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A Critical Discourse Study of Programmatic Literacy Curricula in Ontario: Knowledge, Power, and Discourse in an Age of Diversity

Susan Ibdah, *The University of Western Ontario*

Supervisor: Heydon, Rachel, *The University of Western Ontario*

Co-Supervisor: Zhang, Zheng, *The University of Western Ontario*

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Education

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to produce understandings of programmatic literacy curricula in an age of cultural, linguistic, and modal diversity. Relative to this diversity, I applied van Dijk's (2011) Critical Discourse Analysis to the case of the programmatic literacy curricula in Ontario, Canada to investigate how the discourses of these curricula positioned learners, teachers, literacy learning, and the learning environment. Ontario is an important case to study since it has been identified as a model of successful literacy education innovation (e.g., Luke, 2018) in a context that contains hyper diversity within the student population. The study drew on a Pedagogy of Multiliteracies as adapted by Kalantzis and Cope (2015) to conceptualize literacy. The study findings included the identification of metaphors, themes, instances of intertextuality, and syntax structures that suggested an ironic standardization of literacy learning in a context of diversity. I concluded that the discourses across documents conceptualize successful students as a specific and standardized type of learner. Moreover, teachers are positioned as agents of delivery rather than active designers of literacy learning opportunities. I also found that literacy learning in the documents is primarily monomodal and in service of standard outcomes rather than an exploration of diverse ways of knowing and transformative learning. In the conclusion of the paper, I provide implications, recommendations for new curriculum development, and suggestions for future research, all of which promote means through which curricula may be built that are open to cultural, linguistic, and modal diversities.

Lay Summary

The aim of this study was to produce understandings of official literacy curricula in an age of cultural, linguistic, and modal diversity. Ontario is important to study since it has been identified as a literacy model of success (e.g., Luke, 2018) in a context of student diversity. Using van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis and A Pedagogy of multiliteracies, I investigated how learners, teachers, literacy learning, and the learning environment are spoken about to understand power relations in literacy curricula. The study identified themes and features of discourse that suggested an ironic standardization of literacy learning in a context of diversity. I concluded that the discourses across documents conceptualize successful students and teachers as passive and standardized agents. I also found that literacy learning is in service of standard outcomes rather than an exploration of diverse ways of knowing. In the conclusion of the paper, I provide implications, recommendations for new curriculum development, and suggestions for future research, all of which promote diverse ways of knowing, communicating and learning.

Keywords

Ontario, Literacy, programmatic curriculum, critical discourse analysis, multiliteracies, cultural diversity, linguistic diversity, language curriculum, van Dijk, multimodality, multiculturalism

Acknowledgments

I acknowledge that this dissertation was written at Western University which is located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak and Attawandaron peoples, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. This land continues to be home to diverse Indigenous peoples whom we recognize as contemporary stewards of the land and vital contributors of our society.

Words are insufficient in describing the gratitude I feel towards those who supported me during my rigorous study. Nonetheless, I offer these words of appreciation to my husband, son, supervisors, family, and friends: Immeasurable thanks to you, for it is you who have helped me reach places otherwise inaccessible and develop my life purpose otherwise unrealizable. Indubitably, you are the good in this world.

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Dedicated to Jakob and Haleem

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Chapter 1: Dissertation Overview

This chapter provides an overview of the dissertation, including research questions and justification. It outlines fundamental concepts of the dissertation and finishes with a delineation of the following chapters.

All over the world, demographics of elementary students are changing as “immigration and migration, and the cultural consequences of both are impacting the way students' language development needs are addressed in the classroom” (Chiariello, 2018, p. 23). Specifically, in immigrant-receiving countries, such as Canada, literacy education entered the spotlight: language, culture, knowledge, and communication collide in unprecedented ways. In Canada, welcoming immigrants from non-Western cultures and non-English speaking communities has increased significantly (Statistics Canada, 2017). According to *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy*, this pattern of immigration brings a diversity of cultures, ways of knowing, languages and modes of communication (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013). In turn, these forms of diversity have implications for pedagogy and curriculum. Within the Canadian context of immigration and multiculturalism, I examine how diversity of the student population in Ontario is (or is not) addressed in the province’s programmatic literacy curriculum.

In Canada, each of the ten provinces and three territories is responsible for governing education in its jurisdiction (Canadian Bureau for International Education, 2016). Consequently, all aspects of education may differ across the country at any time, including programmatic curricula, assessment policies, and working conditions for teachers (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2018). What remains the same across Canada, however, are, colonial *Eurocentric ways of*

knowing that can negate diverse epistemologies and approaches to knowledge and information (Vallée, 2018).

Students from “marginalized groups suffer the consequences of negative identity construction and have difficulty negotiating a sense of belonging in Canada” (Cui, 2019, p. 67). For example, Cui documented how elementary Chinese students in Canada who are racialized are often discussed through a model minority discourse. Cui found that Chinese students in her transnational study were conceptualized through discourse as “high-academic achievers who are smart and hardworking...but quiet and obedient when facing unfair treatment” (p. 70). Through this discourse, the students become “essentialized” and their “struggles as racialised minorities rarely attract academic attention” (p. 70). Moreover, the discourse surrounding Chinese students in Canada “focus on their academic performance or labour market transition” without addressing how “racialised minorities may still regard themselves as outsiders even if they are educationally successful” (p. 70). According to Reitz and Banerjee (2007), one third of students from Chinese immigrant backgrounds in Canada reported having faced experiencing racial discrimination at school.

Indeed, governments have identified that education in Canada may have much work to do in terms of equity and social justice; for instance, the Ontario Ministry of Education (2017) states that it is necessary for educators to identify and eliminate “discriminatory biases, systemic barriers, and power dynamics that limit students’ learning, growth, and contribution to society” (Ontario’s Education Equity Action Plan, p. 5). These “barriers and biases, whether overt or subtle, intentional or unintentional, need to be identified and addressed” (*Policy/Memorandum, 119, 2013, p. 2*). I use the

case of Ontario, Canada to and identify and address these barriers and biases in the programmatic literacy curriculum toward better understanding issues of equity and diversity in education.

So, what *is* literacy? According to the United Nations Education for All Global Monitoring Report (2016), there is no single definition of literacy. Instead, the definition of literacy in a given circumstance is not immune to academic, political cultural, and personal values (UNESCO, 2016). Literacy can be defined differently by many people in different places and different times. Many different theories of literacy have thus emerged, evolved, and exist simultaneously, reflecting particular spaces and times (UNESCO, 2016). In this study, I employ a multiliteracies perspective (Cope & Kalantzis 2004, 2006, 2009, 2015; New London Group, 1996), which views literacy as multiple, reflecting diverse ways of knowing, communicating, and expressing oneself within contexts of shifting cultural and linguistic diversity.

I am interested in how Ontario's programmatic literacy curriculum conceptualizes literacy in an era of student cultural and linguistic diversity. One way to investigate this is by conducting a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of Ontario's programmatic literacy curriculum documents. This research was designed to understand how literacy curriculum addresses cultural diversity in Ontario and respond to the growing importance of multimodal and multilingual communication. Before outlining the theoretical framework, I now present a rationale for studying Ontario, Canada.

Rationale for Studying Ontario

Ontario is a prime case to study. In Ontario, the student population in public schools has diversified so quickly that it has put pressure on the province's school boards

and Ministry of Education to adopt policies and curriculum to support multiethnic schools (Mujawamariya, Hujaleh, & Lima-Kerckhoff, 2014). For instance, according to the 2016 Canadian Census, there were 250 ethnic origins in Ontario. Additionally, Ontario is responsible for serving more than two million children in four different publicly-funded school systems -- English public, English Catholic, French public, and French Catholic (Census, 2017). As such, the Ontario Ministry of Education is familiar with the link between the current trends of diversity and equity.

In 2009, the OME published *Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy* to “foster inclusive school environments that value diversity and respect all individuals” (Mujawamariya, Hujaleh, & Lima-Kerckhoff, 2014, p. 271). The strategy states, “we must also address the needs of a rapidly changing and increasingly complex society by ensuring that our policies evolve with changing societal needs” (OME, 2009, p. 9). The strategy emphasizes the right of every student, the rights of all to be free from discrimination, unfair treatment or exclusion at school.

According to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage (2018), discrimination typically refers to individual bias towards a member of a different ethnicity. Systemic or institutional discrimination refers to practices like Canada's residential schooling system whereby Indigenous children were forcefully taken away from their families and subjected to all kinds of abuse at boarding schools (Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, 2018).

Increased discrimination around the world in light of global migration gives rise to the general question of how effective Ontario's multicultural education (elaborated on in Chapter 2) is in integrating minority students in terms of student diversity regarding

identities and ways of knowing (Ghosh, 2018). In terms of difference, we must ask different questions than what/whom, and how.

Another reason why I selected Ontario is for its unique standing in global education: Ontario has “the most culturally diverse population in Canada” (Ontario Immigration, 2016, para 1) and, at the same time, a “top” programmatic literacy curriculum held up as an international exemplar (Luke, 2011). For instance, the National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE, 2015) named Ontario’s curriculum, which includes the programmatic language curriculum, the best curriculum in Canada; NCEE (2015) also named Canada one of the top countries for literacy education. This ranking is also supported by PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment). In 2015, Canadian students scored an average of 527 on the PISA reading assessment while the average score internationally was 490. Among the 72 countries that participated in PISA 2015, only one outperformed Canada in reading (<https://www.cmec.ca>).

There are other examples of Ontario’s strong international reputation in education. The spotlight on Canada’s performance in literacy has led to the nation’s increasingly strong impact on global education markets (Message from the Minister of International Trade, 2015). For example, the Canadian economy benefits from an international and immigrant student population: international students spend almost \$8 billion on tuition and education-related fees (The Canadian Bureau for International Education, 2016).

According to a study on internationalizing Canadian education, Canada’s international student population comes from countries across the globe, but a few send far more students than others: China, India, Korea, Saudi Arabia and the United States,

combined, make up more than half of Canada's international students" (Humphries, Knight-Grofe, & McDine, 2012, p. vi). These students and their home countries become cultural and political allies who promote Canadian values globally (Humphries et al., 2012).

In 2011, Alan Luke implored researchers to investigate the successes of the literacy curriculum in Ontario, which he described as having "strong social democratic commitments to public education, to educational principles of social justice" (Luke, 2013, p. 373). My research investigates Ontario's literacy curriculum to understand what is being held up as successful literacy curriculum in a globalized world.

Using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), I uncovered hidden and implicit discourses and ideology that the Ontario programmatic curriculum. Specifically, I employed van Dijk's (2011) CDA framework. CDA in this study provides both the theoretical framework and method. The "critical" element refers to the study of power and the unearthing of power imbalances (Fairclough, 1992; Foucault, 1981; van Dijk, 1993). van Dijk's (2011) social theory and CDA is an apt framework as it brings together issues of diversity (such as immigration and discrimination), cognitive models of discourse and knowledge, and how ideology can be uncovered through discourse analysis. While there are other CDA models, van Dijk's (2011) model adds the cognition interface to express not only *that* discourses can influence thinking and action but also *how* they do it. This focus is fitting for my research because I am interested in knowledge and communication processes. Furthermore, van Dijk's (2011) CDA model deals with institutional-level discourses, such as those produced by branches of government, such as ministries of education. Because my study focused on investigating discourses in the

programmatic literacy curricula with respect to student diversity in an era of increased immigration, this CDA is the most apt approach to the investigation.

To organize the CDA, I used Schwab's (1968) four commonplaces of curriculum: learner, teacher, subject, and milieu within Ontario's context of diversity and multiculturalism. These commonplaces served as foci and helped organize the data. The discourses I examined are the ones that might have influenced the making of the programmatic literacy curriculum (i.e. the discursive context) as well as the discourses embedded within the programmatic literacy curriculum itself. Discourses that shape institutions of education were examined in Chapter 2 and 3 to build the context model of discourse (van Dijk, 2011) while discourses embedded within the programmatic literacy curriculum underwent a rigorous CDA. I have provided details of the methodology in Chapter 4.

Research Questions

While research has been conducted on Ontario's programmatic literacy curriculum (e.g. Bergrall & Remlinger, 1996; Dennis, 2011; Egan-Robertson, 1998; Willetts, 2015), no research has specifically investigated the implications of the discourses within Ontario's programmatic literacy curriculum concerning 21st century literacy, learners, teachers, and milieu, and how these constructs connect to issues of diversity and multiculturalism.

The value of this research is that it identifies discourses both that influence curriculum-making and that are embedded within the programmatic curriculum which directly and indirectly impact literacy education. Although ideologies can maintain social stability by offering ways of viewing reality, the discourses within these ideologies

can also be "a space where change can be negotiated" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 126). My research uses multiliteracies pedagogy (Kalantzis & Cope, 2004; New London Group, 1996) as a conceptual framework to investigate Ontario's programmatic literacy curriculum vis-a-vis the following research questions:

- How are Schwab's (1968) four commonplaces of curriculum-subject matter, learner, teacher, and milieu- configured in the programmatic literacy curricula of Ontario within Ontario's current multicultural society?
- How, if at all, are diverse ways of knowing and communicating addressed in the programmatic literacy curriculum of Ontario in light of non-European immigration trends in student demographics?
- What implications do these findings have for both students from European and from non-European backgrounds in the context 21st Century literacy education in Ontario?

By responding to these questions, this study provides alternative ways of thinking so that educators and students can begin to understand how to self-advocate within the discursive context of programmatic literacy curriculum.

In programmatic literacy curriculum, literacy is defined through discourse. Gee (2000), a member of the New London Group (NLG), observes that literacy is the means by which people understand the world and gain their social values; therefore, literacy plays an important role in identity construction and individual social agency (Gee, 2000). Moreover, how literacy is conceptualized is defined and accessed directly influences who can and cannot actively and meaningfully participate in a democratic society (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). The findings of this study from Ontario bear significance

internationally, as Canada is seen to have international influence in literacy education (Barber, Chijioke, & Mourshed, 2010). In short, this research offers understanding into the political and cultural ideologies of Ontario's programmatic literacy curriculum and its implications as a text of global influence.

Importance of Studying Discourse

What is discourse? According to Fairclough (2003), discourses are “ways of representing aspects of the world – the processes, relations and structures of the material world, the ‘mental world’ of thoughts, feelings, beliefs” (p.176). For van Dijk (1993), discourse is the “legitimation for certain attitudes, opinions” (p. 259). The NLG developed a pedagogy of multiliteracies within a theory of discourse (Fairclough, 1992, 1995). The NLG views literacy as something able to create, apply, and combine diverse forms of discourse to create just societies (NLG, 1996). Herein the importance of discourse and discourse analysis becomes evident.

I next illustrate three main reasons why studying discourse is important in literacy research, especially in relation to student diversity. First, discourse is intimately connected to knowledge. Second, studying discourse can shed light on the power structures within which communication is mediated. Third, understanding discourse can promote understanding of how these structures can be reproduced and how they can be transformed. I now provide more detail for each of these three points.

Relationship between Discourse, Knowledge, and Ideology

The terms that are pertinent to the relationship between knowledge and discourse are conceptualized as follows.

Knowledge. There are numerous conceptualizations of knowledge in and out of

education, such as the distinction made between social knowledge and disciplinary knowledge of the sciences, arts and humanities (Rata, 2012). However, this study draws on van Dijk's work (e.g., 2011, 2014) which states that knowledge consists of shared beliefs that are certified by the knowledge criteria of an epistemological (knowledge) community—that is, a community is one that agrees on the criteria for what knowledge is. Knowledge criteria distinguish between knowledge and superstition, and can be developed and controlled by institutions and their discourses (van Dijk, 2014).

Discourse. According to Fairclough (1992) and van Dijk (1993), discourse is a social practice and represents any form of text or talk in a communicative context. Studying discourses is a study of social structures, since discourses “exhibit their social embedding, e.g., through the social positions or categorizations of language users as social (group) members, and through the contextualization of language use in specific social situations and institutions” (van Dijk, 1988, p. 132).

Now that I have conceptualized both the knowledge relevant to the study, I now discuss the relationship between the two. van Dijk (2011) explains that there are three major ways of knowing about the world and they are through *experience*, *discourse*, and *inference*. In this conceptualization, early in development from babies to children, people learn primarily through experience; after that, knowledge becomes abstract and cannot come directly from experiences. Talking about abstract knowledge and making inferences require discourse. As such, according to van Dijk (2014), most of our knowledge comes from discourse.

Ideology and Discourse. Foucault (1982), who was concerned with power in institutions, believed that power structures were embedded in language; for example,

language could create and sustain identities of people as objects and subjects (Foucault, 1982). Language can normalize certain attributes based on the communicator's values and the social context in which language is communicated (Foucault, 1991). van Dijk (1998) adopted this perspective and developed his CDA model to show how communication is linked to the dimensions of "cognition, power and discourse" (p. 130). Accordingly, studying discourse can reveal norms, values, and power structures that contribute to the conceptualization of literacy and diversity.

I use van Dijk's conceptualization of ideology: shared beliefs among symbolic elites which manifest their power through discourse (van Dijk, 1998). According to van Dijk (2011), the term "symbolic elites" refers to the people or entities in society who have power, whether directly or through their role as distributors of epistemologies (such as Ministries of Education, as is the case for this study). According to van Dijk (1993), "ideologies are the foundation of the social beliefs shared by a social group...[and] consist of those general and abstract social beliefs, shared by a group, that control or organize the more specific knowledge and opinions (attitudes) of a group" (p. 49). Here, van Dijk uses a much broader definition of ideology than the one conceptualized and popularized by Marx: instead of focusing on false-consciousness, van Dijk sees ideologies "as political or social systems of ideas, values or prescriptions of groups or other collectivities, and [that] have the function of organizing or legitimating the actions of the group" (van Dijk, 1998, p. 5). Because ideologies are fundamentally a "system of ideas," van Dijk argues that they "belong to the symbolic field of thought and belief, that is, to what psychologists call 'cognition'" (p. 5). However, he clarifies that "ideologies are undoubtedly social, and often (though not always) associated with group interests,

conflicts or struggle” (p. 5). For this study, I am concerned with ideologies communicated through discourses that conceal or legitimate unequal power structures.

Reproduction of Discourses

According to van Dijk (2011), discourses are reproduced first individually and then socially through communication with others. The CDA framework from van Dijk (2011) uses the concept of mental models from cognitive psychology: just as information is stored in network model where one idea is related to another through innumerable connections, so too are discourses. Because discourses provide a way to organize information, they influence thinking, communication, and action. They are therefore reproduced consciously or subconsciously. Harmful discourses, such as those found in discriminatory ideology, can be reproduced even without the intention of discrimination (van Dijk, 2011, 1993, 1997; Wodak, 2001).

Importantly, however, discourses are the site of both power and resistance (Gaventa, 2003). In the words of Foucault (1998) “discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart” (pp. 100-101). By revealing harmful discourses, educators can understand how knowledge is governed through authority.

Authority of Knowledge

To highlight an aspect of van Dijk’s theoretical framework used in this study, I here share his conceptualization of knowledge. First, I present a few other definitions to differentiate them from the definition I employ.

Knowledge, according to classic Greek philosophers like Plato, represents justified true beliefs (Plato, 1943). In this definition, knowledge represents an ontology,

and since there are many ontological orientations that define truth differently (Foucault, 1982), this type of true knowledge is impractical to theorize for literacy as a social practice (van Dijk, 2003). Quoting Foucault, Rainbow (1991) explained that confronting power imbalances does not require finding an “absolute truth” but rather requires “detaching the power of truth from the forms of hegemony, social, economic, and cultural, within which it operates at the present time” (p. 75). The authority of knowledge must then be separate from an overarching and predetermined concept of truth.

This idea of knowledge separated from truth was made popular by the 17th century philosopher Francis Bacon who promoted the pursuit of “useful knowledge” through the development of the scientific method (Robinson, 1997). I would like to elaborate on this point, as it is both interesting and seminal to an understanding of useful (that is not theoretical) knowledge; useful knowledge is the knowledge used in daily life within epistemic communities (van Dijk, 2011).

In the 17th Century, modern science emerged and with it the “dawn of the modern age” (Robinson, 1997). At this time, the traditional authority of Church and ancient Greek philosophers was challenged to make way for the pursuit of useful knowledge: the knowledge that depended on the authority of no one but rather from observation, experience, and experiment (Robinson, 1997). This useful knowledge is gained using Francis Bacon’s model of scientific inquiry, or he called it “*novum organum*” (the new method). This scientific method of inquiry was articulated by Francis Bacon as a way to triumph over authority; after all, according to Bacon, “*ipsa scientia potestas est*” – “knowledge itself is power” (Bacon, 2000). Similarly, Foucault rejects authority over absolute knowledge or truth, explaining that

truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its “general politics” of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true. (Foucault, 1980, p. 131)

Moreover, Foucault (1978) used the term “power/knowledge” to demonstrate his understanding of the connection between power and knowledge: power is knowledge and knowledge is power. Having only one power that legitimates what counts as true knowledge, according to Foucault (1981), is a dogmatic understanding of science. On the surface, Foucault’s ideas on knowledge appear to be contrast Bacon’s since the former criticizes science while the latter praises it. However, it is not science itself that Foucault opposes but rather the blind authority that science can take. In this regard, Bacon and Foucault advocate for a knowledge free of dogmatic authority and abuse of power.

Similarly, in his multidisciplinary approach to CDA, van Dijk acknowledges the many possibilities of knowledge and their construction through arbitrary power (i.e. Bacon, Foucault), and so presents a more practical definition of knowledge as follows: knowledge is a set of beliefs that are justified by criteria set out by an epistemic community; that is, a community who shares the same idea of what truth, reality, and knowledge should be (van Dijk, 2014). The corollary is that knowledge in one epistemic community does not function as knowledge in other epistemic communities (van Dijk, 2014).

van Dijk's CDA and Theoretic Framework

van Dijk's (2011) CDA model is concerned with the knowledge transmitted by *epistemic institutions* such as schools, universities, faculties of education, and government agencies whose main aims are to transmit, share, normalize, and test knowledge about the world (van Dijk, 2013). Because I am studying programmatic literacy curricula, understanding this type of knowledge is integral to my thesis. An overview of programmatic curriculum follows the theoretical framework.

As mentioned earlier, knowledge is communicated through discourse. van Dijk (2003) says, "discourse plays a fundamental role in the daily expression and reproduction of ideologies" (p. 4). He therefore attends to the ways "ideologies influence the various levels of discourse structures, from intonation, syntax, and images to the many aspects of meaning, such as topics, coherence, presuppositions, metaphors, and argumentation, among many more" (p. 4). Moreover, van Dijk (1993) explains that discourses are "structures or strategies of text and talk, we refer, for instance, to graphic layout, intonation, stylistic variations of word selection or syntax, semantic implications and coherence, overall discourse topics, schematic forms and strategies of argumentation or news reports, rhetorical figures such as metaphors and hyperbole, speech acts, and dialogical strategies of face-keeping and persuasion, among others" (p. 9). In my study, I examined each of these features in the programmatic literacy documents to locate implicit discourses and ideologies as well as nuanced conceptualizations of the four curriculum foci.

van Dijk's Social Theory

van Dijk's (2011) CDA model is based on the understanding that ideologies are reproduced in society through discourse in the following three ways:

1. Systematically: discourse structures such as semantics, syntax, pragmatic functions, style
2. Institutionally: organization's, especially those that have the authority to define and distribute knowledge, such as faculties of education and government agencies, play a role in the production and reproduction of power and power abuse
3. Cognitively: discourse is stored in the minds of language users, allowing for ideologies to affect thinking and action.

Discourses manifest "specific events, knowledge, attitudes, norms, values, and ideologies" (van Dijk, 1993, p. 9). van Dijk (2014) distinguishes ideology from knowledge by stating that, while ideology and knowledge are both systems of shared belief, ideology is not justified by the criteria of true beliefs as posited by an epistemic community. As such, ideologies are shared in groups and do not constitute knowledge, but rather reflect certain and specific attitudes and interests (van Dijk, 2014).

What distinguishes van Dijk's CDA model from Fairclough (1992, 1995) is his inclusion of cognitive element of discourse (i.e. the mental model as the cognitive interface between discourse and social reproduction). In this way, van Dijk's CDA considers not only *that* discourses have power but also *how*. The "how" is explained by van Dijk's (2011) multidisciplinary social theory. I will detail his social theory in the next section.

van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis

In *Discourse and Context* (2008), van Dijk agrees with social linguistics that language use varies with social parameters such as ethnicity, age, and social class. However, van Dijk (2014) disagrees that language use does not vary directly with social structures. According to van Dijk (2014), there is a cognitive interface between the language user and the social structures that produce discourse. Each language user, according to van Dijk (1997), has their own understanding of the social structure which is processed cognitively. As such, context is represented in each member of a communicative practice as a mental model of the communicative situation (van Dijk, 2014; 1993).

Context is not an objective part of the social situation; it is a subjective part in the cognitive model of each participant in the social situation (van Dijk, 2014). Each person has a slightly different mental model of the situation and with it slightly different understandings even within the same social situation. The mental model shows how people store discourses in network-like structures, and how they create microlevel discourse (communication from person to person) and macro-level discourses (communication from institution to person) (van Dijk, 1997). As such, mental models of discourses influence how people interpret and theorize new information (van Dijk, 2011).

Now that I have introduced the psychosocial aspect of the CDA framework, I turn to the critical aspect. In this CDA, and as in all CDA, the critical dimension refers to understanding power relations to investigate any abuses there within. The critical dimension is analyzed in the communication of those in power, not those without it. For this reason, analyzing the programmatic literacy curriculum makes sense.

According to (van Dijk, 1997) when communicating, language users address the following, which comprise the communicative mental model

- Relevance of the content of communication
- Time and place of communicative situation
- Identity of participants
- Goals of the communication
- Type of communication

Discursive theory such as Foucault (e.g., 1982) finds that people think about themselves through discourse and act accordingly; in this sense, discourse shapes identities and subjectivities. In a system where there are asymmetries of power, these identities can be oppressive (Foucault, 1979; Freire, 2018). Some key concepts of discourse highlighted by Foucault (1982) and Fairclough (1992) and adopted by van Dijk (2011) are the following:

- Discourse produces knowledge through language
- Discourse gives rise to events
- Discourse constructs objects and subjects
- Discourse produces reality and knowledge;
- Power is exercised through dominant discourses;
- Discourses are embedded in institutional practices such as programmatic curriculum

Ideologies and Discourse in the Programmatic Curriculum

In this study, I examine discourses of the programmatic literacy curriculum of Ontario. Before I discuss how ideology can be manifest the discourse embedded in

programmatic curriculum, I define programmatic curriculum.

There are numerous definitions of curriculum, and in this study, I have employed Doyle's (1992) concept of curriculum. For Doyle, curriculum refers not only to the "substance or content of schooling, the course of study that specifies what is to be taught" (p. 486), but also to the "knowledge, methodologies, and dispositions that constitute the experiences and the outcomes of schooling" (p. 487). Doyle explains that "curriculum is not simply content, but a theory of content, that is a conception of what the content is, what it means to know that content, and what goals one is accomplishing when one is teaching the content" (p. 507).

According to Doyle (1992), there are three levels of curricula: *institutional*, *programmatic*, and *classroom*. The institutional curriculum embodies a belief system of what public schooling should be, as communicated through policy discourse (Deng, 2010). Referencing Doyle (1992), Deng (2010) explained that institutional curriculum planning is always a "political undertaking" (p. 1). In Canada, "provincial governments are constitutionally responsible for making institutional curriculum decision" (p. 1). Programmatic curriculum documents convey "the expectations and ideals embedded in the institutional curriculum into operational frameworks for schools, thereby bridging the gap between the abstract institutional curriculum and the (enacted) classroom curriculum" (p. 1). The third level of curriculum according to Doyle (1992) is the classroom curriculum, also known as enacted curriculum (McKnight et al., 1987; Schmidt et al., 1996).

The classroom curriculum is "an evolving construction resulting from the interaction of the teacher and students" (Deng, 2010, p. 2). At this level, curriculum

planning brings together the institutional curriculum and programmatic curriculum and transforms them into learning experiences for students in the classroom (Deng, 2010). Deng (2010) cites Westerbury (2000) to explain that the programmatic curriculum is used to “connect with the experience, interests, and the capacities of students in a particular classroom” (Deng, 2010, p. 2).

Concerning the nature of the programmatic curriculum, it has been seen by many scholars as a regulative mechanism, which may normalize literacy through its set of rules, organization, and definitions of knowledge (Popkewitz, 1998). In other words, the programmatic curriculum “defines what counts as school knowledge in a particular situation, as well as the cultural norms for having access to that knowledge” (Doyle, 1992, p. 499). In 1949, Tyler’s curriculum paradigm arguably became the most influential curriculum text ever written (Pinar et al., 1995). This paradigm remains influential in Ontario (Rosen, 2004; Wiggins & McTighe, 2006). For example, Tyler (1949) postulated that programmatic curriculum be written in a particular order, beginning with “objectives” to “experiences” to “cumulative experiences” to “evaluation”. According to Rosen (2004), this order is adopted by Ontario’s programmatic curricula. Above all, programmatic curriculum is not neutral; curriculum is political; it can reinforce power inequalities—one group is placed in a privileged position and the other in a disadvantaged position (Mujawamariya, Hujaleh, & Lima-Kerckhoff, 2014).

Curriculum is never neutral, but it is, as it is in Ontario, governed by political and corporate interests (Ricci, 2002). These influences come with a range of perspectives regarding what should be taught at school and how the curriculum should serve student

needs that they have identified as important (Dillon, 2009; Kliebard, 2004; Sadker, Zittleman, & Sadker, 2013).

