bilinguals (from "Limited

English Proficient" to "English Learner"), the increase from two to four years for inclusion in the subgroup of former English Learners (ELs), and the requirement accommodations be provided while students are learning English (Wright, 2016). While certain tenets of ESSA are similar to those of its predecessor, (e.g. the requirement that emergent bilinguals be tested "in a valid and reliable manner"), it is unclear how curricular, programmatic, instructional, and assessment decisions will be made by state and district-level educators. Districts are key sites to examine how leadership decisions are taken up in schools (Datnow & Park, 2009). The differences in the legislation and the potential flexibility allotted to districts may have implications for the education and assessment of emergent bilinguals. Considering the negative impacts of NCLB and the differences between NCLB and ESSA, it is crucial to consider how district leaders will wield some of this new-found flexibility, and what the implications of ESSA will be for students, teachers, and schools.

Research Questions

Since policy implementation is partially dependent on educators' understanding and interpretation, and previous federal policy has changed the way teachers worked with emergent bilingual students in primarily negative ways, it is crucial to examine how district and school-based educators, whose voices have largely not been included in the crafting of federal policy, interpret and respond to ESSA and LOOK. This study aimed to explore how educational leaders in districts educating high numbers of emergent bilinguals interpreted and responded to ESSA and LOOK and made decisions about the education of emergent bilinguals. To that end, I asked the following questions:

1. How do state, district, and school leaders interpret policies, including ESSA and LOOK, for emergent bilingual students and their teachers?

2. How do state, district, and school leaders and district and state documents report curricular, personnel, and instructional decisions that have been made in implementing ESSA, LOOK, and other policies for emergent bilingual students?
3. What factors do state, district, and school leaders identify as influencing the implementation process of these policies?

To answer these questions, I conducted a qualitative study of educational leaders' interpretations of and responses to ESSA for emergent bilinguals in Massachusetts. For the purposes of this study, educational leaders were district and school leaders who are key implementers of policy impacting emergent bilinguals, as well as key informants from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Schools (DESE). Policy implementation literature suggests administrator and teacher interpretation of policy is crucial to its implementation (Coburn, 2001, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 1990; Fullan & Miles, 1992; Honig, 2006). Since ESSA may facilitate more district-level autonomy than NCLB, and since the district is a key site for guiding school-level decision making (Datnow & Park, 2009) the focus of this dissertation was on district-level interpretation and implementation, although it also includes voices of school leaders. A qualitative interview approach was well suited to examine how educational leaders interpreted and implemented ESSA and LOOK.

Historic Policy Context for Emergent Bilingual Students

The federal government has put forth a number of laws and court decisions aimed at improving education and ensuring equity for all students, including emergent bilingual students. The 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was passed as part of Lyndon Johnson's war on poverty and his plan to build what he referred to as a Great Society. The legislation intended to address educational inequalities and the impacts of child poverty by

providing additional funding for schools with many low-income students. Since its passing, the law has been reauthorized a number of times and has been shaped and reshaped in a number of ways relating to emergent bilingual children.

Federal Policy and the Courts Through 2016

Title VII of ESEA, the Bilingual Education Act, was passed in 1968. The act was the first explicit intervention of the federal government in the language of education for bilingual students and it also incentivized schools beginning bilingual programs (de Jong, 2011; Stewner-Manzanares, 1988). The law mandated that emergent bilinguals receive language support as a part of their education so they could access content while learning English. The Bilingual Education Act was intended to provide "meaningful and equitable access for English-language learners to the curriculum, rather than serving as an instrument of language policy for the nation, through the development of their native languages," (August & Hakuta, 1997, p. 16). The legislation sought to dismantle some of the inequities that emerge when students learning English cannot access the curriculum.

In 2001, ESEA was reauthorized under George W. Bush as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and it greatly expanded the federal government's role in education. High-stakes assessment systems became fully embedded into the educational system during NCLB and Race to the Top (RTTP). Most research does not show that these assessments have been successful in improving student learning (e.g. Ratner, 2015; Simon, 2013). A number of reviews of the literature examine the trends and impact of high-stakes assessment on students, teachers, schools, and communities (Au, 2007; Lee, Maerten-Rivera, Penfield, LeRoy, & Secada, 2008; Phelps, 2012; Solórzano, 2008). For example, Au, a critic of high-stakes assessment and accountability-based systems, conducted a metasynthesis of 49 qualitative studies focusing on the impact of

high-stakes assessments on curriculum and instruction. Coding for subject matter content alignment, form of knowledge and instructional change, as well as the direction in which these changes were made, he found that teachers across studies reported a narrowing of curriculum to tested subjects as well as an increase in teacher-centered instructional methods (Au, 2007). While there were some exceptions, and teachers in some studies reported that high-stakes assessment did support integration of content knowledge and student-focused instruction, these occurred in cases when teachers believed the test design and content facilitated these instructional methods. Overall, Au (2007) found that teachers across studies reported that high stakes assessments exerted a high degree of control over their teaching and students' learning.

Under NCLB, the Bilingual Education Act was subsumed under Title III, the English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act. Title III removed the word "bilingual" from the federal legislation and prioritized English proficiency (Menken, 2010; Thomas, 2017). It contained no mention of the benefits of educating students to be bilingual and biliterate (Wright, 2005). Under Title III, students classified as emergent bilinguals had to take annual language assessments, as well as the content assessments mandated by their states. After emergent bilingual students were in an American school for one year, they had to take the same English Language Arts (ELA) tests as their non-emergent bilingual peers.

NCLB was crafted around the belief that many schools were currently failing, and focused around achievement outcomes and accountability systems. Operating out of this paradigm, the legislation used assessment to strengthen federal control of education (Menken, 2010). There were implications for the education and the assessment of emergent bilinguals. Under NCLB, all students were expected to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) on standardized tests. The assessment results of both emergent bilinguals and students in Special

Education were mandated to be reported in subgroups. The law also mandated that emergent bilingual students have access to "high quality language instruction educational programs that are based on scientifically-based research demonstrating the effectiveness of the programs in increasing (a) English proficiency; and (b) student academic achievement in the core academic subjects" (Title III, Sec. 3115(c)(1)). The law also stipulated that emergent bilinguals be given "reasonable accommodations on tests and that they be tested "in a valid and reliable manner," (Title I, Sec. 1111(b)(3)(C)(ix)(III)). Schools reported evidence of student progress, and progress became tied to federal funding that districts, schools, and students received, a process which resulted in the tests being very high-stakes (Menken, 2010). Thus NCLB used student achievement scores as the mechanism for educational change (Penuel et al. 2016).

Court cases have also addressed the need for equitable education of emergent bilinguals nationally. The seminal 1974 Supreme Court case *Lau v. Nichols* determined that schools must teach emergent bilingual students academic content while they are learning English. Since Lau, schools and teachers are challenged to meet this call without causing inequities or segregating emergent bilinguals from their peers (Callahan & Shifrer, 2016). Callahan and Shifrer (2016) explain "EL programs that comply with education policy but limit EL students academically prove a dangerous, double-edged sword," (p. 464). Lau did not specify programmatic requirements or characteristics. Another pivotal case, Castenada v. Pickard in 1981, established three requirements for programs educating emergent bilinguals. The programs must: 1) be based in sound educational theory, 2) have adequate implementation and 3) eventually have proven effectiveness in meeting the academic and language needs of emergent bilingual students (Del Valle 2003; Hakuta, 2011). These three requirements for choosing, implementing, and monitoring programs, often referred to as the Castenada Test, were folded into the Equitable

Educational Opportunity Act (García, 1987). Despite federal law and the requirements of these cases intended to protect and educate emergent bilinguals, there is ample research to suggest schools have not sufficiently educated emergent bilinguals in terms of their academic and linguistic needs (e.g. Callahan & Shifrer, 2016; Gándara & Orfield, 2012; Linquanti, 2001).

From NCLB to ESSA

Most recently, ESEA was reauthorized under Barack Obama in 2015 as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). ESSA continues the aims of NCLB to instate high standards and systems of accountability with the goal of closing the achievement gap. Under ESSA, states must "identify a category of schools for comprehensive support and improvement" and intervene in struggling systems after three years. The legislation also articulates four academic indicators which must hold "substantial weight" in a state's system of accountability. The four indicators are: 1) students' proficiency on state tests, 2) English language proficiency, 3) an academic measure of student growth that can be disaggregated by subgroup, and 4) one indicator or school quality or student success aside from test scores (ESSA, 2015). The fourth indicator could be related to student or teacher engagement, access to advanced course offerings, college and career readiness or school climate and safety.

While ESSA maintains NCLB's focus on high-stakes accountability, it also allows for more state flexibility to select goals for which schools will then be held accountable (Penuel et al. 2016). Funds must continue to be used for language instruction, professional development for teachers, programming for families and community members, interpreter services, and materials in languages comprehensible to students. States must also identify exit exams in languages other than English and work toward acquiring or developing exams in other languages (ESSA, 2015).

There are also a number of relevant differences between NCLB and ESSA for emergent bilinguals. Under ESSA, children are no longer referred to as "Limited English Proficient," but "English Learner." Second, emergent bilingual accountability has been transferred from Title III to Title I, where other accountability indicators are referenced. One critique of including emergent bilingual students' scores into Title I rather than Title III is that federal agencies may have less power to ensure states and districts are meeting the needs of emergent bilinguals (Williams, 2015). There are a number of potential differences for high-stakes assessment. Under ESSA emergent bilingual students must be provided accommodations until their English has been determined proficient (ESSA, 2015). English language and content scores for emergent bilinguals will be measured in grades three through eight and in high school.

There are also changes around entry and exit criteria into and out of emergent bilingual programs. The state must establish entry and exit criteria and procedures for emergent bilinguals to participate in language services. ESSA also stipulates that state-level indicators of emergent bilingual students' learning be disaggregated and that the requirement for emergent bilingual program enrollment, which is English proficiency level, be more closely aligned with requirements for program exit, which historically has been academic achievement (Callahan & Shifrer, 2016; Ragan & Lesaux, 2006).

Another major contrast is that, while NCLB included emergent bilingual students' standardized test scores in publicly-reported district data and subgroups beginning one year after students enrolled in an U.S. school, ESSA allows states to continue that practice, or to publicly report emergent bilinguals' scores in their first year, but not to count them in district averages until the third year. Students formerly classified as emergent bilinguals who are proficient in English, based on the annual language proficiency exam, can be counted in a subgroup for up to

four years, instead of two years. One potential implication of this change is that it could create an illusion of overall English proficiency at the school or district level (Wright, 2016). Conversely, it could enable districts to better support students formerly classified as emergent bilinguals. Notably, states can use a growth measure instead of a raw or scaled score to report emergent bilinguals' scores. (Wright, 2016).

Finally, ESSA allows for more local flexibility. ESSA decentralizes implementation of these components of the accountability system to the state and district. States and districts are expected to have more choice in choosing curricula, assessments, programs and interventions for emergent bilinguals. All of these differences could have an impact on how schools choose curricula, focus instructional strategies, hire, assign and train teachers, and make assessment decisions for emergent bilinguals and are worthy of detailed study.

Since how ESSA and LOOK are interpreted and responded to by educators is largely unknown and since LOOK represents a significant policy change for MA and ESSA's predecessor had primarily negative implications for emergent bilinguals and the teachers who educate them, it is crucial to build a body of work that examines, from the perspective of the professionals in districts and schools, how educators are making meaning of these policies and what they are doing in response to them.

In this dissertation, I explore how state, district, and school-based professionals focused on educating emergent bilinguals understood and responded to ESSA and LOOK. While participants had little knowledge of ESSA and perceived it not yet impactful, they believed the advent of the LOOK Act would usher in a positive era for the education of emergent bilinguals in MA. I build the argument that participants displayed what I refer to as an *intentional focus on*

the immediate, directing their efforts and resources to the programming, coaching, and advocating that they believed would have the most positive impact on bilingual students.

In Chapter Two, I briefly present the history of research on policy implementation. I then describe the theoretical framework, sensemaking theory (Spillane, Reiser, et al., 2002) that informs this study and I detail its three primary principles, which are applied in data analysis in Chapter Three. I then review three broad areas of literature: 1) policy interpretation, 2) responses to policy, specifically for emergent bilinguals, and 3) the emerging work on ESSA and emergent bilinguals. The first category of literature is broken into two subgroups: a brief and general overview of educators' perceptions of and interpretations of policy as well as a review of educators' understandings of policy for emergent bilinguals. Within the general overview, I also review how sensemaking has been utilized in the literature on policy interpretation and implementation. Throughout this presentation of literature, I examine what questions researchers are asking, how they approach these questions methodologically, and the trends that emerge in the findings.

Chapter Three describes the research design. I explain why a qualitative approach, drawing from case study methods, is appropriate for a study of policy interpretation and response. I present the educational and policy context of Massachusetts and explain how I decided to structure sampling and data collection processes, focusing on districts educating high numbers of emergent bilingual children. I then describe the data I collected, briefly present a profile of each district participant's system, and detail the cyclical data analysis process.

Chapter Four presents the primary findings of the study. I describe how participants interpreted and responded to ESSA and LOOK, as well as priorities they reported as central to their work. Throughout Chapter Four, I discuss how these findings interact with-- confirming in

some cases and challenging in others-- the literature in the field of policy interpretation and implementation. I argue that participants prioritized what they viewed as most impactful for students; that included LOOK, but not ESSA. They rejected the assumption that each of them had a role to play in the interpretation and response of ESSA, though all actively engaged in the interpretation and response of LOOK. Participants purposefully structured their efforts and resources around an intentional focus on the immediate priorities and initiatives they viewed as the most important for bilingual children. Chapter Five presents implications for educational practice and a conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO

Sensemaking Theory and Policy Interpretation and Response Past and Present for Emergent Bilingual Students

This study on the interpretation of and response to ESSA and LOOK in Massachusetts is grounded in and builds on the fields of policy interpretation and implementation. This chapter first presents a broad overview of the literature on policy implementation. I then discuss the sensemaking framework and its theoretical principles. Next, I review the literature on how policy is understood and implemented for emergent bilingual students. In reviewing this literature, I considered the questions: "What does the literature say about policy interpretation for emergent bilingual students?" and "What does literature say about policy implementation for emergent bilingual students?" The studies for this review were identified through searches of key terms in the ERIC database, including sensemaking and policy interpretation, policy implementation, policy response, the Every Student Succeeds Act, the LOOK Act, and emergent bilinguals.

Researching Policy Implementation: A Brief Overview

Policy implementation is an inherently complex process shaped by multiple actors and contextual factors (Elmore, 1983; Honig, 2006; Odden & Marsh, 1988). The literature documenting the history of policy implementation, based on Honig and Odden's work, identifies four primary waves, each characterized by policy features and implementation approaches from the field's inception in the 1960s through the early 2000s (Goggin et al. 1990; Honig, 2006; Lennon & Corbett, 2003; Odden, 1991; Radin, 2000). I will briefly characterize each wave.

The policy implementation literature of the 1960s has been characterized as an examination of *what* was being implemented in terms of fidelity to program models and compliance with top-down policies (Honig, 2006). This body of literature was focused primarily

on how policy crafters approached broad social issues and distributed resources to certain groups, as specified in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Evaluators declared implementation "failures" those instances in which policy was not implemented with fidelity, and suggested more clarity in directions in order to close this "gap" (Honig, 2006, p. 6). The second wave of implementation literature, in the 1970s, focused on both static and change elements as researchers continued to focus on the rolling out of federal policies over time, but with increased attention to the role of people and place as contextual factors that impact implementation. Researchers in this period sought to backwards plan by creating tools that could help implementers link on the ground implementation back to policy. The 1980s ushered in great attention to measuring the success of various policies and determining which were "effective" and which were not (Honig, 2006). Nearly two decades into ESEA, and after the release of *A Nation At Risk* in 1983, the research foci in the third wave of implementation literature shifted to who was teaching, what encompassed the curriculum, and how the curriculum was taught (Fuhrman, Clune, & Elmore, 1988). Honig (2006) argues that the fourth wave of policy implementation research, which began in the 1990s and early 2000s, had new policy goals, targets and tools, increased attention to the connections between policy, people and places, and demonstrated epistemological shifts.

Early approaches to policy research that focused on analysis of the policy itself, rather than on the process of policy implementation, have come under recent critique. Honig (2006) explains "The essential implementation question then becomes not simply 'what's implementable and works' but 'what is implementable and what works for whom, when, where and why'," (p. 2). We now understand that multiple school, district, and state actors are understanding and

shaping policies as they implement, or do not implement, their features and goals in varying ways and to varying degrees.

Some researchers of policy implementation focus on the processes by which individuals make decisions in their best interests, how policies impact those choices, and what the results of those choices are (Lane, 2013; Loeb & McEwan, 2006). Coburn (2016) refers to these traditions as the principal-agent theories. Work done in the tradition of social network theories, by contrast, examines how social interactions and social context influence people's actions (e.g. Coburn, Russell, et al. 2012). Increasingly, a sensemaking framework has been applied to studies of policy implementation. Scholars examining implementation from a sensemaking perspective, Coburn explains, "focus on the way that individuals' and groups' interpretations of policy are shaped by cultural ideas available to them in the environment," (Coburn, 2016, p. 465). Coburn (2016) explains that "these different approaches to studying policy implementation put forth quite different accounts of the nature of human agency, traversing the terrain from unfettered individual choice through different formulations of conditioned agency to heavily socialized views where action is dictated by the social structure. These assumptions about human agency, in turn, inform what the researcher pays attention to in his or her research design and the inferences he or she draws from data," (p. 466). Coburn notes that it is problematic that these assumptions are not often explored and challenged by scholars of education policy implementation.

Recently, federal or state crafters of policy have been referred to as *policy architects* or *policy creators* and district and school-based educators as *policy actors*. Increasingly, scholars have argued that educators are not only implementers of policy, but policy makers themselves. They first understand and then make decisions about policy crafted at the federal or state level. Policy is enacted by educators, or these policy actors, through the lens of their own personal

experiences and professional abilities, as well as their school and community contexts (Cohen and Ball 1990; Darling-Hammond 1990). Datnow and Park argue that rather than operating as top-down or bottom-up, policy implementation can be understood as an "open, multi-layered system" within and taking into account the contexts of individuals, organizations, and cultures (Datnow & Park, 2009, p. 349). Later in this chapter, the sensemaking perspective will be explored in detail.

A Note on Language

The terminology referring to bilingual children is almost as varied as the population it describes. While many school-based professionals refer to bilingual children learning English as "English Language Learners" or "ELLs" and, previously, as "Limited English Proficient" or "LEP," these designations actually ignore the fact that these children are bilingual. The erasure of the word bilingual legitimizes and privileges English in U.S. schooling and positions other languages, and the speakers of those languages, as secondary to English speakers (Thomas, 2017). That said, in the U.S., there are programmatic as well as equity reasons for schools' need to classify children who need language support in order to thrive in school. For these reasons, I use the term "emergent bilingual" in this dissertation. Emergent bilingual is a term used by researchers who position bilingualism as an asset and who recognize that children experience school and learn through their multiple languages (Chappell & Faltis, 2013; García & Kleifgen, 2010; García, Kleifgen, & Falchi, 2008; García & Vázquez, 2012). I do, however, use the term "English Learner" (EL) when I reference policy documents that specifically use this term. I do this for sake of clarity and to limit confusion, since English Learner, or EL, is the commonly-used term in policy documents and in the discourse of many state, district, and school staff.

Theoretical Framework: Sensemaking

Scholars of education reform and educational change have argued an examination of what happens when actors in districts, schools and classrooms implement policy is crucial for understanding policy and its implementation (Coburn, 2001, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 1990; Fullan & Miles, 1992; Honig, 2006). These scholars argue that examining the policy itself is insufficient; it is necessary to examine policy as it is given shape in schools. The literature on policy implementation has undergone a shift in the past several decades from being understood as a one-way and linear path starting with top-down policy and ending with implementation, to a mutual-adaption approach (Datnow & Park, 2009). In such an approach, implementation is a layered process occurring and being shaped across multiple contexts and organizations and by many professionals (Datnow & Park, 2009). As a part of this shift, a sensemaking framework, which comes from the field of organizational psychology, has increasingly been utilized by researchers examining how policy is implemented in schools (Datnow & Park, 2009).

Sensemaking has been used to explore how people create common understandings within their organizations and contexts (Weick, 2001; Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005). Sensemaking perspectives can facilitate understandings of how educational change occurs and why challenges arise when local actors interpret the requirements of policy. Spillane, Reiser & Reimer (2002) explain that "from a cognitive perspective, implementation hinges on whether and in what ways local implementing agents' understanding of policy demands impacts the extent to which they reinforce or alter their practice," (p. 47). The sensemaking approach draws from theories of social and situated cognition. Spillane, Reiser, and Reimer explain that "what a policy means for implementing agents is constituted in the interaction of their existing cognitive structures (including knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes), their situation, and the policy signals"

(Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002, p. 388). Spillane and colleagues use the term sensemaking, and not interpretation, to highlight the complexity of the process, which they describe as an "active attempt to bring one's past organization of knowledge and beliefs to bear in the construction of meaning from present stimuli" (Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002, p. 394). This perspective assumes implementation relies on how professionals understand the policy, and to what degree their interpretation changes, or does not change, their practice (Spillane, 2004; Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002; Spillane, Reiser & Gomez, 2006). Sensemaking has been used across fields to facilitate examinations of how professionals understand the interaction between external factors in their workplaces (Coburn, 2001; Porac, Thomas, & Baden-Fuller, 1989; Weick, 1995). A sensemaking framework can be appropriate when local actors choose to support the purposes of the policy they are implementing and also when they choose to reject aspects of the policy because before they make a decision regarding how to respond, they must understand the policy (Spillane, Reiser and Reimer, 2002).

Sensemaking has been conceptualized to have three components: individual cognition, situated cognition, and the role of (policy) representation (Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002).The first component of sensemaking, individual cognition, refers to an individual's cognitive factors such as knowledge, beliefs, and prior experiences, that explain how the individual responds to a given stimulus (Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002). These are the factors that are often referred to as aspects of "human capital." An individual's training and skills impact how and to what degree that person implements policies, and new information is filtered through existing beliefs and understood in relation to prior experiences (Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002). Spillane, Reiser and Reimer (2002) argue that if a person is more familiar with a given policy, it is more likely that he or she will adopt and implement it. This understanding of how individuals make sense of

change draws from the concept of schemas in the field of developmental psychology (Bartlett, 1932; Piaget, 1972). Schemas are structures of knowledge used to connect concepts and people rely on them to understand the world around them (Markus & Zajonc, 1985; Murphy & Medin, 1985; Schank, 1986) and to know what to expect in social situations (Cantor & Mischel, 1979; Cantor, Mischel, & Schwartz, 1982; Trope, 1986). Spillane and colleagues caution that those without great professional expertise may only recognize the superficial features of policy and not understand its depths or true purposes. When understanding is only superficial, actors might implement surface-level aspects of policy change but miss the deeper purposes of the changes. For example, a teacher attempting to implement a mathematics reform could adopt the instructional practice of teaching with manipulatives while not attending to the deeper and more abstract policy goals of changing math discourses or student stances toward math (Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002). In addition to cognitive factors, an individual's feelings, beliefs, and emotions can also have an impact on how the individual interprets changes processes (Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002).

Spillane and colleagues' characterization of the second component of sensemaking, situated cognition, focuses on the actor as social sensemaker, comes from the field of social psychology, and also draws on theories of situated and distributed cognition. Individuals make sense of change processes with one another and within a given time and space. At the macro and micro levels, social surroundings and networks impact sensemaking, as do "thought communities" and "world views," which impact a person's perspectives and schema (Mannheim, 1936; Resnick, 1991). A person's position in relation to others as well as the immediate organizational and social contexts are important for sensemaking. Institutional, social, and organizational factors, as well as historical context, also have an impact on individuals'

sensemaking. The sensemaking process is thus "nested" in multiple contexts within a given organization (Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002, p. 389). These contexts are a major factor in any individual's sensemaking and actually constitute a crucial element in the change process, rather than merely serving as a the "backdrop" against which implementation occurs (Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002, p. 389). Layers of context are crucial for, not incidental in, sensemaking.

The third component of the sensemaking framework is the role of representation. How policies and their goals are articulated by crafters of policy impacts individuals' and groups' sensemaking. The nature of the policy change determines how much a given actor must shift his or her thinking and approach. Policies that require great cognitive shifts will be more likely to experience challenges in implementation because of the requirement that knowledge structures change in order for policies to be implemented. Specifically, external messages regarding how to translate policy into practice can have a major impact on sensemaking. If an external representation of the policy provides details, the scholars posit that these descriptions could mitigate the potential for superficial implementation and facilitate actors' understanding of policy aims.

In education, researchers seeking to understand the connections between policy and implementation have applied a sensemaking framework to educators' interpretation of and response to federal, state, and local policy (Spillane, 2004; Spillane, Reiser, et al., 2002). Spillane, Diamond and their colleagues (2002) have argued sensemaking helps explain how educators "figure out what a policy means and whether and how it applies to their school to decide whether and how to ignore, adapt, or adopt policy locally," (p. 733). Studies examining policy implementation from a sensemaking perspective will be discussed later in this review.

While the three components of sensemaking theory guide my approach to this policy study and will support my analysis of how leaders report implementing policy for emergent bilinguals, the framework's limitations have begun to be discussed in the scholarly literature. Some researchers have cited that the sensemaking perspective does not give sufficient attention to power, ideological, and institutional dynamics in studies of policy implementation (e.g. Datnow & Park, 2009). For example, one largely unexplored component of context is the power of district level leadership and its potential impact on how leadership is distributed and how decisions at the school level are made (Datnow & Park, 2009). Spillane and colleagues state they do not assume that the policies to which actors are responding are, in fact, "correct" or the right kinds of policies. Rather, they declare that in order to make a decision about how to respond, educators must first make sense of any policy.

Policy is interpreted and acted upon by individuals and groups within cultural, racial, historical and linguistic spaces that differ organizationally and culturally. The positionality of educators and researchers in relation to policy is not neutral, and these positionalities could be more deeply discussed in the scholarly literature. Context and the professional decision making of educators must also be duly considered in studies on the implementation of education policy.

