

Contents

1 Introduction	1
U.S. Educational Policy and English Learners.	1
A Brief Overview of How Literacy Has Been Taught in the U.S.	3
Contrasting Views on the Role of Teachers in Policy Making	6
Poststructural Perspectives on Agency	6
Teacher Agency and Educational Policy.	9
The Three Studies Reported on in This Volume	12
2 Teachers of ELs Negotiating Top-Down Literacy Initiatives in Two Urban Districts	13
Research Design and Data Sources	14
Findings	16
Teachers Made Principled Adaptations to the Program.	17
People Overseeing Teachers' Implementation of OCR	
Influenced Teachers' Actions	18
Administrators Differentiated Enforcement of the	
OCR Mandate	18
Supportive Principals and Colleagues Affected	
Teachers' Actions	19
Resistance as Principled and Accommodating	20
Conclusion	22
3 Case Studies of Teachers Negotiating a Top-Down Literacy Mandate	23
The Case Study Teachers	24
Data Collection and Analysis	25
Classroom Observations	25
Post-Observation Interviews	27
Findings	27
Teacher Talk Predominated	27

Whole-Class Instruction Characterized Almost all Teaching	29
OCR Skill and Strategy Instruction Predominated	29
Teachers Frequently Read the OCR Texts Aloud to Students . . .	34
Students Had Very Few Opportunities to Read Independently. . .	34
Students Had Virtually No Opportunities to Write.	35
Teachers Were Concerned About How OCR Was Not Meeting Their Students' Needs	35
Over Time, the Teachers Became More Compliant with the District Policy	37
Discussion	41
A Desire to Remain Part of the Burgess Community Motivated Teachers to Conform	42
Institutional Authority Exerted a Tremendous Influence on Teachers' Actions	42
Professional Roles and Relationships Influenced Teachers' Actions.	43
Conclusion	44
4 Teachers' Collective Efforts to Resist the Policy Environment:	
The Case of Educators Advocating for Students (EAS)	45
Organizing for Collective Resistance	46
Teachers' Perspective on EAS	48
EAS was a Safe Space to Talk with and Learn from Others. . . .	48
EAS Members Advocated for Drawing on Multiple Discourses When Resisting Authority.	49
EAS Had an Ongoing Yet Transforming Relationship with the Union	50
Conclusion	51
5 Discussion	53
Top-Down Influences and Teacher Agency Affected Policy Implementation	53
Mandated Policies Constrained Teachers' Provision of Excellent Instruction for ELs	55
Collaborative Action as a Powerful Assertion of Professional Agency	58
Professional Development Aligned with Policy Mandates Not Usually Effective.	59
Some Final Thoughts.	60
Appendix A: Open Court Teacher Interview (Core Questions)	63
Appendix B: EAS Statement Published in Newspapers	65
References	67

Teachers of English Learners Negotiating Authoritarian
Policies

Pease-Alvarez, L.; Davies Samway, K.

2012, VIII, 71 p. 3 illus., Softcover

ISBN: 978-94-007-3945-1