Responses to these questions can contribute to the literature of how contemporary literacy curricula are created. Coburn (2003) argued that to contribute to education that adapts to shifting student demographics, changes are needed in how educators think about

how students learn, subject matter knowledge, expectations for students, and what constitutes effective instruction); norms of social interaction (e.g. patterns of teacher and student talk such as accountable talk and ways in which students and teachers treat one another); and in the underlying pedagogical principles embedded in curriculum (e.g., evidence informed approaches to effective instruction grounded in a sound theory of learning). (Gallagher, Malloy, & Ryerson, 2016, p. 483)

Therefore, the programmatic curriculum contains discourses that shape literacy learning, such as what literacy is and who can access it, important issues for understanding how student diversity is addressed. As a “normative framework for defining and managing the work of teachers” in the classroom (Doyle, 1992, p. 487), Ontario’s public elementary teachers are monitored and held accountable for how they use the programmatic curriculum through performance evaluations according to how they meet the objectives of the programmatic curriculum (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016).

One example of performance evaluations is Ontario’s Teacher Performance Appraisal. This evaluation appraises teachers on how well they apply the Ontario ministry of Education’s “curriculum, ethics, educational research, and related policies

and legislation” (among other things) in their daily practice (Teacher Performance Appraisals, 2010, p. 18). Subsequently, programmatic curriculum documents have “important political and managerial functions” (Doyle, 1992, p. 487), since teachers are evaluated on how they use them.

For this study, I investigated both ideologies found within the curriculum (i.e. ideology of power with regards to diversity) and ideology of curriculum making. For the latter, I used Eisner’s (1992) conceptualization of curriculum orientations and ideologies. In chapter 2, I outline his six orientations as they relate to curriculum-making. For now, I define curriculum ideology as it was used by Eisner (1992): curriculum ideologies are value matrices or “beliefs about what schools should teach, for what ends, and for what reasons” (p. 302). Eisner explained that curriculum ideologies “influence what is considered problematic and nonproblematic in the curriculum” (p. 302). The ideologies, in turn, influence how curriculum is written and how it is enacted. In fact, Eisner posits that all “educational practices emanate from ideologies” (p. 303). This point harkens to Doyle’s (1992) idea that programmatic curricula bear important implications socially and politically.

Significance of Ideologies in the Curriculum

The value matrix embedded within ideology informs how educational matters are viewed (Eisner, 2002). Consequently, curriculum ideologies “influence what is considered problematic and non-problematic in the curriculum” (p. 302). Similarly, Getzels (1974) noted that how educational concepts are construed in the curriculum affects how the classroom is conceived; for example, when children seen as empty vessels, passive receptacles pedagogy of control and order follows.

This study begins from the understanding that literacy education (here read as curriculum) cannot be separated from how literacy is discussed (Henning, 2019). According to Johnson (2005), “social communication, of all types, is imbued with ideological tensions that concurrently subordinate certain individuals and superordinate others. These power relations can shed light on who can participate in literacy curricula, how, and why” (p. 81). These ideas on who can participate in educational and curricular objectives are “matters of choice” and are based on “value judgments of those responsible for the school” (Tyler, 1949, p. 4). As “education is a normative enterprise” (Eisner, 1992, p. 302), programmatic curriculum is aimed at achieving certain virtues. These virtues can be defined as the “value matrix” or “beliefs about what schools should teach, for what ends, and for what reasons” (Eisner, 1992, p. 302). This value-matrix is reflected in discourse. Determining what kind of literacy is valuable becomes a priority in CDA and thus in this project.

Educators and researchers must be aware that although ideologies are most often manifested subtly within discourse, they are just as powerful as overt ones (Eisner, 1992). The way in which the world is conceptualized through language has “significant value consequences for matters of educational practice” (p. 303). For instance, because the programmatic curriculum is “shaped by broader social forces” it can serve as “an instrument of social reproduction” (Doyle, 1992, p. 499). Without critical examination of the curriculum, ideologies can be taken for undisputed truths (Eisner, 1992). Therefore, the language used in curriculum documents reflects the dominant approaches to teaching language, tendencies towards organizing patterns of language learning and teaching in a particular context and setting. Studying the language of curriculum, then, can bring forth

the "explicit and implicit approaches and messages carried and conveyed in regard to teaching and learning" (Lavrenteva & Orland-Barak, 2015, p. 654). This statement holds true because language is not simply descriptive: it is also "constitutive of experience" (Eisner, 1992, p. 303).

Bazzul (2014) illustrates this supposition by maintaining that discourses are statements that can objectify or subjectify people in power relationships. Bazzul argued that "discourses orient teachers and students to the world, others, and themselves" (p. 421). Discourses, through the subjugation and objectification of language, lay out who "can legitimately participate" in education (p. 421).

This study investigated how relationships of power and communication are maintained and created through curriculum to promote visions of literacy education. Such power relations are acknowledged by Foucault (1972) who stated that power relations in discourse can be uncovered by examining the position of subjects and objects in statements. Because power, social structure, and ideology are communicated through discourse, using a critical discourse analysis is an apt methodology to understand curriculum ideologies. I gain and share an understanding of how programmatic curriculum is able to embody, promote, and reflect knowledge of communication in contemporary times by using CDA to investigate diversity of language, culture, and knowledge.

Critics of CDA (e.g., Luke, 2004; Martin 2004; Widdoeson, 2004) describe such critical work as pessimistic, focusing on how discourse reproduces the status quo instead of offering how discourse can transform it. For this reason, I employed A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies (Cope & Kalantzis, 2004, 2009; New London Group, 1996) as the

conceptual framework for understanding literacy in 21st Century North America. Because multiliteracies is a transformative pedagogy of knowing and communicating, it fills in where CDA leaves off—it provides the transformative element that van Dijk's and other CDAs require.

Multiliteracies and van Dijk's CDA

Because CDA does not come with its own treatment of literacy or literacy curriculum, I employed multiliteracies to conceptualize literacy. Although there are various definitions of literacy and literacy education, I used multiliteracies as a framework because it promotes a view of literacy education as promoting a plural, dynamic set of practices that allow all citizens to participate in society (Cope & Kalantzis, 2004, 2006, 2009, 2015; NLG, 1996). Contrasting with multiliteracies pedagogy is traditional literacy, which focuses on the teaching of print literacy through rote memorization, using the standard alphabet and conventions (Purcell-Gates & Dahl, 1991). However, traditional literacy cannot account for the diversity in how children communicate in an era of global mobility and digital communication (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009).

A diverse population such as Ontario's can benefit from an inclusive conceptualization of literacy and learning, which is why multiliteracies is the apt lens with which to view literacy and its education in this study. Multiliteracies theory views global literacy in the 21st century as the ability to communicate with various symbols and signs, using a multitude of media and modes (New London Group, 1996; Olthouse, 2013). According to NLG (1996),

[Multiliteracies] is based upon a particular theory of discourse. It sees semiotic activity as a creative application and combination of conventions (resources - Available Designs) that, in the process of Design, transforms at the same time it reproduces these conventions (Fairclough, 1992a, 1995). That which determines (Available Designs) and the active process of determining (Designing, which creates The Redesigned) are constantly in tension. This theory fits in well with the view of social life and social subjects in fast-changing and culturally diverse societies. (p. 74)

Literacy in this study then refers to the different ways of knowing, learning, and communicating and that literacy is a social practice with transformative potential. This idea of discourse and communication as transformative social practice is also held by just as Foucault and van Dijk argue that discourse is a social practice. A pedagogy of multiliteracies thus provides the tools needed to create the transformation.

For instance, according to multiliteracies, “effective learners” need to be “flexible, autonomous, and able to work with cultural and linguistic diversity” (Kalantzis, Cope, & Harvey, 2003). Effective learners, due to some extent by the ubiquity of digital technology, also make meaning using multiple modes, wherein written language and symbols interact with visual, aural, gestural and spatial patterns of meaning (Kalantzis, Cope, & Harvey, 2003).

As such, literacy pedagogy must allow students opportunities and encouragement to choose and use different forms of literacy; allowing students these opportunities speaks to issues of justice. According to Foucault (1982), justice is the condition that allows children the ability to know truth free from such obstacles as prejudice or discrimination;

justice also allows children to be creative (see things differently, produce new knowledge, or create new ways of doing things). Both Foucault and multiliteracies recognize that non-traditional forms of literacy are valuable and that children need multiple forms of literacy to express their diversity of experience.

Multiliteracies Pedagogy as a Conceptual Framework for Learning

A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies aims “to create a literacy pedagogy that would work within a technology-driven, culturally diverse, and global economy (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009); to create a literacy pedagogy that promotes a culture of flexibility, creativity, innovation and initiative” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009, p. 170). Inherent within this pedagogy is an appreciation for the issues of diversity with which I am concerned in this study.

Another affordances of multiliteracies for this study is that it promotes what the Alaska Native Knowledge Network (1998) calls a “culturally-responsive curriculum”, a curriculum which recognizes “cultural knowledge as part of a living and constantly adapting system that is “grounded in the past, but continues to grow through the present and into the future (Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 1998, p. 14; Rigney, Garrett, Curry, & MacGill, 2019). A “culturally responsive curriculum fosters a complementary relationship across knowledge derived from diverse knowledge systems” (p. 15). As such, the broader goals of multiliteracies theory are to create culturally inclusive access for students “to the evolving language of work, power, and community, and fostering the critical engagement necessary for them to design their social futures” (NLG, 1996, p. 60). Through its transformative qualities, multiliteracies challenges the status quo by redefining literacy and opening possibilities for marginalized people to participate in a

democratic society (Zhang, 2015).

Researcher Investment

As a teacher in Ontario, Canada, I have witnessed the use of discourse as both a freedom bell and a tool of oppression. How educators and students speak of themselves within the educational context can restrict or liberate their thinking of the world and of themselves. Some discourses can restrict more than they liberate and vice versa.

I also found that the way discourses position students with the classroom plays a fundamental role in how students construct their own identities as learners and as people outside the home. In my own experiences as a teacher across grades and disciplines, I have seen how setting students up for success comes by positioning them as capable and knowledgeable, as well as creating opportunities for them in literacy education to be active participants in curriculum-making. These moves can boost diverse ways of knowing, learning, and being. As such, discourses about students and learning can be a hand up or a hand holding them down. I want to do as much as I can to bring awareness to literacy discourse in education, from the programmatic curriculum to the classroom curriculum, so that the words used in teaching and learning are hands that raise students up.

Coming to the research, I knew that words had power, so in this study I wanted to investigate the discourse of the programmatic literacy curriculum to find answers to the questions that guide me. According to Freire (2018), language informs how people imagine and see the world: words name the world and the world is envisioned through these words. Speaking to Freire's theory of language, Berthoff (2005) explained that "liberation comes only when people reclaim their language and, with it, the power of

envisagement, the imagination of a different world to be brought into being” (p. ix). Therefore, the language of the curriculum creates worlds for students and teachers.

The primary goal of this study is to generate knowledge of the ways in which contemporary literacy curriculum can address diversity. Diversity of students is often conceptualized as “cultural” and/or “linguistic” without considering the presupposed epistemologies in each of these types of diversity. I want to examine literacy because literacy itself presupposes a certain type of knowledge. In a multicultural society such as Ontario, how is knowledge diversity—that is the diversity of knowledge students bring with them to school—addressed in the programmatic curriculum? What are the implications for this conceptualization vis-a-vis the four commonplaces of curriculum-learner, teacher, subject matter, and milieu? What are the implications for diversity?

Outline for the Rest of the Thesis

To ground and locate the contributions and lineage of the study, in Chapter 2, I review literature examining literacy discourses in Canada. I also review issues related to diversity in the context of language learning and literacy practices.

In Chapter 3, I provide a historical overview of literacy curriculum and theoretical and historical underpinnings of multiliteracies.

In Chapter 4, I present my research questions and expand on the study’s critical discourse analysis methodology, including document selection.

In Chapter 5, I present the results of Stage I analysis.

In Chapter 6, I critically discuss these results and their implications for curriculum making and pedagogy. I provide suggestions for practice, and highlight some opportunities for future scholarship in CDA and literacy education.

Chapter 2: Background to the Study

This dissertation is concerned with multiculturalism as a Canadian policy. As such, this chapter provides background information on issues of diversity in Ontario related to literacy. I then outline pertinent literature related to diversity issues in literacy education, then explain theories of how language plays a role in these issues.

Part I: Contextualizing Issues of Diversity and Literacy in Canada and Ontario

This section is divided into three parts: an overview of multiculturalism policy in Canada to provide sociopolitical context for the research; a literature review on the ways education in Ontario has addressed and continues to address Canada's multiculturalism policy; and a literature review on institutional inequality in Ontario education, including racial, ethnocultural, and linguistic biases in Ontario's programmatic curricula.

Today, according to the World Population Review (2019) website, 32.3% of Canadians considered their ethnic origin to be Canadian. Other major groups recorded were English (18.3%), Scottish (13.9%), French (13.6%), Irish (13.4%), German (9.6%) and Chinese (5.1%). The website states that "nearly 22% of the population is now foreign-born, and about 60% of new immigrants come from Asia, particularly China and India (World Population Review, 2019). Fueling this diversity is an increase in immigration to Canada from around the world (Statistics Canada, 2019). Immigrants have settled mostly in Canada's largest metropolitan centres: Toronto, Ontario for example, is one of Canada's largest and most quickly diversifying cities (Census Canada, 2019).

Canada is also diverse in its languages. With two official languages, English and French, “56% of Canadians reported that English was their first language and 20.6% reported that French was their first language in 2016”, while Chinese is “the mother tongue of more than a million people” (World Population Review, 2019).

In his 1971 statement on multiculturalism, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau announced, “to say we have two official languages is not to say we have two official cultures, and no particular culture is more ‘official’ than another” (Library and Archives Canada, 1971, p. 8581). Given that language and culture are inextricably tied to one another (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2014), English and French cultures are superordinate above all other cultures by their very nature as official languages. These cultures are granted protection through the mandate of French and English instruction in all territories and provinces throughout Canada.

According to Rosen (2004), the issue of curriculum control continues to be contentious in Ontario:

Conservatives saw schools as a force for social stability, a way of teaching people to accept their place in the world. Liberals saw them as a basic human right, a way of preparing people for peaceful change and progress. Nationalists saw them as a way of creating a sense of national identity and patriotism. Socialists saw them as offering workers a chance to get an education and so hasten the day when they would be able to seize political power. (Osborne, 1999, p. 7)

From this quote, I note that different political agendas can either build from the work done in a previous administration or they can abandon it. In terms of diversity, these

political documents treat student diversity according to a specific political agenda.

Multiculturalism Policy

To understand diversity in Ontario, I address multiculturalism as both a policy and a discourse. First, I outline the birth of the multiculturalism policy then, in subsequent sections, discuss multiculturalism as a discourse.

As a pretext to multiculturalism policy, Canada experienced a history of political tensions between its two colonial powers: the British and the French. According to Ferguson, Langlois, and Roberts (2009), when the British took control of Quebec in 1763, the French Canadians had to rely upon “natural increase in order to sustain their population, while Great Britain encouraged mass immigration from the British Isles to increase population, practices which ensured national duality” (p. 69). Canada’s Multiculturalism Act was ostensibly created to protect both individual and collective rights, and to enhance “the multicultural heritage of Canadians” (*Section 27, Canada’s Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, Canada, 1982). Multiculturalism Policy became an official part of Canada’s constitution in 1983, and in 1988 Canada’s Multiculturalism Act was passed by Prime Minister at-the-time Brian Mulroney (Kymlicka, 2015). The first Multiculturalism Policy was advanced by the Government of Canada (1971):

A policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework ... (is) the most suitable means of assuring the cultural freedom of all Canadians. Such a policy should help to break down discriminatory attitudes and cultural jealousies.

National unity, if it is to mean anything in the deeply personal sense, must be founded on confidence on one’s own individual identity; out of this can grow respect for that of others, and a willingness to share ideas, attitudes and

assumptions ... The Government will support and encourage the various cultural and ethnic groups that give structure and vitality to our society. They will be encouraged to share their cultural expression and values with other Canadians and so contribute to a richer life for all. (Trudeau, 1984, p. 519)

The Act was based on the idea that Canadians should have the freedom to express themselves in terms of culture and/or ethnicity, both privately and publicly, without facing discrimination or prejudice (Kymlicka, 2015).

Evolution of Canada's Policy on Multiculturalism: An Historic Overview

It is important to review how multiculturalism as a policy evolved in order to understand multicultural discourse in the programmatic literacy curriculum. According to Wong and Guo (2015), by the time of Canada's confederation in 1867, diverse peoples had co-existed for hundreds of years. However, because the British and the French dominated the Indigenous people pre-confederation, including through genocide, they listed themselves as the founders of Canada and took governmental control over the country (Cochrane, Dyck, & Blidook, 2015).

The literature indicates that, between the late 1800s and early 1900s, Canada saw increased immigration and subsequent increased ethnic diversity as many European immigrants arrived in Canada. Alongside these soon-to-be-settlers came "non-European groups such as the Chinese (railway workers), Japanese (agricultural workers) and Blacks (underground railway)" (Wong & Guo, 2015, p. 1). From this quotation, non-European groups were considered workers rather than citizens in the early days of Canada. This point shows there have been problematic power relations involved regarding non-European groups from the outset of Canada's history.

All the while, the French had been fighting for sovereignty from Britain's cultural hegemony (Wong & Guo, 2015). The Prime Minister at-the-time, Lester B. Pearson (1963-1968), paved the way for the 1969 official *Languages Act* (Wong and Guo (2015), which declared both English and French as official languages in Canada. According to Kymlicka (2015), these multicultural reforms were political tools used to defuse Quebec separatism.

However, Pierre Trudeau oversaw the implementation of the *Multiculturalism Act* in 1971, stipulated that "Canada was more than just the two cultures of French and English" (p. 2). This milestone crowned Canada as the first nation in the world to adopt an official multiculturalism policy in which the federal government provided protection for cultural minorities (Marger, 2015). Shortly thereafter, according to Cochrane, Dyck, and Blidook (2015), Canadians with white European ethnic origins began to make up less and less of the Canadian population, while Canadians with Asian, African, and Latin American origins continue to increase as immigration to Canada from the respective regions increase. The "breadth and intensity of this cultural and racial diversity" (Wong and Guo, 2015, p. 1) has increased and garnered political attention in Canada.

Kunz and Sykes (2007) have offered an additional way of understanding the evolution of Canada's multiculturalism policy: the 1970s focused on ethnicity and on "celebrating differences," the 1980s focused on "managing diversity," and the 1990s focused on multiculturalism (as cited in Wong & Guo, 2015, p. 4). During the 2000s, multiculturalism policy adopted "inclusive citizenship," by aiming to integrate minorities under an overarching "Canadian identity" (Wong & Guo, 2015, p. 4). Under Prime Minister Stephen Harper from 2006 to 2015, the immigration system sought to maintain

Canada's status as a "destination of choice for talent, innovation, investment, and opportunity" (Ghosh & Abdi, 2013, p. 95). In tandem, the concept of multiculturalism has been modified by scholars to incorporate anti-discrimination measures to broaden its scope in recent years (Ghosh & Abdi, 2013).

Multiculturalism in Dominant Discourses. I now discuss multiculturalism as discourse borne out of multiculturalism policy. Understanding how multiculturalism manifests in discourse provides a framework for understanding ideas of multiculturalism in programmatic literacy curriculum this study will examine. According to Winter (2015), multiculturalism as a national identity is a discourse that became popularized in Canada during the 1990s. Winter (2015) posits that the discourse of multiculturalism as an identity discourse stemmed from former prime minister Jean Chretien's actions to mitigate low support for multiculturalism among the Canadian public. In 1998, Chretien's Liberal Government introduced a new multiculturalism program called the Brighton Report (1996), which "subsumed the expression of ethnocultural diversity under the notion of shared Canadian identity" (Abu-Laban & Gabriel, 2002, p. 15).

After the Brighton Report was implemented, public support for multiculturalism rose and peaked between 2002 and 2003 and continues to remain above the 1990s levels (Kymlicka, 2010).

Multiculturalism Educational Approach and its Criticisms. The literature expresses that multicultural education emerged from the 1972 *Federal Multicultural Policy Statements* (James, 2010; James & Shadd, 2001), the 1982 *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom*, and the 1988 *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*. In Canada, multiculturalism has been taken as a statement of cultural pluralism to include both the

host populations and immigrant populations in Canada (Kymlicka, 2010).

To highlight the context across Canada, I point out the three specific goals of multicultural education, as identified by Kehoe and Mansfield (1997):

1. equivalency in achievement
2. more positive intergroup attitudes
3. developing pride in heritage (p. 3)

By achieving these goals, proponents of multicultural education state that Canadian society can achieve unity amidst cultural diversity (Kirova, 2008).

The multicultural education approach is centered on students learning about different aspects of culture, such as different cultural values based on religion, history, politics, health care, and family structure, as well as customs, language, clothing, and art (Dhillon & Halstead, 2003). According to Dalton and Crosby (2013), although the multiculturalism educational approach emphasizes “an appreciation of differences” (p. 284), many people misunderstand the appreciation of difference as treating all beliefs and behaviours equally, as is so in moral relativism. Although moral relativism approach to difference may diminish overt conflict, it does not “create conditions for authentic dialogue and engagement that are necessary for a community grounded in a shared acceptance of the common good” (p. 284). Blum (2010) further expresses the problematic nature of multicultural education by arguing that it creates tensions in the classroom between (a) giving justice to group and individual difference and uniqueness and (b) treating each individual and group equally (Blum, 2010). As my research examines, these tensions may be present in the programmatic literacy curriculum as well.

Kirova (2008) summarized the major criticisms of Canadian Multicultural

education. First, by focusing on preserving the cultural heritage of minorities, culture is “reduced to knowable elements such as food, dance, and dress that students can and should learn about” (p. 116). Moreover, multiculturalism emphasizes differences among cultures, which, according to Stables (2005) and Troyna (1987), creates artificial barriers between groups and barriers to authentic communication among students. However, increased knowledge of other cultural groups might, in fact, enhance the feeling of difference, may not necessarily lead to critical examination of the dominant culture, and thus does not encourage dialogue among groups about how to work through differences (Cheon, 2019). In some instances, as Flecha (1999) pointed out, the emphasis on difference can also be used to develop hate programs like the Neo-Nazis did in Europe.

Moreover, a *multicultural education framework* positions cultural identities as pre-given and fixed, leading to essentialized and stereotyped categories of people in relation to Whiteness (Kirova, 2008). Problematically, students in this framework are forced to choose an identity governed by certain Eurocentric ideology, such as those identities that maintain Anglo hegemony over culture (Fleras, 2014). Multicultural education neglects to make a clear connection between racism and its notions of culture, and, in the process, it obscures *white* dominance (Ghosh & Abdi, 2013). Ghosh and Abdi (2013) argued that the culturalist ideology of multicultural education reinforces existing inequalities by normalizing white privilege as an unquestioned attribute of white culture. This is achieved through the notion of cultural difference, where difference is created in relation to the "norm" of white (i.e. Anglo Saxon or Western European) ancestry.

According to Mitchell (2001), in building Canada’s national identity, white identity is the norm while other identities are excluded. Multiculturalism, therefore, "has

failed to question the norm of whiteness and the domination of white culture by making it invisible. By remaining concealed and removing the dominant group from race and/or ethnicity, the focus on difference is depoliticized" (Ghosh & Abdi 2004, p. 34). As a result, asymmetrical relations of power are maintained. Cultural difference rhetoric, then, connects educational failures to the Other by de-emphasizing how dominant (white) identities are implicated in the production of difference.

Another major criticism of multicultural education comes from anti-racist theorists, who are typically seen as holding opposing views to those of multiculturalists (Dei, 1996; Tator & Henry, 1991). Anti-racist education theorists stress that multicultural education "ignores racial differences and racial discrimination and fails to challenge the organizational structures of institutions as a basis for this discrimination" (Kirova, 2008, p. 106).

Institutional Inequality Based on Race, Culture, and Linguistic Differences in Canada. According to Donnelly (2010), numerous reforms in education about Eurocentrism and discrimination against students from non-European ancestry arose in the 1990s in relation to equity. A case in point are the conversations that have happened in relation to the Toronto Board of Education, located in one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse cities in the world (Statistics Canada, 2019), which has long held a strong position as an advocate for equity. This advocacy work can be seen in the Board's early introduction of multicultural school camps and by including gender and racial equity in Ontario's educational framework (Carr, 2007). Another example of integrating equity was in 1992 when attention to racial discriminatory practices emerged on a nationwide level and when the Ontario Ministry of Education (OME) implemented anti-racist

policies in education (OME, 1993). The policy document, *Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity in School Boards Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation* (1993) was the first OME document to counter the Eurocentric perspective and salient whiteness in education; this document required that educators recognize

some existing policies, procedures, and practices in the school system are racist in their impact, if not their intent, and that they limit the opportunity of students and staff belonging to Aboriginal and racial and ethnocultural minority groups to fulfil their potential and to maximize their contribution to society. The impact of racism becomes compounded when two or more factors, such as race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, etc., are present in the same situation. (OME, 1993, p. 5)

This document was promising since it acknowledged systemic racism and a need for change within education systems to combat inequality. However, according to Morgan (2018), Ontario's Harris conservative government ended the initiative in 1995; the National Anti-racism Council of Canada (2007) claimed that the Harris conservative policy was aimed at achieving "high standards" rather than equal opportunities (p. 88). The words *equity* and *anti-discriminatory* were eliminated from the new curriculum documents (National Anti-racism Council of Canada, 2007).

Multiculturalism and Eurocentrism in Canadian Education. Although Canada is seen globally as a country that embraces multiculturalism, its predominant whiteness (that is, a population of Western European ancestry), raises questions about how the salience of multiculturalism shapes notions of diversity and multiple identities (Carr, 2008). Ghosh (2018) found that dominant (white) cultures in Canada "tend to see multicultural policy as a policy for 'ethnic' cultural groups, not only denying themselves

ethnicity and culture but also removing themselves from being part of the societal change that was needed to create a ‘fusion of horizons’ (Gadamer 1989), a composite culture or ‘third space’ (Bhabha 1994)” (p. 28).

As such, multicultural education in Canada is a “hotly debated” issue (Ghosh & Abdi, 2013, p. 32). One significant question is whether or not multiculturalism education failed in Canada. According to many educational researchers, it has indeed (Ghosh, 2003; Ghosh & Abdi, 2004; Kirova, 2015; Kymlicka, 2009). The prevailing paradigm in education claims to provide equality of opportunity, but it does not allow for the attainment of the goals of equality, either in practice or through the curriculum” (Ghosh and Abdi, 2013, p. 5). In Canada, multicultural education has often come to mean something superficial: “the dances, the dress, the dialect, the dinners” (Au, 2014, p.10). There is no focus on “the values, the power relationships that shape the culture” (Au, 2014, p. 10). As such, multicultural education does not look at discrimination (Au, 2014).

There is much evidence of inequity in Canadian education that may be due to systemic discrimination. Alarming, research shows that the dropout rates of immigrant visible-minority students exceed the dropout rates of non-racialized Canadian-born students (Derwing & Munro, 2007). Wideen and Bernard (1999) explained this phenomenon as a consequence of schools’ inadequacy at meeting the needs of increased diversity despite adopting multicultural education. As such, Canadian schools have become places which “foster isolation and replicate racialized forms of injustice” (Kirova, 2015, p. 239).

One explanation for the lack of cultural understanding, according to critical multiculturalism researchers, is that the current multicultural curriculum teaches students

about other cultures through the dominant culture's lens; this approach may lead to the *folklorization* of other cultures (Stables, 2005). Ghosh and Abdi (2004) rationalize that, because multiculturalism ignores and therefore fails to challenge "the domination of white culture by making it invisible," the inequitable power relations among groups becomes "depoliticized" (p. 34). In other words, without acknowledging systemic discrimination within the curricula themselves, hostility among groups becomes couched as a lack knowledge of the other, rather than from racism as a mechanism of power.

It comes as no surprise, then, that literacy research has critiqued multicultural curricula in Canada for being unable to reduce, let alone, eliminate racism and the discrimination of minoritized students (Kirova, 2015). In her review of Canadian multicultural education, Kirova (2015) cited several studies which demonstrate the failure of multicultural curriculum. For example, several researchers found disproportionate dropout rates for students from visible minorities compared to Canadian-born students even under a multicultural education system (Derwing & Munro, 2007). Based upon the conclusions of her literature review of Canadian curricula, Kirova (2015) implored provincial ministries of education across Canada to "re-examine how better to integrate disparate and marginalized voices into the privileged domain and to reinvest in" (p. 249).

According to Ghosh (2018), the failure of multicultural education in Canada is tied to the failure to create and sustain cultural understanding between diverse cultural groups. For instance, research has shown that racism and lack of cultural empathy in the Canadian education system continues to disenfranchise and isolate second-generation immigrant youth in Canada (Pratt & Danyluk, 2017). Pratt and Danyluk (2017) concluded that these findings illustrate the inability of multicultural education to protect

certain ethnic groups from exclusion.

One reason for this failure to create meaningful inclusion for all ethnic groups is provided by Ghosh and Abdi (2004) who argue that racial discrimination is not recognized by multicultural education; therefore, multicultural education cannot address institutional discrimination found within education systems themselves (as cited in Kirova, 2015). According to van Dijk (2011), institutional racism, intentional or not, means that discrimination against a certain group of people in the country is enshrined in the policies, laws, and traditions. In the long run, this becomes reflected in exclusion of these people from certain practices and their being disadvantaged in comparison to the rest of the population. In Canada, Ghosh (2018) found that dominant cultures (i.e. people with European backgrounds) are not inclined to change “their own attitudes towards minority groups” and are “often not aware of the power imbalance in their favour and of their many privileges that are not shared by minority cultural groups” (p. 18). Therefore, according to Carr (2008), the discussion on (in)equality in education of Canada should be conducted with the perspective of numerous Canadian identities for all Canadians, not just “ethnics.”