Locating the Research

All studies were located in the ERIC database through key search terms associated with the research questions. As I described earlier in this chapter, I considered the following questions specific to emergent bilinguals: "What does the literature say about policy interpretation for emergent bilingual students?" and "What does literature say about policy implementation for emergent bilingual students?" Additional studies were identified from reference lists of studies generated by the searches. All literature included in the review was published in peer-reviewed

journals or presented at conferences with peer-review processes. No limitation on publication date was stipulated in order to broadly capture the literature on policy implementation. Studies included were limited to those conducted and published in the United States, as this study explores how educators in the U.S. understand and implement U.S. policy. The only exception to this was the literature on sensemaking; in discussing the sensemaking literature I included studies conducted internationally to give a full picture of how the framework has been used in the policy implementation literature. The searches yielded literature I divided into three primary categories: 1) educators' interpretations of education policy, 2) educators' responses to and implementation of policy for emergent bilinguals, and 3) literature on ESSA and emergent bilinguals. Figure 1 presents the sections of this literature review.

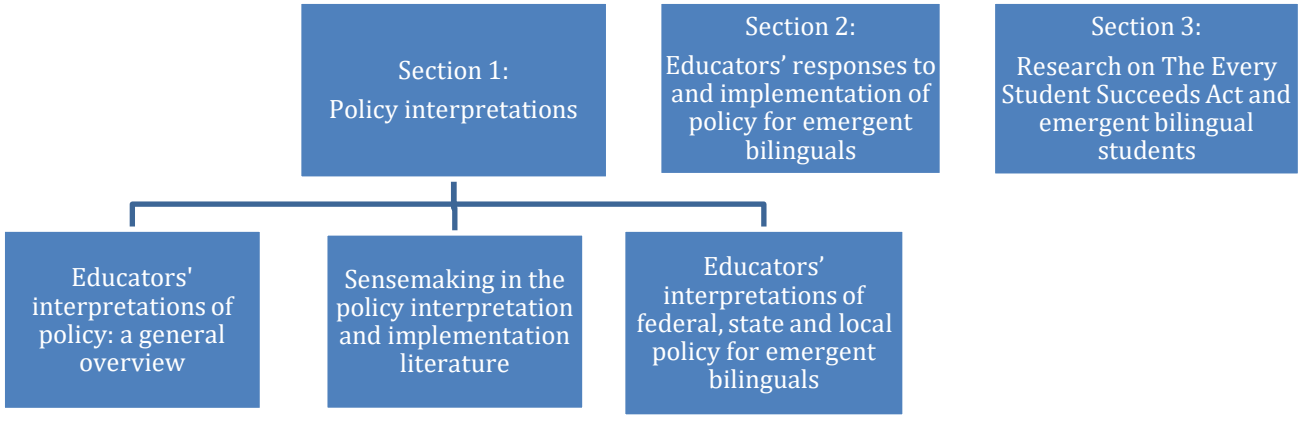

Figure 1. Structure of the literature review on policy interpretation and responses for emergent bilinguals

The discussion of policy implementation includes both federal and state policies because the number of policy studies focused on emergent bilingual students and their teachers are few, and because there are state contexts that are similar to, and therefore relevant for, the Massachusetts context of the current study. I include studies that address the implementation of policy by and for teachers, as well as administrators, for the crucial role that both teachers and

administrators play in the implementation process. I conclude the review by discussing the more limited literature on ESSA, and close with what can be learned from the studies on the implementation of policy for emergent bilinguals.

Educators' Interpretation of Policy

Notably, the literature on federal policy focuses primarily on the impact of policy, rather than its implementation. This section presents the literature on educators' understandings of policy. First, I present an overview of literature utilizing a sensemaking framework to study educational policy. Second, I review the literature specific to educators' interpretation of policy for emergent bilinguals. In this second section, I include in a table studies on policies related to interpretation and implementation for reasons I discuss below.

Sensemaking in the Policy Implementation Literature

Research exploring how individuals make sense of policies and change processes in education shows that educators' existing knowledge and practice is important in their process of adopting new practices (Cohen; 1990; Cohen & Weiss, 1993; Shulman, 1986). Cohen and Weiss explain, "when research is used in policymaking, it is mediated through users' earlier knowledge," with the policy message "supplementing" rather than "supplanting" teachers' and other implementing agents' prior knowledge and practice," (Cohen & Weiss, 1993, p. 227). Drawing on current knowledge of policy and reflecting on how policy has been implemented in the past influences the implementation of new policy (Spillane, 2004). In fact, educators' tendency to see the familiar in policies that do, in fact, require a fundamental change and differ in key components or purposes from current or past policies, impacts the degree to which educators implement the new policy with the spirit or principles intended (Honig, 2006).

But workplace structures, social networks, and professional affiliations, as well as broader contextual factors such as national and ethnic identity, social class, religious identity, political membership and other social factors can mediate how policy is understood and implemented (Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002). Organizational structure (McLaughlin and Talbert 1993, Spillane, 1998), including formal and informal networks (Coburn, 2001), as well as professional discourse (Hill, 2000) and educators' professional affiliations (Spillane, 1998) play a role in educators' sensemaking. Research on the situated nature of sensemaking has also focused on the impact of organizational and community histories on educators' sensemaking (Lin, 2000, Yanow, 1996). One study focusing on situated cognition in implementation explored teachers' opportunities to use sensemaking in a case study of Michigan teachers' implementation of math standards (Spillane, 2004). Spillane found that teachers' conversations with colleagues were important for teachers' making sense of the standards. Teachers reported needing time provided by the district to make sense of the new standards. Spillane found teachers who closely echoed the standards in their practice were able to discuss their teaching openly and authentically, while teachers whose practice differed substantially from the standards reported they made sense of the standards by themselves (Spillane, 2004). Such a study assumes, of course, that the alignment of teaching with the standards is a positive outcome, or at least one unchallenged by teachers. This work and others have examined how the structure of organizations and the grouping of professionals impact sensemaking (Spillane, 1998). Coburn (2001), used sensemaking and institutional theory to examine how teachers shape policy collaboratively. She conducted an in-depth case study of teachers' construction of policy messages about reading instruction in one California elementary school. She found that teachers in the Professional Learning Community (PLC) she was examining participated in "formal

networks" and "informal alliances" (p. 145) and that these played a role in teachers' sensemaking of policy. The PLC has been found to "mediate" how policy is translated into practice (Coburn, 2001; Stein and Brown, 1997). Collective sensemaking, as well as the personal and professional identities of the collaborators themselves and the organizational and structural factors of the collaborations, have thus been found to have an impact on educators' practice.

Other researchers seeking to understand the role of social and professional networks in sensemaking have focused on the organization of subgroups within a central office or school (Spillane, 1998), as well on educators' professional affiliations, both at the district level (Spillane, 1998) and at the school-level (Ball & Lacy, 1984; Little 1993; McLaughlin & Talbert, 1993; Siskin, 1991, 1994). Park and Datnow (2009) conducted a case study of 4 urban districts and found that leaders "co-constructed" both the goals for, and implementation of, data-driven decision-making, that they distributed decision-making power intentionally across educators, and that they fostered professional growth and school capacity by modelling and facilitating the brokering of knowledge. This co-construction was not achieved haphazardly but by the intentional creation of "an ethos of learning and continuous improvement rather than one of blame," (p. 477).

Finally, the way in which the policy is written can facilitate or constrain sensemaking to varying degrees (Spillane et al., 2002). As policy is articulated, explaining its rationale and its key principles is crucial for implementation. Otherwise, policy may be understood or implemented superficially, especially by novice educators (Spillane, 2004). The representation by policymakers, policy documents, the media and others of the purpose, language, and principles of new policy as compared with those of former policy is crucial for educators' sensemaking.

Educators' Understandings of Federal, State and Local Policy for Emergent Bilinguals

The following section of the literature review presents studies on educators' understandings of policy specifically regarding the education or assessment of emergent bilingual students. Table 1 presents a list of studies on educators' interpretations of policy, as well as the studies on their responses to policy, discussed in the next section, for emergent bilinguals. The table presents both studies on how educators *interpret* policy as we all as how they *respond to* policy for emergent bilinguals for two reasons: 1) researchers may focus on either interpretation or response, but most cover both to some degree in their findings and 2) there are very few studies related to policy interpretation and implementation specifically related to emergent bilinguals. They are discussed separately in this chapter to provide sufficient grounding in both the interpretation and response processes, and for the relevance both small bodies of work have for the current study. The studies on this topic are all qualitative or mixed methods.

Table 1

Studies on educators' interpretations of and response to policy for emergent bilinguals

Authors and year	Study purpose	State	Methods	Participants	Primary findings
deJong, 2008	Understand teachers' perceptions of Question 2 in MA	MA	Qualitative; conducted interviews	18 elementary school teachers	Found how the district communicated policy, colleagues' interpretations, policy language itself, and participants' beliefs impacted how teachers implemented the English-only policy; teachers reported trying to adhere to their beliefs about bilingualism and learning while teaching within the SEI model

Harper, Platt, Naranjo & Boynton, 2007	Understand how teachers implement NCLB, particularly in relation to reading	FL	Qualitative; conducted interviews	52 experienced ESL teachers	Found teachers reported concerns with high-stakes assessment, lost time to differentiate instruction and felt that NCLB had a negative impact on the education of emergent bilinguals in FL
McNeil, Coppola, Radigan, & Heilig, 2008	Understand what is happening to students in a standardized, accountability-based education system	TX	Mixed methods; conducted ethnographic study of urban high schools in one district, ethnography of one high school, analysis of a large student-level data set	Students and teachers (n= unknown)	Found principals reported a tension between wanting to comply with policy and to prioritize high-quality teaching and learning
Palmer & Rangel, 2011	Understand the mechanisms through which teachers implement high-stakes accountability for emergent bilinguals	TX	Qualitative; conducted interviews	16 teachers in bilingual classrooms in Texas	Found teachers reported a loss of instructional time, a narrowing of curriculum, and pressure to use test-centered materials; teachers tried to "buffer" students from the negative impacts of high-stakes testing and remained committed to fostering quality teaching and learning
Revilla & Asato, 2002	Understand the impact and implementation of Prop. 227 on emergent bilinguals, teachers, and families	CA	Qualitative; conducted case study of 3 districts using ethnographic methods (observations of classes & meetings, interviews, one focus group)	Teachers & admin.	Found teachers reported frustration at the lack of guidance regarding policy implementation; English was privileged above other languages; variation existed within and across implementers; in some cases, there was a "hyper-interpretation" of policy

Wright & Choi, 2006	Understand teachers' views, reported impacts, and perceived effectiveness of NCLB, Proposition 203, and Arizona LEARNS on emergent bilinguals	AZ	Mixed methods; surveyed teachers via telephone	40 third grade teachers	Found teachers reported confusion over the practices which new policies permitted, expressed concern the policies were harming students, voiced frustration that no guidelines had been given in the implementation of SEI, and believed high-stakes assessments were inappropriate for emergent bilinguals

General themes from this group of studies are that teachers identified high-stakes assessments as being inappropriate for emergent bilinguals (e.g. Palmer & Rangel, 2011), that they had little to no guidance in implementing programs mandated by policy (Revilla & Asato, 2002; Wright and Choi, 2006) and that they questioned the appropriateness, effectiveness and rationale for Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) (deJong, 2008; Wright & Choi, 2006). Teachers also struggled with the rigidity and appropriateness of policy-supported and policy-mandated curricula for emergent bilinguals. For example, in an interview study with 52 English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers in Florida, researchers explored teachers' perceptions of their roles in relation to reading curriculum, instruction, and testing (Harper, Platt, Naranjo & Boynton, 2007). Teachers reported they believed some strategies included in Reading First, such as the teaching of nonsense words, were not appropriate for bilingual students who were learning how to comprehend and not only decode (Harper et al. 2007). Teachers in the same study also expressed concern with the amount of assessment and monitoring of reading as well as they prescriptive nature of the reading curriculum. Across some studies, educators experienced a tension between implementing policy and teaching in a way that was consistent with their beliefs and their perceptions of what their bilingual students needed (deJong, 2008; Wright & Choi,

2006). This tension will be discussed in detail, along with the studies by Palmer and Rangel and Harper, deJong and Platt, in the section of this review on response to policy. The studies by deJong and Wright & Choi are discussed here for their thematic, contextual, and methodological relevance to the current study.

DeJong (2008) conducted a study in Massachusetts on how teachers perceived the passing of Question 2 in MA. She interviewed 18 elementary school teachers in a single district and found that the way teachers understood the policy was shaped by their beliefs and also by the messaging of district actors. As the teachers, 16 of whom taught in the bilingual program prior to the law's passing, negotiated policy messages, deJong (2006) found that their own beliefs, the policy itself, the language of the policy, and their colleagues' interpretations of the policy had an impact on teachers' implementation of the policy. Teachers mediated messages that came internally from themselves and their belief systems as well as from their colleagues and the district. DeJong explains that teachers' practices, such as grouping students by home language and encouraging them to speak their home languages, allowed them to implement the SEI model while attempting to honor their own beliefs about bilingualism and adhere to what they considered best practices in teaching bilingual students. DeJong argues that "this particular SEI implementation context created a way to resist the monolingual intent of the law and the SEI teachers stepped into this 'ideological wedge' by continuing to use their bilingual skills and support the value of bilingualism and the cultural identities of their students in their classrooms," (p. 364). Yet teachers often had to navigate assimilationist language in their district after the passing of Question 2. Teachers in this study reported the most challenging part of the law was that students applying for waivers to be in a bilingual program were placed first in a 30 day English-only setting. Teachers felt helpless to negotiate solutions within this mandate that

supported emergent bilinguals in ways appropriate for their academic and linguistic needs (deJong, 2008).

Wright and Choi (2006), in a survey study conducted with experienced third grade teachers, sought to understand teachers' views of state language and assessment policies, the impact of those policies on the teaching and learning of emergent bilinguals, and the effectiveness of those policies in meeting emergent bilinguals' needs. The researchers found that teachers reported having no guidelines on *how* to implement the state-mandated SEI program. They also found teachers believed the high-stakes assessments were not appropriate for emergent bilinguals. Nearly all 40 felt that English was crucial to students' success in the U.S. and also that students should not only speak English but should also speak their home language; ninety-five percent felt that strong bilingual programs were effective in supporting students' English acquisition and academic success (Wright & Choi, 2006). Teachers' views of policy, however, were more mixed. Teachers in this study supported students' bilingualism, the school's role in maintaining it, and questioned the effectiveness of the SEI model, finding Proposition 203 limiting and ushering in a program they felt was not as effective for emergent bilinguals. When queried about their views of high-stakes testing, teachers all agreed that schools should be accountable for educating emergent bilinguals, but 78% disagreed or strongly disagreed that high-stakes tests should be used to hold schools, teachers and students accountable for emergent bilingual student education. Ninety percent disagreed or strongly disagreed that standardized assessments provided accurate indications of emergent bilingual students' learning. Only 30% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that SEI was a better model than bilingual education, and 40% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the same statement. The authors explain this uncertainty could be explained by the fact that teachers in this study struggled to understand SEI. Just four

teachers agreed that Proposition 203, which required SEI, brought about more effective programs for emergent bilinguals, and 70% disagreed or strongly disagreed that it did (Wright & Choi, 2006). Over 73% of teachers surveyed felt Proposition 203 was "too restrictive in terms of approaches schools can take to help ELL students learn English," (p. 12). In this study and also in a study conducted by Palmer & Rangel (2011), federal and state policies resulted in reduced professional autonomy for educators and, specifically, restriction on teachers' professional decision making (Wright & Choi, 2006).

Educators' Responses to and Implementation of Policy for Emergent Bilinguals

There is no shortage of research on the *impact* of education policy on students, teachers, schools, and communities. The work examining policy responses and policy implementation, especially for emergent bilinguals, is considerably more limited. In this section of the literature review, I discuss empirical studies that have explored educators' responses to state and federal policies specifically for emergent bilingual students and their teachers. I considered both state and federal policies because the number of studies examining implementation for emergent bilinguals is limited, because I want to make clear connections across all policy studies, and because educators' policy responses in contexts similar to those in Massachusetts could suggest how educators may or may not respond to policy in Massachusetts. The studies in this section focus on the actions educators take and the decisions they make, or do not make, in response to federal and state policy mandates that concern, or have implications for, the education of emergent bilingual students. I interpreted the term educator broadly for the purposes of this review, and have included studies that examined the response of teachers, principals, instructional coaches, and other school and district-based educators.

Studies in this section found that teachers had concerns about high-stakes assessments for emergent bilinguals (e.g. Harper et al., 2007). Researchers also asked educators how they responded to these assessments and teachers reported a loss of instructional time, a narrowing of the curriculum and pressure to use test-oriented materials (Palmer & Rangel, 2011), as well as a privileging of English above other languages (Revilla & Asato, 2002). Studies in this group examined the issues of context in implementation as well as educator agency. Educators struggled, to varying degrees, to both implement and resist policies as they came into schools and classrooms. Four studies exploring this tension and other themes are discussed here in detail.

In a qualitative interview study of state policy implementation that utilized a sensemaking framework as the connection between policy and practice, Palmer and Rangel (2011) found teachers reported navigating the space between compromising the education of their students and adhering to policy mandates; they viewed policy compliance and truth to their ideas about what is best for student learning as dichotomous. The researchers examined teacher decision-making in bilingual classrooms in Texas to understand the mechanisms through which teachers implemented high-stakes accountability processes. The researchers were especially interested in noticing the impact of context on sensemaking and policy implementation, as they observed a dearth of discussion of the role of context in the implementation literature. Through ethnographic interviews of 16 elementary school teachers, they found that teachers reported losing instructional time to prepare students to take the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), that they made instructional and curricular decisions that narrowed the curriculum, and that teachers felt pressured to use curricular materials oriented to the test, even when they felt these might be inappropriate for students' language needs. In fact, teachers reported feeling they were not able to provide strong ESL instruction and still prepare students to meet the demands of

the test. Some bilingual teachers expressed they had to spend substantial time teaching the language of the test at the expense of teaching the second language. These findings are consistent with studies that show high stakes accountability policies disproportionately impact bilingual students in negative ways (McNeil, 2005; McNeil et al., 2008; McNeil & Valenzuela, 2000; Valenzuela, 1999, 2000).

Yet, the teachers in this study expressed a strong and principled "commitment to authentic learning" that they attempted to balance with the pressures of the accountability system (Palmer & Rangel, 2011, p. 633). They "sought out pockets of agency" to exert their beliefs about teaching and learning while navigating the pressures of the accountability system and they attempted to "buffer" students from the negative impacts of accountability systems (Palmer & Rangel, 2011, p. 637). The teachers experienced the tension of simultaneously participating in high-stakes accountability systems and resisting the systems by maintaining a commitment to high quality instruction and meeting the needs of individual students. The researchers argue that teachers "are not simply automatons who implement policies with no regard for their specific students' needs; rather, teachers make sense of the competing demands of formal and informal policy pressures on one hand, with what they believe to be authentic pedagogies on the other," (p. 617). The researchers found that in implementing high-stakes policy, teachers navigated these conflicting demands and implemented policy through their prior knowledge, their beliefs about students, and the local context (2011). The findings in this study contrast those found in the internationally published work by Shohamy (2006), who referred to teachers implementing language policy as "soldiers of the system who carry out orders by internalizing the policy ideology and its agendas as expressed in the curriculum, in textbooks and other materials and the very perceptions of language," (p. 78). Shohamy's "flat" characterization of teachers has been

critiqued by Menken (2008b) and challenged by researchers who find that, to varying degrees, teachers often interpret policy, mediate conflicting policy messages, and resist implementation of policy they deem negative for students, as Palmer and Rangel (2011) found.

In one study that examined the implementation of federal policy, Harper, Platt, Naranjo and Boynton (2007) explored how teachers reported implementing NCLB in schools in Florida, specifically related to reading. The researchers interviewed 52 experienced ESL teachers and found that teachers questioned whether specific reading skills included in the Reading First curriculum were appropriate for emergent bilinguals. Similarly to the teachers in the Palmer and Rangel study, these teachers felt they had lost the opportunity to make professional decisions about what they thought was in the best interest of students. They felt the pacing calendars and standardization of the process of teaching reading did not allow them to differentiate for emergent bilinguals or meet students' individual needs. The teachers also reported that students were placed in remedial reading classes with monolingual English students. ESL teachers were sometimes assigned to teach reading classes with both emergent bilingual and monolingual students. The researchers argue that NCLB, and its standardized implementation in these Florida schools, "has compromised rather than contributed to high-quality instruction for ELLs (in reading)," (Harper et al., 2007, p. 649).

In the study on Texas accountability systems mentioned previously, McNeil et al. (2008) explored how administrators and teachers implemented the policy. In a case study of a high school that was part of their larger study, they found that principals were caught between wanting to comply with the accountability policies and wanting to prioritize quality teaching and learning, a tension similar to the one expressed by the teachers in the Palmer & Rangel (2011) study. Principals sought waivers to change the requirements for grade promotion from accruing a

certain number of credits to passing certain core classes. Changing the requirements for promotion resulted in half the students in one high school remaining in 9th grade. In some cases, these students ended up in remedial classes called "dropback" classes. The researchers argue the principals were put in an "untenable position" (p. 21) of choosing between compliance with high-stakes accountability policy and prioritizing at-risk students' needs.

Another qualitative study focused on the implementation and impact of state legislation, California's Proposition 227, on emergent bilingual students, teachers and families. Proposition 227, which was passed in 1998 and repealed in 2016, was a restrictive language policy in CA and required emergent bilinguals be taught in separate classes and primarily in English. Revilla and Asato (2002) conducted a qualitative case study of 3 public districts' implementation of the policy using ethnographic methods. The researchers argued that various aspects of ethnicity and culture, including language, were used as proxies for race, and thus the legislation was racially charged (Revilla & Asato, 2002). The policy limited the number of bilingual programs in the state. Proposition 58, which repealed Proposition 227 on November 8, 2016, reduced the restrictions on bilingual programs and gave school districts and parents increased voice in choosing the model of education for emergent bilinguals. This study is relevant for the current study since both CA and MA had restrictive language policies which have recently been overturned, and has also recently adopted a state-level policy, LOOK, which facilitates parent voice in programmatic decision making processes. Massachusetts had an English-only policy in place from 2002 to 2017. Revilla and Asato found variation in implementation within and across districts, a "hyper-interpretation" of the legislation, and a pervasiveness of the use of English-only instruction (2002). They explained that the legislation was "hyper-interpreted" because educators and community members granted the law more power than it actually had. For

example, one teacher in this study disposed of classroom games and books in languages other than English because of her understanding of the policy. Revilla and Asato cited "societal pressures" as well as "hostile and vigilant educational climate" for this hyperinterpretation (2002, p. 114). In some cases, district administrators attempted to explain the law in a universal way, which the researchers argue prevented educators from building various understandings and views about the law itself and its implementation. Further, concerns about potential lawsuits made some teachers act in opposition to their professional judgement. Schools were found to implement Prop. 227 with great variability both within and between districts. In one district, many schools aimed to maintain their bilingual programs, while another district's schools sought to funnel all students into SEI classes, and a third district gave schools autonomy to choose a model of education. The researchers found teachers were frustrated by the lack of direction given by both the law and the state in terms of implementation, a finding consistent with Wright and Choi's finding regarding the implementation of SEI in Arizona, another state with a restrictive language policy. Finally, they explained that the implementation of Prop. 227 privileged English above Spanish and other languages, and that even within bilingual programs, the purpose of those programs shifted from building bilingualism and biliteracy to the quick acquisition of English.

The studies in this section point to the potential of educators to feel "stuck" by competing internal beliefs and external policy demands (McNeil et al., 2008; Palmer & Rangel, 2011). Teachers in this group were frustrated by the lack of direction districts and states provided in terms of *how* to implement the mandated policies.

Research on The Every Student Succeeds Act and Emergent Bilinguals

The research on ESSA and its implementation for emergent bilinguals was limited at the time of this writing as the legislation passed in 2015. A search on ESSA and implementation yielded very few empirical studies. There are numerous conceptual articles or frameworks for how to implement aspects of ESSA, like the mandate for evidence-based interventions or attendance incentives, for example (Balu & Erlich, 2018), or instructional concepts the legislation mentions, such as personalized learning (Basham et al. 2016). There are also practitioner and policy memos recommending how states approach aspects of implementation, such as selecting and implementing a non-academic indicator of school quality or student success. Penuel, Meyer and Valladares, for example, (2016) present questions states can consider when choosing non-academic indicators, risks of using indicators, evidence indicators can impact students, discuss whether measures of indicators are valid and reliable, and they close with a discussion of research-supported student-level indicators, school climate indicators, and indicators related to instruction and leadership. A study by Marsh, Bush-Mecenas, and Hough (2017) examined the implementation of an accountability system similar to those required by ESSA, the California Office to Reform Education (CORE) waiver schools, in order to understand how multiple-measures accountability systems like ESSA are implemented. In a multiple case study approach of the six CORE districts that utilized interviews, observations and documents from CORE, district, and school leaders, researchers found participants supported aspects of the system, such as the inclusion of non-academic and growth indicators, but struggled with tensions between customization and standardization, and accountability and continuous improvement. Specifically, participants reported challenges with capacity, concerns with

validity, and misalignment of policy, all of which strained and limited the scope of the implementation of the system (Marsh, Bush-Mecenas, & Hough, 2017).

Of the very few empirical studies on ESSA and emergent bilinguals published to date, the study by Callahan and Shifrer is most relevant. Seeking to explore ESSA's stipulation that programs be evidence-based and contribute to academic equity, Callahan and Shifrer (2016) examined academic access, which they define through course selection, for a nationally representative sample of 10th graders. They did not only study emergent bilingual students but 750 of the students in the study were classified as emergent bilinguals. They also included 2,600 bilingual students not enrolled in ESL courses and 11,570 native English speakers. Using multinomial regression to predict the likelihood of students finishing minimum graduation requirements and college preparatory requirements, they found that emergent bilinguals had "disparate access" to academic courses, despite policies in place to protect them (Callahan and Shifrer, 2016, p. 486). They argued emergent bilinguals are a marginalized status group, an argument that has also been put forth by other researchers (Callahan et al., 2009; Callahan et al., 2009; Menken & Kleyn, 2010; Olsen, 2010).