Language and Linguistic Diversity. Although Canada has two official languages, French and English, the latest census on languages used at home found that there are over 200 languages spoken in Canada (Cheng & Yan, 2018, p. 138). Language learners (rather than native speakers of English or French) are defined in OME’s *English Language Learners, ESL and ELD Programs and Services Policies and Procedures* as students in provincially funded English language schools whose first language is a language other than English, or is a variety of English that is significantly

different from the variety used for instruction in Ontario's schools, and who may require focused educational supports to assist them in attaining proficiency in English." (OME, 2007, p. 8)

The majority of immigrants settle in Ontario, primarily in Toronto (Statistics Canada, 2019; Mullen, 2018), which suggests that ESL programs in schools should be promoted.

In this context of increased ESL needs, 72% elementary and 55% secondary schools in Ontario have English language programs for students who are English/French language learners (Cheng & Yan, 2018). Whatever their first language, Ontario students must learn or improve their English and/or French language skills while also aiming to meet the curriculum standards on par with the Canadian born peers. Ghosh and Abdi (2013) formulated a number of important questions regarding multicultural education that they recommend investigating:

1. "What kinds of knowledge will best ensure that students are critical and participating citizens?" (Ghosh & Abdi, 2013, p. 33)
2. "How are the various groups of students socially and culturally located in terms of the socio-cultural point of view of school knowledge (the curriculum)?" (p. 33)
3. "Does the curriculum serve students differently depending upon their gender, race, ethnic, and class difference?" (p. 33)

For this study, I have employed multiliteracies as a framework to help answer the first question on the kinds of knowledge that foster critical thinking and participation in a democratic society; for questions number two and three, I incorporate these ideas of how culturally and linguistically diverse students are positioned in the programmatic literacy curriculum of Ontario, in my main research questions presented in Chapters 1 and 4, and

discussed in Chapter 6.

Diversity and Standardized Testing. Diversity in Ontario has been addressed by Inclusion policies. Ontario's *Equity and Inclusion Strategy* (2009) provides recommendations for how schools could approach the problem of discrimination to guarantee inclusiveness. According to the document, some of the commitments in this framework are the "promotion of the feeling of belonging; meeting of individual needs of students; elimination of all barriers to education; and involvement of the larger community and parents" (OME, 2009, p. 11).

In the wake of increased immigration from non-English speaking countries, the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO), developed standardized testing in Ontario as way of achieving and maintaining high standards. According to its website, the EQAO is "an independent agency that creates and administers large-scale assessments to measure Ontario students' achievement in reading, writing and math at key stages of their education" (EQAO.com, 2019). Assessments are conducted in grades 3, 6 (primary and junior divisions respectively), and 9 (math). Then, students must also pass the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test in Grade 10, which identifies literacy levels across disciplines needed to graduate from secondary school (EQAO, 2017).

However, these high stakes tests have led to teachers cheating on achievement results since the pressure to maintain high standards can be overwhelming (Simner, 2000; Wong, 2016). For example, according to Yang and Sinclair (2017), some teachers disclose the test packages before the actual exam to work on the content with their students, thus blurring the real outcomes of the tests. Teachers also claim that tests with multiple choice and short answers cannot provide relevant information regarding the

child's academic success, saying that teachers must "teach for the test" to make children score high on tests without teaching real-world skills (Mullen, 2018, p. 5).

In terms of inclusion and discrimination, Perkins, Finegood and Swain (2013) found a direct link has been found between students from low socioeconomic backgrounds and low scores on the EQAO. This finding suggests that the standardized test is suited for families with a certain financial status. In addition, family structures also play a role: "The family stress model connects poverty with parental emotional distress that affects parenting, whereas the parental investment model involves a focus on basic needs that affects children's language" (Perkins, Finegood, & Swain, 2013, p. 1). According to Langois (2017), the result of discrimination based on family background is that schools in low socioeconomic neighbourhoods usually score lower on EQAO tests than schools in wealthier neighbourhoods.

According to Roos et al. (2006), "each step up the socioeconomic ladder is associated with better outcomes" (p. 1). Another group marginalized by the EQAO tests are English Language Learners, commonly abbreviated as ELLs. According to Hou and Bonikowska (2016), there are "decisive" factors influence how well ELL students do in school; these factors include age of English language acquisition, the age of arrival from other countries, and social integration into mainstream society. Corak (2011) found that the risk of not completing school increases when the child arrives in the new country after the age of 9 and especially so after the age of 13. Similarly, Garnett (2010) supports the idea that academic success for immigrant children is affected by uneven access to resources depending on ethnicity and age of arrival in the new country.

In Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Strategy (2009), the OME declared that one of

its three core goals is to close the achievement gap among certain groups of students, such as boys, ELLs, and Indigenous students. More recently in 2017, EQAO policy explains that standardized testing is aimed at achieving equal outcomes for all students: the tests are supposed to show the results of the schools, find their problem areas, and, at the same time, spot the weaknesses of individual students and offer them some corrective measures (EQAO, 2017). However, numerous education researchers express that standardized testing can hardly fix the problems of minoritized students (Kearns, 2011): instead, standardized testing further deepens inequality where socially, economically, or culturally disadvantaged students score low results and are further marginalized (Kearns, 2011). For example, Cheng and Sun (2015) argue ELLs should have access to dictionaries, extra breaks, and additional individual preparation prior to the exam. The reason for these accommodations, according to Cheng and Sun (2015), is that ELLs face a triple challenge when preparing for EQAO testing: they must make extra effort to learn the language, meet the curriculum requirements, and overcome anxiety and frustration associated with standardized testing.

These challenges are confirmed in the study by Kearns (2011) who interviewed students who failed the EQAO test and noted student feelings of degradation, shame, stress, and humiliation. Moreover, all the young people who failed said that they were not aware of having problems in the curriculum or any of the competences that the OSSLT checked. They were shocked because they saw themselves as thriving and could not understand why the curriculum offered did not correspond with what was asked later during the test (Kearns, 2011). Amid the growing linguistic diversity of the Ontario student body, Cummins, Brown, and Sayers (2007) questioned the types of literacy

taught and the ways they are taught; for instance, how can students' diverse needs be met amid standardized assessment?

Due to such criticisms, EQAO testing is now being revised to address student inclusion and well-being as well as creative and critical thinking rather than standard assignments (Mullen, 2018). Using a pedagogy of multiliteracies pedagogy, this study joins the conversation in offering some new ways of thinking about literacy curriculum, standardization, and assessment.

Part II: Contextualizing Literacy, Discourse, and Identity

In this section, I outline important background information and literature regarding three main concepts in this study: the relationship between language and identity; discourse and literacy curriculum; and CDA and programmatic literacy curriculum.

Language and Identity

To understand the significance of studying language and literacy, I discuss the literature on language, literacy, and identity. Abendroth-Timmer and Henning (2014) posit that student identities are made up of the learners' cultures and their individual dispositions, such as their attitudes, motivations and interest towards/on languages and cultures. In the Humboldtian sense, "language learning can, of course, be considered in a technical sense as the expansion of available communication tools, but also in a more holistic way as the transformation of one's concept of self and one's position in and towards the world" (Breidbach & Kuster, 2014, p. 131). In this sense, a student is both "subject to language as well as its creative user" (Breidbach & Kuster, 2014, p. 137). As such, language is an integral part of a student's identity-building.

According to Breidbach and Kuster (2014), identity formation and expression depend on social contexts and are moderated through a dynamic process of self-relation to others in that context. This idea is “reflected in the concepts of fluid, situated and multiple identities” (p. 137). Linguist Bonny Norton (2013), for example, defines identity as “how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is structured across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (p. 45). Learning and processes of self-positioning are henceforth interwoven (Breidbach & Kuster, 2014).

Abendroth-Timmer and Henning (2014) observed that “languages are crucial for constructing identity because they do not only convey meaning in a literal sense, but they also convey norms, attitudes, beliefs about what is normal” (p. 28). When all students are afforded opportunities to create their own identities, they are given opportunities to shift away from binary thinking about identity and its practical effects, such as discrimination based on difference (Ghosh & Abdi, 2013). According to Giampapa (2010),

education is the nexus where social, political, and ideological discourses about what counts as valuable linguistic and cultural knowledge, and who has access to these legitimate forms of capital, and the identity positions assigned to them.

These dominant discourses function precisely to exclude social groups who do not possess the right forms of capital and the literacy practices valued within educational contexts from accessing symbolic and material resources. (p. 409)

Heller and Martin-Jones (2001) observed that what is included in curriculum

is the result of “choices about how to distribute linguistic resources and about what value to attribute to linguistic forms and practices” (p. 419). These choices are embedded in institutional discourses and have practical implications for immigrant communities whose linguistic and cultural forms of capital and identities are devalued within current educational practices (Martin-Jones, 2007).

Moreover, according to Abendroth-Timmer and Henning (2014), language is the means to negotiate culture and identity; in the classroom, Ontario students have benefited from cross-cultural literacy skills so that they may navigate in linguistically and culturally diverse environments (Cumming, 2013). When engaging in literacy practices across cultural contexts, students develop “critical cultural and political awareness” (Abendroth-Timmer & Henning, 2014, p. 32) that guides them to understand which type of linguistic knowledge to use in any given situation. This idea resonates with Wilhelm von Humboldt (1795) who posited that language is both a means of communicating old ideas and a means of constructing knowledge in search for personal orientation (as cited in Breidbach & Kuster, 2014).

However, in a globalized and multilingual society like Ontario, “not all learners have equal access to linguistic, economic and cultural resources. Consequently, not all of them have the chance to be heard and to express their attitudes, learning needs or feelings” (Abendroth-Timmer & Henning, 2014, p. 25). Recent research on multilingualism has been grounded in critical sociolinguistics, an approach that attends to how identity and power play into linguistic interactions (Lamarre 2013). With this understanding, Darwin and Norton (2015) conceptualize identity as a “multiple, changing, and a site of struggle” (p. 36) where people struggle for recognition, socially and

officially in the laws of the land. Moreover, according to Sobanski (2016), “language is a marker of identity, yet also a skill that can be learned and used at will. Multilinguals are able to switch languages, and thus their presentation of self and identity changes according to their desires or what the situation might demand of them” (p. 162).

However, people who speak many languages may also identify with more than one language, so that language does not have a one-to-one correspondence to their identity, nor is their identity stable across contexts (Lamarre & Lamarre, 2009).

According to Abendroth-Timmer and Henning (2014), “identity emerges from a dialogical process of communication and reflection” (p. 26) between the individual and the community, and between the individual and themselves. The discipline of critical sociolinguistics attempts to address such intricate interactions between language and identity and the context in which they take place (Sobanski, 2016). Accordingly, this study investigates the implications of programmatic curriculum, including for language and identity.

Curricular Orientations

As suggested in chapter one when rationalizing the study’s focus on programmatic curriculum, the import of programmatic curriculum for understanding what it promotes and the implications of such cannot be overstated. Curriculum theorists have long argued the significance of programmatic curriculum. Referring to what the study calls programmatic curriculum, Goodson (1987) described it as a substantive “place where we tell ourselves who we are” as well as an “important social artefact and a vital documentary source for any social history” (p. 6). As Goodson (1990) noted, “it would be folly to ignore the importance of controlling and defining the [programmatic]

curriculum” (p. 263) because the programmatic curriculum is “the visible and public testimony of selected rationales and legitimating rhetorics for schooling” (p. 263). Further, relating to the question of what should be taught, Rosen (2004) argued that programmatic curriculum documents are “high status sites where a subject” (e.g., language or English) “is named, not just in terms of what the subject ‘is’ or ‘should be’ (making accessible certain literary theories on reading, for instance), but how it should be taught, and how what has been taught should be tested” (Rosen, 2004, pp. 1-2).

Importantly, programmatic curriculum is not an autonomous document, but rather inter-textual, connected to other documents and contexts; for instance, Ministries of education in Canada as the announced authors of programmatic curricula, have been seen to be influenced by social movements as seen by the Hall-Dennis (1968) report’s influence on curriculum until the early 1980s (Rosen, 2004), or by discourses of the time, such as the influence of business on Canadian programmatic curriculum by the end of the 20th century (Rosen, 2004), or discourses of neoliberalism more recently (Moffat, et al., 2018).

According to Eisner (1992), the programmatic curriculum reflects the ideologies that influence the direction of the curriculum. Knowledge generated by uncovering the ideologies of a programmatic literacy curriculum can in turn create awareness of the nature of education conceived by curriculum makers. CDA is a tool that can achieve this goal as it is specifically geared to systematically uncover tacit ideologies embedded within institutional texts. Still relevant is Eisner and Vallance’s (1974) orientations of curriculum. They outlined that

controversy in educational discourse most often reflects a basic conflict in priorities concerning the form and content of curriculum and the goals toward which schools should strive. The intensity of the conflict and the apparent difficulty in resolving it can most often be traced to a failure to recognize these conflicting conceptions of curriculum (p. 1).

According to McEwan (1992), there is always a need “to clarify what the different conceptions of English are if English teaching [including English language arts] is to become more consistent in its practices, and if we are to understand more fully the ways that these practices relate to different and often concealed educational and social aims” (p. 103). One way to understand such practices is by understanding orientations of curriculum, which is outlined in the following section.

Eisner and Vallance (1974) laid the groundwork for six orientations of curriculum: 1) the cognitive orientation is concerned with the process of intellectualism; 2) the technological orientation is associated with technical rationalism and the idea of curriculum as a control mechanism; 3) social reconstruction orientation focuses on teaching students critical consciousness; 4) the academic rationalist orientation is aimed at developing academic culture as an aesthetic; 5) the "personal success" model is based on business ideals of efficient economies; and 6) "curriculum for personal commitment" is based on sustaining academic culture after schooling is completed (Pinar, 2008). These orientations are important to understand as they help identify ideologies within official literacy curricula.

CDA and Literacy Research

According to Sachs (2010), new discourses in education emerge when institutions

undergo changes to solve problems such as cheating, discrimination, or marketization of the industry. New discourses can include “rewording learners as consumers or clients, rewording courses as packages or products” (Fairclough, 1992, p. 6). As such, CDA (Fairclough, 1992, 1995), has been widely used in literacy research. In this section, I provide examples of CDA research to highlight how CDA can illuminate concerns in literacy education.

Dennis (2011) is an example of how discourses in programmatic curricula emphasize government discourses marginalizing other literacy discourses. Dennis used CDA to examine the text, *Success in Adult Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL provision (Success in ALNE)*. This programmatic document frames the policy of adult literacy learning in the UK. Upon analyses of this document, Dennis (2011) suggested that “with the pervasiveness of a government-driven discourse, other discourses have become marginalised or silenced” (p. 122). Dennis argued that quality of instruction was communicated through vague and attractive language. For example, the text used the word “heart” to describe the essence of the document.

Another theme Dennis (2011) found was that literacy practitioners were regulated and accountable for success of the learner: quality of teaching was second to measurable success, and measurable success was also the responsibility of teachers. Moreover, the quality of the learner was equated to the learner’s ability to achieve “challenging targets, including qualifications and personal learning goals” (Dennis, 2011, p. 122). In other words, if the learner did not achieve success, it was due to a lack of quality instruction or a fault in the learner’s abilities, not due to the rules outlined in the document itself.

In another study of literacy and CDA, Hamilton and Pitt (2011) found that literacy

discourses for adult literacy learners positioned learners as educational problems. The researchers examined adult literacy discourse policy from the 1970s in the UK to 2010 (Hamilton & Pitt, 2011). These researchers investigated two questions: how are adult literacy learners positioned by discourse? How is agency of the learner represented? The researchers examined two documents: *A Right to Read* manifesto (1974) and *Skills for Life: The National Strategy for Improving Adult Literacy Skills* (2001). Discourses that were uncovered included the themes of “deficit and disability” as well as “exclusion and duty”: the former category revealed that adult literacy learners were reduced to the problematic areas of their life; the latter category revealed the creation of a new underclass which primarily consists of prisoners and unemployed adults (Hamilton & Pitt, 2011).

The theme of *exclusion* was also uncovered. The document positioned those who were literacy learners as excluded members of society that could only gain inclusion through regulating their behavior “within constraints set by government” (Hamilton & Pitt, 2011, p. 360). Moreover, the authors concluded that the simplified conceptions of literacy and literacy learners were “counterproductive” to learning and teaching since it failed to address the complexities of literacy learning that foster literacy acquisition (Hamilton & Pitt, 2011, p. 369).

Gibb (2008) provided another study example of CDA and literacy education. Using CDA, the researcher studied three texts concerned with employment and second language policy to “reveal the overlapping layers of discourses embedded in the texts” (Gibb, 2008, p. 318). The goal was to provide practical literacy guidelines for Canadian immigrants. Upon analyzing the data, discourses were found to marginalize “the social

and structural complexities of second language learning in adulthood” (Gibb, 2008, p. 318). For instance, by making individual adults solely responsible for their own literacy learning, other factors of learning success, such as the literacy curricula themselves, were excluded. Gibb (2008) cautioned that “policymakers and educators must be wary not to inscribe processes that reduce learning to an individualized and psychologized process but confront the sociohistorical structures and systems” (p. 332). Instead, Gibb (2008) suggested creating collective responsibility for adult literacy learning.

In North America, Johnson (2005), based in Arizona, USA, examined the education policy *Proposition 203, English for the Children*. This initiative called for one year of English immersion instead of bilingual education for students with low proficiency in English communication skills. To analyze the discourse in the policy, this study adopted a principle from cognitive science to show how people think metaphorically. Upon completing a CDA, Johnson found several metaphors that were used to describe English language learners, immigrants, and bilingual learning. For example, the metaphors that were found to describe English were “success,” “unity,” “tool,” and “gift.” The metaphors for immigrants were “victims,” “swimmers,” and “invaders,” while “traps,” “forms of segregation,” and “failure” were metaphors for bilingual education (Johnson, 2005). The researcher concluded that diversity and minority languages were placed in an inferior position to the mainstream culture, leading to acts of cultural insensitivity by educators, such as blaming poverty on language barriers (Johnson, 2005).

Another example of CDA and literacy research relevant to establishing the context of my study is Yamagami (2012). This investigation used CDA to extend the

work on literacy education in North America and CDA in a bilingual context, and it focused on the following questions:

1. How are literacy learners named?
2. What characteristics or qualities are attributed to them?
3. By what arguments are individuals and groups legitimated or delegitimized?
4. From what points of view are these names, characteristics, and arguments expressed?
5. Are they implicitly or explicitly stated, and with what intensity? (p. 146)

Using the document of *Proposition 227* in addition to the media coverage of the *Proposition 227* campaign, Yamagami found four themes of discourse:

1. Bilingual Education Is Unpopular Among Latino Parents
2. Bilingual Education Has Failed
3. Bilingual Educators and Second Language Acquisition (SLA) Researchers Cannot Be Trusted
4. English Is the Language of Power and Success (pp. 147-148)

Yamagami concluded that these discourses upheld the idea that “assimilationist” policies of the proposition are not racist and anti-immigrant in nature by blaming factors outside of the proposition for unfavorable results (p. 153). This study, along with the aforementioned examples of CDA, provide insight into discourses and critical issues on literacy curriculum documents that may or may not be present in Ontario’s programmatic literacy curriculum. These CDAs, therefore, provide triangulation for this project as well as an entry point to compare and contrast Ontario’s literacy curriculum with other North American and British literacy curricula.

Summary of Chapter 2

Research has suggested how programmatic literacy curriculum discourse has impacted literacy curriculum in both theory and practice in Canada. Literacy is inextricably tied to language, culture, and identity; discourses embedded within programmatic curricula inform the conceptualization of how literacy, learners, teachers, and milieu thus bear significant implications in practice (Hamilton & Pitt, 2011; Yamagami, 2012).

The following section, Chapter 3, outlines a historical overview of literacy curriculum in Canada.

Chapter 3: A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies

In this chapter, I present an overview of the theoretical underpinnings of multiliteracies pedagogy, which provides the conceptual framework for the study's approach to literacy. In brief, Stornaiulolo, Hull, and Nelson (2009) defined multiliteracies as a framework that views "literacy as a negotiation of multiple linguistic and cultural differences through the design and redesign processes" (p. 382). Kress (2009), a New London Group (NLG) member, explains the *multi* in multiliteracies as the multiplicity of modes, the multiple discourses in language, and the diverse social factors that shape a society such as culture, gender, and age. The rest of this chapter outlines the genesis of multiliteracies, its principles, and its conceptualizations of equity. The chapter ends by responding to some criticisms of multiliteracies pedagogy.

Overview: A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies

A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies was developed by the New London Group (NLG) to account for "the growing significance of two 'multi' dimensions of 'literacies' in the plural—the multilingual and the multimodal" as many classrooms were experiencing more linguistic diversity due to increased immigration and use of digital technology (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009, p. 166). Multilingualism refers to multiple forms of language, dialects and accents, while multimodality refers to the "use of several semiotic modes in the design of a semiotic product or event, together with the particular way in which these modes are combined" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001, p. 20). In other words, multimodal literacy reflects "all modes of sense-making and the range of media through which one can construct meaning" (Heydon & O'Neill, 2014, p. 6).

Multiliteracies has been interpreted as a “perspective recognizes diverse semiotic modes of representation—linguistic, visual, audio, gestural, spatial, and multimodal—and that these representational modes are also culture and context specific” (Skerret, 2016, p. 115). Skerret (2016) stated that, according to the NLG, “individuals construct meaning based on available designs—for instance, semiotic tools and contexts with which they have experience—and redesign these tools and contexts for their own meaning-making purposes” (p. 115). This multimodality further “involves the process of modes shifting, or transitions in our meaning-making attentions from one mode to another: oral, written, visual, audio, gestural and spatial” (Kalantzis & Cope, 2015, p. 21). With multimodality comes multimodal literacy, the ability to use different forms of expression.

In contemplating the import of multimodal literacy, according to Heydon (2015), it is especially important when considering the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1990) which mandates the rights of each child *to be heard* (Article 12) and *to have freedom of expression*. Heydon (2015) explained

Freedom of expression is defined as children have the right to communicate orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the children’s choice’ (article 13)...The importance of freedom of expression is evident given the connection between literacy and identity. (p. 58)

Heydon (2013) described the connection between the expansion of *literacy options* through multimodality and its corollary effect on the expansion of *identity options*.

Multiliteracies pedagogy must also account for changes in medium and the multimodal options this affords/constrains in contemporary times. According to Gee (2007), a member of the NLG, literacy practices in the 21st century are heavily influenced

by technology since communication now involves social media and digital technology. Giampapa (2010) explained that this influence of digital technology on communication economic and technological change has reconfigured “labour market and the very skills and knowledges that function as valued capital within these new structures” (p. 408). Hence, the literacy demands on people have changed and perhaps ratcheted up. Because literacy pedagogy “must account for the burgeoning variety of text forms associated with information and multimedia technologies” (New London Group, 1996 , p. 61), multiliteracies pedagogy embraces the language of social media and technology, as digital literacy is integral to students’ successful participation in the globalized economy (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). In other words, literacy pedagogy must reflect the social and technological contexts in which it is situated.

Multiliteracies pedagogy additionally responds to linguistic diversity. According to the NLG, diversification of minority world societies--through migration and rapid technological change -- necessitates that education helps citizens respond to new forms of cultural and linguistic diversity: “effective citizenship and productive work now require that we interact effectively using multiple languages, multiple Englishes, and communication patterns that more frequently cross cultural, community, and national boundaries” (New London Group, 1996, p. 64). These varied ways of communicating in turn necessitate varied learning opportunities (Lankshear & Knobel, 2003). The idea of student diversity is seen by multiliteracies scholars as an opportunity to create a sense of belonging and spaces for transformative learning (Cope & Kalantzis 2004, 2009; NLG, 1996).

Transformative learning underscores the definition of being literate, according to Cope and Kalantzis (2009). They define being literate as having communication skills and competencies in understanding and controlling a myriad of representational forms as well as appreciating the relationship each form has to other forms. Overall, students must be skilled in making meaning of, curating, and navigating multimedia. They must also be able to make meaning through multimodality which juxtaposes visual images, the written word, as well as diverse languages (New London Group, 1996).

Pedagogical Principles of Multiliteracies

Cope and Kalantzis (2009) explained how multiliteracies pedagogy can promote learning opportunities for all students through four pedagogical principles: *experiencing*, *conceptualization*, *analyzing*, and *applying*. The first principle, *experiencing*, is based on the view that learning is bound by human contexts and thus meaning is a product of experience and personal interests (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). According to Kalantzis and Cope (2011), experiencing has two forms: *Experiencing the Known* and *Experiencing the New*. The former, *Experiencing the Known*, involves students reflecting upon their own experiences in order to bring their *Funds of Knowledge* (Moll, 1991) into the classroom (Kalantzis and Cope, 2011). By means of these activities, learners introduce diverse knowledge, experiences, and interests into the classroom. As such, Cope and Kalantzis (2009) explained that “learners bring their own, invariably diverse knowledge, experiences, interests and life-texts to the learning situation” (p. 185). The second form of experiencing is *Experiencing the New*, which involves “observing or reading the unfamiliar and immersion in new situations and texts” (Kalantzis & Cope, 2011, p. 51). In this regard, learners experience learning new ideas within their intelligibility levels as

conceived by Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009; Kalantzis & Cope, 2011).

The second principle of multiliteracies pedagogy is *conceptualizing*, which refers to a “knowledge process” that encourages learners to uncover tacit assumptions and to make generalizations based on evidence (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009, p. 185). According to Kalantzis and Cope (2011), during the process of conceptualizing, “learners become active conceptualizers, generalizing from the particularities of the experiential world” (p. 51). Conceptualizing is divided into two forms: *Conceptualizing by Naming* and *Conceptualizing with Theory* (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). *Conceptualizing by Naming* entails identifying differences and similarities between objects or ideas and developing a nomenclature to categorize them (Kalantzis & Cope, 2011). *Conceptualizing with Theory* requires students to generalize concepts using interpretative frameworks (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). Fundamentally, *Conceptualizing* positions learners as active “theory makers” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). As theory makers, students draw on their own experiences develop concepts (Kalantzis & Cope, 2005). *Conceptualizing* therefore requires students to draw on both everyday knowledge as well as abstract thinking (Cazden, 2006).

The third pedagogical principle of multiliteracies is analyzing. Analyzing entails a “certain kind of critical capacity” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009, p. 185) where students evaluate relationships of power or analyze systems in order to understand, predict, and apply concepts. Analyzing takes on two forms: *analysing functionally* and *analysing critically*. According to Kalantzis and Cope (2011), *analysing functionally* is a process which involves “reasoning, drawing inferential and deductive conclusions, establishing

functional relations such as between cause and effect and analysing logical and textual connections” (p. 52). In this regard, learners “develop chains of reasoning and explain patterns in text” (Kalantzis & Cope, 2011, p. 52). The next form, *Analyzing Critically*, requires students to evaluate their own and other “perspectives, interests and motives” in order to “interrogate the interests behind a meaning or an action, and their own processes of thinking” (Kalantzis & Cope, 2011, p. 52). Moreover, *Analyzing Critically* is concerned with uncovering abuses of justice and power (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009).

Finally, the fourth pedagogical principle of multiliteracies is *applying* calls for learners to be innovative, applying their perspectives, experiences, and knowledge to real world issues to guide their learning (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). The two forms of applying are *applying appropriately* and *applying creatively*. According to Kalantzis and Cope (2011), *applying appropriately* involved “the application of knowledge and understandings to the complex diversity of real-world situations and testing their validity. By these means, learners do something in predictable and expected way in a ‘real world’ situation or a situation that simulates the ‘real world’” (p. 52). The second form, *applying creatively*, is a “process of making the world anew with fresh and creative forms of action and perception” using “the learner’s interests, experiences and aspirations” (Kalantzis & Cope, 2011, p. 52).

Multiliteracies and Equity

The goal of social and economic equity was a primary driver for the NLG in proposing A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies in 1996 (Garcia, Luke, & Seglem, 2018). According to the NLG (1996), new approaches to literacy education must address diversity in demographics as well as modes of communication and languages so that all

students can achieve “full and equitable social participation” (p. 60). Mirra, Morrell, and Filipiak (2018) explained that, twenty years after “A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies” was published, inequitable social conditions in North America “have become ever more pronounced—consider[ing] the polarized political landscape, the corporate-controlled media culture, and the continued prevalence of systemic racial, social, and economic inequities” (para 5).

The view that the equity goals of multiliteracies pedagogy is needed more now than ever is substantiated by others. In a 2018 interview, Luke commented that “digital technology hasn't fundamentally altered the inequities of print-based, industrial-era schooling” (Garcia, Luke, Seglem, 2018, par. 5). Aligning with Luke’s comment, Mirra, Morrell, and Filipiak (2018) explained that

although students across demographic groups are likely to analyze digital texts, low-income students and students of color are less likely than their more affluent, White counterparts to create texts using technology. Without guided experiences of production, students are not only less likely to fully understand the inner workings of the media they consume, but are also denied full access to the primary means of knowledge creation and amplification of the 21st century. (para 25)

Mirra, Morrell, and Filipiak (2018) suggested that multiliteracies pedagogy must involve a “sophisticated understanding of the specific affordances (and shortcomings) of mass media platforms and the design of learning experiences tailored to those affordances and crafted to highlight marginalized voices” (p. 16). Mirra, Morrell, and Filipiak also (2018) noted that multiliteracies requires critically “conceptualizing radical counter-narratives

and having the tools and the ability to create these counter-narratives by leveraging the most advanced digital technologies” (para 22). In this way, students are better equipped to understand new ways of communicating and the power relations involved in promoting equitable social participation.

In the view of Kiss and Mizusawab (2018), students cannot engage fully and equitably in society so long as they “remain subordinate to teacher-directed classroom practices where their agency as independent writers remains unacknowledged and undeveloped” (p. 67). These researchers propose a multiliteracies design to literacy instruction, specifically writing, “to help students discover what they can and should know, rather than prescribe to them what we, as teachers, know and believe to be (universally) true” (Kiss & Mizusawab, 2018, p. 67). In this sense, students would not be subordinated and potentially have opportunities to engage in society fully and equitably.

Critiques of Multiliteracies

The literature, of course, contains critiques of multiliteracies. Leander and Boldt (2013), for instance, have cogently critiqued multiliteracies, arguing that it overemphasizes the role of texts in literacy to the detriment of literacy’s complexity. Further, according to Leander and Boldt (2013), multiliteracies’ focus on systemic functional linguistics results in narrowing literacy practices of learners as intentional and rational designs. This narrow focus, according to the critiques, “neglects the indeterminate, emergent nature of literacy activity” (Skerret, 2016, p. 117). Rather than multiliteracies pedagogy, Leander and Boldt (2013) call for a *rhizomatic* approach to literacies (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Skerret (2016) provides an overview of Leander and Boldt’s (2013) proposition:

- Conceptualizing young people’s engagements with literacy as “a state of constant, unpredictable emergence” (Leander & Boldt, 2013, p. 25) rather than toward a predetermined rational design of meaning
- The significance of assemblage, meaning an un-scriptable coming together of a collection of texts—those already present, those produced by youths, and those brought in by youths—in literacy events
- Viewing texts as participants, rather than the end goal, of literate activity
- Increased scholarly attention to neglected but essential dimensions of literacy as experienced through the mind and body: movement, sensation, affect, and intensity of feeling, such as pleasure (Skerret, 2016, p. 117)

Moreover, while NLG (2000) based its pedagogy on the notion of designing new social futures, “Leander and Boldt are concerned with a ‘short horizon of vision’ and the ‘unfolding of moment by moment movements and possibilities’” (Jacobs, 2013, p. 271). In this sense, Leander and Bolt (2013) see future-framing of literacy practices as limiting the possibilities and spontaneity of what can emerge in the *now*. The future-framing is seen by Leander and Bolt (2013) as producing a linear understanding of literacies. Moreover, Leander and Boldt (2013) asserted multiliteracies works as “pedagogic prescription” (p. 24), and this level of prediction and control is not possible (or perhaps desirable) in literacy pedagogy.

Jacobs (2013), however, did not see Leander and Boldt and multiliteracies as wholly incommensurable. Jacobs argued that one could take a rhizomatic approach to learning within a multiliteracies perspective by understanding that intentional design

includes “the spontaneous, random, and unexpected” (p. 271). Skerret (2016) offered a response:

[Teachers] should carefully reconsider the intents, possibilities, and limitations of our multiliteracies-inspired classrooms. However, this does not mean that we should wholly abandon our enterprise of intentionally prying open “mere literacy” (NLG, 1996, p. 64) instruction to be more inclusive of the identities, interests, and multiliteracies of today’s youths. (p. 119)

Skerret (2016) suggested the following priorities for reconceptualizing multiliteracies:

“Building authentic and caring relationships across difference and affinity,” “stretching out time for enjoyment of learning processes and activities, including enjoyment through the body,” and “pursuing literate objectives that students and teachers agree on as valuable” (p. 119). Skerret argued that these priorities for multiliteracies pedagogy would “dethrone school as the premiere context of literate activity and learning” (p. 119).

Conclusion

In conclusion, multiliteracies is an alternative to *traditional literacy pedagogy*. I use traditional literacy pedagogy using the definition provided by Kalantzis and Cope (2008): the pedagogy of traditional literacy uses standardized approaches to literacy instruction.. According to these researchers, the traditional framework of literacy learning did not acknowledge students’ prior language experiences, or funds of knowledge (Moll, 1992). Instead, Kalantzis and Cope (2008) conceptualize literacy learning, as part of a pedagogy of multiliteracies, as an individuated social practice which includes students’ values and experiences.

Additionally, according to Skerret (2016), multiliteracies has repositioned culturally diverse youth “from a deficit perspective to a view of them as full and purposeful users of literacy” (p. 116). Moreover, the goal of multiliteracies pedagogy is to provide transformative learning opportunities by opening up definitions of literacy so that different ways of knowing, communicating, and thinking can create communities based on equity and diversity (NLG, 2000). I have used a multiliteracies framework to understand how literacy curriculum can address diversity in an equitable and democratic fashion.

The next section, Chapter 4, outlines the methodology of the research which uses multiliteracies as a conceptual framework for literacy.

Chapter 4: Methodology

In this chapter, I outline the methodology and methods of my study. First, I present a rationale for utilizing van Dijk's (2000) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Next, I present the method of analysis, including a list of data sources, followed by the graphic organizers for data collection. I conclude with a description of how the methods and methodology assisted in responding to my research questions.

Overview of Methodology

In this study, I employed van Dijk's (2000) CDA to gain an understanding of how dominance and power relations interconnect with structures of text in Ontario's programmatic literacy curriculum. This form of CDA allowed me to identify discourses that position and shape Schwab's (1969) four commonplaces curriculum: learner, subject matter, teacher, and milieu.

By implementing CDA in this research, I was able to investigate "the systems of pedagogy, curriculum, and assessment that make it possible to explore the social control and power discourses that exist in educational institutions" (Cause, 2010 as cited in Fehring & Nyland, 2012). According to van Dijk (2015), the core purpose of CDA is to reveal power relations that are embedded over and in discourses. Discourse shapes culture and society; culture and society equally constitute discourse, and discourse reflects cultural and social practices of various agencies/agents (van Dijk, 2000).

Discourse analysis sheds light on how linguistic attributes of cultural and social practices can hold dominance over some groups, thereby reinforcing and legitimating dominant power relations (Van Dijk, 2015). According to Donoghue (2018), CDA is "a powerful tool in problematising constructions of language that (re)produce asymmetrical

power relations between ruling and subaltern classes” (p. 1). Because this research examined power relations in government-produced discourse, a CDA was helpful in understanding whether and how unfair power structures may be produced and reproduced within an educational context.

Theoretical Underpinnings of van Dijk’s CDA

Researchers in education have turned to CDA as an approach to interpret, describe, and explain important educational issues (Rogers, 2008). The purpose of CDA, according to Kang (2015), is to “reveal unequal politics of certain discourses that discriminate against the powerless and to make subaltern voices heard in society” (p. 65). As such, the focus of the analysis is on discriminatory aspects of discourses at socio-cultural, political and ideological levels (Kang, 2015; van Dijk, 1993, 1998). van Dijk’s (1993; 1998; 2011) CDA analyzes how hegemony is produced, reproduced, and transmitted via both spoken and written texts. The concept of hegemony for van Dijk refers to the “consensus, acceptance and legitimacy of dominance” (van Dijk, 1993 p. 255) through dominant discourses. Discourse and domination are related through the production and reproduction of power through discourse.

Moreover, CDA examines the ways discourse functions to shape and reshape culture and society in various ways as language users interact with each other to achieve consensus and consent from the larger community (Kang, 2015). Language users who create and reproduce discourse are “connected to attaining symbolic control over others, discourses get dynamically reproduced, produced, and transmitted at various layers/levels of socio-cultural structures” (Kang 2015, p. 64). Furthermore, van Dijk (1993) distinguished between micro and macro structures of discourse in written text or spoken

language. Discourse, language use, communication, and verbal interaction belong to the micro-level of the social order. Dominance, power, and inequality between social groups are general terms that belong to an analytical macro level.

van Dijk's (2011) approach to CDA bridges the gap between macro and micro levels of discourse production and reproduction. According to van Dijk (1993), "there are two major dimensions along which discourse is involved in dominance, namely through the enactment of dominance in text and talk in specific contexts, and more indirectly through the influence of discourse on the minds of others" (p. 279). I will outline these two dimensions of van Dijk's (2011) CDA under the subheadings of "discourse in language" and "discourse in the mind".

Discourse in Language

According to Donoghue (2018), CDA is based on "critical social theory, drawing from thinkers such as Foucault, Bourdieu, Gramsci, Althusser, and the Frankfurt School" (p. 1). I invoked Foucault's (1981) notion of governmentality in this study to explain "how people are positioned and position themselves in structures of power" (Heydon, 2015, p. 58). According to Donoghue (2018), "language acts as a metaphor for power because inherent to language use (and abuse) is a framework of rules. These rules guide how we understand the social and political worlds and thus in turn how we act and interact within those worlds" (p. 33). In the same vein, van Dijk (2003) argues that these rules, in terms of "how they develop, how they act upon different groups, and how they can be challenged is the central broad concern of CDA" (p. 352). These concerns tie in with my research questions of how learners and teachers are positioned through discourse within the programmatic literacy curriculum. Moreover, governmentality is fitting as it is

also a key feature of van Dijk's (1993) CDA.

The theory of language used in van Dijk's CDA is based on Fairclough's critical theory of language (van Dijk, 1993). Based primarily in critical realism, Fairclough's critical theory of language offers the "a lens for understanding human ontology (our 'being-in-the-world'), epistemology (how knowledge is formed and apprehended) and ethics (how we ought to act as moral beings)" (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014, p. 219). Critical realism strives for emancipation by viewing "change as arising from a process of human reflection centered on progressive cycles of analysis, objective setting, formulating plans, executing them and evaluating the results" (Coghlan, & Brydon-Miller, 2014, p. 219).

Moreover, Fairclough built his critical theory of language upon Foucault's concept of governmentality, the idea that government controls its populace in a fashion similar to a shepherd, while disguising its control as care (Foucault, 1981). As such, Fairclough's theory subsumes "ideological discursive formations (IDFs)" are "embedded within speech community" and that "a characteristic a dominant IDF is the capacity to 'naturalize' ideologies, i.e. to win acceptance for them as non-ideological common sense" (Fairclough, 1995, p. 21). Thus, the objective of CDA is to denaturalize IDF to disclose hegemonic and oppressive structures (Fairclough, 1995).

Further, Fairclough (1992; 1995) borrows from Halliday's (1978) to conceptualize language. According to Halliday (1978), there are three functions of language: language functions ideationally, interpersonally, and textually. Fairclough (1995) explains language in text "always simultaneously functions ideationally in the representation of experience and the world, interpersonally in constituting social

interaction between participants in discourse, and textually in tying parts of a text together into a coherent whole and tying texts to situational contexts” (p. 6). In addition to these functions, I also examined two other functions explicated by Kalantzis and Cope (2015) in *Negotiating Spaces for Literacy Learning, Multimodality and Governmentality*. In a chapter of the book, Kalantzis and Cope describe the fourth function of language as situated practice in which “context makes meaning” and “is part of the meaning” (2015, p. 20). The fifth and final function of language, according to *Negotiating Spaces for Literacy Learning, Multimodality and Governmentality*, is to advance a language participant’s interests (Kalantzis & Cope, 2015).

Studying this function of language requires a critical approach to understand “the dynamics of ideologies, be these explicit or implicit, propagandistic or ‘informational’” (Kalantzis & Cope, 2015, p. 21). While van Dijk (1993, 1998, 2011) borrows elements from the interpretivist paradigm to acknowledge the human discernment in analyzing language, it is also scientific in approach, employing rigorous and systematic analysis from the positivistic paradigm (Dieronitou, 2014). Thus, a CDA helped me demonstrate not only which discourses are manifest in Ontario’s programmatic literacy documents, but also how they function within society, thereby adding to my understanding of the significance and impact of programmatic curricula in its educational and social contexts.

Discourse in the Mind

van Dijk's (2011) CDA approach seeks to find an understanding of social relations and ideological structures of power communicated through discourse. van Dijk (2003) argued that "groups possess (more or less) power if they can manage to (more or less) control the minds and acts of (members of) other groups" (p. 354). Because the

mind is the interface between discourses and social structures, discourses can be used to control cognition (van Dijk, 2015). For this study, I examined the discourses within and surrounding the Ontario programmatic literacy curriculum documents to understand how ideologies maybe at work and what implications they have for controlling the minds of those who read and work with these curriculum documents.

To understand this point, van Dijk (1993) explained how “beliefs may be represented in (similarly simplified) propositions or networks, and belief-clusters may in tum be organized by various schemata” (pp. 56-57). In other words, mental models of the discourses consumed by a discourse participant are “assumed to be organized in such schematic patterns” (p. 57). These schemata

may be combined in a specific order and hierarchy, and allow for variable terminal elements. Typically, as is the case in the generative grammar of sentences, such structures are represented in tree-like (directed) graphs, consisting of a top node, several edges and a number of lower-level nodes representing subordinate (included) categories. (p. 57)

The symbolic elite who have the power to disseminate “knowledge” and ideology must “persuade or otherwise influence their audiences” to comply, a feat only possible by influencing the audience’s cognition (p. 259). In this sense, there is a production of ideology through discourse and a reproduction of ideology as it is stored as mental models in the cognition of the public (van Dijk, 1993). van Dijk (1993) explained

we distinguish between the enactment, expression or legitimation of dominance in the (production of the) various structures of text and talk, on the one hand, and the functions, consequences or results of such structures for the (social) minds of

recipients, on the other. Discursive (re)production of power results from social cognitions of the powerful, whereas the situated discourse structures result in social cognitions. That is, in both cases we eventually have to deal with relations between discourse and cognition, and in both cases discourse structures form the crucial mediating role. They are truly the means of the symbolic reproduction of dominance. (p. 259)

Because this research is focused on literacy (i.e. ways of knowing and communicating), van Dijk's conceptualization of ideology a "way of organizing the social mind" is fitting; he explained that ideologies can "control both the opinions or attitudes of the group, as well as their knowledge" so that through their reproduction they become "basic knowledge or opinions that are shared by everyone, taken for granted, and uncontested" (p. 40). This conceptualization of ideology must be considered when examining discourses in the programmatic literacy curriculum of Ontario to determine whether knowledge itself is influenced by ideology, and, if so, how.

Rationale for van Dijk's CDA

According to van Dijk (1993; 2000) and other prominent CDA researchers such as Fairclough (1992, 1995), discourse refers to a kind of social practice. van Dijk contended that, while "the vast majority of studies of ideology (whether Marxist or non-Marxist) are rooted in the social sciences," they overlook "the cognitive and the discursive dimensions of ideologies" and "most cognitive science is barely interested in questions of the mental structures and functions of ideologies" (van Dijk, 1998, p. viii). Therefore, he proposed a triangulation of the interrelationship among cognition, discourse, and society in his CDA sociocognitive model (van Dijk, 2000). This model

emphasizes the cognitive phenomena which are linked to ways in which domination, social inequality, and ideologies work through discourse. To discover attitudes, social representations, and social actors' ideologies, the link between the discourse structure and the societal structure ought to be viewed (van Dijk, 2009, as cited in Ramanathan & Hoon, 2015).

According to van Dijk (1993), constraining critical analysis of discourse to systemic functional linguistics is inadequate since this kind of linguistic analysis fails to consider other discourse dimensions, such as mental perceptions and social representations. As such, van Dijk (2001) posited that CDA researchers should take into account the various kinds of social cognitions shared within a community. According to van Dijk (1993), these social cognitions are "socially shared representations of societal arrangements, relations, and groups, as well as mental operations like thinking and arguing, interpretation, learning and inferencing" (p. 257). Therefore, what distinguishes van Dijk's (2011) model of CDA from others such as Fairclough's (1992, 1995) is the recognition of social cognition as the mediator between text and society.

van Dijk (1998) explained that ideologies may be primarily in the mind, then produced socially, and then reinforced or de-emphasized in the mind according to the response the ideologies receive within cultural context. van Dijk's CDA is hence useful for examining issues such as ethnic discrimination and racism in everyday elite discourse and institutional discourse (e.g., van Dijk, 1991, 1992, 1993, 2011). This attention to prejudice and institutional discourse is important to my study on discourses on and of diversity in the Ontario Ministry of Education programmatic literacy curriculum.

Because discourses often carry ideologies, I also examined the documents for

ideologies using CDA. Because I used van Dijk's CDA I employed van Dijk's broad definition of ideology. According to van Dijk (1998), ideologies are "political or social systems of ideas, values or prescriptions of groups or other collectivities, and have the function of organizing or legitimating the actions of the group" (p. 3). Ideologies need not be negative unless they become a tool for dominating others (van Dijk, 2011). To claim that one's "insights into society were precisely self-defined as non-ideological, and hence [should be taken] as truthful and scientific" (p. 2), is, according to van Dijk (1998), "hardly different from other ideologies that are developed to achieve hegemony, to legitimate power or to conceal inequality — if only in the domain of knowledge" (p. 3). Therefore, I distinguish, as van Dijk has, between ideology as a group belief and ideology "self-serving falsehood" (p. 3).

van Dijk's Micro and Macro Discourse Analysis

van Dijk (1993, 2000) identified two degrees of (discourse) analysis: macro and micro. The micro-level of analysis "describes social actors, and the social interaction between these actors in social situations" (van Dijk, 2000, p. 31). At the more abstract macro level, CDA researchers discuss the relationships, such as power and dominance, among "groups of social actors, institutions, organizations, whole states or societies" (p. 31).

Ideologies manifest in various forms of interaction and verbal communication, but a vital form of interaction is discourse (van Dijk, 1993, 2000, 2003). Discourse is communicated through monological text, such as programmatic curricula, and in dialogical conversation (van Dijk, 2000, 2003). This research focuses on the discourse in the monological text of Ontario's programmatic literacy curriculum. Because discourse

plays a “fundamental role” in both “the expression and reproduction of ideologies” (van Dijk, 2003 p. 31), this study of discourse can reveal ideologies within the programmatic literacy curriculum text (Jahedi, Abdullah, & Mukundan, 2014).

Cognitive Context Model

According to van Dijk (1998), the context model defines “the mental (and hence subjective) counterpart of the canonical structures of a communicative situation or context as we know them from a vast literature in ethnography, sociolinguistics, pragmatics, microsociology and social psychology” (p. 193). Using the aforementioned research, van Dijk (1998) asserted that a context model is constituted by at least four of the following categories:

- Setting: location, timing of communicative event;
- Social circumstances: previous acts, social situation;
- Institutional environment;
- Overall goals of the (inter)action;
- Participants and their social and speaking roles;
- Current (situational) relations between participants;
- Global (non-situational) relations between participants;
- Group membership or categories of participants (e.g., gender, age). (p. 193)

For this study, I considered all these categories to understand the context model for the production of OME programmatic literacy curriculum.

Based on earlier work (van Dijk & Kintsch, 1983) that formulated cognitive text representations, van Dijk (1998) introduced the *context models* concept into CDA theory of discourse. Context models refer to the mental representations of the structures of the

communication circumstances that are of discursive relevance to the interlocutor.

According to van Dijk (1998),

context models are used to manage communicative events. They represent the intentions, purposes, goals, perspectives, expectations, opinions and other beliefs of speech participants about each other, about the ongoing interaction or currently written or read text, or about other properties of the context, such as time, place, circumstances, constraints, props and any other situational factor that may be relevant for the appropriate accomplishment of the discourse. (p. 198)

Important to CDA, these functions of the context model “affect the structures of text and talk, and vice versa, structures of discourse may in turn affect the structure or contents of context models” (p. 198).

As mentioned previously, van Dijk’s CDA seeks to uncover unequal power structure by investigating their social representations in discourse. This CDA presupposes three critical theoretical reasons for analyzing social representations as a cognitive interface between society and discourse (van Dijk, 2011). The first reason is that discourse is interpreted/produced by people who understand it based on knowledge and beliefs that are socially shared. The second reason is that social structures are created and maintained when they are socially represented through discourse. The third and final reason is that discourse influences society through social cognition via mental models (van Dijk, 2011).

Using van Dijk’s (2011) CDA to apply macro level and social cognitive understandings to micro-level text, the study can identify the ways power and dominance are produced and reproduced through discourse in Ontario’s programmatic literacy

curriculum. For instance, in van Dijk's (2011) CDA, ideologies serve as the primary frameworks in organizing the social cognitions shared by members of organizations, social groups, or institutions. According to van Dijk (1995),

ideologies are both cognitive and social. They essentially function as the interface between the cognitive representations and processes underlying discourse and action, on the one hand, and the societal position and interests of social groups, on the other hand. This conception of ideology also allows us to establish the crucial link between macrolevel analyses of groups, social formations and social structure, and microlevel studies of situated, individual interaction and discourse.

(p. 18)

This conceptualization of ideologies permits critical discourse analysts to “establish the important link between social structure and social formations, macro-level analyses, and micro-level studies of situated, personal discourse and interaction” (van Dijk, 2011, p. xiii). A facet of the system is the sociocultural knowledge shared by individuals of a particular society, group, or culture. Group members may also share evaluative opinions, beliefs, organized into social attitudes. Therefore, ideologies are the abstract, overall mental systems that aid in the organization like attitudes that are shared socially (van, Dijk 2011).

Documents for Analysis

In this section, I list the documents that I analyzed for the study and explain how I selected them. In short, I included in the study every document listed under the *language category* for the elementary level (Grades 1 to 8) on the Ontario Ministry of Education website (<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/language.html>) as of July

2019. The following is the list of documents and the URL links by which each were found:

1. *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Language, 2006 (revised)*
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/language18currb.pdf>
2. *Boys' Literacy: Me Read and How (2009)*
http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/meRead_andHow.pdf
3. *Supporting English language learners: A practical guide for Ontario educators Grades 1 to 8, 2008*
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/esleldprograms/guide.pdf>
4. *Supporting English Language Learners with Limited Prior Schooling: A practical guide for Ontario educators (Grades 3 to 12), 2008*
http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/manyroots/ELL_LPS.pdf
5. *English Language Learners / ESL and ELD Programs and Services: Policies and Procedures for Ontario Elementary and Secondary Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12, 2007*
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/esleldprograms/esleldprograms.pdf>
6. *Many Roots, Many Voices: Supporting English Language Learners in Every Classroom, 2005*
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/manyroots/manyroots.pdf>
7. *Early Reading Strategy, The Report of the Expert Panel on Early Reading in Ontario, 2003*
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/reading/reading.pdf>

8. *Literacy for Learning – The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy in Grades 4 to 6 in Ontario, 2004*

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/literacy/panel/literacy.pdf>

9. *Supporting Student Success in Literacy: Grades 7-12 – Effective Practices of Ontario School, 2004*

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/brochure/literacy/literacy.pdf>

Organization of Analysis

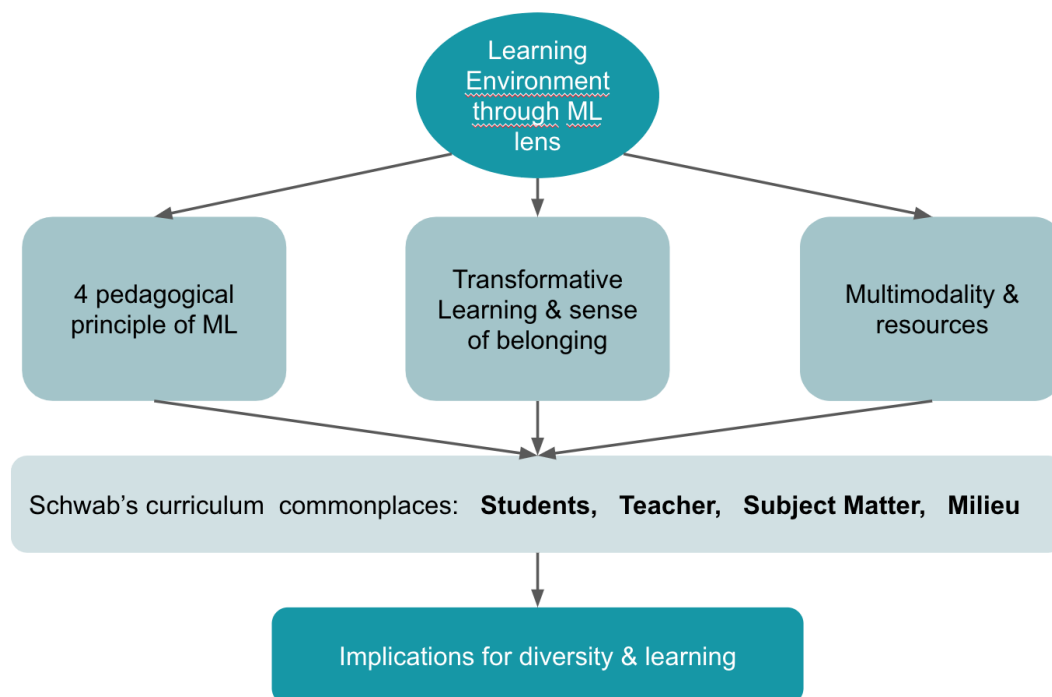
I collected and organized the data from the curriculum documents through a series of steps. The first stage of organization was creating data tables with headings that include three dimensions of the multiliteracies environment, as listed in the multiliteracies project, *Designs for Learning* (2005) conducted by New London Group members Mary Kalantzis and Bill Cope.

- Dimension #1: Diversity as a sense of belonging and knowledge that is transformative
- Dimension #2: Pedagogy based on experiencing, conceptualizing, analyzing, and applying
- Dimension #3: Multimodal communication and expressions of knowledge

The following graphic, Figure 1, provides a visual representation of this initial data organization.

Figure 1

Data organization.



I used these dimensions to organize my analysis because these dimensions would help me conceptualize literacy in the texts through a multiliteracies lens. I identified which aspects of each curriculum document could belong to each dimension. Next, I grouped all information from each text into dimension #1, dimension #2, and dimension #3. In this way, I gathered all relevant information from the programmatic literacy curriculum related to diversity, pedagogy, and multimodality, respectively. For each category, I examined the role, positioning, and conceptualization of three commonplaces of curriculum: learner, teacher, and subject matter. Additionally, I used NVivo software to help me find the most frequently used words in each document and to find key words (student, learner, child, teacher, literacy, milieu, environment, culture, equity, democracy, materials, instruction and diversity) so I could analyze subject and object positioning through how each keyword was in sentences. I created data tables that organized data on the three dimensions of multiliteracies environment as well as data from the NVIVO

analysis. To examine the programmatic literacy documents of Ontario, I performed a CDA in two stages.

Stage I. Discourse Analysis

Once the data tables were complete, I employed van Dijk's CDA, which included an examination of the following features of text (adapted from Shousha, 2010):

I. Semantics:

- a. choice of the topic
- b. images.
- c. Rhetorical figures of speech.
- d. Sources

II. Lexis:

- a. Adjectives
- b. Modality: Modals and Adverbs
- c. Key noun frequencies

III. Syntax: a. Nominalization. b. Active and passive.

IV. Cohesion

I compiled the data into data tables then looked for patterns. The key findings of each document for Stage I are presented in Chapter 5.

Stage II: Ideological Analysis

Next, I employed van Dijk's (2011) theory of ideology to examine how discourses in the programmatic literacy curriculum may contribute to ideologies of domination. van Dijk (2006) provided a framework for analyzing ideology by examining the following interactional strategies:

- Positive self-presentation
 - Negative other-presentation (Macro speech act implying Our 'good' acts and Their bad' acts; Semantic macrostructures: topic selection)
 - (De-)emphasize negative/positive topics about Us/Them
 - Give many/few details
 - Be general/specific
 - Be vague/precise
 - Be explicit/implicit (Lexicon: Select positive words for Us, negative words for Them; Local syntax)
 - Active vs passive sentences, nominalizations: (de)emphasize Our/Their positive/negative agency, responsibility
 - Hyperboles vs euphemisms for positive/negative meanings
 - Metonymies and metaphors emphasizing Our/Their positive/negative properties
 - Emphasize (loud, etc.; large, bold, etc.) positive/negative meanings
 - Order (first, last: top, bottom, etc.) positive/negative meanings
- (p. 373)

van Dijk's ideological square approach is a conceptual tool for exploring and examining discrimination and marginalization of peoples in texts. According to van Dijk (2011), racist text or talk, for example, is dominated by *othering* people from different ethnic and/or cultural backgrounds. van Dijk (2011) explained the ideological square by showing how the in-group (Us) is positioned more positively than the out-group (Them):

- Emphasize positive things about Us.
- Emphasize negative things about Them

- De-emphasize negative things about Us.
- De-emphasize positive things about Them. (p.44)

A negative presentation of the “Other” and a simultaneous positive self-presentation can be investigated by analyzing linguistic dimensions of a text, from the syntactic and lexicon structures, to the sentences' meanings, and the coherence between sentences, and to the wider sociocultural context of the macro level (van Dijk, 2000). Using the ideological square, I examined the documents to see whether or not students were marginalized (i.e. classified as “out-group” or “in-group”) and what criteria led to that classification.

In conclusion, I used van Dijk’s (2011) sociocognitive model of discourse analysis because it deals specifically with issues of education and discrimination. I included a multiliteracies conceptual framework to understand both the subject matter and pedagogy of literacy within the programmatic literacy curriculum documents. Multiliteracies also served as a transformative piece for the discourse analysis because it provided insight into how unjust power structures can be remedied through literacy pedagogy. The next chapter presents the results for each document separately.

Chapter 5: Results

This chapter provides the results of the first stage of the Critical Discourse Analysis for each document that I included in the study. I organized the findings from each document in terms of broad subheadings that reflect the most relevant results of this study.

Common Headings that Organize Results

The following are some of the most common headings and a brief description of what they communicate.

Context

Under this section, I provide the purpose and goals of the document as articulated by the document itself.

Length

I state the number of pages of each document analyzed under this section.

Teacher

The teacher is one of Schwab's commonplaces of curriculum, hence this section expresses the document's conceptualization of teacher.

Student

The student is one of Schwab's commonplaces of curriculum, hence this section expresses the document's conceptualization of student.

Subject Matter

Here I present findings related to how the document conceptualizes literacy as subject matter according to Schwab's curriculum commonplaces.

Milieu

Here I share the finding of milieu in each document.

Equity and Diversity

Under this subheading, I included my findings on how diversity and equity are conceptualized in each document.

Resources & Multimodality

This subheading includes my findings on the learning resources and materials that the documents express.