Learning from the Literature

The literature on educators' interpretations of and responses to policy for emergent bilingual students reviewed in this chapter revealed a number of themes that are relevant to the present study. First, implementing aspects of NCLB as well as state and local policies tailored to fit its accountability mandates were found to be challenging for teachers ideologically, programmatically and logistically. Components of NCLB, such as high-stakes testing, are generally not deemed reliable or appropriate for students by the teachers of emergent bilinguals in these studies. Further, educators had concerns about the negative impact of high-stakes testing

on themselves and their students. This is not a new finding, but a concerning one considering the similarities between NCLB and ESSA.

A second theme to emerge from the implementation literature is the importance of the agency that educators perceive they have, or do not have, in implementing policy. Teachers and principals in the studies reviewed reported experiencing a reduction in professional autonomy throughout and because of the implementation of high-stakes reforms. Multiple researchers discussed a tension that educators experienced between merely implementing mandated reforms and resisting aspects of policy that they believed ran contrary to students' needs or their own beliefs about teaching and learning. Studies examining this tension have reported findings across a spectrum-- from teachers feeling stuck to implement aspects of policy with which they fundamentally disagree to teachers actively resisting aspects of policies they believed were detrimental for their students and intentionally implementing others they believed to be beneficial to teaching and learning. These implementation decisions were influenced by a multitude of internal factors, including beliefs, experience, and familiarity with past reforms as well as external factors like immediate and broader social and cultural contexts.

There are a number of limitations to the current body of literature on policy implementation. First, the dearth of studies examining the implementation of policy for emergent bilinguals, and not just the impact of policy on emergent bilinguals, underscores the need to further understand how educators make decisions about implementing policy for these learners. While some researchers have outlined recommendations for ESSA to improve educational equity (e.g. Cook-Harvey et al. 2016; Harper et al., 2008), there has been no empirical work published yet on educators' response to ESSA particularly for emergent bilinguals. Compounding the urgency to expand the field of policy implementation more broadly

is the need for studies to report how educators are interpreting and implementing aspects of ESSA aside from its high-stakes testing component. While high-stakes assessments systems are crucially important to analyze in studies of policy implementation, they are not the only element of policy that can have a major impact on students and teachers. Examining how various tenets of the law are understood and implemented is a need this study sought to address.

Further, the lack of studies exploring the perspectives of emergent bilingual district directors and coordinators suggests key implementers of policy for the largest growing population of students in the country have been largely absent from the implementation literature. The absence of coordinator of director voices is problematic since educators in these roles are generally responsible for not only the implementation and accountability of EL policies, but they also serve as instructional leaders of English language teachers. They represent a crucial part of the interpretation and implementation picture.

Finally, the studies in this review generally do not all deeply develop the sensemaking framework. Some mention some parts of the framework and not others, and others use the framework a bit superficially. Others have raised questions about the degree to which sensemaking is able to address questions of context, professional decision-making, and power dynamics (Palmer & Rangel, 2011; Stern, 2016). In general, with the exception of the study by Palmer & Rangel (2011), the studies that apply a sensemaking framework do not sufficiently discuss the role of context in how implementation decisions are made. Researchers have argued the lack of attention to context is problematic in the implementation literature (Jacob, 1997) and other work shows that context is crucial for how policies are implemented (Achinstein et al., 2004; Datnow, Borman, Stringfield, Overman, & Castellano, 2003; Diamond & Spillane, 2004). For that reason, one goal of the present study is to engage the three tenets of sensemaking in the

data analysis process and to consider the role of district and state context in the interpretation and response processes.

CHAPTER THREE

Study Design: A Qualitative Study of Educators' Interpretation of and Response to ESSA and LOOK

Qualitative work "inquires into, documents and interprets the meaning-making process," (Patton, 2015 p. 3). Patton (2015) conceptualizes qualitative research as having four primary characterizations: 1) the privileging of the perspectives of the research participants, 2) the centrality of the researcher as embedded and inseparable from the process of inquiry, 3) the transparency of theoretical frameworks and orientations, and 4) the inductive nature of qualitative work. Importantly, qualitative work must seek to understand the nature and role of historic, cultural, community, societal, family, racial and linguistic contexts in influencing all phenomena.

Applying a sensemaking framework, this dissertation explored organizational, state, district, and school leaders' interpretations of and responses to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Language Opportunity for our Kids Act (LOOK) for emergent bilingual students in Massachusetts. This study aimed to understand how these leaders interpreted and responded to ESSA and LOOK for emergent bilinguals in cities educating large populations of emergent bilingual students. The study also sought to understand how these leaders carve out priorities for the education of emergent bilinguals, and what factors, internal and external, impact their decision making. The study employed a qualitative design and was informed by case study methods. Case study methodology facilitates the construction of an in-depth understanding of how a particular process, policy interpretation and response, occurs within a certain context. This methodology has been utilized and is well-suited for detailed examinations of change processes or phenomena bound within a particular context and time frame, and supports researchers in

answering "how" and "why" questions (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2012; Yin, 2014). Since I sought to build a data set that enables a study of interpretation and response to policy by "key informants" across the state who were knowledgeable about federal and state policy for a specific student population, this study is not "bound" by parameters classic in case study methodology. However, the study's aim of creating a rich image of how leaders think about and respond to policy aligns well with aspects of case study methodology. The primary data source for this study was interviews from state and district leaders, including members of DESE, an organization, districts, and schools, and these were supplemented by state documents, as well as informed by publicly available and district-provided demographic and programmatic sources of information. As I created a holistic understanding of how leaders in the state and select districts were understanding and implementing ESSA, LOOK, and other district priorities, I constructed "a picture" of what these policy interpretations and responses look like in Massachusetts districts educating high numbers of bilingual children (Stake, 1995, p. 3).

While Massachusetts boasts a strong system of education, the state has also been critiqued for its failure to educate emergent bilingual students well (Vaznis, 2011; Viesca, 2013). A variety of reforms, including a recent reversal of a roughly fifteen year English-only policy, have been in place in the years immediately preceding this study. These reasons and others, detailed in this chapter, make Massachusetts a particularly interesting state in which to examine the implementation of policy for emergent bilinguals. Though this study specifically examined leaders' understanding and implementation of ESSA, all policy implementation and response is situated in and impacted by the district and school context, which includes the landscape of other reforms oriented around improving the education of emergent bilinguals in MA. For this reason, I provide a brief background of recent MA reforms in this chapter.

Statement of Positionality and Relationality

Midway through data collection for the current study, I became a school-based administrator in one of the districts in which participants in this study work. Their participation was complete before they knew I was a candidate for the position, and I did not recruit additional participants from this district after I began working there. Neither of the participants oversees my evaluation or works directly with me on a daily basis. Nonetheless, my relationality to the study participants, as an administrator who works in a district educating many bilingual children, must be noted as I could have been a participant in a similar study conducted by someone else and, through the memoing discussed in this chapter, attempted to mitigate the insertion of my biases. At the time of all interviews, I identified myself to participants as a doctoral student and as a former teacher of bilingual students, and I sought to connect with participants as such.

As a teacher, I interpreted and responded to a multitude of policy reforms in a particularly "busy" policy landscape. These reforms included the high-stakes testing requirements of NCLB, the advent of WIDA and ACCESS for ELLs, a new Massachusetts system of teacher evaluation, and the requirements of the MA SEI endorsement. I taught and was socialized into the profession during a period of restrictive language policy in MA. As a white bilingual woman working primarily with bilingual students of color, I both participated in and resisted the marginalization of other languages in my school. I became aware of how teachers and administrators are positioned to both intentionally implement and intentionally resist language policy and educational policy more broadly. I witnessed how administrators' interpretation of policy shaped school policy around language use. In one example, an administrator's extreme interpretation of the state's English-only instructional policy resulted in his forbidding of languages other than English in the cafeteria, playground, and hallways. This is an example of the "hyper-

interpretation" of policy discussed in Chapter Two. In this case and in others, a leader's interpretation of policy became school policy.

Critical observations from my time as a teacher as well as in my current role along with a commitment to dismantling discriminatory systems and a deep belief that education systems, especially those serving children and families who have been historically marginalized by systems of education, must equitably serve all children. This belief guides the rationale for, and cannot be completely separated from, this research. These are the goals and questions that motivate me, and nudged me into my current career as a school administrator.

Study Design

This qualitative study explored how educational leaders interpret and respond to educational policy for emergent bilinguals in districts educating high numbers of emergent bilingual students. This data set contains interview data from conversations with district and school leaders, as well as one teacher, working in districts with the highest population of emergent bilinguals in the state, leaders working for and with the Office of Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement (OLAAA) at the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and with one leader of an organization that directs advocacy and professional development initiatives around educating bilingual children. Documents released by the state and districts detailing or referencing policies related to educating emergent bilinguals made up the secondary data source and were used to situate the interview data within district and state context.

As Chapter Two details, I was interested in how educators individually and collectively understood and responded to policy, as well as how context played a role in educators' sensemaking and policy responses. To that end, three research questions guided this study:

RQ1: How do state, district, and school leaders interpret policies, including ESSA and LOOK, for emergent bilingual students and their teachers?

RQ2: How do state, district, and school leaders and district and state documents report curricular, personnel, and instructional decisions that have been made in implementing ESSA, LOOK, and other policies for emergent bilingual students?

RQ3: What factors do state, district, and school leaders identify as influencing the implementation process of these policies?

The study was framed around the assumption that educators and educational leaders understand and respond to policy for various reasons and to varying degrees and, in their processes of interpretation and response, become creators of policy in their districts and schools. Since I wanted to explore the assumption, based on my understanding of the literature, that state and district leaders might make sense of and implement policy differently and for different reasons based on a number of factors, I interviewed two state-level leaders who are knowledgeable about policy implementation for emergent bilinguals. Through recommendations during the data collection process, I ultimately also interviewed an organizational leader and school leaders. The educational context of Massachusetts, as well as brief summaries of districts' historical, educational, and linguistic contexts, are presented in this chapter.

The Massachusetts Context

Massachusetts has long been considered a national leader in education and education reform (McDermott, 2006). Massachusetts is consistently a top-scoring system on international assessments such as the PISA assessment (NCES, 2015). The state had 964,514 students enrolled in its public schools from 2016-17 (MA DESE). Of those, 30.2% are considered economically disadvantaged and 17.6% are in Special Education. Emergent bilinguals make up 9.5% of

students in the state, and that number continues to rise. In 2010, 54% of students classified as emergent bilinguals spoke Spanish, 7.6% spoke Portuguese, 5.2% spoke Chinese, and about 4% each spoke Khmer, Haitian Creole, Cape Verdean Creole, and Vietnamese (ELL Sub Committee, 2010). Emergent bilinguals are heavily concentrated in Suffolk County, the urban area around Boston.

A report to the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education conducted by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) found that the average emergent bilingual student in MA attends a "triply segregated" school, meaning the average emergent bilingual student attends a school with high proportions of students from low-income homes, high proportions of minoritized students, and high proportions of emergent bilingual students (Slama et al., 2015). Since federal policies are implemented within the cultural, linguistic, racial, social and economic contexts of states, districts, and schools and they are not immune to interaction with state and district policies that are being simultaneously implemented, I briefly discuss the relevant reform context in MA.

Emergent bilingual achievement. Emergent bilinguals in MA have consistently been found, across various indicators, to have the lowest academic achievement of subgroups (Mitchell, 2010). Emergent bilinguals continue to be overrepresented in Special Education (ELL Sub Committee of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education's Committee on the Proficiency Gap, 2010). The Department of Justice has conducted state and district investigations which found inequities in programs that educate emergent bilinguals and in the preparation of teachers to work with them (Vaznis, 2011).

Reform and Policy Context

In addition to the passage of the LOOK Act in 2017, which ended the "English only" era dominant in the state since 2002, the state implemented a number of other reforms in response to accountability pressures. A decade after passing what became controversial language policy, discussed in the introduction of this dissertation, in 2012 the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) joined WIDA, a consortium of states that provides standards, assessments and professional development to support teachers and schools in educating emergent bilinguals. Participating states agree to adopt the WIDA standards and utilize their annual language proficiency assessment, referred to as ACCESS for ELLs (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners).

A second area of reform in emergent bilingual education was the initiative entitled Rethinking Equity in the Teaching of English Language Learners (RETELL), which mandated the training of teachers working with emergent bilinguals in Sheltered English Immersion (SEI). By July of 2016, an estimated 26,000 teachers were required to enroll in a 3-credit, 45-hour course in order to earn a mandated SEI Endorsement, or to earn the Endorsement through other licensure means. Teachers in California and Arizona were also found by the Department of Justice to be ill-prepared to teach SEI, and the states responded with similar professional development initiatives (Hopkins, 2012; López & McEneaney, 2012). These courses emphasize how to make content, in English, accessible to emergent bilinguals (Viesca, 2013). That goal, furthered by a scripted, state-provided curriculum, is narrow (Arias & Wiley, 2013), considering scholars recommend teachers of emergent bilingual students be well-versed in the understandings of culture, language, and policy, in addition to instructional strategies (Villegas &

Lucas, 2011). SEI courses have also been shown to limit teacher learning on all the various approaches to teaching emergent bilingual students (Olivos & Sarmiento, 2006).

Similar to the line of research documenting how educators experience a tension between complying with policy and best serving students, researchers examining SEI requirements demonstrate educators who find aspects of the SEI requirements problematic resist their implementation (e.g. de Jong, 2008; Wright & Choi, 2006). Gort, de Jong, and Cobb (2008) explored how three school districts in MA resisted the SEI requirement and embedded in their districts structures to sustain their bilingual education programs while technically complying with the law. The authors concluded that the meaning of SEI is still unfixed and, will "necessarily be socially constructed within each context by the beliefs, experiences, and histories of the individuals involved (p. 41). Even with the passing of the Look Act, the RETELL course remain the primary means of attaining that SEI Endorsement which continues to be required by the state.

Two other reforms were related, though not exclusive to, the education of emergent bilinguals. First, in 2010, MA adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Then, beginning in 2011, districts in MA initiated a new system of teacher evaluation. The Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation (DESE, 2014) includes a cycle for fostering professional learning and continuous educator development, including: 1) a self-assessment, (2) analysis, goal setting and plan development, (3) plan implementation, (4) formative assessment and evaluation, and (5) summative evaluation. The goals of the frameworks are to promote educators' growth and development, place student learning at the center of teacher practice, recognize teaching excellence, maintain high standards for the granting of professional teacher status, and to reduce timelines for teacher improvement (MA

DESE). While the transition to the CCSS and back again to MA standards, as well as the adoption of the new evaluation framework, became policy several years before this study was conducted, they are a part of the recent policy landscape. As such, they could impact leaders' interpretation and implementation of ESSA and LOOK, especially if leaders are implementing multiple policy mandates aimed at improving education for emergent bilinguals. Since professionals enacting and responding to policy have been shown to understand current reforms based on their experience implementing prior reforms, and since there have been so many recent reforms in MA, it is important to consider the crucial potential role this reform landscape plays in educators' response to ESSA and LOOK.

Sampling and Participant Recruitment

Districts with varying populations of emergent bilinguals can have equally varying structures in place to support and educate students. Since many emergent bilingual students live in high-poverty urban environments with high concentrations of bilingual students, I was particularly interested in how educational leaders in urban districts educating high numbers of bilingual students made policy interpretations and decisions. The study was conducted with state, organizational, district and school-level administrators, as well as one teacher, in Massachusetts cities and towns with large populations of emergent bilingual children. I initially invited to participate leaders from the cities and towns in MA with the 20 highest populations of emergent bilingual students. Since two districts were tied for the 20th highest emergent bilingual enrollment, with 15.7% at the beginning of data collection, they were both included for a total of 21 districts. The source for emergent bilingual enrollment in Massachusetts was the 2017-18 enrollment data on the school and district profile page on the state website. The districts with the highest numbers of emergent bilinguals in the state are presented in Table 2. The districts varied

in size, from over 50,000 total students enrolled in one district to under 2,000 enrolled in another. The only districts excluded from the list of eligible systems were those districts that were composed of a single school. Of these, only four were non-charter single-school public districts: Provincetown, Tisbury. Edgartown, and Oak Bluffs. Students in these towns attend regional high schools after leaving their primary schools. Twenty-six individual charter schools, categorized by the state as districts, were also found to have emergent bilingual enrollment equal to or over 15.7%, which would qualify them to be on this list. These schools were not included in the list of sampled districts, however, because of this dissertation's focus on how districts implement policy for large populations of students.

In order to recruit participants, I contacted state and district leaders via email and invited them to participate in the study. I contacted one member of the Office of English Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement (OELAAA), who directed me to two other members of that same office for interviews. I also contacted one representative from each of the 21 initial districts on the list. I initially contacted the EL or bilingual director for each district, except in one district where I had a pre-existing relationship with a different district administrator. Of these 21 initial contacts, members of eight districts agreed to participate. I then expanded the initial district list from 21 to 25, in order to increase the number of potential participants and because one of the eight initial district participants recommended I speak with a leader in one of the districts in the top 25 list. To recruit additional participants and to ensure I spoke with the leaders in the state best able to address my questions, I asked these initial contacts to recommend colleagues in their own or other districts they felt could speak in detail to these topics, thus employing a variation of the "snowball method" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). It was important that in building this data set I spoke with "key informants." Five participants recommended I

speak with another member of their office, and in each case I was able to interview one to two additional participants of each of those districts. Two independently recommended I speak with one of the leaders of an organization that directs advocacy and professional development initiatives around educating bilingual children. I subsequently contacted that professional and she agreed to an interview. This snowball process brought the total of district participants to 14. I also interviewed together, at their request, the two representatives from DESE, and the organizational leader. The total number of interview participants was 17.

Table 2

The 25 districts in MA with the highest populations of emergent bilingual (English Learner) students

District	*Percent of students classified as English Learner*	*Percent of students with a home language other than English*	*Total district enrollment*
Chelsea	37.3	82.7	6,326
Worcester	34.4	55.4	25,306
Lawrence	34	71.3	18,846
Boston	31.7	48.1	52,665
New Bedford	29.8	38.5	12,626
Lowell	24.2	29.2	14,436
Marlborough	24.1	46.8	4,575
Brockton	23.9	40.5	16,651
Southbridge	23.8	34.7	2,003
Revere	22.8	62.1	7,552
Holyoke	22.4	42.9	5,293
Waltham	22.2	46.3	5,600
Framingham	21.9	44	8,739
Lynn	21.8	52.7	15,517

Everett	20.3	64.4	7,068
Somerville	20.3	48.6	4,868
Malden	20.1	55.2	6,540
Nantucket	18.9	31.9	1,619
Amherst	16.5	24.1	1,146
Quincy	16	39.5	9,412
Milford	15.7	31.1	4,186
Randolph	15.7	37.5	2,823
Springfield	15.6	27.4	25,604
Fall River	15.2	28.3	10,128
Fitchburg	13.8	32.7	5,349

*District enrollment data is from the 2017-18 school year.

District Profiles

While districts all educated high numbers of bilingual students, they differed slightly in some contextual ways and drastically in others. When I speak of context, I refer to the districts' educational, community, demographic, linguistic, racial, socioeconomic, and historical contexts. From the districts listed in the table above, I collected data from eight sites. Each of these districts was given a pseudonym used in the profile below. District profiles were kept deliberately short and statistics provided are intentionally vague to reduce the chance of identification and to protect participant confidentiality, while also providing important, though brief, context summaries.

Crete. Crete is a small, densely populated city close to Boston. Historically an industrial city, Crete struggled economically in the last decades of the twentieth century. Recently, it has been experiencing an economic upswing. The majority of the city's roughly 40,000 residents in the city identify as Hispanic or Latino. Around 40% of city residents were born outside the U.S.

The district educates over 6,000 students, the vast majority of whom speak a language other than English at home. Spanish is the most commonly spoken language in the district. Schools have autonomy to select how they educate emergent bilingual students, who are a large population in the district, as long as the approach meets requirements for teacher ELD and sheltering content instruction. Most schools use an SEI approach.

Knossos. Knossos is a city of over 50,000 people in the eastern half of the state. The district is linguistically and racially diverse, with nearly 40% of city residents born outside the U.S. The district educates over 6,000 students. Over half of families speak a language other than English at home and over 20% of students are classified as emergent bilinguals.

Carthage. Carthage is a city in MA with over 70,000 residents. The district was placed in state receivership several years ago. The vast majority of families speak a language other than English at home and over 30% of students are classified as emergent bilinguals. Program types vary, even within an SEI approach which could be implemented with either a co-teaching or pull out model, who receive their instruction through an SEI approach. The schools in the district also have program autonomy, meaning leaders can choose how to educate emergent bilinguals in their schools.

Thrace. Thrace is a city of over 50,000 people in the eastern half of Massachusetts. Formerly an industrial center, Thrace is now home to universities and an increasing number of immigrant residents, with large populations from Guatemala and India. Recently, the district has seen an increase in Haitian Creole speakers and Portuguese speakers. Around half of families speak a language other than English at home and over 20% of students in the district are classified as emergent bilinguals. The district uses an SEI model and recently began a Spanish English dual language program that goes up through second grade.

Cumae. Cumae is a city in the western half of Massachusetts. The district educates over 5,000 students. Of these, nearly half speak a language other than English at home and over 20% of all students are classified as emergent bilinguals. The majority of bilingual families speak Spanish, and the district does not have a large degree of linguistic diversity. Most bilingual families are of Puerto Rican descent. The city also saw an increase in its Puerto Rican community after Hurricane Maria. The school district experienced an influx of some students who temporarily sought shelter in the community, and others who became permanent residents. The district is in receivership. In educating its bilingual students, the district ended its bilingual programs in 2002 and uses an SEI approach with pull out for newcomers, a newcomer program for high school students, and has begun a bilingual program in the last few years with the goal of expanding its bilingual programs.

Delos. Delos is a town in the eastern half of Massachusetts. The town's population is under 30,000 residents and the district educates fewer than 5,000 students. Of these, around 30% speak a language other than English at home and over 15% of all students are classified as emergent bilinguals. Delos has community schools and does not use a neighborhood school approach. There are two K-2 schools, one 3-5 school, one 6-8 school, and one high school, so each school houses a fairly large number of students. The district uses an SEI approach and has a goal of increasing its dual certified classroom teachers with the ESL license and limiting the pull out approach.

Latium. Latium is a city in the eastern half of Massachusetts. Latium's population is over 50,000 and the district has under 10,000 students enrolled in its schools. Of these, over 20% of students are emergent bilinguals and nearly half speak a language other than English at home. The two primary languages families speak are Spanish and Portuguese, though there is

increasing linguistic diversity in the city. The city educates emergent bilinguals through a variety of approaches, including two-way bilingual, SEI with co-teaching and pull-out, depending on the school, and ELD blocks. The city's immigrant community is varied, from parents who move to the U.S. to work for large international companies to families with a much lower SES background. A number of the city's elementary schools are in turnaround with the DESE.

Styx. Styx is a city of less than 50,000 people close to Boston. There are around 7,000 students enrolled in the district. Over half of students speak a language other than English at home and more than 20% of students are classified as emergent bilinguals. The city is both racially and linguistically diverse. Styx uses an SEI approach to educate emergent bilinguals, and has recently consolidated some SEI programs so that teachers can spend more minutes serving students whose parents opt in to the SEI programs.

Data Sources and Collection

The study employed one primary and one secondary source of data and a cyclical data collection process. District demographics and other publicly available information on the state and district websites informed the district profiles and provided crucial contextual background for data collection and analysis. Data were collected from October of 2018 to February of 2019.

Participants

Study participants were school, district, state, and organizational leaders, as well as one teacher. The two state participants were full-time employees of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and worked either directly in or closely with the Office of English Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement (OELAAA). At their request, I interviewed the two state-level participants together in a video call.

District leaders interviewed included one superintendent, two assistant superintendents, seven Bilingual and/or English Learner Directors or Coordinators, two Bilingual and/or English Learner Assistant Directors or Facilitators, one school leader, and one teacher. The final participant was a full-time employee of an organization that directs advocacy and professional development initiatives around educating bilingual children. See Table 3 for participant roles. This organizational leader worked closely with district and school leaders. Utilizing a key informant approach was crucial since the educators responding to policy differed from district to district. If a district leader suggested another colleague was a more appropriate person to report district decision making and implementation of policies for emergent bilinguals, I requested to interview that other key district actor. If a participant indicated multiple key actors existed in a district, I contacted those multiple actors. For this reason, the number of participants from each district varies from one to three.

A number of precautions were taken to preserve participant confidentiality. I standardized how I refer to participants' titles in Table 3, since districts have various ways of referring to the professionals that lead English Learner or bilingual departments and utilizing those terminology differences could lead to participant identification. For this reason, any leader of a department, whether that person has a coordinator or director or lead title, is referred to as either an EL or Bilingual Director, depending on which programs the district offers. Similarly, any individual serving as an assistant to a EL or Bilingual Director is referred to as an Assistant Director. For a similar purpose, professionals in their positions for less than 12 months are listed as being in their positions for less than one year, and not with a precise number of months. Assistant Superintendents' detailed titles are not referenced, as those can be highly specific and could be traced back to specific districts. The number of years a participant has served in his or

her current position was the number at the time of the interview, which was during the 2018-19 school year.