Pedagogy

Under this subheading, I share findings relative to the learning activities included/excluded in each document.

In addition to these subheadings, I include headings that are specific to each document according to findings, such as specific metaphors, grammatical patterns, instances of intertextuality, and certain discourses. As such, each document's analysis and subheadings are organized according to the findings of each document as a unique text. The following pages in Chapter Five present documents 1 through 9.

Document 1

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2006). *The Ontario curriculum grades 1- 8: Language*.

Retrieved from <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/language18currb.pdf>

Context

According to the document, Ontario's 2006 Language Curriculum for grades 1-8 "replaces the Ontario Curriculum, Grade 1– 8: Language, 1997. Beginning in September 2006, all language programs for Grades 1 to 8 will be based on the expectations outlined in this document (OME, 2006, p. 4).

Length

The document is 155 pages in length.

Organization of Document

The document is organized according to what it calls strands: Oral, Reading, Writing, and Media Literacy. The document is also organized by front matter, which is an introduction, which includes "The Importance of Literacy, Language, and the Language Curriculum," "Principles Underlying the Language Curriculum," "Roles and Responsibilities in Language Education." Next, the document provides a section called "The Program in Language Education" in which the curriculum expectations and strands are defined.

The next section is "Assessment and Evaluation of Student Achievement," which outlines the role of assessment and provides the Achievement Chart for Language, a guide upon which teachers to base evaluation and rubrics. The next major section is called "Some Considerations for Program Planning" in which instructional approaches

are described.

Finally, the document is divided into three sections: an overview of grades 1 to 3, and overview of grades 4 to 6, and an overview of grades 7 to 8. Each of these three sections is followed by each grade where strands are listed with expectations beneath them. The expectations are divided into two categories: overall expectations and specific expectations. The general expectations must be evaluated by the teacher while the specific expectations guide the teacher's instruction. Last, the document lists a glossary.

Subject Matter: Structure of Expectations

For each grade and strand, list of expectations is prefaced with a statement that by the end of that particular grade, "students will," followed by a colon and proceeded by a numerated list of outcomes. Figure 2 that follows shows an excerpt from page 80 demonstrating the structure of expectations.

Figure 2

The structure of expectations in OME (2006) Language Curriculum

1. Listening to Understand

By the end of Grade 4, students will:

Purpose

1.1 identify purposes for listening in a variety of situations, formal and informal, and set goals related to specific listening tasks (*e.g., to summarize the theme of a small-group drama presentation; to record important details about an upcoming event announced on the radio; to clarify suggestions for improvements in a peer writing conference*)

This figure shows how the student as the subject of the sentence is spatially removed from the expectations. This separation of the subject from the expectation indicates a focus on the outcome rather than on child or the learning process. Moreover, the details in brackets which are italicized are also separated from the expectation by the parenthesis and the change in font. These points indicate again that the learning activities and processes are not as important as the outcome.

Most Common Main Verbs

The most common main verbs in the expectations are “identify,” “use,” and “explain.” These verbs are associated with the knowledge process of conceptualizing, which Kalantzis and Cope (2004) argue is the most common knowledge process in traditional curriculum approaches. Table 1 lists the most common main verbs in the expectations and shows how many times they occur.

Table 1

Most Common Main Verbs in the Expectations in OME Language Document

Main Verbs in Expectations				
Expectation main verb	Grades 1-3	Grades 4-6	Grades 7-8	Total
identify	105	90	53	248
use	38	66	38	159
explain	20	34	39	93
produce	15	18	11	44
demonstrate	15	12	11	38
analyze	0	11	8	19
read	6	7	4	17
choose	6	3	2	11
write	2	3	3	8
speak	0	0	0	0
listen	0	0	0	0

In addition to showing the most frequent verbs, Table 2 shows that “read” and “write” are included in the main verbs while “speak” and “listen” are not. This could indicate a focus on print literacy. The most common object of a main verb is “understanding” which is most often collocated with “demonstrate.” Table 2 shows the frequency of “understanding” a verb object.

Table 2

Most common object of a main verb in the expectations in OME Language Document

Object of verb	Grades 1-3	Grades 4-6	Grades 7-8	Total
Understanding [most commonly with “demonstrate”]	18	18	15	51

Table 3 shows the most common adjective/adverb in the expectations. According to the data, the word “appropriate”/ “appropriately” is the most common noun and verb modifier in the expectations.

Table 3

Frequency of the Word Appropriate/Appropriately in the Expectations in OME Language Document.

adjectives/adverbs	Grades 1-3	Grades 4-6	Grades 7-8	total
appropriate/appropriately	40	60	44	144

The word appropriate indicates that there are certain behaviours that are considered literate behaviours. Table 4. that follows shows the instances in the expectations that refer to cultural diversity.

Table 4

Expectations from the OME Language Document that Explicitly Refer to Cultural Diversity

Grade	Strand	#	Reference to diversity/culture
Grade 1	Speaking	2.6	with sensitivity towards cultural differences
Grade 2	Oral	2.5	with sensitivity towards cultural differences
Grade 2	Oral	2.6	with sensitivity towards cultural differences
Grade 3	Oral	2.5	with sensitivity towards cultural differences
Grade 3	Oral	2.6	with sensitivity towards cultural differences
Grade 4	Oral	2.5	with sensitivity towards cultural differences
Grade 4	Oral	2.6	with sensitivity towards cultural differences
Grade 5	Oral	2.5	with sensitivity towards cultural differences
Grade 5	Oral	2.6	with sensitivity towards cultural differences
Grade 6	Oral	2.5	with sensitivity towards cultural differences
Grade 6	Oral	2.6	with sensitivity towards cultural differences
Grade 4	Reading	1.1	Read a variety of texts from diverse cultures
Grade 5	Reading	1.1	Read a variety of texts from diverse cultures
Grade 6	Reading	1.1	Read a wide variety of texts from diverse cultures
Grade 7	Oral	2.5	Read a wide variety of texts from diverse cultures
Grade 7	Oral	2.6	Read a wide variety of texts from diverse cultures
Grade 8	Oral	2.5	Read a wide variety of texts from diverse cultures
Grade 8	Oral	2.6	Read a wide variety of texts from diverse cultures
Grade 7	Read	1.1	Texts from diverse cultures
Grade 8	Read	1.1	Texts from diverse cultures
Grade 7	Media	1.6	Determine the commercial, ideological, political, cultural, and/or artistic interests or perspectives that the texts may involve
Grade 8	Media	1.6	Determine commercial, ideological, political, cultural, and/or artistic interests or perspectives that the texts may involve

From this table, I observed that cultural texts are introduced to students in the expectations beginning in Grade 4. Before that, the data suggests that texts and materials used do not reflect cultural diversity. The implication could be that diverse cultures are not considered part of the cultural in-group since the cultural ingroup is taught through normalized texts in the formative years (Grades 1-3).

Moreover, the document simply mentions that students should be sensitive to “cultural differences”—mentioning difference is not the same as promoting diversity as a sense of belonging and as transformative learning according to multiliteracies pedagogy (Kalantzis & Cope, 2004). Moreover, cultural differences are positioned in the document as a limitation on ways of communicating instead of as additional ways of communicating. This limitation is indicated by the statement “with sensitivity to cultural differences” in the Oral strands. For example, in grades 1 through 3, all students are expected to demonstrate the same appropriate listening and speaking behavior, according to the cultural norms. Then, in grades 4 to 6, students are to behave according to sensitivity to other cultures, as denoted by “diverse cultures.” From this data, I interpret that the expectations promote standardized behavior and divide students into in-group and out-group based on the normalized dominant culture and non-dominant cultures.

Moreover, the expectations in Media for Grades 1 to 3 require students to “describe how different audiences might respond to specific media texts” (pp. 45, 59, 73). This practice encourages students to speak for others without having had any previous experiences with diverse texts since diverse texts are not introduced in the expectations until Grade 4.

Purpose and Function of Expectations

The expectations are the basis for determining student achievement. The document states that “all curriculum expectations must be accounted for in instruction, but evaluation focuses on students’ achievement of the overall expectations” (p. 16). The achievement chart presents the “provincial standard” for achievement (p. 16). In order to meet the standard, students must achieve level 3 according to the achievement chart.

Purpose of Assessment

According to the document, assessment is necessary to “determine students’ strengths and weaknesses in their achievement of the curriculum expectations” (p. 15). Assessment is defined as “the process of gathering information from a variety of sources (including assignments, day-to-day observations, conversations or conferences, demonstrations, projects, performances, and tests) that accurately reflects how well a student is achieving the curriculum expectations in a subject” (p. 16). From these excerpts, I noted that students are conceptualized as weak if they do not achieve the standards of the curriculum.

Categories of Assessment

The achievement chart is divided into four categories: Knowledge and Understanding, Thinking, Communication, and Application. According to the document, these categories are “defined by clear criteria” and “represent four broad areas of knowledge and skills within which the subject expectations for any given grade are organized” (p. 17). According to the document, these categories “should be considered as interrelated, reflecting the wholeness and interconnectedness of learning” (p. 17). However, having learning separated into these categories disconnects the learning and prohibits the conceptualization of the “wholeness” of learning.

The Achievement Chart

The document provides an achievement chart, shown in Figure 3 that follows, which is “a standard province-wide guide be used by teachers” (p. 17). The document states that this chart “enables teachers to make judgements about student work that are

based on clear performance standards and on a body of evidence collected over time” (p. 17).

Figure 3

Excerpt from the Achievement Chart in OME (2006)

ACHIEVEMENT CHART – LANGUAGE, GRADES 1–8

Categories	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Knowledge and Understanding – Subject-specific content acquired in each grade (knowledge), and the comprehension of its meaning and significance (understanding)				
	The student:			
Knowledge of content <i>(e.g., forms of text; strategies associated with reading, writing, speaking, and listening; elements of style; terminology; conventions)</i>	demonstrates limited knowledge of content	demonstrates some knowledge of content	demonstrates considerable knowledge of content	demonstrates thorough knowledge of content
Understanding of content <i>(e.g., concepts; ideas; opinions; relationships among facts, ideas, concepts, themes)</i>	demonstrates limited understanding of content	demonstrates some understanding of content	demonstrates considerable understanding of content	demonstrates thorough understanding of content
Thinking – The use of critical and creative thinking skills and/or processes				
	The student:			
Use of planning skills <i>(e.g., generating ideas, gathering information, focusing research, organizing information)</i>	uses planning skills with limited effectiveness	uses planning skills with some effectiveness	uses planning skills with considerable effectiveness	uses planning skills with a high degree of effectiveness
Use of processing skills <i>(e.g., making inferences, interpreting, analysing, detecting bias, synthesizing, evaluating, forming conclusions)</i>	uses processing skills with limited effectiveness	uses processing skills with some effectiveness	uses processing skills with considerable effectiveness	uses processing skills with a high degree of effectiveness
Use of critical/creative thinking processes <i>(e.g., reading process, writing process, oral discourse, research, critical/creative analysis, critical literacy, metacognition, invention)</i>	uses critical/creative thinking processes with limited effectiveness	uses critical/creative thinking processes with some effectiveness	uses critical/creative thinking processes with considerable effectiveness	uses critical/creative thinking processes with a high degree of effectiveness

Knowledge and Understanding of content is assessed using the terms “limited,” “some,” “considerable,” and “thorough.” Students who are achieving level one are considered limited, suggesting a deficit-based approach to literacy learning and teaching. Moreover,

these assessment terms are vague. For instance, what constitutes being limited or being thorough? Moreover, how can students receive equitable assessment based on individual need if assessment is based on a standardized expectation/outcome?

Moreover, while document calls for the “use of critical/creative thinking” (p. 18), there no expectations that state “critical” or “creative;” this means that there are fixed conceptualizations of these terms in the expectations and what counts as creative or critical processes are pre-determined; how creative or critical then are students encouraged to be?

Teacher

The document provides a bulleted list of mandatory assessment and evaluation strategies for teachers. According to the document,

Teachers must use assessment and evaluation strategies that:

- address both what students learn and how well they learn;
are based both on the categories of knowledge and skills and on the achievement level descriptions given in the achievement chart on pages 20–21;
- are varied in nature, administered over a period of time, and designed to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the full range of their learning;
- are appropriate for the learning activities used, the purposes of instruction, and the needs and experiences of the students;
- are fair to all students;
- accommodate students with special education needs, consistent with the strategies outlined in their Individual Education Plan;

- accommodate the needs of students who are learning the language of instruction; ensure that each student is given clear directions for improvement;
- promote students' ability to assess their own learning and to set specific goals; include the use of samples of students' work that provide evidence of their achievement; are communicated clearly to students and parents at the beginning of the school year and at other appropriate points throughout the school year. (pp. 15-16)

Teachers are given the responsibility of ensuring “fair” assessment practices that “accommodate the needs” of each student. The responsibility OME takes on regarding assessment is the defining standards through expectations and achievement levels.

Teachers are given the responsibility of assessment but not the responsibility of actively designing learning environments. I came to this conclusion based on my analysis of the main verbs associated with teachers and of the language surrounding learning environments. I found that teachers are associated with auxiliary verbs while other subjects are associated with active verbs related to teaching and designing learning environments. The most common verbs associated with teachers as the subject are: *Help, can choose, can help, are (responsible for), are (expected to), should ensure, assign tasks, give, use (methods from curriculum document), encourage and enable*. Table 5 shows the comparison between teacher main verbs and verbs with non-teachers in sentences that describe the learning milieu.

Table 5

Comparison of Verbs Used to Describe Teacher and Non-Teacher Roles

verbs of non-teachers in creating milieu	Main verbs with subject “teacher(s)”
Invite	Help
create	can choose
motivate	can help
lead	are (responsible for)
encourage	are (expected to)
enable	should ensure
organizes	bring enthusiasm
engage	assign tasks
provide	give
enhance	use (methods from curriculum document)
model	encourage
mentor	enable
collaborate	
develop	

From Table 5, the verbs with teachers are semantically weaker since they are usually part of an auxiliary construction such as “should ensure” and “are expected to.” The verbs with non-teachers have stronger connotations since the verbs are more active and concrete, such as encourage, mentor and collaborate.

Student

Students in the curriculum are positioned as being illiterate based on adult standards and thus their funds of knowledge are not considered as literacy skills. As a consequence, the conceptualization of student was an entity in the future state. For example, the documents states

the language curriculum is based on the belief that literacy is critical to responsible and productive citizenship, and that all students *can become* literate.

The curriculum is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills that

they need to achieve this goal. It aims to help students *become* successful language learners, who share the following characteristics. (OME, 2006, p. 4).

This excerpt indicates that students are not literate but *can become* so in a future state. Students are given bulleted expectations of what they “will” do in the future to become literate. In addition, the word “students” is separated from the bulleted list of expectations which shows emphasis on the outcomes rather than the student learning process. This point is supported by the student role explained on page 6: “Mastering the concepts and skills connected with the language curriculum requires work, study, and the development of cooperative skills.” This sentence lacks the word “student” but emphasizes mastering outcomes.

The document also positions students in a passive role where the ministry knows best (e.g. “*students learn best* when they can identify themselves and their own experience in the material they read and study at school” (p. 5)). Additionally, the students are on the receiving end of the prepositional phrases, with the most common being “for students” rather than “with students.” For example, according to the NVIVO term search, there are 20 instances of the prepositional phrase “for students” and zero instances of “with students.” This finding suggests that, in the programmatic literacy curriculum, learning is done unto students rather than by students.

Intertextuality

Under this heading, I include my findings on how the documents borrow from other texts to deliver a message (Fairclough, 1992). By investigating intertextuality, I make good on the idea that “text cannot be viewed or studied in isolation since texts are not produced or consumed in isolation: all texts exist, and therefore must be

understood, in relation to other texts” (Richardson, 2007, p. 100). Further, when thinking with intertextuality, we might consider that intertextuality is used by authors to gain credence or authority from another text (Moloi & & Bojabotseha, 2014).

In this document, the Ontario Ministry of Education quotes from UNESCO, *Statement for the United Nations Literacy Decade, 2003–2012*:

Literacy is about more than reading or writing – it is about how we communicate in society...Those who use literacy take it for granted – but those who cannot use it are excluded from much communication in today’s world. Indeed, it is the excluded who can best appreciate the notion of “literacy as freedom”. (p. 3)

This quote is located at the beginning of the document. It shows from the outset that OME considers the United Nations an authority of literacy.

Document 2

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2003). *Early reading strategy: The report of the expert panel on early reading in Ontario*. Retrieved from <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/reading/reading.pdf>

Context

This report was written by the Early Reading Panel, a group made up of “members from a wide range of constituencies involved in reading” (OME, 2003, p. 3) such as teachers, consultants, principals, school board administrators, academics and researchers . They are said to come from “English, French, and Aboriginal” communities and “worked together to share their expertise in the field of reading” (p. 3) to develop this report on effective reading instruction for teaching reading to all children in Ontario in grades 1 to 3.

Length

This document is 92 pages in length.

Subject Matter

Reading is the sole subject matter discussed in this document. The document explains that “although instructional strategies for oral language and writing are not discussed in detail here, they are essential for teaching children to read” (p. 11).

Milieu: Effective Instruction

The term “effective instruction” was repeated throughout the document. Effective instruction, according to the document, promotes the success of all students. As such, effective instruction in the document calls for the incorporation of “ESL/ELD approaches and strategies throughout the curriculum” (p. 2). According to the document,

Those who lack basic skills in English should receive additional instruction in English as a second language (ESL) or English literacy development (ELD). ESL is designed for students who have little or no fluency in English, although they are fluent in another language. ELD is for students who speak a variation of English that differs from standard English, or who have had limited prior schooling, and who need help to improve their skills in reading, writing, and oral communication. (p. 2)

The document asserts that effective instruction enables all children to become fluent readers, builds on prior knowledge and experiences, and activates higher order skills.

The following table, Table 6, shows a few examples of how effective literacy instruction is characterized in the text. These examples are representative of how "effective instruction" is used across documents.

Table 6

Language Referring to Effective Reading Instruction in OME (2003)

pg	Samples of Text Referring to Effective Reading Instruction
13	Effective early reading instruction <i>enables all children to become fluent readers</i> who comprehend what they are reading, can apply and communicate their knowledge and skills in new contexts, and have a strong motivation to read
13	Effective reading instruction <i>builds on their prior knowledge and experience</i> , language skills, and higher-level thinking.
9	Effective instruction <i>activates children's visual, auditory, and kinesthetic senses</i>

According to the document, effective instruction requires certain actions by teachers. For example, the document says, “teachers should constantly model language structures that are more elaborate and varied than the ones children use outside of school”

(p. 15) as this modelling is beneficial to children. Moreover, teachers are expected to “include authentic and motivating literacy experiences” (p. 31). High frequency verbs associated with teacher as a subject include “engage” (e.g., p. 15), “provide” (e.g., p. 8), “monitor” (e.g., p. 23), “assess” (e.g., p. 8), “model” (e.g., p. 15), “ensures” (e.g. p. 15), and “help” (e.g., p. 8).

Students: Children at Risk

When children are the subject of a clause and the document positions them as “at risk,” the children are linked with the risk factor to form the complete subject in the sentence or clause. For example, the document uses subjects such as the following:

- “Children whose first language differs from the language of instruction” (p. 10)
- “Children with mild hearing impairment” (p. 14)
- “children who struggle with reading in Grades 1 to 3” (p. 7)
- “Children who experience reading difficulties” (p. 22),
- “Most young children with reading difficulties” (p. 33)
- “Children from certain socio-economic, cultural, or linguistic backgrounds” (p. 36)
- “Many Aboriginal children in remote areas of the province” (p. 36)
- “Children who continue to experience difficulties in Grade 3” (p. 33)
- “Children who do not learn to read in school” (p. 65)
- “Some children who speak a first language or dialect that is different from the language of instruction” (p. 14)

According to the aforementioned data, reading is a predominant concern. Being at risk for lower levels of reading achievement is linked to the child’s geographic community,

physical ability, as well as their cultural, linguistic, or socioeconomic background.

Milieu: Discourse of Speed and Competition

According to the analysis, the document seems concerned with making sure students are learning at a similar pace. In two instances, the document repeats the same sentence with the phrasal verb “catch up” on two different pages: “Research findings on early reading difficulties are very clear: children who continue to experience difficulties in Grade 3 seldom *catch up* in later grades” (pp. 4, 33 [emphasis added]).

Students: Negative Constructions Associated with Students

The document uses the negative sentence construction only when referring to students who come to school with reading difficulties, lower levels of oral proficiency, and first languages other than English. The following table, Table 7, provides examples of negative sentences with the word “children.”

Table 7

Examples of Negative Sentences with the Word “Children” in OME (2003)

pg Negative sentences with “children”	
7	Children with unaddressed reading difficulties have not failed the system; the system has failed them.
7	We now know that this is not inevitable, even for children who face significant challenges
10	Whether or not the child’s first language matches the language of instruction, a rich background in oral language will help to develop a strong foundation for reading.
10	If [children whose first language differs from the language of instruction] do not have access outside the school to rich language experiences in the language of instruction, the school is expected to fill the void.
12	Interventions for students at risk of not learning to read
14	Not all children begin school with a solid foundation in oral language.

Children are referred to as “these children” most commonly when they are associated with a perceived learning concern in the document. In fact, 8 out of the 9 times “these children” is used, it refers to children with learning concerns such as children who need “intervention,” who are “at risk,” or come from diverse linguistic backgrounds. The following table, Table 8, shows examples of how “these children” is used in sentences from the document.

Table 8

Examples of How “these children” is Used for Students Who Present Learning Concerns in OME (2003)

pg “these children” associated with learning concerns		
33	These children	Are at risk of failing school and dropping out, and they may have limited career opportunities in adulthood
14	These children	require instruction that increases their oral language abilities in conjunction with reading skills.
14	These children	may or may not be native speakers of English or French.
3	These children	may have had schooling in another country, but their schooling was disrupted or the system was very different from the Franco-Ontarian system, and so they lack rudimentary skills in reading, writing, and mathematics.

The document uses diminutive language to discuss students who present reading or oral proficiency difficulties and/or have first languages other than English. For example, the document using diminutive language such as “lack,” “only,” “little,” “small,” and “limited.” Furthermore, the same types of learners are highlighted in complex sentences using contrast signals such as “although,” “but,” and “on the other hand.”

Students who meet the level 3 standard are associated with the verb “learn,” while students who are moving toward level 3 “must develop” and “may resist” learning. Students who receive level 3 “demonstrate” and “mimic” and “improve,” while students who do not receive level 3 “come from,” “struggle” and “begin.” The following table, Table 9, compares verbs used for students who have met the standard and for students who are on their way.

Table 9

Comparison of Verbs Used for Students Who Have and Who Have Not Met the Standards in OME (2003)

Student meeting standard	Student toward meeting standard
learn	must develop
apply	may resist
use	struggle
show	Come from
mimic	begin
demonstrate	
improve	

Students: Subordination and Children in Complex Sentences

When “children” are the subject in a complex sentence, “children” is located in the subordinate clause most of the time, while “they” is in the main clause the majority of the time. In fact, “children” is in the main clause as the subject only 2 out of 9 times.

Milieu: Resources

According to the document, the teacher organizes a learning “environment that includes charts, lists, word walls, and other resources” (p. 23). The materials most often cited in the document have been compiled in Table 10 that follows.

Table 10

Most Commonly Referred to Pedagogical Materials in OME (2003)

levelled texts	books	pictures
audio	video	overheads
lists	poems	charts
storytelling	conversations	graphic organizers
posters	Word walls	Tapes

I found that multilingual texts are not explicitly stated. The document explains that “it is a challenge to find reading resources such as levelled texts that are adapted to the Franco-Ontarian context” (p. 2). Digital media such as computers are not represented in the document.

Students: Metaphor of Water

Through the analysis, I identified that the document uses water as a metaphor to describe the learning environment. The following are some examples from the document of the imagery of water:

- Children need to be immersed in a literacy-rich environment, filled with books, poems, pictures, charts, and other resources (p. 13)
- They immerse the children in a rich French-language environment that emphasizes the pleasure of speaking and reading in French and promotes *animation culturelle* (p. 49)
- Reading instruction – in fact, all of school life – should immerse the children and their families in a rich French-language environment (p. 68)

- The group composition is fluid and changes according to the teacher's observations and assessments (p. 25)

Milieu: Metaphor of Competition/Race

The document expresses the relationship between children in the same grade through the metaphor of a competition of speed, such as a race. Key phrases include “catch up”, “keep up”, “fall behind”, and “pace of work”. For example, the document explains that “children who continue to experience reading difficulties in Grade 3 seldom *catch up* later” (p. 4). It also mentions that [children who struggle with reading in Grades 1 to 3] have a “much harder time *keeping up* with their peers, and they increasingly *fall behind* in other subjects” (p. 7). Moreover, the quality of learning and teaching from the figure on Key Factors of School Improvement, the imperative is “Focus on the development of skills and *pace of work*” (p. 44).

Milieu: Metaphor of Fuel/Fire

The document uses “fuel” and “fire” to describe motivation and the reading process: “[Motivation] is the fuel that lights the fire and keeps it burning (metaphor)” (p. 13).

Milieu: Metaphor of Vehicle

The document invoked the metaphor of a vehicle to describe literacy in the life of students: “As these children grow older and literacy increasingly becomes a vehicle for teaching” (p. 38).

Milieu: Metaphor of Construction Building

Learning is seen as a “building” activity similar to construction building. For example, the document describes how students need help integrating new information

with their prior knowledge in order to build on their learning and deepen their understanding (p. 8). Their prior knowledge is considered a “foundation.” According to the document, “teaching builds on the cultural backgrounds and first languages of the children” (p. 55). The key to teaching English Language Learners is said to be “building strong bridges from the known to the new” (p. 15). Students also build: “new vocabulary,” “memory structures,” “new knowledge” and “oral language skills” (these phrases and ideas were repeated often and found on several pages).

Moreover, phonics and word study are described as “building blocks for becoming an effective reader” (p. 23). Finally, the periods in which students learn literacy are called “blocks of time” (p. 35) and children need “blocks of uninterrupted classroom time” for literacy learning (p. 4).

Students and Milieu: Discourse of Economics

The discourse of economics is used to describe the literacy environment as well as the cultural diversity of students in Ontario. For example, the document states “with immigrants representing almost 25 percent of Ontario’s population, there is rich cultural diversity in many of the province’s classrooms” (p. 1). This rich diversity is something that teachers can “capitalize on” (p. 49).

While some children are said to have “a wealth of knowledge” (p. 15), some children are described as “language-impooverished,” having a background with “little opportunity to develop a rich vocabulary and complex language structures” (p. 14). The document asserts that “children need to be immersed in a literacy-rich environment” (p. 13) in which they can capitalize “on early gains” in reading” (p. 37). Furthermore, while there are “gains” in literacy, there are “costs of illiteracy” (p. 65).

Students: Discourse of Missing Something

The document conceptualizes achievement levels below ministry standards as a void, lacking, gap, or deficit. For example, the document states that the challenge of teaching is not creating “culturally matched” instruction “for each ethnic group, but to capitalize on diversity and to recognize when an individual child or group of children has a particular need or deficit that is making it harder to learn to read” (p. 49). Table 11, shows examples from the text that show the use of the words “lack”, “gap”, “void” and “deficit.”

Table 11

Discourse of Missing Something (OME, 2003)

pg	Example from the document
2	lack basic skills
3	lack rudimentary skills
45	lack context for understanding
58	gaps of “at-risk” learners
46	gaps in knowledge
10	school is expected to fill the void.
49	deficit that is making it harder to learn to read.

Students may be entering school unprepared (compared to their peers), and the document sees them as lacking basic or rudimentary skills or prior experience needed for comprehension. Further, if children whose first language differs from the language of instruction “do not have access outside the school to rich language experiences in the language of instruction, the school is expected to fill the void” (p. 10).

Subject Matter: School-Home Connection

Creating a connection between the school and the students' home is emphasized in the document. For example, the document describes "effective schools and classroom teachers" as those who "involve families in their children's education and help them to connect with relevant resources in the broader community" (p. 65). The connections allow teachers to suggest to parents the "most appropriate home activities at each stage in a child's reading development" (p. 65).

Document 3

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2004a). *Literacy for learning – The report of the expert panel on literacy in grades 4 to 6 in Ontario*. Retrieved from <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/literacy/panel/literacy.pdf>

Context

This report was “developed by a bilingual panel of experts to promote a whole-school, whole-board approach to literacy planning for Grades 4–6 in English- and French language schools. The planning framework calls on educators to build on the foundations laid in a child’s early school years and to prepare each child for more advanced and applied literacy learning in later grades and in life” (p. 2).

Length

The document is 147 pages in length.

Subject Matter

The main subject matter of this document is reading. For instance, I found 47 pedagogical activities—that is, instances in which the document explicitly stated a learning/teaching activity that included what was to be taught/learned and how it was to be taught/learned). I noticed that all 47 of these activities were reading activities. The following table, Table 12, shows a sample of the pedagogical activities and how I coded them according to subject matter.

Table 12

Pedagogical Activities Coded for Subject Matter in OME (2004a)

p.	statement	Sm
67	[Students in grade 6] could compare the description of Cartier in the text to a short story that focuses on the impact of early European settlement on Aboriginal peoples	read
75	After reading, students make text-to-self and text-to-text connections, and record their thinking on a graphic organizer. After reading independently, students work with a partner to compare the language used by authors in their respective texts to describe children.	read
74	During reading, students search for words that the author has used to create a negative image of a group of people.	read
66	When students have frequent opportunities to talk about their reading and to compare their understandings, they further develop the ideas and information that they have drawn from their reading.	read
71	When students reflect on what the author wants the reader to think or believe, or how the author is persuading the reader to feel a particular way, they learn to evaluate what they read, view, and hear, and to draw conclusions about the purpose and validity of the ideas and information in texts of all types.	read
71	When reading print, visual, or electronic texts, students need to learn how to examine the messages they read, looking for inconsistencies and evidence of the author's beliefs, values, and point of view	read
74	Students in a small group read a book selected by the teacher to provide a moderate challenge, and, while reading, they use previously taught strategies and skills to construct meaning.	read
30	For social studies, they could choose an explorer and create a box of artefacts, such as maps, letters, illustrations, and other texts, to help them tell a story about that explorer in a presentation to the class.	represent

Table 12 shows that the majority of pedagogical activities concern literacy as reading.