Table 3

Participant roles

District pseudonym	**Role**	**Number of years in current position**	**Role prior to current position**
Carthage	EL Asst. Director	3 years	EL Teacher
Crete	Superintendent	8 years	Assistant Superintendent
Crete	EL Director	5 years	EL Teacher
Cumae	Bilingual Director	Less than one year	Elementary School Teacher
Cumae	Principal	Less than one year	EL Director
Delos	EL Director	7 years	Newcomer Teacher
Delos	Asst. Superintendent	2 years	Elementary School Principal
N/A: DESE	DESE Participant 1	6 years	EL Teacher
N/A: DESE	DESE Participant 2	6 years	Leader in another state's Department of Education
Knossos	EL Director	Less than one year	EL Director
Latium	Asst. Superintendent	1 year	Non-profit Leader
Latium	Bilingual Director	8 years	EL Teacher
N/A: Organization	Organizational Leader	About 5 years	EL Director
Styx	EL Director	2 years	Elementary School Teacher
Thrace	EL Director	3 years	Assistant High School Principal
Thrace	EL Asst. Director	3 years	Elementary School Teacher
Thrace	EL Teacher	5 years	EL Teacher

Interviews

I conducted semi-structured interviews lasting approximately one hour with each participant with the exception of the state leaders, whom I interviewed together. Interviews were conducted either in person, via a video conference, or on the phone, depending on participants' preference and availability. Five interviews were conducted in person, five were conducted via a video conference, one of which included the two state participants, and six over the telephone. The interviews were informed by Yin's (2014) recommendations for conducting interviews for case study methodology. Specifically, Yin (2014) recommends interviews be a structured conversation rather than a scripted interaction. The purpose of the interviews was to understand how participants make sense of the various policies impacting emergent bilinguals and implement them in their district contexts, or at the state level, role depending. The interview sections were guided by the themes of inquiry, and flexibility was allowed to ask follow up questions. The protocols were semi-structured and vary slightly for district and state actors. The interview protocol contains items that address each of the three research questions. Specifically, I hoped to understand how these educational leaders reported making a range of educational decisions as they understood and implemented the requirements of ESSA and LOOK for emergent bilinguals within a national culture oriented around high-stakes testing and accountability and within a state climate that has undergone recent and significant policy changes. The sections of the protocol were: 1) the programmatic model for emergent bilinguals, 2) the Every Student Succeeds Act, 3) district and state support for ESSA implementation, 4) the LOOK Act, and 5) implications of ESSA and LOOK for districts, schools, and students. Specific areas of questioning spanned sensemaking and its three components as well as topics related to policy implementation. They included: understandings and decision making related to

ESSA, LOOK, and other policies, district and state policies as they interact with the implementation of these policies, district priorities, challenges, decision making around programming, curriculum planning, instruction, professional development, language use, and assessment, among others. Most questions asked participants "how" they understood or implemented policies, rather than "why" they did. These "Level 1" questions were worded to make participants feel comfortable and to avoid defensiveness while also facilitating acquisition of the information I required to answer the "Level 2" questions that explain "why" they understood or approached a phenomenon in a given way (Becker, 1998; Yin, 2014). Since contexts and factors influencing implementation differed between districts, I aimed for participants to guide the trajectory of the interview content, to the extent possible (Mischler, 1991; Rubin & Rubin, 1995; Palmer & Snodgrass Rangel, 2011). Interviews, then, were flexible enough to allow participants to shape the direction of interview content.

I piloted the protocol in the fall of 2018 with two individuals on separate dates. The first was a cognitive pilot with a current district administrator of a district not included on my initial list. This administrator talked through the protocol with me and gave feedback on which questions might spur rich conversation and which questions should be revised. The second and full pilot was conducted with a retired former district leader from one of the eligible systems. I adjusted the protocol following both pilots.

I then conducted, recorded and transcribed interviews with all participants. I used a speech to text transcription service to transcribe the interviews then I reviewed each one at least once and some as many as three times and I edited the text to match the audio file. Transcriptions were stored on a secure computer and pseudonyms were assigned to all interviewees and all districts to ensure confidentiality.

District and State Documents

Since this study is focused on how state and district leaders make sense of and respond to policy, I also examined documents participants shared, or that are publicly available online through state and district websites. Documents provided crucial state context and were collected both preceding and following the interviews with district and state leaders. Prior to the interviews, I previewed any relevant publicly available documents. During the interviews, I asked participants to share any additional documents about ESSA, LOOK, and other policies for emergent bilinguals. Notably, all documents shared were state-originated documents. The purpose of including the documents was to inform my crafting of a holistic picture of the context in which district and state leaders were functioning and to understand how districts and the state communicate policy messages inside and outside their school communities. A list of documents is included in Table 4.

Table 4

State Documents

#	Topic of document	Title of document	Date	Source	Document type
1	Accountability	Massachusetts Next-Generation System of Accountability	Summer 2018	MA DESE	PowerPoint
2	Classification and monitoring of ELs	Guidance on Placement, Progress Monitoring and Reclassification Procedures of English Learners	January 2019	MA DESE	Microsoft Word/PDF
3	DESE group convening	High Incidence English Leaner Education Leadership Network	Unknown	MA DESE	Microsoft Word/PDF
4	EL program review	Tiered Focused Monitoring Toolkit	Unknown	MA DESE, OLAAA	Microsoft Word/PDF

5	ESL Curriculum	Next Generation ESL Project: Curriculum Resource Guide	July 2016	MA DESE	Microsoft Word/PDF
6	ESSA in MA	ESSA: Revisions to MA State Plan	April 2017	MA DESE	Microsoft Word/PDF
7	ESSA in MA	Every Student Succeeds Act Summary	Unknown	MA DESE	Microsoft Word/PDF
8	ESSA in MA	Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Board of Elementary and Secondary Education	March 2016	MA DESE	PowerPoint
9	ESSA in MA	Accountability in ESSA: Setting the Context	September 2016	MA DESE	PowerPoint
10	ESSA in MA	Massachusetts Consolidated State Plan Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)	Updated August 2017	MA DESE	Microsoft Word/PDF
11	ESSA in MA	Massachusetts ESSA Plan: Executive Summary	Updated March 2017	MA DESE	Microsoft Word/PDF
12	Identification of ELs	Guidance on the Initial Identification of English Learners	January 2019	MA DESE	Microsoft Word/PDF
13	Language proficiency benchmarks	Guidelines for the Use of Benchmarks toward Attaining English Proficiency	October 2018	MA DESE	Microsoft Word/PDF
14	LOOK	Guidelines for Implementing the State Seal of Biliteracy	December 2018	MA DESE	Microsoft Word/PDF
15	LOOK	Board of Elementary and Secondary Education December 19, 2017, Presentation by Director of OELAAA	December 2017	MA DESE, OLAAA	PowerPoint
16	LOOK: ELPAC	The LOOK Act and English Learner Parent Advisory Councils (ELPACs) (one page introduction)	Unknown	MA DESE	Microsoft Word/PDF

17	LOOK: ELPAC	Guidance for English Learner Parent Advisory Councils	August 2018	MA DESE	Microsoft Word/PDF
18	LOOK: Seal of Biliteracy	MA State Seal of Biliteracy (SSoBL)	Unknown	ME DESE, OLAAA	PowerPoint
19	LOOK: Seal of Biliteracy	Steps for the Implementation of SSoBL	Unknown	ME DESE, OLAAA	PowerPoint
20	LOOK: Seal of Biliteracy	Criteria for Students to Earn the State Seal of Biliteracy in MA	Unknown	ME DESE, OLAAA	PowerPoint
21	LOOK: Seal of Biliteracy	MA Approved Assessment Instrument for English and Minimum Required Scores or Levels	Unknown	ME DESE, OLAAA	PowerPoint
22	LOOK: Seal of Biliteracy	Portfolio-Based Alternative Evidence Method for Foreign Language Assessments in MA	Unknown	ME DESE, OLAAA	PowerPoint
23	LOOK: Seal of Biliteracy	Frequently Asked Questions about the MA State Seal of Biliteracy	Unknown	MA DESE, OLAAA	Web-based resource
24	LOOK: Seal of Biliteracy	Education Laws and Regulations: Massachusetts Certificate of Mastery and State Seal of Biliteracy	Unknown	ME DESE, OLAAA	PowerPoint
25	TWI Programs	Guidance for Defining and Implementing Two-Way Immersion (TWI) Programs	December 2018	MA DESE	Microsoft Word/PDF

As I collected all data, I wrote analytic memos (Charmaz, 2004) to facilitate connections between the research questions and the data and to stay close to the data. I wrote a memo after each interview and reviewed all data collection memos before reading through interview transcripts and beginning the coding process.

Data Analysis Process

Since the study utilized a theoretical framework to facilitate an understanding of how educational leaders interpreted and responded to policy, and since I wanted to remain close to the details of the data, I required an analytic approach that included both deductive and inductive methods and I developed one that merges the two. Since this study drew on case study methods, I considered the 4 analytic approaches Yin (2014) proposes could guide the process: utilizing theoretical propositions, developing a case description, examining potential rival explanations, and working the data up from the ground. Since sensemaking guided my understanding of the process of unpacking and responding to policy, a primary analysis approach was to utilize theoretical propositions, as well as to work the data up from the ground, since little was known about how educational leaders are understanding and responding to the changing MA policy landscape. The initial codes came from the three tenets of sensemaking theory: individual cognition, situated cognition, or collective sensemaking, and the role of policy representation and communication. Before beginning the data immersion and coding process, I read through all analytic memos I kept during data collection. I then transcribed, using a voice to text transcription service, all interviews and read each transcript between one and three times in order to edit each for accuracy. Throughout this transcription process, I was also compiling documents and tracking them in a document log.

Phase One

After compiling all data, I conducted two initial readings of the interview data. First, I read through the interviews in role alike groups. I read through all interviews with English Learner and bilingual directors, as they were the most frequently represented role, then assistant directors and coordinators, then school-level professionals, then other district-level professionals

and finally the state and organizational leaders. I then read through all transcripts in district groups, beginning with transcripts from participants in the largest city and ending with those in the smallest community. Finally, I read through the documents and the transcripts a third time and began the first formal coding process. As I read, I coded in Dedoose, a web-based app that facilitates the analysis of qualitative and mixed methods data. Table 5 presents the codes and subcodes generated throughout the coding process. I first coded for content demonstrating how participants interpreted ESSA, LOOK and district priorities; I documented instances of individual cognition, situated cognition, and the role of policy representation and messaging. These three tenets of sensemaking theory became my categories of initial, deductive codes. Within each of these initial codes, I began a process of determining subcodes emerging from the data. I later expanded upon these codes and subcodes to include others emerging from the data in Phase 2 of analysis. These are also presented in the table.

Table 5

Data analysis codes and subcodes

Codes	Subcodes
Individually interpreting policy, general*	Interpreting programming for emergent bilinguals
	Interpreting the state's role
	Interpreting the district's role
	Interpreting the role of certain district leaders
	Interpreting how policy plays out in schools
	Interpreting the SEI Endorsement
Collectively interpreting policy*	
Representing/communicating policy*	
Collaborating	With Dese

	With external organizations
	Within district
	With other districts
Interpreting ESSA	As indistinct from NCLB
	As different from NCLB in some way
	Not knowing enough to interpret ESSA
Responding to ESSA	Reporting no changes/ no response to ESSA
Interpreting LOOK	Feeling hopeful
	Feeling LOOK aligns with best practices for students
	Feeling LOOK offers needed flexibility for districts
	Believing the ELPAC to be a crucial component
Responding to LOOK	Beginning the ELPAC
	Considering programming options for emergent bilinguals
Conceptualizing other priorities	Access to resources and sustainable funding structures as a priority
	Improving curriculum and instruction as a priority
	Pathways for students as a priority
	Coaching and PD as a priority
Beliefs about how change occurs	Beliefs about district leadership
	It's not policy, it's _____.
	Mind shifts
	Sustained support for teachers

*First round codes

Phase Two

During the second phase of data analysis, I read through all data again and coded inductively for emergent themes. Coding was an iterative process (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2013), as qualitative analysis is generally a cyclical rather than linear process (Saldaña, 2015). I continued to use the qualitative research software Dedoose to facilitate coding with inductive codes. As I analyzed the data, I considered the prevalence of various codes, as well as their contexts, and I wrote analytic and reflective memos (Saldaña, 2015) in order to trace my thinking and interpretation about emerging themes, and to trace connections from the data to the research questions. In addition to the initial codes generated from the theoretical framework (Saldaña, 2015), I utilized process codes, which were appropriate for exploring how participants are expressing and interpreting their own actions and decision making processes (Saldaña, 2015). Process codes in particular are helpful in identifying "action" in the data and facilitated a focus on implementation steps and decision-making (Charmaz, 2004).

Throughout the coding process, I employed a constant comparison process (Corbin & Strauss, 2015) to determine additional inductive codes based on topics that emerged in the data (Charmaz, 2009). Throughout that process, I examined relationships between data, codes and categories. Inductive codes were constantly shaped throughout the analysis process, facilitated by memoing, and they covered a wide range of topics not included in the initial deductive codes. An emerging list of codes was documented in a codebook along with a rationale for the code and examples. The codebook was then employed for focused coding during the fifth and final read through of the data. This exercise allowed for the finalization of the codebook and the editing and solidification of codes. Codes, deductive and inductive, were organized into categories that

enabled me to me to view the relationships between the codes (Creswell, 2017). As I aggregated and consolidated the codes categorically, I constructed themes (Stake, 1995).

This qualitative analysis process enabled an exploration of district and state leaders' understanding and implementation of policies for emergent bilingual students in districts educating high numbers of emergent bilinguals. How did participants understand ESSA and LOOK? How did they respond to these policies in the context of their work as state, organizational, district, and school leaders? What other priorities did they report, and what factors impacted how they thought about these priorities? Those questions govern the next chapter, in which I discuss the major themes found in this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

Interpreting and Responding to ESSA and LOOK for Emergent Bilinguals in Massachusetts

In this chapter, I present how participants reported interpreting and responding to ESSA and LOOK, as well as other factors participants voiced as major drivers of their thinking and work with emergent bilingual students. I also embed a discussion of the scholarly literature with the presentation of these findings. Participants reported this current era to be an exciting, optimistic time for the educators of emergent bilingual students in Massachusetts. While most participants reported knowing little about ESSA, they expressed excitement about LOOK, believing it offered needed flexibility for districts and could enable them to educate more students in ways consistent with their beliefs and consistent with the research on the impacts and benefits of bilingualism. Participants believed ESSA "filtered" through national, then state, then district strata before coming to schools. In this sense, participants primarily viewed themselves as the objects, rather than agents, of this federal policy. They reported significantly more agency in responding to the state-level policy LOOK. District messaging around federal policy for emergent bilinguals was minimal. District leaders were focused on interpreting policies and establishing educational foci they viewed as more pressing and immediate than the implementation of federal policy. Table 6 presents the primary themes and sub themes constructed throughout the data analysis processes. These also structure the organization of this chapter.

As I detailed in Chapter Three, the research questions for this study were: 1) How do state, district, and school leaders interpret policies, including ESSA and LOOK, for emergent bilingual students and their teachers? 2) How do state, district, and school leaders and district

and state documents report curricular, personnel, and instructional decisions that have been made in implementing ESSA, LOOK, and other policies for emergent bilingual students? 3) What factors do state, district, and school leaders identify as influencing the implementation process of these policies? The three tenets of sensemaking-- individual sensemaking, collective sensemaking, and the role of representation-- will be addressed in this chapter but will not serve as an organizing structure because participants' understanding of ESSA, LOOK, and other initiatives was primarily an individual, not a collective, process and they reported minimal messaging of policies.

There were just four strong examples of collective sensemaking, or co-constructing understandings with colleagues, in the participant interviews. In these examples, participants articulated how they understood systems of accountability, program models for ELs, including Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) and English as a Second Language (ESL), and the LOOK Act. Numerous plausible explanations for the shortage of evidence of collective sensemaking in this data set exist, yet most likely is that ample opportunities for collective sensemaking did not exist for these professionals. Coburn (2001) and Spillane, Reiser, and Reimer (2002) have argued that systems of education must create and refine systems that support adult learning and show that system leaders understand educator expertise to be collectively and socially constructed. Since evidence of collective sensemaking was limited, the majority of codes used to construct themes related to interpretation were individual. The second and third tenets of sensemaking theory, situated cognition and the role of how policy is represented, arose only occasionally. For this reason, I discuss discrete examples but do not refer to them as trends. In this chapter, participants interpretations are discussed by theme.

Table 6

Interpreting and responding to policy and setting priorities

Themes	**Sub-Themes**	**Definition**
"There is no buzz about ESSA"	Policy interpretation and implementation as layered processes	Belief that policy "passes through" distinct levels: federal, state, then district
	ESSA in relation to NCLB	Understanding of ESSA as distinct from NCLB in its potential for changes in funding structures and its emphasis on early childhood education (as voiced by two knowledgeable participants, one from DESE and one district-level EL Director)
	ESSA as a compliance mandate	"Trickle down" of ESSA as an accountability system mediated by MA DESE
	The challenge of disentangling ESSA from district priorities and practices	Inability to disentangle the various motivations for district initiatives and programs with the mandates of ESSA
LOOK: a policy triumph	LOOK as offering needed flexibility	Benefits to program choice and sanctioning of bilingual ed. programs welcome due to a common belief in bilingual ed. and inappropriateness of a "one size fits all" model
	LOOK as oriented around the requirement of the creation of ELPACs	Hope the establishment of ELPACs increases parents' voice in their children's education

Understanding recent reform: from RETELL to sustainable practice		RETELL as compliance-oriented in nature, and failing, alone, to impact classroom practice, but requiring follow up and coaching
An intentional focus of efforts on the immediate	District leadership as a crucial piece of the equity puzzle	Positive orientation toward bilingualism and stable, equity-oriented leaders as crucial for educating emergent bilinguals
	Advocacy for improved funding structures and access to resources	Funding from the state as a needed and missing piece of quality education for emergent bilinguals
	Focus on building educator capacity	Improving curriculum and instruction as a core focus
	Prioritizing the creation of multiple pathways	Pathways including newcomer programs, STEM strands, vocational programs, dual college enrollment etc. as crucial opportunities for bilingual students
	Need for mind shifts	Change in how bilingualism and bilingual students are considered and discussed necessary for sustainable change

Theme One: "There Is No Buzz About ESSA"

Participants expressed a general lack of clarity on what ESSA would mean for emergent bilinguals. This lack of clarity seemed to stem from a limited familiarity with the legislation, a limitation many participants acknowledged. The degree and nature of participants' interpretation of ESSA appeared to be impacted by participants' knowledge of ESSA. This knowledge varied drastically from participant to participant. For those participants who did discuss their

understanding of ESSA, they made sense of ESSA in different ways and to different degrees. While some understood it as indistinct from No Child Left Behind, participants with more familiarity of the policy noted differences, particularly in the possibility for funding structures to change and in the early childhood emphasis of ESSA. Some saw ESSA as merely a compliance mandate, while others viewed it, in conjunction with other policies, as the potential to build pathways for emergent bilinguals.

Participants' general perspective on ESSA can be summed up in a statement made by the Thrace Administrator for English Language Learning and echoed by three other district leaders. She remarked, "There is no buzz about ESSA." Participants had little knowledge of the federal policy. One participant explicitly stated that not all EL or bilingual directors would or *should* have familiarity with federal policy; one indication that the superintendent and the DESE staff were effective leaders, according to this participant, was the fact that they were the mediators of federal and state policy. This participant, and several others, viewed federal policy interpretation and implementation as passing through distinct levels: federal, state, then district actors, rather than being understood and implemented directly by district actors. This participant did not see interpreting federal policy to be the role of the EL director at the district level. He, and others, were more focused on another policy-- the state-level policy, LOOK, which will be discussed in detail in the next section-- as well as other district priorities.

Policy Interpretation and Implementation as Layered Processes

EL and bilingual directors reported that their source of information on federal and state policy should be the MA DESE. Most bilingual and EL directors assumed information on ESSA would travel from the state to superintendents to the appropriate district leaders. One district participant reported that the DESE often updates district leaders on ESSA at an annual meeting

in the fall. Yet this update did not prove sufficient in teaching district leaders about the policy; even the participants who mentioned attending still reported very little familiarity with the legislation.

For district participants, the state was responsible for teaching leaders about ESSA and LOOK, as well. The Crete EL Director captured a sentiment oft-espoused by district leaders throughout data collection for this study. He explained,

> It's pretty rare that I would look at a federal guidance document to then create district policy. And I think the reason is, is because the states, oftentimes that's, we'll use the analogy of a floor/ceiling. Massachusetts, I'd say, pretty rarely just takes something as is. They always want to change it, even if they just want to change the letter of this standard, like, you know, if you say, oh, we use the Common Core framework, you go, no, you don't, you use the Massachusetts literacy frameworks. Well, they look a lot like the Common-- yes, they do, but we've enhanced them. You know, that's, that's how it is here. And so they do that with lots of different things. I mean even with the ACCESS testing, there's, you know, there's certain things that we do that are different than other states. So. So it's not to say that, you know, we don't pay attention or ESSA or No Child Left Behind hasn't influenced what we do. Obviously it has. I mean, with No Child Left Behind it's all about accountability and testing. So that's, that's changed everything that we do. However we may not directly sort of connect that with ESSA...Change is a big, big part of what we do. However, we wait from the filter from the state that's then filtered at the district level, which then is filtered to the principal level or school leadership level, which is then filtered down to the teacher level, you know, and I feel like that's sort of how it works because, I mean, again, if you're, if your job is to educate 25 kids in the day, reading a

> 300 page policy brief or whatever, it's not gonna necessarily going to be the most helpful... it's pretty rare that I would read federal policy to then directly inform, um, district policy. I really use the Massachusetts guidance.

This participant was not alone in understanding the state's role as a "filter" of policy between layers of the state, districts, and schools. The assumption underlying this claim is that policy interpretation is better left to those "closer" to the policy; teachers, like the ones in Kennedy's (2005) study, had more immediate concerns. Yet not all educators shared this certainty that comprehension was the role of others; other participants reported feeling embarrassed they did not know more about the policy, implying that they would more proactively seek to comprehend it if they had the exposure or the time. This participant did not believe him or herself to be the "right" person to comprehend ESSA. For this reason, this conceptualization of implementation as a layered process is different than the fluid, reciprocal processes characteristic of the layers described by Datnow and Park (2009), who have conceptualized and explained the technical-rational, mutual adaptation, and sensemaking/co-construction perspectives which they argue have historically characterized the field of policy implementation. They argue that sensemaking and co-construction perspectives are most helpful in considering policy change because of their focus on context in terms of how actors relate to one another and the role of context itself in impacting implementation. Using sensemaking and co-construction perspectives, they analyzed the theories of action evident in NCLB, comprehensive school reform, and data-based decision making. It is notable that in the present study, which draws from a sensemaking perspective, the layers evidenced by the sensemaking of ESSA did not have fluid membranes; participants understood information to pass only in one direction: from the state to the districts to the schools. This perspective evokes the technical-

rational tradition which assumes unilateral rather bilateral movement of policy and which Datnow and Park (2009) contrast with the sensemaking tradition which is more oriented toward co-construction. They explain that in a technical-rational perspective, "the casual arrow of change travels in one direction—from active, thoughtful designers to passive, pragmatic implementers. Accordingly, the policy process tends to be viewed as a sequential development with discrete linear stages," (Datnow & Park, 2009, p. 348). Yet I am by no means arguing that by conceptualizing layers of policy implementation regarding ESSA as impermeable that the participants in this study ceded agency as policymakers. To the contrary, the participant cited above for insisting he should not be consumer of ESSA was a dedicated interpreter and responder of LOOK, as were all other participants.

The few participants that reported some knowledge of ESSA gained exposure through participating in various professional responsibilities or trainings. Their understandings of ESSA were primarily individual exercises, and most who discussed the policy understood it as a compliance mandate. Notably, the findings on how participants understood ESSA come primarily from the accounts of those best able to answer questions about the legislation, of which there were few. One state participant voiced uncertainty as to how ESSA would play out. More time was needed, she argued, to understand how ESSA would unfold. She explained, "it's going to take two or three years I think before change is really implemented because districts need to have time to think about what are the possibilities and where can we move our money around where they're planning out their budgetary future a year or so out. It's going to take time to change gears and be different." This was not a general finding but a relevant comment considering this state participant was knowledgeable of ESSA.

ESSA in Relation to NCLB

The first way participants understood ESSA was in relation to their understanding of NCLB, a phenomenon Spillane (2004) argues occurs as participants make sense of new policy. While participants who had little to some knowledge of ESSA made opaque references or posed questions as to how ESSA related to NCLB, two important outliers should be noted. Two participants with the most knowledge of ESSA together reported two key ways they viewed ESSA as diverging from NCLB-era policies, and, because of the participants' expertise, they are worthy of detail. These two participants voiced differences between NCLB and ESSA could hold potential for changes in funding structures and early childhood education. One of these two participants who worked for DESE spoke about the potential under ESSA for district leaders to coordinate and strategize around funding structures. This state employee emphasized the importance of coordinating Title I and Title III funding streams so funding is used as strategically as possible. She explained that prudent leaders would want to strategically coordinate, but not overlap Title I and Title III spending, explaining, "You want to make sure the money that you're getting is used as effectively and efficiently as possible...For example, if the Title I district or a Title I school made a decision to use up their Title money to make sure that ELLs are reading on grade level, you do that. Title III can also be used and make sure that ELLs are improving their reading comprehension. So the idea is for districts to recognize, hey, we're already spending Title I money for it. It doesn't make sense to also spend Title III money." The second participant, the EL Director in Delos, who was also knowledgeable about these distinctions, echoed a similar approach to planning district spending. This participant had previously served on the board of directors of an organization that directs advocacy and professional development initiatives around educating bilingual children. This participant had

also previously advised national politicians on policy, including ESSA, for emergent bilingual students. She explained she had advocated at the national level for keeping Title III funds separate from Title I funds before ESSA was passed. She later also advocated at the state level and at the Commissioner of Education's office, with partners from Massachusetts, to keep Title III finding separate from Title I funding in MA. This director viewed this advocacy as crucial for keeping these funding streams separate, a choice she viewed as potentially positive for emergent bilinguals. Notably, both participants who admitted having some knowledge of ESSA cited this understanding of the funding structure.