For example, on page 6, the document suggests that students “could compare the description of Carter to a short story that focuses on the impact of early European settlement on Aboriginal peoples” (OME, 2004a). I coded this as reading since the document is discussing reading activities in social sciences and suggests a way to connect the reading with other texts on similar issues.

Subject Matter and Milieu: Discourse of Productivity

The discourse of productivity is repeated throughout the document. For example, the document states that “through frequent use of appropriate technologies, students build confidence in their skills and gain access to the growing wealth of information and productivity tools on which literate learners rely” (p. 24). The document also speaks about how school leaders: should “value junior writers’ development as they use the writing process by not overvaluing the product” (p. 90). Teachers are in charge of “arranging the most productive physical set-up for the equipment” (p. 25). The document even cites Tomlinson’s (2004) four pillars of differentiated instruction (“content, process, product, and environment” (p. 27) that further emphasize the discourse of productivity, as the four pillars follow the process-product linear trajectory.

Students: Discourse of Targets

I found that this document emphasizes “targeted” as instruction is part of “effective instruction.” The document defines targeted instruction as instruction which is designed “to address specific learning needs” (p. 29). Targeted instruction is “aimed at moving the student along a developmental continuum” (p. 12). Some examples of how target is used in the document are as follows: Teachers are required to give “meaningful targeted feedback about their work” (p. 44) and “set targets that promote improved achievement” (p. 100).

Subject Matter: Discourse of Economics

The discourse of economics runs through the document. For instance, the document states that the “English-language environment provides parents and teachers with a wealth of opportunities to connect literacy with a child’s daily life and

experiences” (p. 7). It also states that “Through frequent use of appropriate technologies, students build confidence in their skills and gain access to the growing wealth of information and productivity tools on which literate learners rely” (p. 24). The document includes a bank as metaphor with the statement “Students need a bank of words that come to mind automatically, requiring no conscious effort, in order to manage difficult decoding and comprehension challenges” (p. 73). Furthermore, the document illustrates how “teachers capitalize on the natural curiosity and social nature of junior students” (p. 12).

Teachers and Students: Metaphor of Apprenticeship

The document invoked the metaphor of apprenticeship to describe how students learn. According to the document, “the junior classroom is like an artisan’s workshop. The teacher is the experienced reader and writer, and the students are novices learning in an apprentice-like relationship” (p. 57). For example, after teachers model how to create appropriate discussion questions, the “students’ own questions may begin as ‘copies’ of the teacher’s questions but, with practice, the process of inquiry takes root in students’ ways of thinking and becomes the basis for the independent construction of meaning” (p. 35).

Students: Metaphor of Water

The metaphor of water is used to describe student’s experiences with texts, language, information. For instance, “When junior students are *immersed* [emphasis added] in a wide variety of text forms” (p. 83). “Students today experience a constant *stream* [emphasis added] of ideas and information” (p. 9), “students also observe and *absorb* [emphasis added] the thoughts and thinking processes of others” (p. 56), and “it

becomes critical, then, that the school be a place *steeped* [emphasis added] in French language” (p. 56).

Students: Metaphor of Reflect/Mirror

The document uses the verb “reflect” to connote the idea that students see themselves in the learning experience through the texts they consume. The document discusses the role of teachers in choosing “a wide variety of texts and topics, paying particular attention to those that positively reflect the identity, culture, and interests of the students and the wider community” (p. 18). To “ensure that texts include viewpoints that reflect the diverse nature of Canadian society” (p. 62), teachers seek and assess “targeted resources” by asking themselves the guiding question: “How do our existing text-based and multimedia resources reflect the cultural profile of our school community and the global nature of Canadian society?” (p. 101).

According to the document, another way that teachers help students see themselves is by reflecting their skills back to them. For instance, teachers listen to students as think-aloud their metacognitive processes, and then “reflect back to them the successful strategies, skills, and approaches the students are using” (p. 58).

Milieu: Metaphor of Window

The document uses the metaphor of a window to gain insight into student thinking: “The unique response of each student provides a “window” into the student’s reading process” (p. 66). The insight helps teachers understand the meaning-making processes of students, since, as according to the document, “the meaning that readers seek is both in the text and in the mind of the reader who brings experiences, knowledge, purposes, and a perspective to the author’s words and meanings” (p. 65).

Subject Matter: Metaphor of Tree Roots

The metaphor of tree roots can be seen in the following two statements from the document:

- “Students’ own questions may begin as ‘copies’ of the teacher’s questions but, with practice, the process of inquiry takes root in students’ ways of thinking and becomes the basis for the independent construction of meaning” (p. 35);
- “Teachers challenge students to “dig deeper” for meaning, to wonder about possibilities, and to discuss contradictions” (p. 17).

This metaphor of tree roots illustrates the beginning of students’ deeper thought processes

Metaphor of Construction Building

A metaphor of construction building is used to illustrate how students gain more knowledge and advance on the learning continuum. Their prior knowledge or background is the “foundation” to “build on” (e.g., p. 2) with “tools” (e.g., p. 23) provided by the teacher. ELL may also use electronic translators to “build bridges” (p. 42) across languages. The teacher also challenges the students to “dig deeper” (p. 17). For those who require additional assistance, the teacher provides “scaffolded” (e.g., p. 27) support.

Scaffold on

There are 15 instances of either “scaffold on” or “build on” (and their word forms). The most common object of the verb phrase is children’s “first language”. The following table, Table 13, shows the number of occurrences of the scaffold on and build on and which object they are followed by.

Table 13

Frequency of the Terms “Scaffold on” and “Build on” with Object in OME (2004a)

Scaffold on or Build on	
Object of verb phrase	# of occurrences
First language	7
Prior knowledge	2
[Each other’s] Ideas	2
[struggling or diverse] students’ strengths	2
Personal and cultural backgrounds	2
Foundation from child’s early years	1
Total	15

The phrasal verbs “scaffold on” and “build on” are used 15 times in the document. In almost half the cases, the verbs objectify a student’s first language. These occurrences relate to the document’s tip for teachers to “consider a student’s literacy in the first language as a foundation for developing literacy skills in the language of instruction” (p. 42). The verbs are also used in juxtaposition with culturally diverse students, or children just entering grade school.

Student “Background”

The word “background” is only used with children in the early years, and when juxtaposed with diverse languages and cultures, and their various respective word forms. The document does not employ the term “background” when speaking about students in general. The following table, Table 14, presents all instances of the word “background” as it is used in the document.

Table 14*All Instances of the Word “Background” in OME (2004a)*

pg	Excerpt from text
7	the diverse backgrounds and experiences of all people become a resource base
13	build on the personal and cultural backgrounds and experiences
13	learn about the cultures, languages, and background experiences
16	prior knowledge and experience, language background
21	texts that reflect their interests, abilities, and backgrounds, including resources in their first language
22	reflect the diverse interests, abilities, and backgrounds of the students
28	connect to the backgrounds, cultures, and personal identities of the student
42	Supporting Second-Language Learners: provide the background knowledge
42	Supporting Second-Language Learners: use texts that include situations and characters that represent the experiences and backgrounds

Theme of Student Identity

I found that the document emphasizes the idea of student identity. Specifically, the document raises concerns about student identity in the junior grades (Grades 4-6). The document cites physical, social, emotional and intellectual changes for this concern. It also claims that “the central question of the junior student’s life is, Who am I?” (p. 18). In response, the document states that “educators need to affirm the personal and cultural identity of each student” (p. 15). In order to find texts and strategies that affirm students’ identities, the document asserts that teachers “must carefully assess the needs, interests, experiences, and personal and cultural identity of each student” (p. 80). According to the document, when teachers know the student’s identity, they can facilitate learning, since

students who see themselves reflected and affirmed in classroom texts and in instruction (that is, those who experience language, culture, and identity engagement) come to appreciate that reading and writing are genuinely for them and about them. In addition to having their own identity affirmed in this way, junior students learn about the cultures and identities of others. (p. 6)

The document suggests that the time spent in the junior years is a period for students to “explore the impact of personal and cultural identity on literacy learning” (p. 13).

Personal and Cultural Identity

The document divides identity or at least modifies identity using “personal” and/or “cultural”. Often, “personal and cultural identity” appears in the sentence as a unit. An example of the text states “The reader’s personal and cultural identity, first language, and other knowledge, experiences, and interests all contribute to the process of making meaning” (p. 61). The document asserts that, in order to better understand their students, teachers “must carefully assess the needs, interests, experiences, and personal and cultural identity of each student” (p. 80). Sometimes, personal identity is separated from culture but still juxtaposed together: For instance, the document explains that “Clues to personal identity and culture lie in many places, including the student’s gender, family, first language, religion, community, hobbies, interests, special abilities, and prior schooling. Students bring all these aspects of personal identity into the classroom, and all these aspects influence how they learn” (p. 18).

School-Home Connection

The document emphasizes the need to make and maintain a strong and constant connection between school and home. This connection in the document is called “home-

school-community partnership” (p. 101). The document explains that a connection between school and home is important since “junior students thrive in schools that are family-friendly and in families that are school-friendly” (p. 15). As such, successful schools” encourage ongoing informal contact [with student’s families] that contributes to the building of a shared vision and to the development of a literacy-centred culture of learning focused on student achievement” (p. 96).

Milieu and Sense of Belonging

The environment is defined using two columns of bulleted points as part of a larger figure called “Planning Framework for Effective Literacy Instruction in the Junior Grades.” In the right column of the table, the bullet points define what the environment is (such as intellectually challenging and risk free). The column to the left lists bullet points about what the environment includes (such as technology and inclusive resources). The following graphic, Figure 4, is screenshot of the description of the environment from the document.

Figure 4

Description of the Environment in OME (2004a)

Environment	
<i>is:</i>	<i>includes:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • intellectually challenging • flexible • interactive • engaging/relevant • risk-free 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • choice • variety of groupings • technology and multimedia • rich, varied, and inclusive resources

The document asserts that students in this environment “learn to engage with new ideas as they read, write, and talk about a broad range of themes, topics, experiences, and perspectives in a multimedia, multicultural world” (p. 11) and “learn to live with respect and intellectual vigor in a multicultural world” (p. 6).

Milieu: Learning Resources

According to the document, a wide variety of resources should be used in the classroom. The document explains that this “wide variety of non-text tools and resources can be used to support literacy in all subject areas, and especially in the arts” (p. 23). Most of the resources are geared specifically at reading skills and most of them are traditional print resources. Most of the materials explicated in the document address diversity such as diverse interests, cultures, and multimodality. Dual language books, for instance, are used to translate the content from the English classroom into a student’s first language to help students “keep up,” while digital technology can be used to bridge “the gap” between students who have access to information technology and students who do not.

Resources that are inclusive are those that “connect to the backgrounds, cultures, and personal identities of the students; develop multicultural values; provide a wide range of positive male and female role models; provide opportunities for students to develop social responsibility and leadership skills” (p. 21). When students see themselves “reflected” in the text, they feel the texts are “genuinely for them and about them” (p. 6).

The document explains that students work in a collaborative environment “where all students feel affirmed, support each other’s learning, and are prepared to take chances; and they extend opportunities for collaborative learning that include learning buddies in

other grades” (p. 18). It explains that this environment is “risk-free environment”, permitting students to ask questions and share their opinions and personal points of view” (p.55). Teachers are instructed to “provide plentiful opportunities for students to talk and interact in flexible and dynamic groupings, including small groups and pairs; they model and help students to create a collaborative learning environment where all students feel affirmed, support each other’s learning, and are prepared to take chances” (p. 18).

Students: Sentences with Students as Subject in the Negative Construction

I looked at sentences with students and in the negative construction. Negative construction in this case were most often linked to students attending French-language schools or learning English as a second language, students with special needs education, students struggling with reading and/or not meeting expectations, and students without access due to the “cultural divide.” I did not look at the research boxes, since the research was verbatim from other researchers and did not connect directly to the prose written in the main text published by the ministry. I wanted to focus on Ministry-constructed sentences to see how negative sentences are created by the ministry itself.

Students: Being Literate

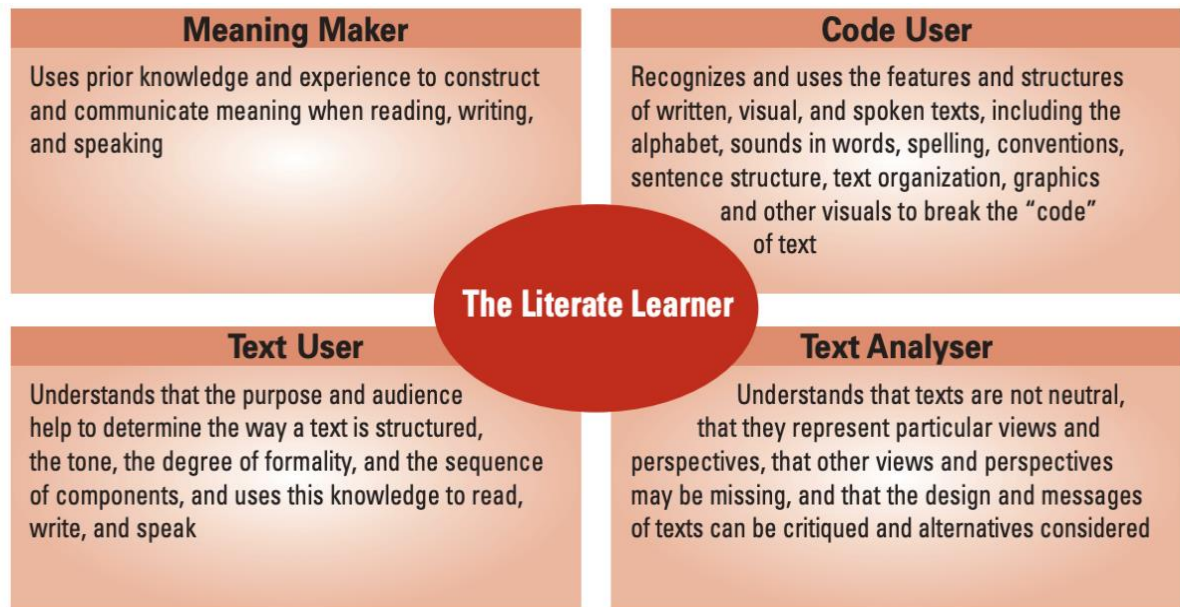
According to the document, literacy is the ability to use language and images in rich and varied forms to read, write, listen, speak, view, represent, and think critically about ideas. It enables us to share information, to interact with others, and to make meaning. Literacy is a complex process that involves building on prior knowledge, culture, and experiences in order to develop new knowledge and deeper understanding. It

connects individuals and communities, and it is an essential tool for personal growth and active participation in a democratic society (p. 5).

The document states that the purpose of the report itself is to provide a “framework for ensuring that students in Grades 4 to 6 in all publicly funded schools in Ontario receive the strategic instruction and support they need to develop as fully literate readers, writers, talkers, and thinkers” (p. 1). The document explains that “to be literate, students must learn to make meaning from texts, to break the ‘code’ of texts, to use texts functionally, and to analyse and critique texts...students integrate all four simultaneously when they read, write, listen, and speak” (p. 8). The following graphic, Figure 5, is taken from the document that illustrates four roles of the literate learner.

Figure 5

Four Roles of the Literate Learner in OME (2004a)



According to the document, literate learners “continually explore new texts and new ways of understanding familiar texts” (p.5) Being literate requires “automaticity” to decode the text, such that “students need a bank of words that come to mind

automatically, requiring no conscious effort” (p. 73). Furthermore, the document presupposes that “all junior students can develop as literate learners when they receive scaffolded support that prepares them for higher learning and growing independence”, as explicated in the third Guiding Principle of effective literacy learning (p. 11).

Intertextuality

Intertextuality is an important feature to investigate as it indicates an association between the two texts and can help understand the ideology of the document being investigated. According to Richardson (2007), “text cannot be viewed or studied in isolation since texts are not produced or consumed in isolation: all texts exist, and therefore must be understood, in relation to other texts” (p. 100).

In this particular case, I noticed an intertextual connection with the following statement from the document: “Literacy instruction in the junior grades takes students another giant leap forward by engaging them purposefully with a wide variety of texts and technologies that will help them develop as active, critical, responsible, and creative communicators for the twenty-first century” (p. 5). This statement hearkens to Neil Armstrong’s famous line upon stepping onto the moon for the first time in human history: “One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind” (NASA.gov, 2019).

Milieu and Subject Matter: Effective Instruction

The document focuses on three main elements of what it considers part of “effective instruction”: explicit teaching, differentiated instruction, and collaborative learning. Explicit teaching uses “target resources” (p. 97)—that is, resources that address specific needs of learners. Effective teaching makes implicit information explicit through modeling and demonstrating skills and thinking processes, especially those related to

metacognition. The document defined a “good teachers” as those who “demonstrate how to apply a range of strategies. They do not simply assign and assess work. Teaching involves ‘showing’ and ‘demonstrating’” (p. 39). Moreover, the document conceptualizes students as needing explicit instruction on how to think, work collaboratively, and apply skills. Additionally, students are said to “need skills to determine where to direct their attention and how to interpret messages and use them appropriately” (p. 9).

The most common verbs to describe teachers’ active role in teaching is to “provide” and “model.” Much of “effective” teaching is aligned with some form of assessment, such as assessment for, assessment as, and assessment of teaching. The document explains that “teachers continually assess the literacy learning of their students in order to design classroom activities that will promote new learning for each student” (p. 12), which is Guiding Principle #5 of what the document calls “effective literacy learning” (p. 11).

The second main focus of effective instruction in my findings is differentiated instruction. In the document, differentiated instruction refers to instruction that meets the needs of different students by using different supports. Differentiation can include differentiating the teaching strategy, the learning process, the assessment, or the learning environment.

The third focus of effective instruction is collaborative learning: According to the document, “teachers capitalize on the natural curiosity and social nature of junior students by offering learning activities that require collaboration” (p. 12). Teachers “model and help students to create a collaborative learning environment” (p. 18). This collaborative environment is seen as a “productive” one (p. 21).

A fourth, but less expanded upon, element of effective instruction is incorporation of critical literacy practices. The document argues that critical literacy is not something to be “added to the literacy program or something to do each day for ten minutes before lunch. It is a lens or overlay for viewing texts that becomes a regular part of classroom practice” (p. 9). Most verbs that follow student in the subject position of a main clause are stative and/or modified by a modal. The verb learn is the most frequent active verb with the verb “use” next with 4 occurrences. The following table, Table 15, shows the main verbs with students as subject in actor position as related to literacy learning.

Table 15

Main Verbs with Students as Subject in Actor position as Related to Literacy Learning in OME (2004a)

Main Verbs with student as subject in actor position Related to literacy learning			
Stative	number	Active	
need	25	learn	12
learn	12	use	4
become	8	Make	3
are	3	acquire	2
begin	3	seek	1
Reflect on	2	discover	1
Will have	2	collect	1

Four modal verbs follow student as subject in a main clause. “Can” is often used with a condition to fulfil the ability. The active learning verbs and higher order thinking skills are preceded by the hypothetical “could” or “may” (possibility). The verbs “learn” and “apply” are used with the imperative “must.” The following chart, Table 16,

provides a complete list of modals and main verbs for students as subjects in actor position.

Table 16

Complete list of modals and main verbs for students as subjects in actor position in OME (2004a)

Modals with students as actors in subject position	
Must (imperative)	must apply must learn
May (possibility)	may choose may reread to confirm may be more advanced along one continuum
Can (ability)	can develop as literate learners when can become motivated writers when can readily transfer their language skills... provided they... can both deepen and demonstrate
Could (hypothetical)	could write could design could read about could devise could conduct could evaluate could look at could investigate could examine could compare

Document 4

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2008a). *Supporting literacy grades 7-12*. Retrieved from <http://edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/brochure/literacy/literacy.pdf>

Context

Supporting ELL Grades 7- 12 is a “booklet informs teachers and board staff about successful literacy strategies currently in use in Grade 7–12 classrooms and in district school boards across the province” (p. 5). The document says it was prepared by teachers and administrators to facilitate “board-wide successful literacy teaching practices from Grade 7 to Grade 9” (p. 13). This document, referred to as a “manual”, serves to provide “resources that can help teachers prepare students for secondary school and the OSSLT” (Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test) (p. 13). It is written in user-friendly terminology, with colourful layouts and simple design to guide pedagogy for “key knowledge and skills in the following three subject areas: language/English, mathematics, science” (p. 13).

Length

This document is 42 pages in length.

Equity and Diversity

The only reference to equity and diversity was in the past tense, when the document reported on an activity done by a grade 8 class using a WebQuest computer program (p. 30). This activity, shown in Table 24, allows students the opportunity to design a device to help people with disabilities, in an effort to promote equity and diversity in the classroom and in society.

Multimodality and Resources

The document lists resources mostly for reading; these resources did not indicate diversity in content or use (e.g., for ability, language, interest, culture). Teachers are responsible for choosing the resources using their judgement of what may be of interest to students while being appropriate to the learning goals of the lesson. The document conceptualized media as a way for students to present text in a new form, for example, a movie script or an email. Table 17 shows my interpretation of multimodality in the document.

Table 17

Multimodal activities when students are the subject and in the Active Voice in OME (2008a)

pg	mode/material	Subject Mater
19	double-entry diaries	Reading
20	Student literature circle	reading
23	[Workshops for reading] math and science textbooks and other informational resources, including videos and the Internet.	reading/ math/science
32	The use of computers	Reading
11	a good book.	reading
11	scripts from popular movies and television shows,	media
32`	slideshows, music samples, electronic graphic organizers, and many other electronic tools.	media
32	e-mail and bulletin boards to exchange work, display their thinking to each other, and record the thoughts from group discussions.	represent

For subject matter in Table 17, I wrote down which strand or which discipline the material was recommended for according to the document.

Supports for Students

Students who have been identified as at risk are provided extra support. To receive this support, students must spend more time after school. The document explains that teachers design these programs to provide more reading outside of class and to “support student success” (p. 5). The following are examples of student supports from the document:

- The program is designed for [intermediate] students who have been identified by teachers as needing additional literacy support. It helps these students develop confidence in their literacy skills and learn to recognize and use their learning strengths (p. 23)
- Jean Vanier Intermediate School has developed an after-school book club for students who have been performing below grade level (p. 23)
- St. Patrick’s Intermediate School and the board have partnered to offer an after-school literacy program. The program offers students an inviting atmosphere in which they can receive additional instruction in basic and alternative literacy strategies (p. 23)

Students working towards level 3 are referred to as “weak,” “these students,” “needing additional literacy support,” “below grade level.” In all these constructions, students are in object positions of the sentences in which they are presented. The document positions “weak” readers as in need of motivation. Inability to achieve level three is considered a “failure” in understanding: “Specialized vocabulary can often cause comprehension

failures in reading” (p. 28). See Table 18 that follows which shows students in the object position.

Table 18

Students in Object Position in Sentences about Supports for Literacy

Students working toward level 3			
subject	object	term	support
	X	These students	After school program
	X	Students who have been identified by teachers as needing additional literacy support.	After school program
	X	students who have been performing below grade level	After school program
	X	Weak readers	New motivation strategies

Good Readers

The document explain that good readers have skills but the document does not discuss how these students become good readers. Examples from the text include:

- Good readers can remember and discuss what they have read (p. 19)
- Good readers can make connections between their own experiences and the texts (p. 19)
- Good readers can draw inferences from the text (p. 19)

Subject Matter and Milieu: Explicit Teaching

The document promotes “explicit” teaching and modelling. For example, the document states that “concepts, skills, and strategies must be explicitly taught and modelled” (p. 14).

Document 5

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2008b). *Supporting English Language Learners: A practical guide for Ontario educators grades 1 to 8*. Retrieved from <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/esleldprograms/guide.html>

Context

This document replaces The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1 – 8: English As a Second Language and English Literacy Development– A Resource Guide, 2001.

Length

This document is 123 pages in length.

Subject Matter

The subject matter of literacy is defined as “the ability to use language and images in rich and varied forms to read, write, listen, view, represent, and think critically about ideas” (p. 3). The definition includes imaginative and analytical thinking and effective communication. Critical thinking is defined in the document as a way “to understand and make decisions related to issues of fairness, equity, and social justice” (p. 3).

Students: ELL Defined

English Language Learners (ELL) are “students who are learning the language of instruction at the same time as they are learning the curriculum” (p. 2). Another definition for English Language Learners from the document states that

English language learners are students in provincially funded English language schools whose first language is a language other than English, or is a variety of English that is significantly different from the variety used for instruction in Ontario’s schools, and who may require focused educational supports to assist

them in attaining proficiency in English (p. 5).

In this document, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students are positioned as being potential English Language Learners. The term “First Nations, Métis, and Inuit” replaces the term “Aboriginal” found in previous documents. The goal of literacy instruction for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students is “targeted strategies and supports for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students; and strategies to increase knowledge and awareness of Aboriginal histories, cultures, and perspectives among all students, teachers, and school board staff” (p.6). The document states that “in order to achieve these goals, a holistic approach integrating the framework strategies throughout all programs, services, and initiatives is necessary” (p. 6). However, a definition of what constitutes a holistic approach is not given.

Teaching English Language Learning is something that “can be inspiring, exciting and rewarding for everyone.” The verb phrase “can be” is used perhaps for the position the documents takes that ELL bring both challenges and resources to the classroom (p. 3). The following list summarizes key ideas about teaching English Language Learners presented in the document.

- Effective language and literacy instruction begins with the needs of the learner clearly in mind, and all teachers – across all content areas – are teachers of both language and literacy (p. 2)
- All students, including English language learners, are expected to meet the rigorous challenges of the Ontario curriculum (p. 2)

- Teachers and administrators are working together with parents to ensure that all of Ontario’s students are ready to take their place in a cohesive and productive society (p. 2).
- The Ministry of Education is dedicated to excellence in public education for all students, including First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students (p. 6)
- Successful English language learners can:
 - own community and of Canada
 - integrate confidently into classrooms or courses
 - interpret the world around them (p. 10)

The language surrounding English Language Learners suggests separation not just from the regular program, but from other students as well. For example, “all students, including English Language Learners” or “education for all students, including First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students.” Semantically, the ELL are included, but syntactically they are not. Other similar constructions are that successful ELL “integrate into the classroom” and interpret the “world around them” (or the world outside of them).

Students: Referring to ELL

The document most often refers to students learning English as an additional language as English Language Learners, ELL, and ESL. They are not referred to as students unless students is preceded by “these.” Students are referred to as children only when outside of the classroom, entering the classroom anew or with respect to their parents’ relationship. For example, the document states “In Ontario, children are placed in classes with students who are the same age” (p. 31). The child has not become a student until they are in the class. Table 19 shows the different terms that are used to refer

to students learning English as a language and the number of times they appear in the text. For instance, “These students” appears 11 times, “ESL” appears 134 times and “English Language Learner” was the most common, occurring 339 times.

Table 19

Different terms to refer to students learning English as an additional language (OME, 2008b)

Term	frequency	note
These students	11	Specific type of student
children/these children	38	Not called a student (referring to children outside classroom i.e. entering school or w/r/t parents)
ESL	134	abbreviated
ELL	10	abbreviated
English Language Learner	339	Not called a student

Funds of Knowledge as Economic Resource

The document states that understanding ELL can help teachers mitigate “discipline” (p. 27) issues. The “funds of knowledge” (Moll, 1992) that ELLs bring to the classroom are associated with a discourse of the economy. The following are a few examples from the text of funds of knowledge associated with the economy and money [emphasis added]:

- The focus is on making learning visible and accessible for English language learners who face their own unique challenges but, more importantly, who present a *rich* resource in classrooms throughout the province (p. 3)

- English language learners are a *richly* heterogeneous group. The paths they take to acquire a new language and to adjust to their new environment are also varied and in keeping with their unique needs and experiences (p. 7)
- ELL bring with them a *wealth* of educational and life experiences (p. 64)
- Within the safe and welcoming classroom environment, teachers are given a unique opportunity to tap the *rich resource* of knowledge and understandings that ELL bring to school, and which, in turn, *enrich* the learning of all students in the classroom (p. 7)

Diversity and Identity

The document also expresses a responsibility for schools to help English Language Learners develop a personal identity. For example, teachers can create a welcoming environment by “enabling ELL to develop a sense of personal identity and belonging by sharing information about their own languages and cultures” (p. 23), “teaching them directly about their rights and responsibilities as students and citizens” (p. 23), “reinforcing students’ self-identity by providing inclusive learning resources and materials representative of diverse cultures, backgrounds, and experiences” (p. 23) and designing “lessons and activities and choose resources that take into account students’ background knowledge and experiences” (OME, 2008b, p. 59).

Milieu: Diversity and Sense of Belonging

To welcome students, the document suggests the following tips for teachers:

- including dual language and multilingual resources in the school library and in classroom resources;

- choosing resources on the basis of their appeal for both girls and boys and suited to different levels of English language proficiency;
- respecting aspects of intercultural communication (e.g., awareness that refraining from making eye contact is a sign of respect for persons in positions of authority);
- using global events as opportunities for instruction and being aware of how they may affect students;
- teaching inclusive, non-discriminatory language (e.g., letter carrier instead of mailman) (p. 23).

Equity

According to the bullet list provided in the document, a “fair and equitable” school is one that invites ELL to participate in school activities and in the curriculum: [ELL are represented among students who make school announcements, participate in school plays, and are teacher helpers.