The second difference these two participants reported understanding between ESSA and NCLB is the focus ESSA facilitates on the education of emergent bilinguals in early childhood, a focus which they feel NCLB did not explicitly support. The Delos EL Director explained how she understood this difference, noting "one of the pieces that I saw as a deficit and, at least for Delos Public Schools around the No Child Left Behind Act, was the inability to use Title III funds, or the ability to provide English language development, to early childhood. So in the No Child Left Behind Act, Title III funds were only able to be used for K and higher, and now with ESSA they are able to be applied to preschool programming, because it is supplemental. We have been able to put in Pre-K, early intervention programs. It is small, because it is not like we have so much money, but some is more than none." Seeing this change in the legislation regarding early childhood was crucially meaningful for this participant because this change aligned with her belief about the "importance of that critical period where, our, make the intervention work for us, academically, linguistically and just building schema and experience. And so that was really important for me to push on the Early Childhood. That was really important to me."

The state participant also reported understanding another slight difference between ESSA and NCLB: the option to change the monitoring process for students who have demonstrated proficiency in English and are no longer classified as English Learners. She reported the state of Massachusetts took the option cited in ESSA to monitor students for four years, so this decision was made at the state level. The state reported planning to provide forms districts could use to monitor students' progress in math, English Language Arts, and science. This is an outlier rather than a trend, but a notable finding considering the monitoring timeframe was decided at the state level and reported by a member of DESE. In Chapters One and Two, I argued that because the impacts of NCLB on emergent bilingual students and their teachers was primarily negative, it was necessary to understand how ESSA, in its early years of implementation, was understood and enacted, or not enacted, by educational leaders. Before the advent of ESSA there was speculation that it ushered in flexibility for decision making at the district and/or state level, but there was little evidence in this study that district level participants felt this agency or flexibility. District actors viewed themselves as consumers, rather than crafters, of ESSA. Decisions about ESSA participants referenced, monitoring former ELs for four rather than two years, for example, were made at the state level in Massachusetts.

I have argued that degree of exposure to policy had a great impact on participants' ability to report their understandings of policy. Spillane, Reiser and Reimer (2002) theorize that if an individual has familiarity with a policy, it is more likely that individual will adopt and implement the policy. Differences between NCLB and ESSA are not likely to be grappled with at the school or district level if leaders do not know about these distinctions, nor if they believe they do not have agency over making decisions about them. Participants in this study simply possessed too little knowledge to be able to report how they understood ESSA and what they were doing in

response. This was not the case for LOOK, as I will discuss in the next section of this chapter. While it could be expected for participants who were vocal about the negative impacts of NCLB for emergent bilinguals, an impact well-documented in the research, to pay close attention to its successor, there is little evidence they did. I theorize this lack of attention to ESSA could stem from a number of causes.

It is possible that the legislation could be interpreted as inaccessible for two reasons: it is written in inaccessible language, which Spillane and colleagues (2002) warn can limit sensemaking or cause a policy or initiative to be only superficially understood (Spillane, 2004), or information about the policy has not been accessed by educators, either for internal reasons, like a lack of time or belief learning about policy is not a useful exercise, or external reasons, meaning that there may be factors impacting information dissemination and consumption. In some cases, information which participants expected to receive from the state or other district leaders had simply not yet traveled through all expected channels. Interestingly, administrators in this study reported awareness they were responsible for the compliance of all policies, but they relied on the state and external organizations as providers of information and, in many cases, did not report having substantial information about policy. While policy implementation literature suggests administrator interpretation of policy is important to its implementation (Coburn, 2001, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 1990; Fullan & Miles, 1992; Honig, 2006) the lack of familiarity with ESSA prevented most of these district leaders from first considering and then making decisions about implementing policy features.

Another explanation for the lack of attention to ESSA is that participants felt very distant from ESSA. They were embedded in their day to day context of educating students, the majority of them working in districts with high-need student populations well above the state average. As

Datnow and Park (2009) write, "the sensemaking and co-construction perspectives also do not assume that policy is the only, or even major, influence on people's behavior," (p. 352). Indeed, it was not found to be the major influence in this study. The participants in this study were experienced professionals focused on the curriculum, instruction, evaluation and support they believed would improve education for emergent bilinguals in their districts. I conceptualize this prioritizing as an *intentional focus on the immediate,* which will be further discussed later in this chapter. This focus simply left little room for policies participants viewed as not critical to their work.

Another potential explanation is the possibility that ESSA was considered by these participants, unlike NCLB, as a policy with "no teeth." Participants did not report awareness of any punitive measures for not complying with policy. This is a contrast from NCLB and, for example, its mandate districts make annual yearly progress, referred to as AYP. A DESE presentation on ESSA dated March 22, 2016, characterized NCLB (2002) as having "loose ends" but "tight means," Race to the Top (RTTT) (2009) as having "tight ends/tight means?" and ESSA as having "loose ends/loose means?" Participants often cited the accountability mandates of NCLB; they were less familiar with ESSA mandates, possibly because the policy was not viewed by them as invasive in terms of the accountability structure. If there are major felt impacts of ESSA for educators, these participants did not feel them yet.

ESSA as Merely a Compliance Mandate

Another primary way state and district participants understood ESSA was as a compliance mandate. For nearly all district participants, the state was seen to mediate compliance elements. Most district leaders regarded ESSA as an accountability system, but viewed the state as the level at which compliance with federal policy is and should be handled.

One participant from the state explained how she conceptualized the state's role as a disseminator of policy information to districts and as the keeper of the accountability system. She explained, "so with ESSA there was, there were a number of requirements that we had to fulfill. We had to submit a state plan, we had to make sure that we have, have a standardized exit criteria and entrance criteria for Ls. We had to include in our accountability, an English learner component, what we've done for progress for English learners in our accountability. There are several reporting elements that we have under Title III, that, the three of them look very much like the three AMAOs that we have... there were two others that were added that as well so we're making preparation for getting all of that data together and posting it on our website." One example of this distance district participants voiced from ESSA came from a school leader from Cumae, who remarked, "I think the big thing that I've noticed-- and I have to say I actually am probably a little embarrassed about how little I know about it-- I think it hasn't actually, how it has impacted Cumae and schools in Cumae, is that clearly the state has been looking to the, to ESSA to ensure that they are in line with what ESSA calls for, and I think the biggest manifestation of that are the different measures and benchmarks put in place for English Learners, what does that mean to have been making progress, what does that mean for the school, that kind of thing. But also it has impacted the way the state-mandated student, like, academic performance assessment-- MCAS right-- are shaping. And so I believe those are the two main ways that I've experienced a trickle-down from ESSA." This school leader captured the distance from ESSA articulated by multiple school and district level participants.

The state's role was understood by district participants to be a conveyer of meetings, a provider of guidance and support on accountability systems for emergent bilinguals, and as an approver and supporter to districts in the implementation of programming for emergent

bilinguals. The two participants from the state understood their role to cover all of these areas but they primarily emphasized they were striving to achieve an accountability system that is not a "blunt instrument" and that works for all emergent bilingual students.

Participants lacked motivation for grappling with ESSA: rewards for compliance and punishments for non-compliance were either unknown or not reported. Funding was also connected to some districts' reported abilities to comply with ESSA and other policies. One EL director said of his district level leadership that there was a feeling of "enough is enough, no more unfunded mandates." He explains, "nobody is saying that these policies are bad, you know. Every year there's 10 more things that need to be done and there's no money. What happens is, every year at budget season we have to cut positions. Every year. And so I'd say, you know, another thing that is a large influence on this topic of how do federal policy and state policies, um, how, how are they implemented, or how do districts leverage them, so much of it is based on the money that they have. So like we have to look at sort of the scraps that we have and we figure out ways to do it. And it is impactful." This feeling of constantly having to do more with less was not only viewed as exhausting by this participant and his superintendent, but also detrimental to their high-needs students. Participants viewed the "trickle down" as the way this federal policy was coming into districts; district leaders viewed themselves as the objects of a federal legislation about which they knew little.

The Challenge of Disentangling ESSA's Goals and Mandates from District Practices and Priorities

There was a difficulty, both in interpretation and implementation, for participants to disentangle whether a decision was made in order to be in compliance with ESSA or just because the district was reprioritizing or reorganizing programs, funding, or initiatives in some way.

Participants expressed they were making decisions based on what district leaders felt was best for students, and then those decisions seemed to align with aspects of ESSA, but they were not able to disentangle the various motivations for changes. In fact, alignment between district priorities and ESSA recommendations or policy was often seen as a coincidence; participants reported feeling reaffirmed in their sound decision-making when policies included approaches or practices the districts were already employing. For example, some participants viewed ESSA as primarily oriented around the creation of multiple pathways for students; in many cases districts had already initiated or planned pathways before ESSA came into law. Other examples of this trend include establishing a uniform process for identifying ELs, a practice mandated by ESSA that a participant from Carthage reported having had in place for several years, and as a result of district redesign, not federal policy implementation. Another example of district practice being in front of federal policy is the Crete EL Director citing the strength of their early childhood English Learner identification and programming. The Thrace Assistant EL Director explained how she had not explicitly connected some of their district decisions with policy implementation, even though they do align with ESSA. She explains, "So I think a lot of the systems, like a lot of the structural pieces of ESSA, right, are being implemented...I'll be perfectly honest, I don't know that it was, I don't know, for, maybe this is something on me, it wasn't explicitly sort of linked to this rollout, you know what I mean? ... I didn't realize that it was, it was being sort of dictated to us. I thought that we were just really smart." Participants understood their district approaches as oriented around achieving equity, rather than around compliance with policy mandates.

District leaders were proud to report that the reason their districts were moving in positive directions was that they were making decisions in the best interests of children; they

resisted the idea that policy was the driver of their decisions, and this suggested an underlying mistrust of policy, or an assumption policy making at the federal level moves more slowly than practitioners' and researchers' knowledge of what is best for children. A lack of familiarity with ESSA should not be understood to mean participants did not seek to critically and thoroughly understand policies and make decisions about how to respond. Unlike the impacts of NCLB, which were felt at the classroom level (Au, 2007; Menken, 2008; Palmer & Rangel, 2011; Wright & Choi, 2006), the majority of school-based and district-based staff had not reported noting impacts of ESSA, or even significant changes in practice as a result of ESSA, at the time this study was conducted two years into the legislation's tenure. Participants used their agency as intentional policy actors and their limited time in pursuit of implementing work they perceived would most benefit students: the LOOK Act.

Theme Two: LOOK as a Policy Triumph Offering Needed Flexibility

Overwhelmingly, participants cited the LOOK Act as a priority for district leaders. There was intentionality behind educators' decisions to focus on LOOK, rather than ESSA, for a number of reasons. First, the tenets of LOOK aligned with their beliefs about how students should be educated. These educators firmly believed in district-level decision making about the form of education for bilingual students, and they were committed to developing strong programs of bilingual education. Further, LOOK was seen to be more concrete than ESSA to participants; they had familiarity with the tenets of LOOK, a familiarity they did not have with the tenets of ESSA. Critically, when they spoke about how they viewed LOOK, they knew the major components of *what* they were interpreting. Importantly, participants' attention to LOOK as a policy they perceived as immediate and potentially impactful for emergent bilinguals was not haphazard; it was intentional.

Participants conceptualized LOOK in two primary ways: 1) as offering needed flexibility for school districts, a change they viewed as overwhelmingly positive and 2) as being oriented around the requirement of the creation of English Learner Parent Advisory Councils, called ELPACs, in districts educating more than 100 emergent bilinguals.

LOOK Offering Needed Flexibility

Participants voiced valuing flexibility in designing programs of education for emergent bilingual students for two primary reasons: 1) a common belief that a "one size fits all" model does not work well for bilingual students and 2) their belief that bilingual programs are beneficial and important for children. Participants voiced an optimism around LOOK and its potential. The ESL and Bilingual Director in Cumae referred to LOOK as "amazing" and expressed her gratitude that MA is recognizing in law the importance of research-supported policies for educating bilingual children, as the federal and state governments have done for students in Special Education. She explains, "I mean there's just so many laws and regulations around Special Education and I'm so happy to see that now we're taking English learning just as serious as, as Special Education." This was a sentiment expressed by other EL directors who welcomed legislation codifying practices they had long felt were beneficial for children.

One state actor explained, "We're excited that we do have a few um, districts who are interested in starting the dual language program, and we know from research that dual language programs are beneficial in helping Ls help maintain their culture and their identity while at the same time very effective (with) language." The same participant expressed a belief that biliteracy and bilingualism would prepare children for future endeavors. The participant working at the state-level advocacy and professional development organization echoed this support of more flexibility for districts to make decisions about programming to meet students' needs, explaining

"the fact that transitional bilingual programs don't require, no longer require a waiver, that's huge. Um, so I think more and more it seems like, more and more, districts are going to kind of try out more bilingual programming," work she felt was supported by the advocacy and professional development organization and, increasingly, by universities. This participant viewed the parallel efforts, if not the coordinated collaboration of programs of teacher education, the state, school districts and professional organizations to be critical to realizing the potential of the LOOK Act.

Alignment of policy tenets to beliefs. Participants embraced the LOOK Act, which they reported as aligning to their beliefs about bilingualism, bilingual education, and family empowerment. They reported actively working to execute its tenets as they understood them. This optimism about the LOOK Act is not surprising considering its tenets align with what participants reported believing about bilingualism and bilingual education. This finding is consistent with the argument Spillane and his colleagues (2002) make that when the sensemaker is more familiar with a given policy, he or she is more likely to welcome and implement it. Spillane has described sensemaking as a potentially conservative exercise, whereby sensemakers "preserve [their] existing mental scripts rather than radically overhaul them," (Spillane, 2004, p. 78). He cautioned that sensemakers may understand policies that are considerably different than former ones as less different than they actually are, which could result in policies not being implemented as they were intended. In this case, familiarity with the tenets of LOOK and the consistency between those tenets and what participants felt was best for students and families, resulted in great interest in implementing the components of the policy. The fact that these participants also viewed the English-only policy as inflexible, severe, and misguided also likely influenced their welcoming attitudes toward LOOK. Spillane (2004) theorizes that when tenets

of an initiative or policy, align with participants beliefs, it is natural for them to make plans to enact it, as occurred in this study with the LOOK Act. Yet the alignment of policy with participants' beliefs not only resulted in a commitment to implementation, but also a general sentiment of optimism for the Massachusetts educational context. This finding is relevant because it suggests belief alignment with policy could actually change how professionals view not only a single policy but a policy climate and an educational context.

Similarly to the perceptions of educators in deJong's 2006 study on the passing of English-only legislation, these participants' understandings of LOOK were shaped both by beliefs and by messaging about the policy. Unlike studies examining the implementation of the state-level English-only policy or even the implementation of NCLB for emergent bilinguals, that found educators experienced a tension between fidelity to their beliefs and students' needs and policy implementation (McNeil et al. 2008; deJong, 2006; Wright & Choi, 2008), the educators in the present study did not report such a tension because LOOK provided, rather than took away, flexibility for district-level decision making. Further, they did not see LOOK as being in conflict with their beliefs or their professional work. There simply was no "ideological wedge," between beliefs and policy, as deJong (2006) described. Unlike educators in the Palmer and Rangel (2011) and Wright and Choi (2006) studies which examined how educators implemented high stakes accountability systems for emergent bilinguals, educators did not perceive LOOK to limit their professional autonomy. In fact they were heartened that the state passed legislation they viewed as being in alignment with research-based best practices for bilingual children and eliminated the "one size fits all" English-only approach.

Creation of ELPACs

The second primary way participants reported understanding LOOK was through the mandate of the ELPAC, which they primarily viewed as a positive and groundbreaking component of the legislation. Participants expressed optimism that parents could be empowered to propose programs of education for their children. With the onset of this new structure, district leaders were thinking deeply about how to best begin, inspire, and utilize the ELPAC, how to guide parents in taking ownership of the structure, and what topics to cover. This positivity around the requirement of district ELPACs was voiced by leaders in a variety of roles. The participant from the advocacy and professional development organization expressed hope the establishment of an ELPAC would increase parents' voice in their children's education. District leaders shared this enthusiasm and had just begun to launch their district ELPACs at the time data was collected. The EL Director in Cumae had hosted the first ELPAC meeting two days before her interview for this study. She used the meeting time to present on the LOOK Act and to survey parents to understand what initiatives and programs they would like to see in their children's schools. She reported a great turnout, remarking, "we should have been having these ELPAC meetings a long time ago, but because of this LOOK Act, it's given parents and families more, um, more of a, more power and more voice...We had our first ELPAC meeting and parents were so thrilled. They're like, wait, I can request a new program to be at my child's school? And I said, yeah. I mean we don't have to put it in place. I'd love to have bilingual education at every school if we had the funding and resources and that's eventually the goal...They were just thrilled to hear." The advent of the ELPAC, for this participant, was the one example of policy driving a perceived positive change in district practice.

Yet there was acknowledgement from some that the mere establishment of the ELPAC was not a path to educational change in and of itself; the concept of a parent council serving as what Thrace's Assistant EL Director referred to as a "decision making body" represented a change in how parent councils had historically functioned in many of these districts. Mapp and Kuttner (2013), who have developed a framework for building the dual capacity of educators and families together as partners, explain "the increase in policies promoting family engagement is a sign of progress toward improving educational opportunities for all children. Yet these mandates are often predicated on a fundamental assumption: that the educators and families charged with developing effective partnerships between home and school already possess the requisite skills, knowledge, confidence, and belief systems—in other words, the collective capacity—to successfully implement and sustain these important home–school relationships," (p. 5). They argue that families and educators often do not have this preexisting collective capacity, a sentiment echoed by participants in this study. Participants expressed it would take districts and families time and effort to understand and seize this new power they had under the LOOK Act, and they strongly believed that ultimately the ELPAC could be an "impactful" experience for families. The participant from the advocacy and professional development organization explained, "that's kinda like opening up Pandora's box. You can't have that kind of voice from parents unless you educate parents and you, you know, like that's very systemic...It's not just a matter of establishing a parent advisory council." She and another participant mentioned Mapp and Kuttner's dual capacity framework as informing their thinking in how to co-create a successful ELPAC. One of these two participants reported thinking about the framework as "the capacity of the school to hear the parents and the capacity of the parent to envision themselves as someone with a voice to impact what happens at school." Another EL director of a district in

receivership reported that a crucial piece of engaging families in her district was rebuilding trust that was lost when the district went into receivership. This finding was an outlier rather than a trend, but demonstrates the importance of district context in shaping the participants' thinking around how to move forward with policy initiatives such as the ELPAC. Two participants from one district, Thrace, spoke at length about their efforts and challenges in launching a successful ELPAC. This district had an existing parent council but both participants understood the purpose of parent council meetings to historically have been disseminating information to families; this council had not involved parent input explicitly in educational programming decisions. Creating an ELPAC required an immense amount of reconceptualization of parent committees and a great deal of intentionality, the participants reported. They were optimistic this work would have a positive impact on families; one EL assistant director insisted "this whole idea of like making a decision around a programming is, you know, I mean that's impactful." She explained that her district is in the early planning stages of this "enormous undertaking." They began with sharing information to district families about the ELPAC and were in the process of hiring, through grant funding, multilingual parent liaisons to work in each school. The Thrace EL Director sought to broaden the spirit of LOOK to include the voices of unaccompanied minors in determining programming that impacts them. At the time of our conversation, this participant was considering convening a subgroup of students, meeting during the school day in order to not create an additional burden for students, who traveled independently to the U.S. so their views could inform the work of the ELPAC.

Support of the ELPAC as a structure for change stemmed, similarly to the support for LOOK itself, from an alignment to beliefs. The reality that the creation and purpose of ELPACs corresponded with participants' stated beliefs suggested they would actually attempt to

implement them well. This is consistent with Palmer, Henderson, Wall, Zúñiga, and Berthelsen's (2016) finding that how teachers understood and perceived dual language programs impacted their implementation. They conducted an ethnography of the language policy in two third grade teams teaching dual language bilingual education programs in two different schools. The teachers in this study felt a tension between the goals of the bilingual program and the urgency to prepare children for an English high-stakes test. This tension ultimately contributed to the erosion of the dual language bilingual program. Educators in studies by McNeil (2008) and Palmer & Rangel (2011) similarly felt "stuck" navigating competing policy demands. Palmer and Rangel, who studied how teachers impact high-stakes accountability, found teachers attempted to "buffer" students from the negative impacts of high-stakes testing structures. In the face of policy that narrowed their curriculum and caused them to feel pressure to use test-oriented curricular materials, they attempted to resist and remained committed to trying to deliver high-quality curriculum and instruction. I cite these studies as a contrast to how the participants in the current study viewed LOOK. Creating strong ELPACs generally corresponded with participants' stated beliefs, resulting in optimism and willingness to implement rather than a tension.

This planning work was not without obstacles. Thrace was struggling to recruit interested participants for the ELPAC, a trend noted by one other EL director, as well. The EL director in Thrace believed immigration status could be an obstacle to family participation. She also expressed a tension between wanting to recruit and welcome while also needing to set up guidelines for the group, noting "it gets tricky too because, you know, the most boring thing that you can do in a new meeting group is setup bylaws...I'm trying to really be aware that my role in this is to inform the ELPAC and set up a system where I can hear what they want." While

enthusiastic about launching ELPACs, participants also reported uncertainty as to how this change in how families had previously been engaged by schools would evolve.

Despite this optimism surrounding the ELPAC, two participants in one district insisted LOOK was not a driver of change but rather a confirmation of the work and values their district had long been moving forward, a view in contrast to that of the leader quoted above regarding her excitement about the ELPAC. The Crete Superintendent explained the district already "had pieces of it in place and I think because we were such a, a heavily multilingual district, it's (implementation) not a heavy lift for us. I think in some communities where they have not had ELLs it's probably a much heavier lift. Um, so for example, we've always been very good about making sure that translations are done. Um, we've been very good about making sure that we're engaging our parents, you know, to the point where we have dedicated parent liaisons at the different grade ranges. I think for us it was definitely the change in terms of more formalizing the parent meeting to mirror sort of the ELPAC meeting with the Special Ed." Rather than creating systems, this leader saw an opportunity to "tweak" existing practices and formalize structures. One EL Director whose district was seeking to expand two-way programming from the elementary school level only to the middle schools, also, sought to expand bilingual programs slowly and carefully. He concludes, "I like the fact that we're sort of gradually moving because we want quality. We don't just want to have six programs fizzle out there because they don't have the resources." He cited a shortage of qualified bilingual teachers in the state and the logistical and curricular changes embedded in beginning a quality program in Spanish.

While the Massachusetts educators who participated in this study expressed uncertainty as to how the components of the LOOK Act would play out in their districts, they were optimistic about the potential of the LOOK Act to improve education for bilingual students.

Participants were not only more familiar with the tenets of LOOK than ESSA, they fully supported them. This alignment in beliefs elevated their sense of agency; they reported actively engaging in how to take full advantage of the promise LOOK offered. EL directors from Latium and Thrace as well as representatives from the state were hopeful that LOOK would usher in new opportunities for the growth of bilingual programs and they were actively engaging in the work to make those opportunities a reality.

Theme Three: Understanding Recent Teaching Reform for Emergent Bilinguals: From RETELL to Sustainable Practice

Participants reported understanding initiatives that they perceived were immediate to their work with students. The primary initiative they reported considering seriously was the professional development initiative Rethinking Equity in Teaching for English Language Learners (RETELL), the course sanctioned through DESE with the goal of endorsing teachers for teaching Sheltered English Immersion. While the focus of this study was not around the SEI Endorsement or the RETELL course, RETELL and the SEI Endorsement arose as topics in most interviews. Participants understood RETELL in two primary ways: 1) it was compliance-oriented in nature, 2) and it did not, itself, have an impact on classroom practice, but required follow up and coaching. In general, these participants did not question the purpose of RETELL; they assumed the course's goals were appropriate, desirable, and would have a positive impact on students, but participants reported the implementation of those goals was either inappropriate or insufficient.

Participants largely viewed RETELL as oriented around compliance. The Thrace EL Assistant Director explained, "it was almost rolled out in a, in a way that felt very compliance-based, right? Because you had to get your certification before you could apply for your license

again. And so that piece- so I think people were compliant obviously because they want to keep their jobs right, so they went- and so I don't know if you got, like the level of investment even initially going into the process, um, you know, and like sort of this opportunity to be reflective about how this impacts your instruction and creates access, right, for students in your class. And then following up there, there wasn't much, there was none, there was no follow up, right? Like at- or minimal, I would say minimal follow up." District leaders in Latium and Delos similarly and explicitly referred to RETELL as a "box to check." One EL director perceived teachers viewed the endorsement as "one more thing I have to do to keep my license." The bilingual director in Latium expressed a more nuanced view also held by other participants:

> I think RETELL, RETELL really tried to address a lot of, sort of the pieces that needed to be addressed-- professional development, assessment for English learners, instruction, better sheltering instructional strategies-- so there was this mass undertaking of offering SEI courses and I am, as a bilingual director, I have taught many SEI courses, but I think along the lines it just became a check in the box but, so we... teachers were required to take this course kicking and screaming. However, the implementation aspect of this really has not been well developed, either by districts or by the state. So it was the state that told the teachers to take the scores and then to magically go into the classrooms and to be able to implement... And now post RETELL we are finding that's not happening. So then it becomes more of an onus on the part of district leaders to say, okay, what are we doing to support the students, sheltering content for the students. And it's still the same conversation. And RETELL has been around since 2013. We are not seeing what the outcome should have been around the sheltering instruction.

This conceptualization of RETELL as compliance-oriented was consistent with how the course was conceived and implemented by the state; it did was not conceptualized as a way to challenge assumptions and build culturally and linguistically responsive practice. It was begun to respond to the DOJ's charge that teachers were not prepared to teach SEI (Viesca, 2013).

The lack of visibility of RETELL strategies emerged as a theme; five of the fourteen district participants reported they did not see RETELL strategies in classrooms. In their view, RETELL did not have the desired impact on teaching and learning. One district leader from Thrace reported "I never see RETELL strategies" while an EL assistant director in Carthage reported,

> In very broad terms, it hasn't been as sustainable as I expect the state would have liked it to be. We are finding, we did find initially that there was some systematizing of implementation strategies. We did find that there was a growing sense of awareness around, you know, who ELs are, an asset-based approach and all that. But over time, and as, um, I guess as RETELL, when it sort of slowed down, um, and now it's on the districts, um, it's almost as if some of that has the strategies or the approach has transformed into other things, or less, less RETELL. So sometimes it's, you know, you might see the hints or the residuals with strategies there.

One EL director who facilitated RETELL courses believed teachers in her district learned sound strategies for sheltering instruction for students classified as WIDA levels 3-5, but that RETELL had not armed teachers with strategies for teaching language learners with beginning English proficiency levels. Another EL director observed she recently had been hearing more about RETELL than in the initial months after the course started. She remarked, "I've heard more conversation about RETELL strategies this year than I have probably like in the past five

years… I also think it's almost like you're having this epiphany like three years after you took the class, know what I mean, you can't find your binder." This leader attributed the recent interest in sheltering strategies to a recent district change to a co-teaching model rather than a pull-out model of service delivery and to a better alignment of curriculum for emergent bilinguals to grade-level curriculum and standards. A different EL director saw variation in the level of implementation of RETELL strategies in classrooms, noting that the most effective teachers might implement them while others did not. The failure to universally see RETELL strategies in classrooms was problematic for these participants who viewed improving instructional strategies to be a crucial piece of educating emergent bilinguals. This study found that Arias and Wiley's argument (2017) that the goal of the SEI course was narrow holds true for how these participants viewed not only the goals but also the implementation of RETELL.

Participants expressed a belief that RETELL strategies should not be taught only in the context of a course but embedded into ongoing conversations, coaching, and a part of broader conversations around how to better education for emergent bilinguals. One Cumae school leader, who had previously served as the Cumae EL Director, expressed,

> I think the other piece which is the more powerful piece is how are we ensuring that training, while very basic and kind of the starting point, is actually penetrating everyday classroom practices and, for the district level, you start with SEI learning walks that happens twice a year where it really kind of, where the ESL director is the one that is prompting that to happen. It is the school's responsibility to engage in it and gather that data and to reflect on what that means for the school and then go around and temp. check where are we with this and what do we need to do about it, kind of a thing, so that happens at the district level… I think now as a school leader it really is about going into

> classrooms, seeing classroom practice, integrating my understanding of what it means to shelter instruction, because that is really what RETELL does-- it's not ESL, it's sheltering, right-- so every single classroom should be doing this, especially with a population like ours where so many of our students are needing that sheltering. And then how do we address that through our PLC's and through our one-on-one coaching. What are the things that we can integrate because we are seeing there's a need for it in the classroom, rather than are you doing the seven strategies, or whatever it is, like not having a checklist but more about 'what's the state of instruction for our Ls and how much access do they have?' and 'what is the teacher doing to enable that to happen?' and 'how can we lean on the RETELL course and the content of that course to actually help teachers revamp or strengthen their instruction in relation to access for English language learners?'

This leader's perspective was reflective of those voiced by district and organizational leaders. The participant from the advocacy and professional development organization similarly voiced, "So, um, I do not think that it is a, you know, something that's going to solve all the problems in our classroom, all the instruction focused on English Learners. I think that, um, that there has to be follow up, there has to be a, for example, administrators looking at the (SEI) Smart Card and um, and seeing what's happening and not happening in the classrooms. Uh, I would love to see coaching initiatives. There are some, uh, across the state, but not enough where coaches work with teachers on a daily or weekly basis to, um, you know, try to improve instruction. So really it can't stop at that course."

Participants' objections to the course stemmed from their beliefs about how to change teacher practice, rather than from ideological disagreements; they challenged the assumption that

a stand-alone course, without practice- embedded coaching, could change practice. A recent policy analysis of RETELL published as a part of a dissertation study situates this finding: "The prioritization of *training* must be emphasized here, as (1) there was no mechanism put in place to monitor any degree of *execution* (the DOJ letter made mention of such monitoring, but it was not put in place); (2) there was no need to demonstrate any degree of improvement in student educational outcomes; (3) the state was not required to make any broader policy changes to the English-only mandate itself," (Bacon, 2019, p. 101). The lack of monitoring and support structures were most problematic for these participants. Interestingly, the study participants did not challenge the ideological underpinnings and assumptions of the RETELL course and the requirement of the SEI Endorsement; they raised concerns about the implementation, rather than the purpose and assumptions of, the initiative.

Theme Four: An Intentional Focus on the Immediate

In addressing the second and third research questions, "How do educational leaders and district and state documents report curricular, personnel, and instructional decisions that have been made in implementing ESSA, LOOK, and other EL policies?" and "What factors do educational leaders identify as influencing the implementation process of these policies?" I argue that participants engaged in what I refer to as an *intentional focus on the immediate*, meaning they focused on the pressing needs and opportunities they perceived as most likely to improve education for emergent bilinguals. They oriented their professional efforts around these priorities. This is by no means a novel phenomenon. Mary Kennedy (2005) detailed this finding in her book, *Inside Teaching,* in which she explored why reforms often fail. She writes of her study,

> It reveals that teachers are not unaware of reform ideals, and indeed are sympathetic with them. But they also have to attend to many other things, simultaneously orchestrating time, materials, students, and ideas. They must finish a lesson by 11:33 so that students can be in the cafeteria at 11:35. They must make sure that all students are on the same page, digesting the same ideas, gaining the same understandings. They must make sure that the right diagram, chart, or globe is readily accessible to show to students at exactly the right moment, and that the handouts students will need are also nearby. They must be prepared to respond to individual confusions, misunderstandings, and tangential observations without distracting or boring the rest of the class. They must also be prepared to have the entire plan disrupted or defeated by some unforeseen event. Someone from down the hall may enter the room and interrupt the lesson midstream. A student may poke another student or ask a question that other students don't understand or don't care about. The projector may break, or there may not be enough copies of a handout to go around (p. 2).

Similarly to the teachers in Kennedy's study, the overwhelming trend throughout this data set was that participants cited they had more immediate concerns than thinking about federal policy. In this study, the word "immediate" does not merely refer to the school and district administrator duty of responding to the constant onslaught of emergencies, but rather to the focus on the initiatives, procedures, and structures educators perceive are most immediately able and likely to have a positive impact on students. For the most part, district leaders did not report messaging information about ESSA to principals or teachers. Participants reported they centered their limited and precious time with teachers around improving curriculum and instruction rather than policy explanations or co-constructions. A quote from one EL director represents this

theme, yet she also reported attempting to provide information on policy to the educators in her district. She explained,

> We have such limited time to meet with teachers that like, my time isn't explaining ESSA. It's more like application in their classroom because I will make sure that that is all being covered, that we are in compliance and then, if we're not, I take care of that. But no, I don't disseminate all that information because, in my newsletter, I might say, 'hey this is new, check this out. See this link.' If they do it... I don't know if they spend time doing it or not. Is information provided? Yes. I always provide all the information but if people are aware or on top of their game around ESSA, I can't answer that. But I know that a lot of them probably aren't to be honest with you. They probably aren't. It's not a priority for them. They trust in me that we are doing what we are supposed to be doing.

Another bilingual director echoed this sentiment, explaining that most district professionals are asking her "What does this mean for me?" Participants felt their limited time with teachers and school administrators was and should be spent focused on teaching and learning, not explicitly unpacking policy.

Throughout data collection, participants positioned other factors, and not federal policy, as the driving forces behind educational change, or their own action, for emergent bilinguals. A theme, then, that encapsulates much of the data on what guides these participants' understanding of change for emergent bilinguals is summed up in the phrase: "It's not policy, it's _____." Some participants did view the LOOK Act as a driver of positive change. But, for many, the assumption that all policy- and ESSA is a primary example- would change aspects of education for emergent bilinguals, was problematic. For others, policy was simply secondary to other priorities they positioned as either more immediate or more important to their work. For that

reason, I conceptualized how participants prioritize work for emergent bilinguals as *an intentional focus on the immediate.* Here I describe the other concepts, events, and actions that participants cited as the primary agents for, or causes driving, their own actions and priority-setting for the education of emergent bilinguals in their districts. They are: 1) district leadership as crucial for an equity-oriented agenda, 2) advocacy for improved funding structures and access to resources, 3) a focus on building educator capacity to educate emergent bilinguals, and 4) prioritizing the creation of multiple pathways for students. Each of these is related to the fifth theme: the need for educator and community member mind shifts around bilingualism and bilingual children. Participants' reported their districts being at various places on a mind shift continuum; most reported mind shifts that still needed to occur while others cited mind shifts had already taken place in the district.

It's District Leadership

First, participants reported school and district leadership to be a crucial factor impacting the quality and nature of education for emergent bilingual students in their districts. Leadership has long been determined to be a force for the collective learning of organizations (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2010). Participants in this study reported that positive orientations toward bilingualism and bilingual education at the district-level facilitated teacher learning initiatives and programming, with the collaboration of the bilingual or EL department and teachers. Lucas, Villegas, and Freedson-Gonzalez (2008) argue positive orientations toward bilingualism are needed for culturally and linguistically responsive teaching, and these orientations have been considered and applied to leadership. Scanlan and López (2015) argue that there are three dimensions to educating culturally and linguistically diverse students: promoting a sociocultural integration, cultivating language proficiency, and ensuring academic

achievement. Leaders utilizing these dimensions, they argue, create a learning architecture through a system of "integrated service delivery" (p. 23). While the educators in this study did not all explicitly reference service delivery, they did speak to these three dimensions in identifying effective leadership for educating bilingual students.

The Latium Bilingual Director explained how synergy with her district leadership supported her work in her district, explaining, "I think the difference for district folks is we have a new team in place, a new superintendent, a new assistant superintendent, people at the top who are very open to equity and diversity. I think that has made a huge impact on how it looks on the ground, right? Because we have that commitment from the very top then." Another bilingual director, from Delos, used an example of high administrator turnover in the district to demonstrate the importance of stable and quality leadership in ensuring quality education for emergent bilinguals. She explained, "so the majority of our administrative staff across the different (schools) have been here 3 years or less, which is the same as ESSA. So I don't know about a lot of the shifts that happened because of ESSA or if they have to do with the administration. Because a lot of shift happens when you have an administrator coming in." She demonstrates how important district context, such as the rate of administrator turnover, is so intertwined with policy implementation. The Crete Superintendent who participated in this study explained that her philosophy is to have a deep trust in her principals and directors and to facilitate resourcing and supporting them appropriately. She explained, "For us in terms of the programming, it's really, it's really the EL Director and this, and the principals know, I do more oversight. It's like, you tell me what, you know, let it filter up. So you tell me what you need to make the gains to, to be in the best interest of students. As long as you are meeting the goals of our five year district plan, then I'm going to support you. So, so yeah, I really don't do a whole

lot of top down dictating because I think the creativity really has to come from the bottom up." Fullan, Cuttress, and Kilcher (2009) write that one responsibility of a change-oriented leader is to connect and integrate change pieces. They explain, "creating coherence is a never- ending proposition that involves alignment, connecting the dots, being clear about how the big picture fits together," (Fullan, Cuttress, & Kilcher, 2009, p. 14). Related to the fierce insistence that having equity-minded leaders is critical for the education of emergent bilinguals is the need participants voiced to hire staff that have beliefs and skills consistent with the commitment to educate emergent bilinguals.

Two district participants cited the embedding of explicit, equity-oriented goals in their district strategic plans as levers for change. One EL director talked through her decision-making process, explaining,

> As a district director I look at the Strategic Plan and I think, what are my department goals? … For example, the Strategic Plan has a whole section on expanding bilingualism and biliteracy. Within that frame there are action steps, observable action steps that we are following, like expanding bilingualism at two of the elementary schools, implementing a dual-language program, strengthening our curriculum in two-way at the secondary level. Then it becomes my onus to look at the Strategic Plan to think, okay, what can be accomplished in year one, and year two, and in year three. And then the next layer is at the school level with coaches and teachers to look at the department goals and to plan for their own professional goals at the school level with the work that they do around their students.

Another notable finding that is an outlier rather than a theme, but relevant for its level of impact on one community represented by two participants in this study, is the role of leadership

in advocating for students and teachers. One participant, a district superintendent, argued how a change in the classification for English proficiency through the WIDA standards had an impact on the funding the city of Crete was able to access for emergent bilinguals. The DESE October 2017 Guidance on Identification, Assessment, Placement, and Reclassification of English Learners states the following related to classifying students as ELs based on their WIDA ACCESS scores: "Students with at least an overall score of 4.2 and a composite score of 3.9 on ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 may have acquired enough English language skills to be considered English proficient. These students who demonstrate the ability to perform ordinary class work in English as indicated by one or more of the measures listed on Other Relevant Data (described below) should no longer be classified as ELs." The guidance does state some ELs may need to "maintain the classification" beyond these scores, in which case the district should continue to provide services. The Crete Superintendent explained that since the state's guidance declares emergent bilinguals can be deemed proficient in English with a literacy score of 3.9 on the ACCESS Test, though, the district no longer receives funding for students who earn those scores. She found this problematic considering the district was often still providing services to these students who, in many cases, still needed targeted language instruction, translation, and other related services. She estimated this change caused 310 Crete students previously considered emergent bilinguals to no longer be classified as such, and, therefore, for the district to lose the EL funding it was receiving for them. A related struggle was that 83 of around 300 students who were classified as homeless were not classified, for reasons unknown to the participant, as economically disadvantaged. The superintendent explained the district would have gained $4,600 for each of those 83 students, the majority of which are emergent bilinguals. She concluded, "there are a lot of ways that we just keep getting hit." This superintendent and her bilingual

director were active advocates at the state level, a role they deemed to be a critically important component of their professional duties as educational leaders.

It's Funding

Funding is a second theme that arose as participants resisted policy as the primary lever for change. Three participants repeatedly cited funding from the state as a needed and missing piece of quality education for all students, and especially for emergent bilinguals. One participant served on the Foundation Budget Review Commission (FBRC) and spoke about her advocacy for funding structures. She reported the FBRC recommended the increment for low income students should be between 50% and 100% above the base student rate. She felt the governor's proposed budget, which she reported raised the increment for low income students to 50% above the base rate, was high enough for the administration to cite they had met the Foundation's recommendation, but she had hoped this would be higher and would continue to advocate. For emergent bilingual students, the FBRC recommended an additional amount of funding per student, and this increment would be the same at all grade levels. This participant cited what she considered a debunked myth that more services are needed at the lower grade levels; it was important for her that funding for emergent bilingual students be steady through middle and high school to cover needed services.

In extending this funding argument to the district level, one EL director argued that a lack of diverse representation could have a negative impact on school budgets. This participant saw a direct connection between representation at town hall and educational funding for historically marginalized populations. She explains,

> Because it's not whether or not a district will support it, or the teachers are supportive, or if we have the laws in place...how does, sometimes whoever is sitting on the town floor in

> political communities, whoever is on your finance committee or whoever is on your town selectman, how much power they have in guiding how much funds are allocated to certain requirements, whether it's law or not. So I could be really knowledgeable, my superintendent could be really knowledgeable, we could possess or state all the things that we need to do, but at the very end, taxpayer money, some of it is federal, in the very, very end, it is who is sitting on town floor. The people sitting on town floor are not reflective of the student population most districts have, especially with the growing English learning population, the growing diversity around race, the growing diversity around socioeconomic status, I could keep going but you get what I'm saying.

She strongly believed that more representation of bilingual community members and people of color would result in the more equitable distribution of funding.

Some participants described funding for public education broadly to depend on the district, as the Assistant Superintendent for Equity and Diversity for Latium explained, “It's like, there's a reality to what money does and then there's, and in the communities that are making it work are communities that are subsidizing in the learning through their city or town budgets. And the ones that cannot afford to do that are not having the same level of success.” The funding issue was very immediate to district level participants and one they felt had a direct impact on their ability to educate emergent bilingual students. District and state funding structures was an issue district leaders could talk about with ease and passion, and they perceived adequate funding as being absolutely pivotal to their work.

It’s Building Educator Capacity

District participants reported a major priority in educating bilingual students to be building educator capacity to improve instruction and curriculum. Building capacity is one of the

"drivers" of change identified by Fullan, Cuttress, and Kilcher (2009). Scanlan and Lopez (2015) situate the building of teacher capacity to be a critical aspect of leading schools specifically for culturally and linguistically diverse students. Participants in this study approached thinking about and building capacity in varied ways, but all district participants that discussed capacity building cited coaching and practice-embedded professional development as a crucial element. Some foci included the training of administrators on language objectives and discourse, sentence, and word level demands, as well as the DESE definition of ESL instruction, in addition to the coaching of teachers, the provision of common planning for teachers, and the utilization of the SEI Smart Card during classroom observations.

EL directors reported a focus on creating or improving the curriculum for emergent bilinguals in their districts. One director reported changing programming models to approaches she understood from research to be "pedagogically sound." In some districts in which these participants worked, emergent bilingual students received the same curriculum as their peers and, in others, the curriculum they received was different. One EL director reported working to create model curriculum units that are aligned with DESE expectations and the state standards. She explains, "we're flying a plane as we're building it and it, I mean, I think even more importantly it is, it's a shift in thinking for ESL teachers who've always used their own resources that had no connection to core content that you know, that. So this is a shift. And then to further complicate things to make sure that people understand that what we're not doing is solely supporting content, but we're supporting language development, is another complex layer of this, right?" While she and her team built units, they chose to temporarily use a Spanish elementary curriculum they believed was similar to the curriculum they were using in English at the elementary level. One challenge to her work of building teacher capacity was the limitation of

only meeting with elementary school teachers three times a year. Another participant, the EL Director in Cumae, also prioritized supporting teachers in improving instruction while she focused on improving curriculum. This was a part of her district's receivership efforts, and she explains,

> There's a lot more demands on teachers in receivership. I think there's a lot more expectations, um, you know, but they're all good things like teachers are asked to participate in PLCs, to participate in extra PD. I mean, Cumae Public Schools has more PD that they have, every school has a few hours a week of PD just at that school, so that demands are more, but their benefits, it's for a good reason, right? Because PD and PLCs all support our instructional practices and our culture, how we're culturally responsive. We've done some PD around that. Um, I really think even though the demands and expectations are a lot higher, it's for good reason. And we're in, we're in receivership for a reason, right? Because our, our, our, we were underperforming and in order to get out of that we need to support our teachers, which sometimes looks like more demands and more expectations. We've done a lot of implementing of new curriculum also because, um, I mean if it wasn't working, why continue with it? So we have new reading curriculum, new writing curriculum, new math curriculum, you know, I'm really pushing the Ms, the MCUs and um, ESL curriculum from the state and writing new curriculum.

One school leader explained that, though she is the person in the building responsible for compliance for emergent bilinguals, the primary focus of her compliance work was ensuring students received the appropriate amount of quality language services, as her overarching priority was to improve teaching and learning. The nine EL and bilingual directors and assistant

directors saw improving curriculum and instruction to be a, if not the, primary focus of their work.

It's Prioritizing the Creation of Multiple Pathways

District leaders across roles reported that a priority for improving education for emergent bilinguals in their districts was putting multiple and varied pathways into place for students. District participants saw one of their primary roles as a creator of pathways, which included programs within high schools for newcomer students as well as others for students with interruptions in their formal education, a STEM strand, vocational programs, and opportunities for students to dually enroll in community college classes while in high school. One district explicitly named multiple pathways in its turnaround plan. Participants from Cumae and Crete as well as state representatives mentioned the possibility of students enrolling in community college classes while finishing high school. Three participants reported that the availability of pathways in their districts was related to a visionary and equity-oriented superintendent and a district's decision to prioritize access to opportunities.

The superintendent interviewed also discussed her priority of recruiting, hiring and retaining more teachers of color from the community. Her district, Crete, created an education pathway at the high school as one avenue toward achieving this goal. While in the early stages, the education pathway currently had 18 students enrolled. The city also pays for teacher assistants to take the MTEL, the state test that is one requirement of teacher licensure, in order to support them to become classroom teachers in the district.

Four participants spoke about preparing emergent bilingual students for college, community college, and careers after graduation from high school. One participant, an assistant superintendent, reflected a theme multiple participants alluded to: "We're trying to raise the rigor

of the standards, but we're also dealing with compassionate and passionate educators who see these kids coming in and, and, and see sort of like, um, see some of the challenges in terms of academics and sort of fixate around that. And so I have like, people were like, we need to get kids, these kids, trades and they need to be in trade school. And I'm like, right, I'm down with the idea of like, uh, giving kids the tools, meeting them where they're at, as long as we're not funneling them into a system that eliminates dreams or opportunities in the future." The district's role, in his view, was not to make decisions for students but to provide multiple options and the high expectations necessary for students to choose a route. He, and others, viewed one of his primary responsibilities as reducing barriers to students' success.

The Need for Mind Shifts

As district participants discussed how to bring about educational change for the emergent bilingual students in their districts, they reported that mind shifts in educators were needed in order for bilingual students to be equitably educated. Scholarly work presents both the kinds of mind shifts researchers argue are needed as well as the processes schools and districts can utilize to achieve these shifts. Some, like deJong, have put forth frameworks for schools to consider as they make choices about educating bilingual children. She proposed four principles to inform decisions around educational design for bilingual children. They are: 1) striving for educational equity, 2) affirming identities, 3) promoting additive bilingualism, and 4) structuring for integration. Others argue for practitioners and scholars to reconceptualize language as practice that individuals do (e.g. García, 2009; Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Pennycook, 2010). For example, Palmer and Martínez argue for the need to refocus on understanding language and bilingualism and their relationship with dynamics of culture and power (Palmer & Martínez, 2016, p. 380). They explain, "monolingual *perspectives* on language can actually impede the

development of bilingualism and biliteracy. Regardless of the instructional context, we argue that rethinking monolingual perspectives on language can help all language arts teachers to more effectively promote bilingualism and biliteracy in their classrooms," (Palmer & Martínez, 2016, p. 380). They encourage educators and scholars to resist assumptions that continue to privilege monolingualism and which undergird the majority of teaching strategies touted as helpful in the education of emergent bilingual students.

The mind shifts described by participants in this study can be characterized together as an urgent need to combat linguicism and racism; participants felt that in order to bring about real improvement for emergent bilinguals, teachers and community members must shift how they think about bilingualism and bilingual students. There is a growing body of work on the beliefs teachers hold about bilingual students. Taken collectively, this work demonstrates a number of needed mind shifts that relate to the current study. Some researchers have found that teachers reported feeling generally positively about emergent bilinguals but less positively about having them in their own classes (Karabenick & Noda, 2004; O'Brien, 2009; Reeves, 2006; Walker, Shaffer & Iiams, 2004; Young & Youngs, 2001). For example, Reeves (2006), who surveyed 279 high school teachers, found that 72% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they would welcome the inclusion of emergent bilinguals in their classes, but 75% of teachers did not feel emergent bilingual students should be educated in general education settings until they were proficient in English. Shin and Krashen (1996), who surveyed 794 elementary and secondary teachers in CA about bilingual education, reported that teachers felt positively about bilingualism, but less positively about bilingual programs. Other researchers found teachers held deficit beliefs about emergent bilinguals (Escamilla, 2006; Johnson, 2000; Hernandez, 2001; Lee, Luykx, Buxton, & Shaver, 2007; Rodriguez et al., 2010; Penfield, 1987; Walker, Shafer &

Iiams, 2004). These studies suggest that U.S. educators still struggle to hold positive views about educating bilingual children and bilingualism.

In the present study, participants primarily spoke in the conditional or future tense about mind shifts like the one described by Palmer and Martínez. In only one instance, an EL director reported leaders in her district had already undergone a mind shift toward prioritizing equity for emergent bilinguals, and she attributed this shift to district leadership and to the hiring of equity-minded district and school leaders. She explained, of the superintendent,

> He has a very social justice perspective and that is who is leading our district and that is who he is hiring for our schools. So, I mean, we have principals who very much are like we don't question whether English Learners have access to reading interventions. All of our students have access to reading intervention. And they are our students. So it's not like, there has been a whole language mindset around - certain interventionists used to say things like 'all the Ls are taking the reading intervention spots,' and I'm like, 'the reading intervention spots from who? Who are they taking them from? These are our students.' But that has dissipated because that's not acceptable language in school anymore.

This participant raised two important points: her strong belief that hiring was the best possible way to bring about equity for emergent bilinguals and that, in the scramble for resources and services in public schools, emergent bilinguals had often been left out.

More common were examples of district leaders citing mind shifts yet to come. Many yearned for the shift described above by the Delos EL Director. Participants expressed the shifts they sought included both a cease in deficit discourse and thinking about bilingual students and a taking of collective ownership of all students at the district, school, and classroom levels. An

Assistant Superintendent cited “a perception around, even goodhearted people, around the abilities of bilingual (students).” He reported this was a challenge to him personally and a challenge to the district in trying to raise rigor and expectations while keeping gateways open for all students. He discussed the need to create systems that reward and showcase, rather than punish, students’ bilingualism.

The Cumae EL Director broadened the conversation around mind shifts to apply to families as well as school-based staff. She explained:

> I tell families and students all the time that you have such a greater opportunity to get a better job if you're bilingual, that you, you know- the cognitive- that the research shows that the cognitive benefits of students who know two languages, they do so much better on standardized testing, they have better career opportunities. You know, I'm really trying to push that change in mindset, and it's slow and, you know, as we can see as a state from 2001 until 2018--17-- when the LOOK Act came out, it took us 17 years. I think now that the LOOK Act is out, it's only been out for, what, a year now or, in as a bill for a year, that it's going to take time for people to really shift their mindset and understand that these students are, are such an asset to our, to our team, to our community. So I guess my biggest challenge is just kind of changing the mindset and, and getting, getting everyone-- families too of these students-- to understand this is great. It's not just teachers that, you know, it's not just, it's not just school folks, it's families.

She was the only participant to explicitly state she also hoped to see a mind shift in families.