- ELL are members of school sport teams, clubs, and other extracurricular activities.
- Accommodations and modifications to instructional and assessment strategies appropriate for ELL are part of every teacher’s repertoire.
- Resources specifically suited to English language learners provide equitable access to curriculum.
- Newcomer parents are invited to attend the next School Council meeting, introduced, asked if they need any assistance with information, and are encouraged to attend subsequent meetings (p. 29).

The document quotes from another Ministry document called *Reach Every Student – Energizing Ontario Education* (2008c) to explain the importance of equity: “Equity and excellence go hand-in-hand ... a quality education for all in publicly funded schools is a key feature of fostering social cohesion – an inclusive society where diversity is the hallmark, and where all cultures are embraced within a common set of values” (p. 22).

Equity according to the document is important for promoting “high standards” (p. 22) for all students while affirming “the worth of all students” (p. 22). The idea of identity is seen to play a role in what the document terms “equitable” literacy education. According to the document, “the implementation of equity and inclusionary practices” in schools helps “strengthen [students’] sense of identity and develop a positive self-image” (p. 22). Equity is also tied to diversity: the document states that implementing equity “encourages staff and students to value and show respect for diversity in the school and society at large” (p. 22). Equity is associated with a “safe” environment for learning, one that is “free from harassment, bullying, violence, and expressions of hate” and promotes “fairness, healthy relationships, and active, responsible citizenship” (p. 22).

Differentiating Instruction

According to the document, “hands-on learning activities” (p. 66), “simplified text” (p. 50), “visual cues” (p. 50), “bilingual dictionaries” (p. 50), and “cloze exercises” (p. 62) are ways to adapt the learning to meet ELL needs. Some activities to teach ELL include “extensive use of visual cues, graphic organizers, scaffolding”, “previewing of textbooks” to pre-teach “key vocabulary”, “peer tutoring” and the “strategic use of students’ first languages” (p. 50).

Students: Peers

The word “peer” is mentioned 58 times. Peers are used in this document for two main purposes: one, to compare ELL/ESL with mainstream peers; and two, to act as tutors and assistants for the ELL learning process. The following is a few examples from the text:

- But young children may well take five or more years to catch up to their age peers in vocabulary acquisition and the accurate use of grammar in both spoken and written English (p. 11)
- use of a variety of instructional strategies (e.g., extensive use of visual cues, graphic organizers, scaffolding; previewing of textbooks, pre-teaching of key vocabulary; peer tutoring) (p. 50)
- developing a level of English fluency, accuracy, and confidence approximating that of English-speaking peers for most social and academic purposes (p. 53)
- Assign buddies, mentors, and peers to support and encourage class participation (p. 57)

Students' Background

The word background is used 36 times to discuss the identities of ELL, ESL, and newcomers. The word background is not used for students in the dominant culture of the classroom. Students in the mainstream do not have “backgrounds” but rather language and cultures that are not preceded by “background.” For instance, the document states that teachers should “encourage students [in the mainstream] to share information about their own languages and cultures to raise awareness for all” (OME, 2008b, p. 59).

However, “background” is used with ELL/ESL students. The following list provides examples from the text:

- [ELL] come from diverse backgrounds and school experiences, and have a wide variety of strengths and needs (p. 5)
- Initial assessment of, and ongoing enquiry about, children’s [first language] background experiences and accomplishments will provide helpful information on items (p. 14)
- provide books, visual representations, and concrete objects that reflect [ELL’s] backgrounds and interests (p. 15)

Students: Errors

The document discusses student “errors” and how to approach them. For example, the document suggests that teachers “provide feedback on one kind of *error* at a time” (p. 60), “note specific, habitual *errors* and provide direct instruction later” (p. 60), “select common *errors* as the language feature of the week, teach them explicitly, and provide opportunities for practice” (p. 60) and “encourage ELL to keep an editing checklist containing examples of *errors* and corrections, for their reference” (p. 60).

Subject Matter and Milieu: Explicit Instruction

The document is clear about “explicit instruction” being the most effective mode of instruction. The document presents tips and strategies in the imperative, speaking directly to teachers: “Give clear directions. Explain them explicitly” (p. 60), “Model the process and the product” (p. 60), “Provide multiple opportunities for practice” (p. 60). The idea of process and product was used to conceptualize the learning experience of students. For instance, instruction in Ontario is characterized as having a “focus on

process (with attention to students' thoughts, reflection, and personal application of new learning), as well as product" (p. 30).

Metaphor of Construction Building

Another, more developed, metaphor is construction building. The document suggests that students bring their previous knowledge as a foundation for teachers and pedagogy to build upon. The following is a list of examples from the text. I added emphasis to highlight the building metaphor:

- Respect and use of the first language contribute both to the *building* of a confident learner and to the efficient learning of additional languages and academic achievement (p. 8)
- Making connections between their prior knowledge and the content of the curriculum helps them *build on* what they already know and succeed in the tasks (p. 64)
- There are efforts to *build* cross-cultural understandings (p. 26)
- Because your daughter has some gaps in her education, her ELD program will *build on* her background knowledge and help her acquire English literacy skills at the same time (p. 31)
- With informed and flexible support from the ESL or ELD teacher, where available, and from classroom teachers, learning can be accelerated by *building* background content knowledge and by supporting language development (p. 37)
- Teacher monitoring and feedback guides and supports students' learning as ELL *build on* prior knowledge, develop critical literacy skills... (p. 62)

- Making connections between their prior knowledge and the content of the curriculum helps them *build on* what they already know and succeed in the tasks (p. 64)
- This has given him a strong *foundation* on which to *build* his English-language skills (p. 84)

A Focus on Time

The document demonstrates a concern with time. Common time-related words connected to learning include “accelerate,” “quickly,” “catch up,” and “efficient.” The following list provides examples from the text:

- we hope to accelerate her learning (p. 31)
- learning can be accelerated (p. 37)
- help students accelerate their learning (p. 38)
- progress through school as quickly as possible (p. 7)
- acquire a local accent quickly (p. 11)
- quickly learned the English alphabet (p. 74)
- catch up to their age peers (p. 11)
- catch up to a moving target (p. 12)
- efficient learning of additional languages and academic achievement (p. 8)
- They may acquire vocabulary and grammatical structures in English more efficiently (p. 11)

Students: The Use of the Word “Target”

The use of the word “target” is associated with instructional approaches for

teaching ELL. The following list provides examples of how “target” is used in the document:

- ELL are working hard to catch up to a moving target (p. 12)
- targeted strategies and supports for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students (p. 6)
- teacher provides targeted instruction specific to the needs of the student (p. 39)
- Students receive tutorial support, as needed, and continue with further targeted instruction (p. 39_
- Students benefit from targeted instruction (p. 39)
- She makes good progress with the targeted support (p. 84)
- targeting and modifying instruction (p. 62)

Milieu: Cross Curricular Connections

The document outlines some sample units that are both cross-curricular and said to meet the needs of English Language Learners. For instance, the document presents a sample unit plan for Grade 2 Science (p. 66). My analysis shows that this unit allows for multimodality as students create a simple machine and an advertisement. Moreover, I interpreted this unit as incorporating multiliteracies pedagogy because it calls for analyzing functionally and applying creativity and explicitly includes English Language Learners as active participants in the learning activities.

Similarly, in my interpretation, the sample unit of Grade 5 Social Studies links to the diverse interests of all students by allowing students choice in selecting a topic of personal relevance to them (p. 74). From my analysis, students in this unit are theory makers in that they look for connections on how early civilization inventions impact them personally and the world generally (p. 74). The multimodality of the unit is evident in the

process of research, creating artifacts, and participating in a classroom museum exhibition.

Document 6

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2009). *Me read? And how! Ontario teachers report on*

how to improve boys' literacy skills. Retrieved from

http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/meread_andhow.pdf

Context

According to the document, “This resource guide is intended for classroom teachers, special education teachers, principals, and other professionals in the field of education who are developing and delivering literacy programs or support for boys at the elementary or secondary level. It may also be of interest to parents¹ who are concerned about their sons’ literacy skills and who may wish to advocate for the use of these strategies in their schools” (p. 2). According to the document itself, “*Me Read? No Way!*, based on a review of effective practices around the world, was intended to stimulate discussion about boys and literacy and provide practical and effective strategies that teachers could put to use in the classroom” (p. 2).

Length

This document is 98 pages in length.

Subject Matter

This document focuses on reading, as indicated by the title.

Students: Boy/Girl Dichotomy

There are nine sections in which boys are compared to girls for the expressed purpose of explaining that girls are doing better than boys in literacy achievement. The success of boys is compared to girl’s literacy achievement and thus seen as “less successful” (p. 5).

The document describes boys as having “different” needs than girls have. The document associates boys with “hands-on”, “kinesthetic”, and “technology” -driven learning. The document describes boys as “more successful than girls in engaging with the multimodal literacies and literacy contexts that are likely to become dominant in the future” (p. 5).

Boys as Active and Passive

The document portrays boys as active doers outside the classroom (for instance, the document shows pictures of male athletes outside the classroom). However, the document positions boys as passive objects in the classroom. For example, boys are most often in an object position of sentences, either object of a preposition such as “resources for boys” (p. 2) or as objects of a verb: “encourage boys” (p. 39), “help boys” (p. 21), “provided boys with”(p. 27).

Students: Vulnerability

Boys in this document are conceptualized as weak and vulnerable in the context of reading and literacy. For example, the document states that “texts that are heavily illustrated and include minimal text” are preferable as they “may allow weaker readers to pick up some of the plot and information without actually reading” (p. 10).

Another instance of associated weakness with boys’ literacy comes in the form of a strategy recommendation, which urges teachers to “foster staff awareness of boys’ development, learning needs, and strengths and weaknesses” (p. 74). The document also portrays boys’ vulnerability is with the term “at-risk.” For example, the document mentions that “[the program] Boys to Men...is intended to guide, support and nurture at-risk boys” (p. 41). Another school initiative “targeted a group of weak readers with a

program” (p. 77).

Students: Empowering Boys

The document sees teachers as forces that can empower boys to read. For instance, the document explains that teachers can “empower” (p. 10) boys when they allow them to choose their own books. At St. Edward school, a Boys’ Book Club was seen as a way to “empower” their male students and “yield comfortable, confident readers able to share and discuss their views in different settings” (p. 83). Another example of how the document uses the word empower is “enabling conversation in the classroom helps students to make sense of new knowledge and new ideas, allows them to explore relationships between what they know and what they do not know, increases their understanding, and empowers them as individuals” (p. 33). According to the document, technology also serves as an empowering agent for boys: “Technology grabbed their interest because they used it constantly in their lives, and learning how to use the programs and being able to solve their own problems made them feel independent and empowered” (p. 55).

Subject Matter and Milieu: Boys’ Achievement

According to the document, the focus of OME (2009) centers on the “gap” between boys’ achievement and girls’ achievement in literacy according to EQAO and other standard test results (p. 19). Part of this focus on improving achievement involves improving boys’ classroom behaviour which the document views as “disruptive” (p. 5) and “reluctant” (p. 9).

Students: Boys Lacking

Just as it was found in the other curriculum documents, students in this document

who are at risk are described with the word lack. For example, it states that “boys [at risk] showed a lack of interest” (p. 5), and a “lack of purpose” (p. 5). They were also described as needing “confidence” as they “lacked self-esteem” as learners (p. 5).

Milieu: Competition

The document mentions competition with respect to boy’s learning and achievement, For example, according to the document, “boys *outnumber* girls among students with special education needs” (p. 6) and “forms of friendly *competition* were found to motivate boys” (p. 21).

Milieu: Activating Students

Boys are presented as needing to be “activated” (p. 21). For instance, according to the document, teachers should “activate” student’s “prior knowledge” (p. 21). Boys students “activate” (p. 30) each other during game by tapping them on the shoulder. The student responses on the survey also express the connotation of needing to be activated (p. 6):

- “Tap my creativity”
- “Point me toward my goal”
- “Show me I can make a difference”

Boys in this document are associated with technology. For example, the document mentions that “the inquiry teams also discovered that technology provided greater flexibility within the classroom and school for creating differentiated learning experiences that addressed the boys’ individual needs and interests” (p. 53).

Equity

Equity in this document centers on gender. The document explains that “gender

equity ensures that boys and girls are given the necessary supports to achieve the same standards of excellence. Equity acknowledges that boys and girls may need different supports to achieve these outcomes” (p. 7).

Milieu: Resources

According to the document, the resources associated with successful literacy outcomes for boys are high interest books, graphics, materials that show boys doing “active” things in familiar cultural contexts (p. 5), humour, magazines, cartoons (p. 9). The document also mentions technology and interactive learning tools as effective materials for literacy learning (e.g. p. 21).

The document states that boys do better than girls with hands on media such as technology. According to the document, one reason for boys’ affinity for technology was that “technology grabbed their interest because they used it constantly in their lives, and learning how to use the programs and being able to solve their own problems made them feel independent and empowered” (p. 55).

Students and Teachers: Men and Boys

The document links literacy for boys with their maleness. For instance, the document stresses that boys are young men who need older men to motivate them. According to the document, boys need “older male role models such as fathers, grandparents, uncles, businessmen, athletes, authors, and artists” (p. 38). Sometimes, boys were referred to as “young men” or “young man.” For instance, the document presented the focus of one of the school’s literacy initiatives which was “to create ‘literate’ young men” (p. 16).

Students and Subject Matter: Being Literate

In the document, being “literate” means achieving a “level 3” in OME expectations and doing well on standardized testing, “as readers and writers, as speakers and listeners, as critical viewers and creators of media products” (p. 7). Additionally, the document quotes a teacher from a secondary school who expressed that “boys are more literate than their reading and writing results indicate, and if we use different strategies to engage them and assess their achievement, the abilities that we were unable to see before will become apparent” (p. 3).

Milieu and Teachers: Didacticism and Effective Results

The document advocates didactic teaching approaches such as explicit teaching, modelling desired results, and pointing out connections for them: for example, the document discusses how “teachers helped boys to recognize the relationship between reading and writing by *making constant connections* between the two areas” (p. 15). According to the document, boys achieved higher results after teachers used explicit teaching: “The teachers observed that when the boys were given assignments with step-by-step instructions, clear expectations, and a formula to follow, they were more likely to complete the assignments with a ‘high degree of effectiveness’ (p. 23). One didactic literacy activity shared in the documents involved making bookmarks: Teachers made bookmarks that “outlined the strategies of summarizing, identifying features of nonfiction text and finding supporting details” and the boys “took care not to lose them” (p. 16).

Mnemonic Devices that Spell RAPE

The document presents mnemonic devices and their acronyms. These acronyms spell

RAPE. The following graphic, Figure 6, is a screenshot of the document which shows the acronyms.

Figure 6

Screenshot of Mnemonic Devices that Spell RAPE

To help students apply these strategies, the teachers used mnemonics, such as “retell, relate, reflect” (3 Rs) and “answer, prove, extend” (APE).

The acronyms are placed side by side on the same line and in all caps and separated neatly within brackets. This finding could indicate learning as a colonization of student bodies.

Milieu: Targeting Boys

The term *targeted* is repeated five times to describe the approach to teaching boys. For example, the document discusses how a “school targeted a group of weak readers with a program called ‘Read 180’” (p. 77). It recommends that teachers “use direct, targeted instruction and specific strategies” (p. 20), and that “targets and timelines were set for each of these students, and targeted assessment tools were used” (p. 62).

Milieu and Teachers: Using Boy’s Likes/Dislikes

The document focuses on boys’ attitude towards learning. For example, in one project, the teacher explained the participants were boys “who did not like to read and who would vocalize their dislike of school on a regular basis” (p. 29). One solution was to build rapport, as one teacher suggested that “you can’t inspire a boy to read unless you know what he likes. You have to get to know the boy first” (p. 65).

The document suggests that teachers use boys’ interests to find reading material that boys were more likely to enjoy, such as reading material “that portrayed boys in

familiar situations or with familiar cultural backgrounds” since these materials “proved a powerful stimulus for engaging reluctant readers” (p. 9). The term “happy accidents” was used to describe students who experienced joy from reading a book (p. 17).

Physicality of Boys and the Repetition of “Hands”

The document focuses on physicality when discussing boys reading; for example, the document provides a list of ways to motivate boys to read called “Ten Tips That Make a Blog Entry Grab Readers” (p. 56). “Grab” is a physical verb involving the hands. The idea of hands is also seen in the repetition of “hands-on learning” with respect to teaching boys. Examples of the word “hand” in the document include “it gave me a handle on them” (p. 65), “hands-on” (p. 27, p. 35, p. 49), “manipulatives” [man is a Latin root word for hand] (p. 27 and p. 35), “hand in hand” (p. 31). Table 20 shows these examples as they are presented in the document.

Table 20

Repetition of Hands as Related to Boy’s Literacy in OME (2009)

pg	sentence/phrase
65	“I really enjoyed spending individual time with students assessing their reading... It gave me a handle on them.”
27	the inquiry team used hands-on literacy games, such as word-tile manipulatives for vocabulary practice,
28	Teachers observed that the boys in their classrooms were more relaxed, more comfortable, and more productive in a high-tech, hands-on kinesthetic environment
31	The results yielded strong indications that involvement in the arts went hand in hand with engagement in learning at school.
35	The team asserted that in their experience, talk is the “hands-on” part of communication, comparable to manipulatives in math

49	At the beginning of the project, the boys at this school conveyed their preference for writing about real-life and hands-on experiences
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Boys and Discourse of Strength

The document often uses the discourse of strength to discuss boys in relation to literacy learning. The following is a list of examples from the text:

- The results yielded strong indications that ...(p. 31)
- Boys, as strong visual-spatial learners (p. 53)
- initial investigation revealed a strong preference among boys for...(p. 55)
- boys had a strong interest in electronic and graphic form (p. 5)
- material that held a strong interest for them (p. 9)
- poetry strongly appealed to many boys (p. 9)
- here are strong links between positive attitudes to reading (p. 19)
- a strong, balanced approach to literacy using high-yield strategies (p. 21)
- forge stronger connections to their reading (p. 22)
- build a strong work ethic (p. 21)

Within the same vein of the word strong, the word “reinforce” and its various word forms were repeated in the document. Reinforce means to strengthen and it is used to describe strategies to improve boy’s literacy achievement. For instance, the teachers cited in the document “introduced and then reinforced the use of the ‘3 Rs’ framework (retell, relate, reflect)” (p. 23). Series books, with their predictable plots and characters, hook the boys and at the same time reinforce their knowledge and experience of literary elements (p. 10).

Real Life of Boys

The document cites teacher observations that “boys were eager to engage with ‘real-life’ literacy contexts and ‘real-life’ literacy practices” (p. 4). Examples of real-life texts are those that allow for “deep conversations” about “particular views of the world” (p. 43). The document explains that “through these conversations, [boys] should come to understand that they have the power and responsibility to make a difference in the world” (p. 43).

Subject Matter: Boys’ Behaviour and Achievement Levels

The document states that boys have certain behaviours that result in achievement levels lower than girls’ achievement levels. The document cites teacher reports about boys’ behaviours as they relate to literacy achievement:

- boys were less successful than girls in their ways of negotiating and participating in conventional literacy classrooms and conventional literacy activities;
- boys showed a general lack of interest in print-based reading and writing activities;
- boys demonstrated a perceived lack of purpose and relevance in schoolwork;
- boys made “minimalistic” efforts to complete and present school literacy tasks;
- boys were disruptive, easily distracted and difficult to motivate within the classroom (p. 4)

Boys were also described as reluctant in nine instances in the document. For example, the document states that “at Rosethorn Junior Public School, a focus on metacognition transformed the boys from reluctant readers to ‘more independent readers choosing their own literature and setting goals to improve their reading skills’” (p. 22).

Subject Matter: Product and Yield

The document uses the terms *product*, *process*, and *yield* to describe the learning experience of boys in literacy intervention programs. The following list presents some key examples of how the document uses these words:

- including topics relevant to their lives *yielded* positive results (p. 9)
- Design a balanced literacy program with *high-yield* strategies (p. 20)
- boys were more successful when there was a strong, balanced approach to literacy using *high-yield* strategies modelled by the teachers (p. 21)
- The results *yielded* strong indications that involvement in the arts went hand in hand with engagement in learning (p. 31)
- Exploring the multiple meanings in texts and finding connections between texts and between texts and personal experiences *yield* the type of intellectual challenges that boys enjoy (p. 43)
- The inquiry team at St. Edward proposed to empower their students with a Boys' Book Club that would *yield* "comfortable, confident readers able to share and discuss their views in different settings" (p. 83)
- more comfortable, and *more productive* (p. 28)
- Ensure there is a *product or deliverable* required at the end of the activity (p. 50)
- a variety of technology and media *products* (p. 53)
- the development of a belief system that our boys could be successful was a *by-product* of this project (p. 64)
- inviting their reflection on their *processes* and the quality of their *products* (p. 84)

Milieu: Discourse of Economics

The use of economics as a discourse is prevalent throughout the document. The following list provides example excerpts from the text:

- boys' *poor* engagement and achievement in literacy (p. 5)
- Many of the boys initially read with staccato fluency and *poor* expression (p. 71)
- *Poor* literacy skills can have a profound effect on performance in other subjects, as well as on students' success throughout their lives (p. 6)
- socioeconomic status, geographical location, and *poverty* affect the educational performance (p. 6)
- large populations of students living at or below the *poverty* line (p. 61)
- boys need first to be engaged with a *rich* and varied mix of materials... to achieve literacy success (p. 11)
- correlation between the availability of a *rich* and diverse selection of resources (p.11)
- resulting in *richer* and more critical responses from the boys (p. 22)
- discussion about books appears to be *richer* and more authentic (p. 34)
- greater *richness* of language and extension of ideas (p. 35)
- skills to *enrich* their own learning (p. 51)
- every class had a *rich* library of reading resources (p. 72)
- Gender-specific groupings provided for much *richer* discussions (p. 80)

Document 7

OME (2004b). *Many Roots, Many Voices: Supporting English Language Learners in every classroom*. Retrieved from

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/manyroots/manyroots.pdf>

Context

According to the document, “*Many Roots, Many Voices* is designed to support teachers, principals, and other education professionals at the elementary and secondary levels in working effectively with English language learners” (OME, 2004b, p. 4). The document states that it provides “a rich source of practices and strategies that can be put to immediate use in the school and the classroom” as well as “an in-depth exploration of the English language learner, and an annotated list of references and resources for further reading and study” (OME, 2004b, P. 4).

Length

This document is 62 pages in length.

Subject Matter

The document focuses on reading as the subject matter of literacy as indicated by the repetition of reading activities, suggestions, and strategies. I have provided the following excerpts to highlight the focus on reading in the document:

- As soon as beginners can recognize and produce these words orally, they can learn to read them (p. 9)
- invite students to read aloud poems in their first language, provide an English translation if possible (p. 17)
- Before having students read the text, present them with a concept map (p. 25)

- Guided reading is a strategy that helps readers work their way through new and difficult text (p. 26)
- They often read inefficiently in English, trying to understand each word as they read (p. 27)
- They require the support of a teacher to guide them through challenging text, demonstrating and prompting effective reading strategies (p. 27)
- Look for print resources that are reader-friendly (p. 32)

Milieu: Resources

The learning resources discussed in this document refer to only a handful of learning resources that link to cultural and linguistic minorities. Out of the five learning resources, one was multicultural, one was multilingual, and three were characterized as likely to “mystify” students, “make unrealistic expectations” for students, or “conflict” with students’ values. The list that follows shows the examples in context:

- Some [cultural content] may be linguistically accessible to English language learners but make unrealistic assumptions about their cultural knowledge or prior experiences. i.e. aboriginal in history (p. 32)
- Many of the textbooks used in Ontario schools contain Language that is difficult for English language learners, and some contain cultural references that mystify newcomers (p. 31)
- Class material may contain content that conflicts with some students’ belief systems or values (p. 32)
- These strategies [to adapt program to ELL] include extensive use of visual cues, manipulatives, pictures, diagrams, graphic organizers; attention to clarity of

instruction; modelling; previewing of textbooks; pre-teaching of key specialized vocabulary; encouragement of peer tutoring and class discussion; strategic use of students' first languages; (p. 33)

- Select materials for the classroom and library that contain illustrations of members of various ethnocultural groups engaged in a range of positive roles and situations (p. 41)

According to my analysis, the multicultural and multilingual materials are for display in the classroom or library while the monolingual and monocultural materials are for supporting teaching and learning. These learning materials for ELL/ELD are centered on explicit teaching of content. According to the document, the materials that reflect diversity are chosen by the teacher, not the student, community, or family of the students.

Metaphor of Construction Building

The metaphor of teaching as building runs throughout the document. For example, the heading on page 14 reads: Build bridges: prior knowledge as a foundation". This section explains that

Students' first languages are a critical foundation, not only for language learning, but for all learning. You can build on English language learners' language skills, other prior knowledge, and cultural backgrounds to enhance their understanding of English and ease their integration into the mainstream classroom (p. 14)

Examples like these throughout the document provide readers with the impression that ELL students provide a foundation (cultural background and first language) and the teacher builds on this foundation using new learning in English.

Metaphor of Race/Competition

English language learners are associated in the document with the following ideas related to a race metaphor:

- Losing track (p. 27)
- Need to learn as quickly as possible (p. 27)
- Take several years to catch up (p. 51)
- Absorbing at a rapid rate (p. 22)
- Have an advantage (p. 51)

Metaphor of Knowledge as Water, Students as Sponges

I found several instances where the document used water as a metaphor. For example, knowledge in the document is characterized as water, while students are characterized as sponges. Evidence of this metaphor can be found in the following excerpts:

- absorbing language at a remarkable rate (p. 33)
- absorbing language at a rapid rate (p. 22)
- From the “mainstream” classrooms (p. 23)
- By welcoming a student’s home language, schools facilitate the flow of knowledge, ideas and feeling between home and school and across languages (p. 14)

Missing of Metaphor of Tree Roots

Although the title of this document is *Many Roots, Many Voices*, the metaphor of tree roots is missing from the pedagogy and student learning, as well as from the conceptualization of diversity.

Students: Discourse of Being Incomplete

ELL/ELD and immigrant students are associated with “gaps” in their education and achievement and diminutive language such as “limited” (e.g. p. 32, 51, 44), “little” (e.g. p. 22), “only” (p. 8) and “just” (e.g. p. 10).

Discourse of Economics

The document uses economics language to describe the benefits of diversity:

- The reward for this committed effort [to creating a welcoming and inclusive school environment for English language learners] is a dynamic and vibrant school environment that celebrates diversity as an asset and enriches the learning experience for all students (p. 36)
- they, and their ethnocultural communities, may represent substantial resources that schools can draw on to assist English language learners and to enrich the cultural environment for everyone in the school (p. 44)

Milieu: Discourse of Safety

The environment for ELL and non-ELL interacting in the same learning space is consistently described as “safe” or ensuring safety. The following list gives some examples from the document:

- these students will be more comfortable participating in small groups, which offer them a “safe” way to make the transition to full participation in the classroom (p. 22)
- you [the teacher] can ease their integration into the class, help them get to know their classmates, and give them a chance to use English in a non-threatening environment, by partnering them with a supportive peer (p. 22)

- Peers can also be used in emergency situations when necessary (p. 36)

Sentence Structures

Sentences, especially complex sentences, that introduce ESL/ELD learners in comparison to other students are often marked with a contrast signal such as “however,” “but,” and “while.” Contrast markers also introduce the positive aspects of ELL/diversity.

For example:

Parents may also face barriers, such as limited time or limited proficiency in English. *On the other hand*, they, and their ethnocultural communities, may represent substantial resources that schools can draw on to assist English language learners and to enrich the cultural environment for everyone in the school. (p. 44)

Students: Many Needs

Students in the document are expressed as having many needs, as illustrated by the repetition of “English Language Learners need,” and students “need.” In fact, the word need is repeated 53 times. With the idea that ELL bring needs, the school and the teacher are responsible for meeting those needs.

Categories of Students

There are three key terms the document to discuss students: children, student, and learner. Students are spoken about as children when they have not entered school/grade one yet or in relation to their home/family life. For example, the document states that “it may enable parents to become more involved in their children’s education” (p. 15).

According to my analysis, students used without a modifier are those who are not English Language Learners.

The term *learner* is used for students who are learning English as an additional language. For example, “English language learners naturally want to develop a grasp of the language for social, as well as academic, purposes” (p. 8). The following table, Table 21, shows how the terms child, student, and learner are used in the document.

Table 21

How the terms child, student, and learner are used in OME (2004b)

child	student	learner
Ask older students to create a presentation using puppets for young children in a local preschool class or Kindergarten p. 13	Ask older students to create a presentation using puppets for young children in a local preschool class or Kindergarten p. 13	English language learners may need visual aids to demonstrate their knowledge. p. 13

ELLs are referred to as “others.” For example, the document states that students are “to work effectively with others from a variety of cultural backgrounds (p. 22). ELLs are called “these students” (e.g. p. 23) whereas non-ELLs are not. For example, the document asks the following question using “these students” to describe ELLs: “How can we deepen our knowledge and expand our professional practice not only to support these valued students, but to celebrate their presence in our classrooms and enrich the learning experience for all students?” (p. 4).

Milieu: School-Home Connection

Part of the “whole-school approach” promoted in the document requires that administrators forge connections between the school and home (p. 5). For example, the document states “By welcoming a student’s home language, schools facilitate the flow of knowledge, ideas and feeling between home and school and across languages” (p. 14).

The document instructs teachers to provide immigrant families with suggestions for home

life that span household chores for children to extracurricular activities that further expose students to the English language: “Provide suggestions for home activities (such as establishing routines for doing homework, household chores, going to bed)” (p. 46). The document instructs the reader to “keep in mind” that, in diverse communities, “not all parents share the same ideas about how, where, and when they should be involved in their children’s schooling. Parents may also face barriers, such as limited time or limited proficiency in English” (p. 44).