Other district participants voiced the need for all educators to take responsibility for the education of emergent bilinguals. One EL director explained, “And unfortunately we have a lot of teachers that have been teaching for 20, 30, 40 years and they feel-- it's more of a mindset

shift for them, too, that this is great for our students, that you own these students, that these students are in your class. It's just like a student on an IEP. Everybody owns students and it's a team effort and it's not just, it's not just, um, oh well the ESL teacher will take care of them." This need for taking ownership of emergent bilingual students and their education has been well documented in the literature (e.g. Valdés, 2001). The Thrace EL Director noted that hostility toward teaching emergent bilinguals increased as district demographics changed and more bilingual families moved to the city. In Thrace, she felt that several years ago "it was okay to say I don't want those kids in my class" and she was seeking to move the district forward to "getting, this idea that like all, all of our kids, all, they're ours, they're not mine." Her testimony echoes findings in the research arguing that teachers do not object to the idea of inclusion in theory, but they are not necessarily eager to have emergent bilingual students in their own classes (Karabenick & Noda, 2004; O'Brien, 2009; Reeves, 2006; Walker, Shaffer & Iiams, 2004; Young & Youngs, 2001). This same participant explained that this change has been difficult for the district and its educators and she has been working to eliminate structures she sees as replicating inequity. She explained, "I'm like, I'm trying to be PC, but not too PC with this. What I'm trying to do at the high school level is combat what really is a bifurcated system for kids who speak English and kids who don't speak English." For this educator, that meant eliminating many SEI classes, since all high school teachers had been SEI endorsed, and getting emergent bilinguals out of what she viewed as a separate and less rigorous track. She described both her intolerance of teachers not welcome to emergent bilinguals in their classes and also a feeling of powerlessness to impact decision making at the school building level, since she is a district and not a school administrator. These needed mind shifts were very prevalent in the discourse from district level educators.

Finally, it must be emphasized that exploring how ESSA and LOOK were understood and responded to was the focus of this study but it was not expected or assumed that these pieces of policy were similar. In fact, the way participants represented them were quite different. ESSA was viewed as the less invasive and altogether milder replacement of NCLB, and seen by the district level participants as being handled at the state level. LOOK, alternatively, was a policy these participants had advocated for many years and in which they reported they strongly believed.

Summarizing the Findings

In this chapter, I have presented and discussed the primary findings of this study on policy interpretation and response. I found a climate of optimism after the passage of the LOOK Act and hope regarding LOOK's flexibility and the inception of ELPACs in many districts state-wide. Participants understood policy implementation to be a layered process, but one in which professionals at each layer played a defined role. Those who did have interpretations of ESSA understood it in relation to NCLB and as a compliance mandate. In participants' stated policy responses, I found participants prioritized *an intentional focus on the immediate* in their work. This focus aligned with their beliefs about what is best for bilingual children and what is needed in schools that are often high-need. Stated priorities included implementing the LOOK Act, the onboarding of leaders who prioritize equity, advocacy for funding and resources at the state and district levels, building the capacity of teachers to educate bilingual children, and creating multiple pathways for students.

CHAPTER FIVE

Recommendations for Research, Policy, and Practice

The primary purpose of this dissertation was to explore and analyze how state, district and other educational leaders interpreted and responded to a changing policy landscape for emergent bilingual students in Massachusetts. Specifically, I examined how these educators interpreted and responded to the federal Every Student Succeeds Act and to the state-level LOOK Act. I also detailed other professional priorities raised by study participants. This brief final chapter presents a summary of this dissertation study and puts forth recommendations for further research as well as implications for the findings and questions raised by this study for educational policy and practice. I make two primary recommendations for practice: 1) that educators require the provision of time and resources to examine and understand policy that will impact them and their students and 2) educational leaders must focus on not only the processes but the mind shifts needed to facilitate educational change for emergent bilingual students.

Study Summary

This study presented educational leaders' understandings of and responses to ESSA and LOOK for emergent bilingual students in Massachusetts. In Chapters One and Two, I argued for the need for work that presents how educators are understanding and responding to the changing policy landscape for emergent bilingual students. I then reviewed the scholarly literature related to policy interpretation and response for emergent bilingual children. It is notable that very few studies of EL and bilingual directors exist, and these department heads who set visions for their districts and also oversee teaching and learning are a vital component of the education of bilingual students and should, with their teachers, be better represented in the scholarly literature. In Chapter Three I detailed the rationale for the methods used and the processes by which data

were collected and analyzed. In Chapter Four I presented how and to what degree participants reported interpreting and responding to ESSA, LOOK, and other initiatives related to the education of emergent bilinguals, as well as discussed potential rationales for these findings.

In addressing the first research question, "How do educational leaders interpret policies, including ESSA and LOOK, for emergent bilingual students and their teachers?" I began by describing how participants positioned their own responses within a climate of optimism, derived from the recent passage of the LOOK Act, a law that generally aligned with participants' beliefs regarding maintaining children's bilingualism and empowering families to be an active part in children's education. I argued that, for those few participants who were actively thinking about ESSA, they viewed its interpretation and implementation as a process with discrete layers and they sought guidance from the state on next steps. They understood ESSA in relation to its predecessor, NCLB. Participants also viewed it primarily as a compliance mandate and they struggled to disentangle its goals from other state and district policies. I argued that participants viewed LOOK as a welcome departure from English-only policy which they did not consider to be in the best interests of students or communities, and that they rejoiced in LOOK's flexibility and also its requirement of English Learner Parent Advisory Committees (ELPACs) in districts educating high numbers of emergent bilinguals. I briefly discussed participants' reported attitudes toward RETELL, which they viewed as being primarily compliance-oriented in nature, and as failing to have the desired impact on classroom practice without substantial follow up and coaching.

It is notable that despite citing many challenges in their work, participants overwhelmingly voiced that the current era is an optimistic time for educating bilingual students in Massachusetts. State-level participants were hopeful districts would expand bilingual

offerings and were encouraged that the advent of the LOOK Act enabled the state to support program models consistent with what research suggests about the benefits of dual language programs. This optimism was also expressed by district leaders. One EL director's optimism came from the federal and state accountability mandates that have increased for emergent bilinguals in recent years. She explained, "I think ESSA really forces us to take a look at all kids and how can we better work together. And so the accountability systems that are in place that includes, at the bottom, 25% of your students, and many times the bottom 25, quartile, the bottom quartile, are English Language Learners, students who have just exited, students on IEPs… And now with the new LOOK Act there are certain things in place that districts have to look at." This participant viewed compliance with LOOK and ESSA as a lever for positive change. She cited the ELPAC as a compliance mandate that she believed would have a positive impact on education for bilingual students. She explained, "I think this is a very exciting time for ELL directors in the district...In Massachusetts we really never paid attention to English Learners. We never paid attention to resourcing them appropriately with certified staff, with appropriate materials, with bilingual materials. It was, sort of, integrate them, well, let's integrate them after 2002 and they'll get it, as if they'll get it by osmosis. And post RETELL we are seeing that it's not working. Right? And so you know we need to do things differently." The optimism of other participants did not stem from a belief that compliance would result in better programming and better teaching, but in the belief that the LOOK Act allowed for flexibility and practices they believed beneficial to students.

In this optimistic climate, multiple participants expressed pride in the efforts and success of their educators. A superintendent expressed pride in getting students access to community college credits while in high school and in the district's approach to elementary school

education. District leaders reported immense pride and faith in the educators of emergent bilinguals. One assistant superintendent remarked he felt the teachers of emergent bilinguals in his district were incredibly committed and hardworking. He reported many of them took on additional professional responsibilities such as teaching night classes for adults because they viewed it a "tie" to their work with students. The Thrace Assistant EL Director similarly called the teachers in her department "amazing" while the Styx EL Director called the team of ESL teachers in her district "phenomenal." This optimism was rooted in the hope educators felt after the passing of the LOOK Act.

In exploring the second and third research questions, "How do state, district, and school leaders and district and state documents report curricular, personnel, and instructional decisions that have been made in implementing ESSA, LOOK, and other policies for emergent bilingual students?" and "What factors do state, district, and school leaders identify as influencing the implementation process of these policies?" respectively, I then argued that participants reported what I have referred to as an *intentional focus on the immediate.* I found that participants devoted the majority of their professional efforts to initiatives and areas of work that aligned with their beliefs about what is best for bilingual students. These priorities included the implementation of the LOOK Act, the hiring of equity-minded district leaders, advocacy at the state and district levels around funding structures and access to resources, building teacher capacity to teach emergent bilingual students and developing multiple pathways. Throughout Chapter Four, I integrated a discussion with the scholarly literature on policy implementation and response. In this chapter, I present recommendations for research and practice.

Recommendations for Future Research

The first recommendation for future research is to continue to include educator voices in the policy implementation literature. This is an urgent necessity since we know educators are the most important piece of all education and policy reform (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2011). Further integration of the voices of EL and bilingual directors into the literature is needed for the specialized knowledge base these educators hold and for the roles they play in crafting district priorities and managing accountability structures.

Second, the field of policy implementation must continue to explore the conditions under which educators' policy responses may be limited or facilitated and enhanced. In the current study, conditions which hindered or limited the degree and quality of policy response included knowledge of policy tenets, proper time to comprehend the policy, a belief that policy should be understood by the consumers, alignment of policy tenets with participants' beliefs and the degree to which participants could understand policy purposes in relation to district priorities and initiatives.

The findings discussed in detail in Chapter Four demonstrated that familiarity and agreement with the LOOK Act resulted in optimism and eager implementation while uncertainty regarding ESSA's tenets, implementation, and implications coupled with participants' perceived lack of urgency concerning the legislation did not lead most participants to engage with ESSA in similar ways or to a similar degree. More exploration as to how and under what circumstances participants gain knowledge, resources, and skills needed to make sense of policy is needed, as well as work that continues to examine the connections between stated beliefs and policy response.

It is important to note that the phrase "policy implementation" does not refer to a monolithic phenomenon; policies differ greatly from one another and so do educators' response. ESSA and LOOK differ dramatically from one another in origin, size, scope, and purpose. It was not expected that participants would think about them or respond to them in similar ways. Likely because of these differences, participants' sensemaking did not occur in similar ways or to similar degrees with both of these policies. In the case of ESSA, district and school participants saw the implementation as linear, top-down, and as being driven by the state, a view more reminiscent of technical-rational perspectives on policy implementation than sensemaking perspectives (Datnow & Park, 2009). The possible reasons for the limited attention and response to ESSA were discussed in Chapter Four. With the exception of two participants who offered some interpretations, the sensemaking framework for examining ESSA, then, proved fairly limiting as the participants were not grappling with this policy to the degree they were considering other policies and initiatives. In the case of LOOK, participants were already in actively comprehending and responding to the legislation at the time of data collection. Many had, over the course of months or years, advocated for and sought this legislation because of personal and professional beliefs. Participants' sensemaking of LOOK was an ongoing and multidirectional process between advocates, district and school-based staff, and state-level educators. Educators in this study used their agency they perceived they had in implementing LOOK to plan initial ELPAC meetings, discuss programming options with colleagues, and network with other district leaders who were also exploring how to best, in one participant's works, "take advantage" of the promise offered by the LOOK Act.

Recommendations for Policy

The purpose of this study was to explore educational leaders' interpretations of and responses to ESSA and LOOK. The differences in how they made sense of these very different policies have implications for policymakers. First, policy should create space for educator and community agency in making instructional and programmatic decisions about what is best for students' learning. Participants in this study mistrusted policy they saw as dictating a "one size fits all" approach. They felt English-only policy passed in Massachusetts in 2002 was contrary to research on bilingualism and how bilingual children learn, and this interpretation shaped their response to its successor, which reversed this restrictive policy they viewed at best as inappropriate and at worst as draconian. These participants viewed LOOK, the successor to the English-only policy, as more flexible. They reported LOOK allowed districts to select an approach to educating bilingual children with DESE's approval and also seemed more aligned with research demonstrating the positive cognitive and social benefits of bilingualism, in that it permitted the opening of bilingual programs without a waiver. Participants responded to this more flexible policy that aligned with their beliefs with great enthusiasm. However, it is unrealistic to expect that policy will align with all educators' beliefs all of the time. The importance here is for educational professionals to have sufficient agency to respond to policy in ways that take the needs of their students and local context into account.

Second, the need for educator voices in policymaking has been previously documented (e.g. Hargreaves & Shirley, 2011) and is certainly not a new concept. Many participants in this study had advocated for the LOOK Act and were actively involved in organizations that fought for its passage for years prior to passage. Those who had advocated for LOOK expressed great pride that the support they had long held for such a policy had been effective in bringing about

what they saw to be positive change. Their investment in the policy's passage suggests they will actively work to implement LOOK's tenets.

Recommendations for Educational Practice

This dissertation concludes with two primary recommendations for practice. They are: 1) the provision of time to facilitate increased familiarity with policy and 2) a consideration of the mind shifts needed to occur in order to improve education for emergent bilingual students.

Provision of Time to Facilitate Educator Familiarity with Policy Tenets

As Spillane and colleagues caution, educators cannot make sense of policies of which they have no knowledge (Spillane, Reiser, and Reimer, 2002). While some amount of knowledge seems an obvious requirement for sensemaking, less clear is how much and what kind of familiarity is sufficient. This question raises others about the factors and contexts that provide access points to policy sensemaking. In this study, participants with familiarity of ESSA reported having served in a professional capacity that provided them exposure to the legislation. They were better prepared to make sense of its tenets and consider its implications. This is consistent with Spillane and colleagues' argument that individuals more familiar with a given policy are more likely to act in response to it. It was not clear to district-level educators in this study what they should be doing in response to ESSA; the policy was not messaged to most of them in a way that made it seem concrete. Participants often did not seem to know "what" they were supposed to be interpreting. Like the teachers in the Wright and Choi (2006) study, educators in this study did not feel comfortable with *how* to implement aspects of ESSA, or even *what* to implement. Individuals in this study likely possessed an incomplete picture of the intent behind and full distinctions between NCLB and ESSA because they lacked a full command of ESSA's components. In this sense, their sensemaking was conservative, as Spillane (2004) suggests

sensemaking processes can be. Participants were able to articulate the felt impact of NCLB; yet most of these participants at this stage in the legislation's tenure possessed neither a full understanding nor a felt impact of ESSA.

It is clear that if the educators are to become more informed consumers of ESSA and other policies, they must be provided time to learn about the policy. Policy messaging was reported to be inconsistent and insufficient for district level administrators who viewed the role of the state and external organizations to be the dissemination of policy information. Related here is the need for school leaders to be active partners in these policy processes with district leaders. While interviewing large numbers of school leaders was outside the scope of this study, multiple district leaders in this study reported they felt school leaders had more power in making instructional and programmatic decisions at the school-level.

Overall, participants reported focusing on policy when it aligned with their beliefs and they thought it would have a positive impact on students. Yet the provision of collaborative time alone is likely not sufficient. Participants likely must also be motivated to learn about the policy. If the participants in this study believed ESSA should be interpreted only at the state level, or if they felt ESSA would not have an impact on their teaching and students' learning, why would they invest the time understanding it?

The lack of district actors' engagement in understanding ESSA's tenets is significant because it means the interpretation and response will primarily occur at the state and federal levels. This does not mean ESSA will not have a significant impact on districts. Providing space and time for district leaders to comprehend federal policy together and to consider implications for students could mitigate unforeseen negative felt impacts of the policy and allow educators to take full advantage of the policy's tenets to the benefit of students.

Consideration of the Mind Shifts Needed for Change to Occur

The second primary recommendation for educators is to honor the mind shifts regarding emergent bilingual students that need to occur before and during authentic change processes. Scholars in the field of educational change have long touted the necessity of culture change as an imperative piece of strong leadership and of school change. Fullan (2007) explains, "Transforming the culture—changing the way we do things around here—is the main point. I call this re-culturing." The re-culturing needed in the majority of these school districts, as seen by this study's participants, was a mind shift across district and school staff. Most of the district-level educators in this study believed their district staff still needed to undergo mind shifts about bilingual children in order for equitable educational outcomes to be realized for those children. In considering these mind shifts, it is crucial for educators and researchers to give credence to the traditionally marginalized voices of bilingual, EL, and Special Education teachers and leaders. Two EL Directors expressed frustration at feelings of powerlessness as non-school-based administrators. Coburn (2001) and Datnow, Park, and Wohlstetter (2007) argue school leaders have great power in the creation of messaging about policy, in determining the circumstances under which sensemaking happens, and providing support for sensemaking. These district-level directors reported collaborating with principals but reported they lacked sufficient access to school leaders to feel effective in fully integrating their work into schools. This collaboration could facilitate mind shifts for the better regarding bilingual children and bilingualism. Yet, despite citing a need for these mind shifts, participants overwhelmingly praised the work and commitment of teachers in districts.

In my own practice as a school leader, this study informs how I approach collaborating with district leaders to create educational experiences for children that are informed by multiple

perspectives. It also reaffirms for me the importance of agency and educator voice in the implementation of school initiatives and policies. Finally, it reaffirms the importance of building teacher capacity to teach bilingual students and to dismantle systems that privilege monolingualism over bilingualism.

Limitations

There are a number of limitations to the current study. First, I was only able to capture participants' reported understandings of and reported responses to policy. Therefore, the policy understandings and responses presented in this dissertation were those communicated to me by participants themselves. Observations of school and district meetings as well as ELPAC meetings, school committee, and other community conversations would have facilitated a different, and possibly deeper, kind of understanding. While the comparison of multiple in-depth cases of districts would have been interesting, it was outside the scope of this dissertation study.

Second, as discussed earlier in this chapter, ESSA and LOOK were not similar policies and did not have similar purposes. The purpose of this study was to understand how participants were grappling with and responding to them both because they were occurring on similar, though not identical, time frames, but not because any inherent similarity between the policies. A risk in comparing two policies so vastly different in purpose is the possibility of passing judgement on one or comparing them in a way that applauds one and condemns the other. I attempted to contrast them only in order to understand differences in how and why policy differences and core tenets function *within* the sensemaking process. Thinking about differences in policy as I thought about differences in response was a helpful exercise.

Further, I was and am committed to considering how context impacts the sensemaking and policy response processes, but I had to exercise caution in my presentation of district

information in order to protect participants' identities, many of whom were rightfully concerned about confidentiality. I thus purposefully constructed brief and intentionally vague summaries of district contexts in order to maintain district participants' confidentiality, knowing that more detailed discussion of specific context examples would have facilitated a more in-depth presentation of the role of district context. The brevity of district profiles was especially important considering I included a table disclosing the districts in Massachusetts educating high numbers of emergent bilingual students and the participants I interviewed work in these districts; it is important these cities and towns not be easily matched to the districts I discuss in this study using pseudonyms.

Conclusion

In addition to exploring how school, district, state, and organizational leaders understood and responded to policy for emergent bilinguals in Massachusetts, this study also sought to amplify the voices of a range of educational leaders tasked with both the education of and accountability for emergent bilingual students in Massachusetts. It must be noted well that for the impressive educators in this study, prioritizing an intentional focus on the immediate did not suggest educators were not able to focus attentions and efforts beyond day to day events; this focus was not a failure to see the forest through the trees. Rather, they collaboratively and purposefully crafted priorities aligned with their beliefs and district priorities, choosing to focus on those which they viewed as having a direct and timely positive impact on bilingual students and their teachers.

References

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

Arias, M., & Wiley, T. (2013). Language policy and teacher preparation: The implications of a restrictive language policy on teacher preparation. *Applied Linguistics Review*, *4*(1), 83-104.

Au, W. (2007). High-stakes testing and curricular control: A qualitative metasynthesis. *Educational Researcher*, *36*(5), 258-267.

August, D., & Hakuta, K. (1997). *Improving schooling for language minority students: A research agenda.* Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press.

Bacon, C. (2019). Monolingual language ideologies: Rethinking equity and language policy in Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) teacher education. (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (2217838852). Retrieved from https://proxy.bc.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fsearch.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F2217838852%3Faccountid%3D9673

Ballantyne, K., Sanderman, A., & Levy, J. (2008). Educating English Language Learners: Building teacher capacity: Roundtable report. *National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition & Language Instruction Educational Programs*. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED521360

Balu, R., & Ehrlich, S. B. (2018). Making sense out of incentives: A framework for considering the design, use, and implementation of incentives to improve attendance. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk (JESPAR)*, *23*(1-2), 93-106.

Ball, S., & Lacy, C. (1984). Subject disciplines as the opportunity for group action: A measured critique of subject subcultures. In A. Hargreaves & P. Woods (Eds.), *Classrooms and staff rooms: The sociology of teachers and teaching* (pp. 232-245). Milton Keynes, UK: Open University Press.

Bartlett, F. (1932). Remembering: An experimental and social study. *Cambridge: Cambridge University*.

Basham, J., Hall, T., Carter Jr, R., & Stahl, W. (2016). An operationalized understanding of personalized learning. *Journal of Special Education Technology*, *31*(3), 126-136.

Batt, E. (2008). Teachers' perceptions of ELL education: Potential solutions to overcome the greatest challenges. *Multicultural Education, 15*(3), 39-43.

Becker, H. (1998). Tricks of the trade: How to think about research while doing it. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Booher-Jennings, J. (2005). Below the bubble: "Educational triage" and the Texas accountability system. *American Educational Research Journal*, *42*(2), 231-268.

Brewer, W., & Nakamura, G. (1984). The Nature and functions of schemas. *Center for the Study of Reading, Technical Report No. 325*

Bryk, A., Bender Sebring, P., Allensworth, E., Easton, J., and Luppescu, S. (2010) *Organizing schools for improvement: Lessons from Chicago*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Byrnes, H. (2005). Reconsidering the nexus of content and language: A mandate of the NCLB legislation. *Modern Language Journal, 89,* 277-282.

Callahan, R. M., & Shifrer, D. (2016). Equitable access for secondary English Learner students: Course taking as evidence of EL program effectiveness. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *52*(3), 463-496.

Callahan, R., Wilkinson, L., Muller, C., & Frisco, M. (2009). ESL placement and schools: Effects on immigrant achievement. *Educational Policy*, *23*(2), 355-384.

Cantor, N., & Mischel, W. (1979). Prototypes in person perception. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, *12*, 3-52.

Cantor, N., Mischel, W., & Schwartz, J. (1982). A prototype analysis of psychological situations. *Cognitive psychology*, *14*(1), 45-77.

Chappell, S., & Faltis, C. (2013). *The arts and emergent bilingual youth: Building culturally responsive, critical and creative education in school and community contexts*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge.

Charmaz, K. (2004). Grounded theory. In S. Hesse-Biber & P. Leavy (Eds.), Approaches to qualitative research: A reader on theory and practice. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Charmaz, K. (2009). Shifting the grounds: Constructivist grounded theory methods. *Developing grounded theory: The second generation*, 127-154.

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

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

Coburn, C. (2005). Shaping teacher sensemaking: School leaders and the enactment of reading policy. *Educational Policy*, *19*(3), 476-509.

Coburn, C. (2016). What's policy got to do with it? How the structure-agency debate can illuminate policy implementation. *American Journal of Education*, *122*(3), 465-475.

Coburn, C., Russell, J., Kaufman, J., & Stein, M. (2012). Supporting sustainability: Teachers' advice networks and ambitious instructional reform. *American Journal of Education*, *119*(1), 137-182.

Cohen, A. (1990). *Language learning: Insights for learners, teachers, and researchers*. Independence, KY: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.

Cohen, D., & Ball, D. (1990). Relations between policy and practice: A commentary. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, *12*(3), 331-338.

Cohen, D., & Weiss, J. (1993). The interplay of social science and prior knowledge in public policy. *Studies in the thought of Charles E. Lindblom.* Boulder, CO: Westview.

Coppel, J., Dumont, J. and Visco, I. (2001). Trends in immigration and economic consequences. *OECD Economics Department Working Papers, 284*.

Confrey, J., & Makar, K. (2005). Critiquing and improving the use of data from high-stakes tests with the aid of dynamic statistics software. In C. Dede, J. Honin & L. Peters (Eds.), *Scaling up success: Lessons learned from technology-based educational improvement* (pp. 198-226). San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

Cook-Harvey, C., Darling-Hammond, L., Lam, L., Mercer, C., & Roc, M. (2016). *Equity and ESSA: Leveraging educational opportunity through the Every Student Succeeds Act*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2015). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Corson, D. (1999). Community-based education for indigenous cultures: Indigenous community-based education. *Language Culture and Curriculum*,*11*(3), 238-249

Creswell, J., Hanson, W., Clark Plano, V., & Morales, A. (2007). Qualitative research designs: Selection and implementation. *The Counseling Psychologist*, *35*(2), 236-264.

Creswell, J., & Poth, C. (2017). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Cummins, J. (1981). Age on arrival and immigrant second language learning in Canada: A reassessment. *Applied Linguistics, 2*, l32–l49.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1990). Teaching and knowledge: Policy issues posed by alternate certification for teachers. *Peabody Journal of Education*, *67*(3), 123-154.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2010). Teacher education and the American future. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *61*(1-2), 35-47.

Datnow, A., Borman, G., Stringfield, S., Overman, L., & Castellano, M. (2003). Comprehensive school reform in culturally and linguistically diverse contexts: Implementation and outcomes from a four-year study. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, *25*(2), 143-170.

Datnow, A., & Park, V. (2009). Conceptualizing policy implementation: Large-scale reform in an era of complexity. In G. Sykes, B. Schneider, & D. M. Plank (Eds.), *Handbook of Education Policy Research*. New York: Routledge.

Datnow, A., Park, V., & Wohlstetter, P. (2007). *Achieving with data.* Los Angeles, CA: Center on Educational Governance.

deJong, E. J. (2008). Contextualizing policy appropriation: Teachers' perspectives, local responses, and English-only ballot initiatives. *The Urban Review*, *40*(4), 350-370.

deJong, E. J. (2011). *Foundations for multilingualism in education: From principles to practice*. Philadelphia, PA: Caslon.

Dee, T. and Jacob, B. (2007). Do high school exit exams influence educational attainment or labor market performance? In A. Gamoran (Ed.) *Standards-Based Reform and the Poverty Gap: Lessons for No Child Left Behind.* Washington, D.C.: Brookings University Press.

Del Valle, S. (2003). *Language rights and the law in the United States: Finding our voices*, *40*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y., (Eds.) (2011) *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*. London, UK: SAGE.

Diamond, J., & Spillane, J. (2004). High-stakes accountability in urban elementary schools: Challenging or reproducing inequality? *Teachers College Record, 106*, 1145-1176.

Dilg, M. (1999). *Race and culture in the classroom.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

ELL Sub-Committee of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education's Committee on the Proficiency Gap. (2010). *Halting the race to the bottom: Urgent interventions for the improvement of the education of English language learners in Massachusetts and selected districts.* Retrieved from http://www.gaston.umb.edu/publications/pub_overview_authorname.php?id=286

Elmore, R. F. (1983). Social policymaking as strategic intervention. *Handbook of social intervention*, 212-236.

Escamilla, K. (2006). Semilingualism applied to the literacy behaviors of Spanish-speaking

emerging bilinguals: Bi-illiteracy or emerging biliteracy? *Teachers College Record*, *108*(11), 2329.

Evans, B., & Hornberger, N. (2005). No Child Left Behind: Repealing and unpeeling federal language education policy in the United States. *Language Policy*, *4*(1), 87-106.

Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, Pub. L. No. 114-95 § 114 Stat. 1177 (2015-2016).

Finnigan, K., & Gross, B. (2007). Do accountability policy sanctions influence teacher motivation? Lessons from Chicago's low-performing schools. *American Educational Research Journal*, *44*(3), 594-630.

Fuhrman, S., Clune, W., & Elmore, R. (1991). Research on education reform: Lessons on the implementation of policy. In A. R. Odden (Ed.), *Education policy implementation* (197-218). Albany, NY: State University of New York.

Fullan, M. (2007). *Leading in a culture of change*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.

Fullan, M., Cuttress, C., & Kilcher, A. (2005). Eight forces for leaders of change. *National Staff Development Council*, *26*(4), 54-64.

Fullan, M., & Miles, M. (1992). Getting reform right: What works and what doesn't. *Phi delta kappan*, *73*(10), 745-752.

Gándara, P., Maxwell-Jolly, J., & Driscoll, A. (2005). Listening to teachers of English Learners: A survey of California teachers' challenges, experiences, and professional development needs. *Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE)*.

Gándara, P. & Orfield, G. (2012). Segregating Arizona's English Learners: A return to the Mexican room?. *Teachers College Record*, *114*, 3-20.

García, E. (1987). The politics of bilingual education. *Review of Education*, *13*, 192-194.

García, E., & Frede, E. (2010). *Young English Language Learners: Current research and emerging directions for practice and policy. Early Childhood Education Series*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

García, M., & Pavón Vázquez, V. (2012). Investigating the coexistence of the mother tongue and the foreign language through teacher collaboration in CLIL contexts: perceptions and practice of the teachers involved in the plurilingual programme in Andalusia. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, *15*(5), 573-592.

García, O. (2009). *Bilingual education in the 21st century: A global perspective.* Malden, MA: Wiley/Blackwell.

García, O., & Kleifgen, J. (2010). *Educating emergent bilinguals: Policies, programs, and practices for English Language Learners*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

García, O., Kleifgen, J., & Falchi, L. (2008). From English Language Learners to Emergent Bilinguals. *Equity Matters, Research Review No. 1: Campaign for Educational Equity.*

Goggin, M., Bowman, A., Lester, J.P., & O'Toole, L.J. (1990). *Implementation theory and practice: Toward a third generation*. Glenville: IL: Scott, Foresman & Little, Brown.

Gort, M., deJong, E. J., & Cobb, C. D. (2008). SEeIng through a bilingual lens: Structural and ideological contexts of Structured English Immersion in three Massachusetts districts. *Journal of Educational Research & Policy Studies*, *8*(2), 41-67.

Greeno, J., Collins, A., & Resnick, L. (1996). Cognition and learning. *Handbook of Educational Psychology*, *77*, 15-46.

Guthrie, J. W. (1991). Conditions of education in California: 1990. *Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE).*

Gutiérrez, K. D., & Rogoff, B. (2003). Cultural ways of learning: Individual traits or repertoires

of practice. *Educational Researcher, 32*(5), 19–25.

Hakuta, K. (2011). Educating language minority students and affirming their equal rights: Research and practical perspectives. *Educational Researcher*, *40*(4), 163-174.

Hamilton, L., Berends, M., & Stecher, B. (2005). *Teachers' responses to standards-based accountability*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

Hamilton, L., Stecher, B., & Klein, S. (2002). *Making sense of test-based accountability in education*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

Hamilton, L. S., Stecher, B. M., Marsh, J. A., McCombs, J. S., & Robyn, A. (2007). *Standards-based accountability under No Child Left Behind: Experiences of teachers and administrators in three states*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

Haneda, M., & Nespor, J. (2013). Strangers and professionals: Positioning discourse in ESL teachers' work. *The Urban Review*, *45*(3), 251-272.

Haney, W. (2000). The myth of the Texas miracle in education. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, *8*(41).

Hargreaves, A., & Shirley, D. (2011). The fourth way. *Educational Leadership: Context, Strategy and Collaboration*, 283-289.

Harper, C., deJong, E., & Platt, E. (2008). Marginalizing English as a second language teacher expertise: The exclusionary consequence of No Child Left Behind. *Language Policy*, *7*(3), 267-284.

Harper, C., Platt, E., Naranjo, C., & Boynton, S. (2007). Marching in unison: Florida ESL teachers and No Child Left Behind. *TESOL Quarterly*, *41*(3), 642-651.

Hernandez, A.C. (2001). The expected and unexpected literacy outcomes of bilingual students. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 25(3), 301-326.

Hernandez, D. J., Takanishi, R., & Marotz, K. G. (2009). Life circumstances and public policies for young children in immigrant families. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, *24*(4), 487-501.

Honig, M. I. (2006). *New directions in education policy implementation*. Albany, NY: SUNY.

Herrera, S., & Murry, K. (2006). Mastering ESL and bilingual methods: Differentiated instruction for culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students. *Education Review/Reseñas Educativas*.

Hopkins, M. (2012). Arizona's teacher policies and their relationship with English learner instructional practice. *Language Policy*, *11*(1), 81-99.

Hopkins, M., Thompson, K. D., Linquanti, R., Hakuta, K., & August, D. (2013). Fully accounting for English learner performance: A key issue in ESEA reauthorization. *Educational Researcher*, *42*(2), 101-108.

Hutchinson, M. (2013). Bridging the gap: Preservice teachers and their knowledge of working with English language learners. *TESOL Journal*, *4*(1), 25-54.

Jacob, B. (2004). Accountability, incentives and behavior: The impact of high-stakes testing in the Chicago Public Schools. *Journal of Public Economics, 89*, 761-796

Jacob, E. (1997). Context and cognition: Implications for educational innovators and anthropologists. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, *28*(1), 3-21.

Johnson, R. (2000). Case studies of expectation climate at two bilingual education schools. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 24(3), 261-276.

Karabenick, S., & Noda, P. (2004). Professional development implications of teachers' beliefs and attitudes toward English language learners. *Bilingual Research Journal, 28*, 55–75.

Kena, G., Musu-Gillette, L., Robinson, J., Wang, X., Rathbun, A., Zhang, J., ... & Velez, E. D. V. (2015). The Condition of education 2015. *National Center for Education Statistics*.

Kennedy, M., (2005). *Inside teaching*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Koretz, D., McCaffrey, D., & Hamilton, L. (2001). Toward a framework for validating gains under high-stakes conditions. *Center for the Study of Evaluation, National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing, Graduate School of Education & Information Studies*, University of California, Los Angeles, CA.

Lane, J. (2013). The principal-agent approach to politics: Policy implementation and public policy-making. *Open Journal of Political Science*, *3*(02), 85.

Leana, C., & Pil, F. (2006). Social capital and organizational performance: Evidence from urban public schools. *Organization Science*, *17*(3), 353-366.

Lee, O., Luykx, A., Buxton, C., & Shaver, A. (2007). The challenge of altering elementary school teachers' beliefs and practices regarding linguistic and cultural diversity in science instruction. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching, 44*(9), 1269-1291.

Lee, O., Maerten-Rivera, J., Penfield, R., LeRoy, K., & Secada, W. (2008). Science achievement of English language learners in urban elementary schools: Results of a first-year professional development intervention. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching: The Official Journal of the National Association for Research in Science Teaching*, *45*(1), 31-52.

Lennon, M. C., & Corbett, T. (Eds.). (2003). *Policy into action: Implementation research and welfare reform*. Washington, D.C: Urban Institute Press.

Liggett, T. (2010). 'A little bit marginalized': the structural marginalization of English language teachers in urban and rural public schools. *Teaching Education*, *21*(3), 217-232.

Lin, A. (2000). Reform in the making: *The implementation of social policy in prison.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Linquanti, R. (2001). *The redesignation dilemma: Challenges and choices in fostering meaningful accountability for English learners.* Berkeley, California: The University of California. Linguistic Minority Research Institute.

Liston, D., & Zeichner, K. (1996). *Culture and teaching: Reflective teaching and the social conditions of schooling*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Little, J. (1990). Conditions of professional development in secondary schools. In M. W. McLaughlin, J. E. Talbert, & N. Bascia (Eds.), *The contexts of teaching in secondary schools* (pp. 187-223). New York: Teachers College.

Loeb, S., & McEwan, P. (2006). An economic approach to education policy implementation. *New directions in education policy implementation: Confronting complexity*, 169-186.

López, F., & McEneaney, E. (2012). State implementation of language acquisition policies and reading achievement among Hispanic students. *Educational Policy*, *26*(3), 418-464.

Lucas, T., Villegas, A., & Freedson-Gonzalez, M. (2008). Linguistically responsive teacher education: Preparing classroom teachers to teach English Learners. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *59*(4), 361-373.

Luna, C., & Turner, C. L. (2001). The impact of the MCAS: Teachers talk about high-stakes testing. *The English Journal*, *91*(1), 79-87.

Mapp, K., & Kuttner, P. (2013). Partners in Education: A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships. *SEDL*.

Mannheim K (1936). *Ideology and utopia: An introduction to the sociology of knowledge*. New York, NY: Harvest.

Markus, H., & Zajonc, R. (1985). The cognitive perspective in social psychology. *Handbook of Social Psychology*, *1*, 137-230.

Marsh, J., Bush-Mecenas, S., & Hough, H. (2017). Learning from early adopters in the new accountability era: insights from California's CORE waiver districts. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *53*(3), 327-364.

McGuinn, P. (2016). From No Child Left Behind to the Every Student Succeeds Act: Federalism and the education legacy of the Obama administration. *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, *46*(3), 392-415.

McDermott, K. (2004). Incentives, capacity, and implementation: Evidence from Massachusetts education reform. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, *16*(1), 45-65.

McLaughlin, M., & Talbert, J. (1993). *Contexts that matter for teaching and learning: Strategic opportunities for meeting the nation's educational goals.* Stanford, CA: Center for Research on the Context of Secondary School Teaching.

McMurrer, J. (2007). Implementing the No Child Left Behind teacher requirements. *Center for Education Policy.*

McNeil, L. (2005). Faking equity: High-stakes testing and the education of Latino youth. In A. Valenzuela (Ed.), *Leaving children behind: How "Texasstyle" accountability fails Latino youth* (pp. 57-111). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

McNeil, L., Coppola, E., Radigan, J., & Heilig, J. V. (2008). Avoidable losses: High-stakes accountability and the dropout crisis. E*ducation Policy Analysis Archives*, *16*(3), 1-48.

McNeil, L. & Valenzuela, A. 2001. The harmful impact of the TAAS system of testing in Texas: Beneath the accountability rhetoric. In M. Kornhaber and G. Orfield (Eds.) *Raising*

Standards or Raising Barriers? Inequality and High Stakes Testing in Public Education (pp. 127-150). New York: Century Foundation.

Menken, K. (2006). Teaching to the test: How No Child Left Behind impacts language policy, curriculum, and instruction for English Learners. *Bilingual Research Journal*, *30*(2), 521-546.

Menken, K. (2008). *English Learners left behind: Standardized testing as language policy*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Menken, K. (2008). Review of the book *Language Policy: Hidden Agendas and New Approaches,* by Elana Shohamy. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, *9*(2), 231-234.

Menken, K. (2010). NCLB and English Learners: Challenges and consequences. *Theory Into Practice*, *49*(2), 121-128.

Menken, K., & Kleyn, T. (2010). The long-term impact of subtractive schooling in the educational experiences of secondary English language learners. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, *13*(4), 399-417.

Merriam, S. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education.* Revised and expanded from *Case study research in education.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Miles, M., Huberman, A., & Saldaña, J. (2013). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Mischler, E. (1991). *Research interviewing: Context and narrative*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Mitchell, K. (2010). *Systemic inequities in the policy and practice of educating secondary bilingual learners and their teachers: A critical race theory analysis.* (Doctoral

dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses: http://search.proquest.com/docview/743818241?accountid=14506.

Mohan, B., Leung, C., Davison, C. (Eds.), 2001. *English as a Second Language in the mainstream: Teaching, learning, and identity. Applied Linguistics and Language Study.* Essex, England: Pearson.

Moore, H. (2007). Non-language policies and ESL: Some connections. *TESOL Quarterly*, 41, 573–583.

Murphy, G., & Medin, D. (1985). The role of theories in conceptual coherence. *Psychological Review*, *92*(3), 289.

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition. (2012). Profiles of English Learners. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from www.ncela.us

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, P.L. 107-110, 20 U.S.C. § 6319 (2002).

Nichols, S., & Berliner, D. (2005). *The inevitable corruption of indicators and educators through high-stakes testing.* Tempe, AZ: Education Policy Research Unit.

Olivos, E., & Sarmiento, L. (2006). Is there room for biliteracy? Credentialing California's future bilingual teachers. *Issues in Teacher Education*, *15*(1), 69-84.

Olsen, L. (2010). *Reparable Harm. Fulfilling the unkept promise of educational opportunity for California's long term English learners.* Long Beach, CA: Californians Together.

Odden, A. (Ed.). (1991). *Education policy implementation*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Odden, A., & Marsh, D. (1988). How comprehensive reform legislation can improve secondary schools. *The Phi Delta Kappan*, *69*(8), 593-598.

O'Brien, J. (2009). High school social studies teachers' attitudes toward English language learners. *Social Studies Research and Practice*, *4*(2), 36-48.

Palmer, D., Henderson, K., Wall, D., Zúñiga, C., & Berthelsen, S. (2016). Team teaching among mixed messages: Implementing two-way dual language bilingual education at third grade in Texas. *Language Policy*, *15*(4), 393-413.

Palmer, D., & Lynch, A. W. (2008). A bilingual education for a monolingual test? The pressure to prepare for TAKS and its influence on choices for language of instruction in Texas elementary bilingual classrooms. *Language Policy*, *7*(3), 217-235.

Palmer, D. K., & Martínez, R. A. (2016). Developing biliteracy: What do teachers really need to know about language?. *Language Arts*, *93*(5), 379.

Palmer, D., & Rangel, V. (2011). High stakes accountability and policy implementation: Teacher decision making in bilingual classrooms in Texas. *Educational Policy*, *25*(4), 614-647.

Park, V., & Datnow, A. (2009). Co-constructing distributed leadership: District and school connections in data-driven decision-making. *School leadership and Management*, *29*(5), 477-494.

Patton, M. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.

Pawan, F., & Craig, D. A. (2011). ESL and content area teacher responses to discussions on English language learner instruction. *TESOL Journal*, *2*(3), 293-311.

Penfield, J. (1987). ESL: The regular classroom teachers' perspective. *TESOL Quarterly, 21*, 21–39.

Pennycook, A. (2010). *Language as a local practice*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Penuel, W., Meyer, E., & Valladares, M. (2016). Making the most of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): Helping states focus on school equity, quality and climate. *National Education Policy Center*.

Penuel, W., & Shepard, L. (2016). Assessment and teaching. *Handbook of research on teaching*, 787-850.

Petit, S. (2011). Teachers' beliefs about English Language Learners in the mainstream classroom: A review of the literature. *International Multilingual Research Journal*, *5*, 123–147.

Phelps, R. (2012). The effect of testing on student achievement, 1910–2010. *International Journal of Testing*, *12*(1), 21-43.

Piaget, J. (1972). Intellectual evolution from adolescence to adulthood. *Human development*, *15*(1), 1-12.

Polat, N. (2010). Pedagogical treatment and change in pre-service teacher beliefs: An experimental study. *International Journal of Educational Research,* 49, 195-20.

Porac, J., Thomas, H., & Baden-Fuller, C. (1989). Competitive groups as cognitive communities: The case of Scottish knitwear manufacturers. *Journal of Management studies*, *26*(4), 397-416.

Radin, B. (2000). *Beyond Machiavelli: Policy analysis comes of age*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

Ragan, A., & Lesaux, N. (2006). Federal, state, and district level English language learner program entry and exit requirements: Effects on the education of language minority learners. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, *14*, 20.

Raphael, S., & Smolensky, E. (2009). Immigration and poverty in the United States. *American Economic Review*, *99*(2), 41-44.

Ratner, G. (2015, February 11). Independent test results show NCLB fails. *Fair Test.* http://www.fairtest.org/independent-test-results-show-nclb-fails

Reeves, J. (2006). Secondary teacher attitudes toward including English-Language Learners in mainstream classrooms. *Journal of Educational Research, 99*, 131–142.

Resnick, L. (1991). Shared cognition: Thinking as social practice. In L. Resnick, J. Levine, & S. D. Teasley (Eds.), *Perspectives on socially shared cognition* (pp. 1-20).

Revilla, A., & Asato, J. (2002). The implementation of Proposition 227 in California schools: A critical analysis of the effect on teacher beliefs and classroom practices. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, *35*(2), 108-118.

Reyes, P., & Rorrer, A. (2001). US school reform policy, state accountability systems and the limited English proficient student. *Journal of Education Policy*, *16*(2), 163-178.

Rodriguez, D., Manner, J. & Darcy, S. (2010). Evolution of teacher perceptions regarding effective instruction for English Language Learners. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, *9(*2), 130-144.

Rubin, H., & Rubin, I. (1995). *Qualitative interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ruiz-de-Velasco, J., & Fix, M. (2000). Overlooked and Underserved: Immigrant Students in US Secondary Schools. Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute.

Saldaña, J. (2015). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sandholtz, J., Ogawa, R., & Scribner, S. (2004). Standards gaps: Unintended consequences of local standards-based reform. *Teachers College Record*, *106*(6), 1177-1202.

Saultz, A., Fusarelli, L., & McEachin, A. (2017). The Every Student Succeeds Act, the decline of the federal role in education policy, and the curbing of executive authority. *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, *47*(3), 426-444.

Scanlan, M., & López, F. A. (2014). *Leadership for culturally and linguistically responsive schools*. NY, New York: Routledge.

Schank, R. C. (1986). Explanation: A first pass. *Experience, memory, and reasoning*, 139-165.

Shin, H. B., & Kominski, R. (2010). *Language use in the United States, 2007*. US Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, US Census Bureau.

Shohamy, E. (2006). *Language policy: Hidden agendas and new approaches*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge.

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

Simon, S. (2013, December 3). PISA results show 'educational stagnation' in U.S. *Politico*.

Siskin, L. S. (1991). Departments as different worlds: Subject subcultures in secondary schools. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 27(2).

Siskin, L. (1994). *Realms of knowledge: Academic departments in secondary schools.* Washington, DC: Falmer Press.

Sharkey, J., & Layzer, C. (2000). Whose definition of success? Identifying factors that affect English Language Learners' access to academic success and resources. *TESOL Quarterly*, *34*(2), 352-368.

Slama, R., Haynes, E., Sacks, L., Lee, D., & August, D. (2015). Massachusetts English Language Learners' profiles and progress: A report for the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. *American Institutes for Research*.

Solórzano, R. (2008). High stakes testing: Issues, implications, and remedies for English language learners. *Review of Educational Research*, *78*(2), 260-329.

Spillane, J. (1998). State policy and the non-monolithic nature of the local school district: Organizational and professional considerations. *American Educational Research Journal*, *35*(1), 33-63.

Spillane, J. (2004). *Standards deviation: How local schools misunderstand policy.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Spillane, J., Diamond, J. B., Burch, P., Hallett, T., Jita, L., & Zoltners, J. (2002). Managing in the middle: School leaders and the enactment of accountability policy. *Educational Policy, 16*(5), 731-762.

Spillane, J., Reiser, B., & Gomez, L. (2006). Policy implementation and cognition: The role of human, social, and distributed cognition in framing policy implementation. In *New directions in education policy implementation.* Albany: SUNY Press.

Spillane, J., Reiser, B., & Reimer, T. (2002). Policy implementation and cognition: Reframing and refocusing implementation research. *Review of Educational Research*, *72*(3), 387-431.

Stake, R. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Stein, M. K. & Brown, C. A. (1997). Teacher learning in a social context: Integrating collaborative and institutional processes with the study of teacher change. In E. Fennema & B. Nelson (Eds.) Mathematics teachers in transition (pp. 155-191). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Stern, R. H. (2016). *Not just common sense: Principled sensemaking and implementation of the common core at two middle schools*. Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1785783452). Retrieved from https://proxy.bc.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fsearch.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1785783452%3Facco

Suárez-Orozco, C., Gaytán, F., Bang, H., Pakes, J., O'Connor, E., & Rhodes, J. (2010). Academic trajectories of newcomer immigrant youth. *Developmental Psychology*, *46*(3), 602.

Sullivan, G. (2006). *The impact of high stakes testing on curriculum, teaching, and learning* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (304962599). Retrieved from https://proxy.bc.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fsearch.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F304962599%3Faccountid%3D9673

Thomas, B. (2017). Language policy, language ideology, and visual art education for emergent bilingual students. *Arts Education Policy Review*, *118*(4), 228-239.

Trope, Y. (1986). Identification and inferential processes in dispositional attribution. *Psychological Review*, *93*(3), 239.

Walker, A., Shafer, J., & Iiams, M. (2004). "Not in my classroom": Teacher attitudes towards English Language Learners in the mainstream classroom. *National Association for Bilingual Education Journal of Research and Practice, 2*, 130–160.

Warren, J., Jenkins, K., & Kulick, R. (2006). High School Exit Examinations and State-Level Completion and GED Rates, 1975 Through 2002. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, *28*(2), 131–152.

Weick, K. E. (1979). Cognitive processes in organizations. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, *1*(1), 41-74.

Weick, K. E. (1995). *Sensemaking in organizations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Williams, L. M. (2015). Beyond enforcement: Welcomeness, local law enforcement, and immigrants. *Public Administration Review*, *75*(3), 433-442.

Weick, K. E. (2001). Gapping the relevance bridge: Fashions meet fundamentals in management research. *British journal of management*, *12*, S71-S75.

Weick, K. E., Sutcliffe, K. M., & Obstfeld, D. (2005). Organizing and the process of sensemaking. *Organization science*, *16*(4), 409-421.

Wright, W. E. (2002). The effects of high stakes testing in an inner-city elementary school: The curriculum, the teachers, and the English Learners. *Current Issues in Education*, *5*.

Wright, W. E. (2005). English language learners left behind in Arizona: The nullification of accommodations in the intersection of federal and state policies. *Bilingual Research Journal*, *29*(1), 1-29.

Wright, W. E., & Choi, D. (2006). The impact of language and high-stakes testing policies on elementary school English Learners in Arizona. *Education Policy Analysis Archives/Archivos Analíticos de Políticas Educativas*, *14*.

Wright, W. E. (2007). Heritage language programs in the era of English-only and No Child Left Behind. *Heritage Language Journal*, *5*(1), 1-26.

Wright, W. E. (2016). Let them talk! *Educational Leadership*, *73*(5), 24-31.

Valdés, G. (2001). *Learning and not learning English: Latino students in American schools*. New York City, NY: Teachers College Press.

Uriarte, M., Tung, R., Lavan, N. and Diaz, V. (2010). Impact of restrictive language policies on engagement and academic achievement of English learners in Boston Public Schools. In P. Gándara and M. Hopkins (Eds.) *Forbidden Language: English Learners and Restrictive Language Policies* (pp. 65-85). New York: Teachers College Press.

United States DOJ. (2011). EEOA Review of MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Washington D.C.: US Government.

Valenzuela, A. (1999). Subtractive schooling: U.S.-Mexican youth and the politics of caring. Ithaca, NY: State University of New York Press.

Valenzuela, A. (2000). The significance of the TAAS test for Mexican immigrant and Mexican American adolescents: A case study. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, *22*(4), 524-539.

Valenzuela, A. (Ed.). (2005). *Leaving children behind: How Texas-style accountability fails Latino youth*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Valli, L., & Buese, D. (2007). The changing roles of teachers in an era of high-stakes accountability. *American Educational Research Journal*, *44*(3), 519-558.

Valdés, G. (2001). *Learning and not learning English: Latino students in American schools*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Vaznis, J. (2011, September 17). US finds statewide problems in schools. *Boston Globe.* Retrieved from http://articles.boston.com/2011-09-17/news/30169814_1_learners-teacher-training-school-districts

Viesca, K. (2013). Linguicism and racism in Massachusetts educational policy. *Education Policy Analysis Archives, 21* (52).

Villegas, A., & Lucas, T. (2011). A framework for linguistically responsive teaching. *Teacher preparation for linguistically diverse classrooms: A resource for teacher educators*, 55-72.

WIDA. (2012). WIDA's 2012 Amplification of the English Language Development Standards, Kindergarten–Grade 12 ("WIDA ELD Standards"). *Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System*.

Yanow, D. (1996). *How does a policy mean?: Interpreting policy and organizational actions*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

Yin, R. K. (2012). *Applications of case study research second edition: Applied social research methods series.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods* (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Yoon, B. (2008). Uninvited guests: The influence of teachers' roles and pedagogies on the positioning of English Language Learners in the regular classroom. *American Educational Research Journal, 45,* 495–522.

Youngs, C., & Youngs, G (2001). Predictors of mainstream teachers' attitudes toward ESL students. *TESOL Quarterly*, 35, 97–120.

Zehler, A., Fleischman, H., Hopstock, P., Stephenson, T., Pendizick, M., & Sapru, S. (2003). *Descriptive study of services to LEP students and LEP students with disabilities*. Vol. 1. Research Report. Washington, D.C.: NCELA.