Milieu and Subject Matter: Cross-Curricular Connections

The document offers ideas on how to make “cross-curricular” (p. 23) connections with literacy. The document defines cross-curricular approaches as “incorporating language learning into all subjects” (p. 23). From my analysis, the document makes cross-curricular connections almost exclusively to the math curriculum. The following list shows all instances of cross-curricular suggestions given in the document:

- Explicitly teach the language of mathematics by providing some model statements, using specific mathematical expressions (p. 29)
- Organize students into small groups and give each group a different survey task, or encourage them to think of one of their own. (p. 29)
- The mathematics curriculum emphasizes communication requiring students to explain their reasoning and justify conjectures (p. 28)
- A language is best acquired when it is used to do something meaningful, such as solving a mathematics word problem, creating a dramatic retelling of a story, planning a class outing, learning how to play a sport, or working on a group project (p. 23)

- Incorporate cultural diversity into arts programs– for example, expose students to the work of artists, musicians, and playwrights from a variety of cultures, and give them opportunities to express themselves in a variety of artistic forms from other cultures (p. 41)

Teachers

Most often, the document uses itemized imperatives in a series of bullet points to explain the role of the teacher in teaching ELL/ELD students. Teachers are responsible for helping students achieve expectations using ELD/ESL programs, modifications and by “building on” (p. 14) ELL first language and culture.

Teachers are also responsible for matching students with peers, finding students who share the same interests or come from similar linguistic or cultural background, and explaining to the rest of the students that the classroom is a language learning and positive environment. For example, to create an inclusive environment, the document suggests “purposefully connect English language learners with their peers (for example, make them partners in learning activities; introduce students with common interests to one another)” (p. 19).

Teachers must also explain that diversity is something beneficial for all students to learn from. For instance, the document suggests teachers “communicate positive attitudes towards newcomers and their cultures. Help all students understand the benefits of diversity and of broadening their horizons through learning about other parts of the world” (p. 21), such as about new languages and cultures.

The document suggests ways that teachers can promote a “welcoming” environment (p. 36). Many of the strategies, according to the document, require that

teachers match students based on the teachers view of *sameness*: for instance, teachers match students based on the same first language, same second language learning experience, same gender, or same interests to welcome them into the school. The list that follows provides specific examples of the welcoming strategies that focus on sameness:

- Purposefully connect English language learners with their peers (p. 19)
- introduce students with common interests to one another (p. 19)
- Assign a classroom partner [to] ESL the student; – someone of the same gender and, if possible, the same language background – to explain or model routine classroom tasks or to help the student in other ways (p. 40)
- Select a student ambassador – preferably one of the same gender who speaks the same language as the newcomer – to take the student on a guided tour of the school and introduce him or her to its facilities (p. 40)
- Connect parents with similar needs, interests, or concerns: newcomer parents, for example, may share an interest in a particular topic, such as parenting in their new cultural environment (pp. 44-45)
- Give English language learners opportunities to work with same language partners (example: think, pair, share in first language) (p. 15)
- Point out students, teachers, other staff members, and graduates who have succeeded in learning English and hold them up to students as role models (p. 21)

Diversity

The document instructs teachers to explicitly address diversity in positive ways, communicating appropriate attitudes towards and benefits of different cultures and

languages. The list that follows shows the strategies that explicitly counteract stigma of multicultural classrooms:

- Explain that your classroom is a language classroom as well as a place for learning the curriculum to all students at the beginning of the year (p. 21)
- Communicate positive attitudes about language learning (p. 21)
- Reinforce the benefits of being able to speak more than one language (p. 21)
- Communicate positive attitudes towards newcomers and their cultures (p. 21)
- Help all students understand the benefits of diversity and of broadening their horizons through learning about other parts of the world (p. 21)
- Well-planned integration also fosters a positive attitude in all students to cultural diversity (p. 23)

Equity and Including ESL Students

The documents list ways for teachers to include ESL students by repeating a series of tips. The tips for teachers are listed in a bulleted list in the imperative. Some of the key concepts of the tips are repeated. These repeated focal points are ELL effort, ELL error, and pronunciation of a student's name. I have provided the repeated tips in the following list:

- Give English Language Learners positive feedback on their efforts (p. 19)
- Actively encourage English-speaking students to support the language-learning efforts of newcomers (p. 21)
- Establish a supportive classroom climate in which newcomers' language errors are accepted as a normal part of the language-learning process (p. 19)
- Give priority to errors that interfere with communication (p. 21)

- Learn the student's name and how to pronounce it, and greet the student by name at the beginning of each class (p. 19)
- Practise and use the correct pronunciation of the student's name (p. 40)

Antiracism and Discrimination

According to my analysis, there is no mention of discrimination. Anti-racism was mentioned once in the following context: Students of all backgrounds may enjoy “activities that offer fun and fellowship while promoting the goals of an antiracist education, one of which is to help students of all backgrounds learn to live, study, and work effectively in culturally diverse environments” (p. 41)

Theme of Maintaining Student's Previous Cultural Identity

The document emphasized the need to maintain students' links to their cultural and linguistic backgrounds, citing that these links “help students preserve vital links with their families and cultural backgrounds and a solid sense of their own identity” (p. 16). One way to accomplish this goal is to have “students present topics connected to their language, culture, and country of origin” (p. 17). The result, according to the document, is that “Students ...whose linguistic and cultural backgrounds are valued by their teachers and classmates begin to feel more confident about learning English and about fitting in without having to abandon their cultural identity” (p. 39). The choice of the word abandon also signals the need for students to maintain the cultural identity from the immigrant country.

Milieu: Supports for Students

The document describes two support systems for students who are learning the English Language in addition to the mainstream Language Arts program. These supports

are English as a Second Language (ESL) programs and English Literacy Development (ELD) programs. They are described as follows:

- English as a Second Language (ESL) programs are for students born in Canada or newcomers whose first language is other than English or is a variety of English significantly different from that used for instruction in Ontario schools.
- English Literacy Development (ELD) programs are for newcomers whose first language is other than English or is a variety of English significantly different from that used for instruction in Ontario schools. Students in [ELD] these programs are generally from countries in which their access to education has been limited, or where they may have had limited opportunities to develop language and literacy skills in any language (p. 51).

Document 8

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2007). *English Language Learners / ESL and ELD programs and services: Policies and procedures for Ontario elementary and secondary schools, kindergarten to grade 12*. Retrieved from <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/esleldprograms/esleldprograms.pdf>

Context

This document “sets out policies and procedures for the development and implementation of programs and supports for English language learners in English language elementary and secondary schools in Ontario, from Kindergarten to Grade 12” (p. 4).

Length

This document is 34 pages in length.

Milieu: Support for Students

The document contains program models that purport to help ELL gain “skills they will need to achieve personal success and to participate in and contribute to Ontario society” (p. 7). The following list explains these programs:

- English as a Second Language (ESL) programs, which are for students whose first language is other than English or is a variety of English significantly different from that used for instruction in Ontario schools.
- English Literacy Development (ELD) programs, which are for students whose first language is other than English or is a variety of English significantly different from that used for instruction in Ontario schools.
- Congregating classes for English language instruction

- Core programs (English, social studies/history/geography, science, mathematics) taught by content-area teachers who also hold English as a Second Language Part 1 qualifications
- Sections of secondary courses designated for English language learners (p. 22)

Milieu: School-Home Connection

The document emphasizes the importance of home-school connections.

According to the document, school boards need to:

- Develop strategies for effectively communicating the policy to schools, staff, students, parents, and the community (p.15)
- This information [about the needs of ELL] should be shared with schools, staff, students, parents, and the community (p. 15)
- Parents will be made aware of the goal of ESL and ELD programs in Ontario schools and how they are of benefit to students who are developing proficiency in English (p. 16)

Students and Subject Matter: First Languages Other than English

According to the document, language programs are designed to provide the best language programming. English as a Second Language (ESL) programs are for students “whose first language is other than English or is a variety of English significantly different from that used for instruction in Ontario schools” (p. 22). English Literacy Development (ELD) programs are designed for students whose “first language is significantly different from that used for instruction in Ontario schools.” (p. 22).

The statement “Students in these programs [ELD] are most often from countries in which their access to education has been limited, and they have had limited

opportunities to develop language and literacy skills in any language” (p. 22) connects ELL with limitations. This discourse also emerges in the statement “Schooling in their countries of origin has been inconsistent, disrupted, or even completely unavailable...” (p. 22).

Students: Many Needs

The document presents ELL as having many needs. The following bulleted list from the document provides key examples of how “needs” are often associated with ELL:

- ...to address the learning needs of English language learners in all...(p. 9)
- ...support in meeting the needs of English language learners so that these...(p. 10)
- ...addresses the needs of English language learners...(p. 13)
- ... the needs of English language learners...(p. 13)
- ... specific needs of English language learners...(p. 26)
- ...when modifications to curriculum expectations have been made to address the ESL or ELD needs of English language learners (p. 27)
- ...professional development in meeting the needs of English language learners (p. 31)
- ...meeting the needs of English language learners...(p. 31)

The document states that these students also have various “strengths and needs” (p. 9). Because “needs” is juxtaposed with strengths, I interpret “needs” as contrasting strengths and therefore a euphemism for *weakness*. Thus, if the document positions ELL with many needs, it may be indicating ELL have many weaknesses.

Discourse of Speed

The metaphor “acceleration” features in the document and it refers to the ELL need to achieve English proficiency. The phrases “accelerate their acquisition (p. 11) and “accelerate the student’s acquisition of proficiency” (p. 18) illustrate this point.

Milieu: Multiculturalism

According to my interpretation, the document presents multiculturalism in its policies. The document requires that school boards establish protocols and procedures for welcoming ELL and their families, and where possible “in the first language of the students and their families whenever possible” (p. 15). Multiculturalism is also portrayed by the requirement of school boards to involve community partners (p. 14). The document supports diversity through consultation with community partners “including students, staff, parents, community agencies, and local businesses that reflect the diversity of the community (including cultural groups within the board’s jurisdiction)” (p. 14). The document proposes that students receive orientation to provide them with “information about courses and about considerations related to course selection; explanation of programs and activities; explanation of school policies” (p. 15)

Students: ELL

In this section, I provide the definition of ELL according to the document: “English language learners are students in provincially funded English language schools whose first language is a language other than English, or is a variety of English¹ that is significantly different from the variety used for instruction in Ontario’s schools, and who may require focused educational supports to assist them in attaining proficiency in English. These students may be Canadian born or recently arrived from other countries.

They come from diverse backgrounds and school experiences, and have a wide variety of strengths and needs” (p. 8).

The document acknowledges that ELL can be Canadian-born in addition to being born outside of Canada. According to the document, “many English language learners were born in Canada and raised in families or communities in which languages other than English are spoken” (p. 8). Examples of Canadian-born ELL, according to the document, may include “Aboriginal students whose first language is a language other than English” (p. 8) and “children who were born in immigrant communities in which languages other than English are primarily spoken” (p. 9).

The Use of the Word “Home”

The word home is mentioned eight times in the document. Out of the eight times, six of those references relate to the home country of ELL. I have provided a list of all instances of home as it relates to ELL:

- They may have been in transit for a number of years, or may not have had access to formal education in their home country or while in transit (p. 9)
- Children who have arrived in Canada as a result of a war or other crisis in their home country, and who may have left their homeland under conditions of extreme urgency (p. 9)
- if they are of school age, they have most often received formal education in their home countries, and some may have studied English as a foreign language (p. 9)
- information from the student’s home country, from initial assessment, or from early teacher observation indicates that the student may have special education needs (p. 19)

- a student who had successfully completed the equivalent of Grade 10 in his or her home country would be granted 16 equivalent credits, but may not have the English language proficiency to successfully take Grade 11 courses exclusively (p. 21)

In my view, connecting home with the ELL past may stymie the building of student's new home in Canada.

Equity and Diversity

In this section, I present key instances of equity and diversity in the document. For example, the document discusses diversity as a key influence on the policies: “The diversity that exists in Ontario’s classrooms has helped to shape the policy outlined in this document, which is intended to promote good outcomes for English language learners” (p. 7). Additionally, the document states that “In developing this section of the plan, boards should: – consult with community partners including students, staff, parents, community agencies, and local businesses that reflect the diversity of the community (including cultural groups within the board’s jurisdiction); – make connection” (p. 14). I found only one instance of the use of the word “equity” in the document:

Many current Ministry of Education policies have components that pertain to English language learners. The policies described in this document supplement the provincial policies outlined in the following documents, which are available on the ministry website, at www.edu.gov.on.ca:

- Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity in School Boards: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation (1993) (p. 4)

This instance of the word equity refers to an outdated document published in 1993.

Subject Matter: English Proficiency and Knowledge

The document equates English proficiency with academic achievement. For instance, “these students can develop the proficiency in English that is necessary for success in school” (p. 10). According to the document, the assessment procedure to determine the English language proficiency of all ELL is a structured interview for assessing the oral communication skills, assessments to determine reading comprehension, student writing, and mathematical knowledge and skills. The document presumes that mathematical knowledge is a determinant of English language proficiency. There is implicit connection between “proficiency” and “knowledge and skills” (p. 17) and high outcomes for ELL. The document states that the implementation of the policies stipulated “will promote academic achievement” among ELL at the “level expected of all learners in Ontario” (p. 8).

Document 9

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2001). *The Ontario curriculum grades 1-8, English as a second language and English literacy development – A resource guide*. Retrieved from <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/esl18.pdf>

Context

This document “describes programs and procedures that support students who are from countries or communities in which standard Canadian English is not the primary language of communication and who may have difficulty meeting the expectations of the Ontario curriculum because of their lack of proficiency in English” (p. 4).

Length

This document is 126 pages.

ESL/ELD Program Considerations

The document outlines its interpretation of stages of second-language acquisition for ESL students:

- Stage 1: Using English for survival purposes
- Stage 2: Using English in supported and familiar activities and contexts
- Stage 3: Using English independently in most contexts
- Stage 4: Using English with a proficiency approaching that of first-language speakers (p. 9)

Stages for second-language acquisition and literacy development for ELD students “who have had limited access to schooling and have significant gaps in their education” (p. 9)

- Stage 1: Beginning to use standard Canadian English appropriately
- Stage 2: Using standard Canadian English in supported and familiar activities

- and contexts
- Stage 3: Using Standard Canadian English accurately and correctly in most contexts
- Stage 4: Reading and writing

Milieu: Resources

The document lists various learning resources for ELL:

- Bilingual dictionary/picture books help students learn new English vocabulary (p. 17)
- Models, toys, math manipulatives posters, banners demonstrate procedures and provide related hands-on activities (p. 19)
- T-charts, Venn diagrams, flow charts, decision trees etc. Key visuals developed by the teacher to show how ideas are related (p. 19)
- Chants, rhymes, songs, pattern books. Learners have opportunities to practise saying words and phrases through choral activities in the classroom (p. 24)
- Books and visuals depicting families from diverse identities, cultures and structures (p. 61)

Multicultural and multilingual resources, according to my analysis, are for supporting multiculturalism and first languages of the ELL, whereas the multiliteracy materials are for supporting teaching and learning according to the Ontario curriculum. The document suggests that teachers use the following tools to value diversity in classrooms:

- KWL (Know, Want to Know, What you Learned) chart
- Popular folktales from different countries and cultures (p.73)
- Bilingual storybooks

- Folk tales written in other languages (p.74)

Students: Discourse of Being Incomplete

The document uses the discourse of being incomplete to discuss ELL/ELD programs and students. The list that follows provides examples from the document

- Significant gaps in their [ELL students] education (p. 6)
- Students who may require additional support or activities to fill gaps in background knowledge (p. 92)
- gaps in their schooling (p. 15)
- experiences, knowledge, and skills vary and gaps may exist (p. 83)
- Strategies that...address various possible gaps (p. 83)
- Fill gaps and establish knowledge base for every [ELL] (p. 96)
- Possible gap between the curriculum's language demands and the ability of the student to learn Canadian English (p. 104)

Subject Matter: The Term "Regular"

The document uses the term "regular" to discuss the dominant language classroom. I have listed some examples of how the word "regular" is used with respect to ELL and the dominant classroom culture:

- Most ESL/ELD students, from early to more advanced stages of English-language acquisition, work in a regular classroom for most of the day, with the support of the classroom teacher and/or, where available, of an ESL/ELD teacher (p. 6)
- student's demonstrated skills will also help teachers to adapt or modify the student's regular grade expectations appropriately, as illustrated in the sample teaching units provided in Part 3 of this guide (p. 11)

- Students may be withdrawn from the regular classroom program for intensive literacy support. However, at least part of the day should be spent with English-speaking peers in a regular classroom program (p. 12)
- In elementary schools, most students who require ESL/ELD support participate in the regular classroom program for most of the school day (p. 16)

According to my analysis, the document's use of the word "regular" to describe the dominant classroom normalizes non-ELL and thereby marginalizes English language learning. In the current demographics, this language is problematic as ELL make a substantial portion of the classroom population in Ontario (see Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 for details on current student demographics in Ontario).

Subject Matter: Modified Expectations

The document draws the expectations from the "regular curriculum" (p. 56). It also states the "modified expectations" for "the curriculum expectations that ESL/ELD students may have difficulty achieving" (p. 56). According to the document, these modified expectations are designed to accommodate the language-learning needs of Stage 1 and 2 ESL/ELD students" (p. 56). Figure 7 is a sample of modified expectations from the document.

Figure 7

A Sample of Modified Expectations for the Curriculum Expectations that ESL/ELD

Students Might Have Difficulty Achieving (p. 59)

Expectations and Modifications for ESL and ELD Students

Expectations	Modified Expectations for Stage 1 Students	Modified Expectations for Stage 2 Students
Social Studies		
Students will:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – identify and describe the rights and responsibilities of family members (e.g., decision making, chores) – identify significant events in their lives (e.g., their first day of school, a trip) – order a sequence of events (e.g., school day, school year, class trip) orally and with pictorial symbols 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – identify the responsibilities of family members, using single words and phrases, with visual support such as picture cards – identify significant events in their lives, using single words and phrases, with visual support such as picture cards – order a sequence of events (e.g., in an activity) using pictorial symbols 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – identify the rights and responsibilities of various family members, using simple sentences, with visual support – identify significant events in their lives, using simple sentences, with visual support such as picture cards – order a sequence of events (e.g., in an activity) using words or phrases and pictorial symbols

Metaphor of Construction Building

The document uses figurative language associated with construction building to describe how it views the ways in which ELL develop literacy in English:

- The culminating project in this unit adaptation is about classroom design – a topic of interest to students and one that builds on their experiences and prior knowledge (p. 78)
- Use a variety of activities and visual aids to help students build their vocabulary (p. 97)

- The first language provides a foundation for developing proficiency in additional languages (p. 7)
- A strong foundation in the first language (p. 7)
- develop a strong foundation of knowledge and skills upon which English
- proficiency can be built (p. 17)

Figurative Language

There are several instances of figurative language in the document. For example, the document uses terms such as “absorbing,” “produce oral language,” “silent periods,” and “emotional equilibrium” to discuss the learning process of ELL. I have provided the following examples from the document that showcase such figurative language:

- “During...the student is *absorbing* large amounts of linguistic and cultural information but is not yet ready to produce oral language, especially in front of the class” (p. 11).
- “...as times when the student may experience a ‘*silent period*’ or plateau (p. 11).
- [Newcomers] “Feel that their *emotional equilibrium* is restored” (p. 8).
- The document refers to subject content as the “*vehicle*” for English-Language instructions (p. 17)

Concept of Time

The document uses concept of time when referring to the learning process of ELL. Common time-related words used in the document include “rapid,” “quickly,” “delayed,” “slowly,” and “as soon as possible.” The following list provides examples from the text:

- participate *as quickly and as fully as possible* in all program areas and to achieve the expectations of the Ontario curriculum (p. 4)
- In the early stages of acculturation and language acquisition, there are periods of *rapid growth* (p. 11)
- written outline to help students who may not be able to process oral instruction *quickly enough* to understand fully (p. 19)
- Speak naturally and only slightly *more slowly* than for native speakers of English (p. 19)
- Most [ELL in Kindergarten] acquire the surface features of English *quickly* (p. 24)
- There is a strong likelihood that their first-language development will be *delayed* (p. 24)
- Students need to begin *as soon as possible* to use the language of instruction to acquire important concepts and skills (p. 17)

Contrast Markers

The document uses contrast markers to juxtapose ESL/ELD learners and their English proficiency. For instance, the marker “even though” in the following sentence:

“They are able to use reading and writing skills to explore concepts in greater depth, even though their proficiency in language specific to academic program areas is still developing” (p. 9).

Students’ Background

The word *background* is used 43 times to refer to the identities, experiences, education, literacy, language, culture of ELL, ESL, and newcomers. For example, the

document states that teachers should “encourage students [in the mainstream] to share information about their own languages and cultures to raise awareness for all” (OME, 2008b, p. 59). The word background is not used for students who are not ELL or newcomers.

Multiculturalism and Diversity

The document uses words like “linguistic,” “ethnocultural,” and “educational” to represent the backgrounds of the ELL (p. 4). The document instructs teachers to “validate students’ cultural backgrounds and identities by using books and visuals that depict families of diverse backgrounds, identities, and structures,” and use vocabulary from first language to “validate cultural backgrounds/identities and to help students understand” (p. 61).

School-Home Connection

The guide establishes a school and home connection in the orientation, placement, and integration processes for ELL students. Schools are expected to establish an “open and positive communication with home” during the placement of ESL/ELD students (p. 13). Teachers are expected to encourage parents of ESL/ELD students to support their children even at home. According to the document, “teachers need to encourage the parents of an ESL/ELD student to support their child and let the parents know how they can help him or her at home” (p. 20). For example, the document suggests teachers to encourage parents “to use their first language at home with their child to discuss books, talk and share family experiences, review school work, write to family members, and read” (p. 20).

Milieu: Cross Curricular Connections

This guide offers cross-curricular connections between ESL/ELD programs and other teaching units such as social studies, science and technology, and history. The following list provides examples from the text:

- [for social studies] have students share information about their families by bringing one artifact that stands for something of significance to a family member (p. 60)
- [for science and technology] Students describe observation: effect that different surfaces (e.g., wood, tiles, carpet, water) have on the rate at which an object slows down (p. 65)
- [for math] Students explain difference: perimeter and area and indicate when each measure should be used (p. 79)
- [for history] Invite immigrant/ refugee to speak to the class about coming to and settling in Canada (p. 103)

Teachers

The document explicates the role of the teacher in a series of bullet points. The following examples show the myriad activities for which teachers are responsible:

- identify students who will need ESL/ELD support and plan and implement programs for them;
- incorporate appropriate ESL/ELD approaches and strategies into the regular instructional program;
- provide ongoing assessment and evaluation of students' acquisition of English and report on student progress;

- implement board procedures related to the referral process for ESL/ELD students, in collaboration with school staff and parents;
- collaborate with relevant school staff to find ways to use and adapt resource materials for ESL/ELD students;
- initiate and/or participate in school-level case conferences and parent meetings as required (p. 16)

Milieu: Supports for Students

The guide describes various support systems for students who are learning English. The following is a list of the supports the document includes:

- a) *Integrated Classroom Programs.* Students are placed in a classroom at the appropriate grade level for their age and receive English-language support, throughout the day and across all subject areas, from the classroom teacher and/or the ESL/ELD teacher.
- b) *Tutorial Support:* Tutorial support is appropriate for students who are showing progress in the grade-level program but may still require some assistance to reinforce their language and/or cognitive development. For these students, some one-to-one or small-group instruction may be necessary for a short period of time. Such instruction would be provided by the classroom teacher, the ESL/ELD teacher, or other school support staff.
- c) *Intensive Support:* Intensive support is appropriate for students who are in the early stages of learning English as a second language and/or who have had limited educational opportunities (p. 12)

Subject Matter: Theme of Maintaining Student’s First Language

The document presents the theme of maintaining student’s first language by stating that “Research indicates that students benefit academically, socially, and emotionally when they are encouraged to develop and maintain proficiency in their first language while they are learning English” (p. 7).

Milieu: Diversity and Sense of Belonging

The document states that teachers and schools should create a “sense of belong” (p. 17) for ELL. For instance, according to the document, teachers create a sense of belonging by

Designing lessons and activities and choose resources that recognize students’ background knowledge and experiences. Encouraging students to share information with one another about their own languages and cultures strengthens all students’ awareness of language and culture and helps to give them a sense of belonging and of being respected. (p. 17)

The document suggests that schools:

Post visual images that represent all students in the school; provide signs, notices, and announcements in the languages of the school community; honor the various cultural and faith celebrations within the school; encourage and recruit bilingual volunteers. (p. 15)

The term “positive atmosphere” in the document refers to the environment for ELL that teachers and schools should create. This term is used severally in the document. Under the teaching strategy of cooperative learning where the teacher needs to “Foster a positive atmosphere in which students can gain from each other’s success and are encouraged to

take risks” (p. 61). The statement also appears in cooperative group learning where the teacher needs to “Foster a positive atmosphere in which students can gain from each other’s success and are encouraged to take risks in the inquiry process” (p. 68).

This point of the dissertation concludes the results from each document 1 through 10. The next chapter, Chapter 6, provides an analysis and discussion of these results.

Chapter 6: Context of Results and Discussion

This chapter synthesizes the findings from Chapter 5 and provides a critical discussion of said findings. This chapter contains three sections: section one, context of results; section two, synthesis and discussion of findings which address the research questions followed by recommendations; and section three, research contributions and future research opportunities. I have based the recommendations on a comparison between the findings and the literature concerning literacy curricula for the times in which we live; that is, an era of cultural, linguistic, and modal plurality with the need to promote equitable, democratic education.

Section I: Context of Results

In this section, I relate the communicative context of the programmatic curriculum's text production from the previous chapter. This communicative context is part of van Dijk's (2011) ideological context model: Ideological context models are special mental models that represent "the current, ongoing experience of interaction and communication defining the context of text and talk" (van Dijk, 2011, p. 13). Context models "control how discourse is adapted to the communicative situation, and hence define its appropriateness" (p. 14). Researchers must identify this context to understand how language is communicated dialectically and to anticipate responses from those who consume the text. The context also influences curriculum-making through the discourses surrounding the production of text. These discourses were presented in Chapter 2.

Communicative context. Every communicative context is political, and the context of the Ontario programmatic literacy curriculum is no exception. The Ontario Ministry of Education documents from 2003, which represented 9 out of the 10 documents analyzed

in this project, were published under the Liberal provincial government. The government's own documents offer information about the political goals of the documents' author; Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Strategy document (2009), for example, states its goal of increasing public trust in the education system they lead: "our three core priorities of improving student achievement, reducing achievement gaps, and increasing public confidence in our education system" (p. 10). As Freire (2018) and van Dijk (2011) have observed, administrations use political discourse to gain public trust and increase the probability of reelection, and thus maintenance of political power.

In the case of this study, the programmatic literacy curriculum of Ontario under the control of the Liberal government show an awareness of the audience and its orientation towards multiculturalism, equity, diversity, and 21st century learning. These are key features of the sociopolitical climate of Ontario as illustrated in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

The documents are replete with overt instances of dialectical communication; that is, communicating with an awareness of the consumer's possible responses to information laid out by the author. For example, the programmatic literacy curriculum (OME, 2006) speaks explicitly to the benefits of multiculturalism and diversity, and "best practices" (e.g., p. 23). At the same time, the curriculum provides counter-language to oppose potential and foreseen criticisms. To illustrate this tactic, I present an excerpt from the first programmatic literacy document published by the incoming Liberal party in 2003: "children with unaddressed reading difficulties have not failed the system; the system has failed them" (OME, 2003, p. 7). This statement conveys a sense of understanding that the system, not the children, should be blamed for failures in

education. Additionally, the statement conveys an apparent objectivity since it suggests the curriculum makers can see faults in the “system.” However, the statement does not specify which system has failed the child. In other words, what is actually being blamed here? The legal system? The political system? The current education system?

An inference can be made by examining the contemporary political context of the *OME Early Reading Strategy* (2003), that the blame for failure falls under the responsibility of the previous administration of the Ontario Ministry of Education, which was the Conservative party. To support this inference, consider the following passage from the OME document, *Reach Every Student* (2008), published during the tenure of the liberal government:

In 2003, the newly elected government inherited an education system that was in turmoil. It responded by making education its first priority, setting bold targets, and investing in the improvement of schools in partnership with local educators and communities. (p. 3)

From the above excerpt, I deduced that political discourse is not absent from OME documents and must be considered when analyzing the communicative context of the documents.

Another note on the context in which the documents have been written is the use of metaphors. Understanding these metaphors requires figurative analysis. Analyzing metaphors is “of paramount importance in political language analysis,” (Lu & Ahrens, 2008, p. 383). Fairclough (2000) explains that using metaphors in political texts is a linguistic strategy that is often used and obscures power relations. Accordingly, the numerous metaphors and imagery used in the documents could be used to position the

consumer of the text as a passive receiver of information, rather than an active processor of what is presented.

Now that I have defined the communicative context, I present a synthesized analysis of the results from Chapter 5, followed by a discussion.

Section II: Synthesized Findings

In this section, I present the synthesized findings from Chapter 5 and further analyze the findings using van Dijk's (2011) theoretical framework discussed in Chapter 4. The findings are presented in relation to my research questions in the context of cultural and linguistic diversity in the current era in Ontario:

1. How is subject matter conceptualized?
2. How are teachers and students conceptualized?
3. How is milieu conceptualized?

The following is an analysis and discussion which address the above research questions.

Research Question #1: How is Subject Matter Conceptualized?

According to my analysis, literacy, as the subject of the curriculum documents analyzed, is predominantly print based since most of the direct discussion of literacy in the documents dealt with reading print texts (e.g., OME, 2003; OME, 2009). OME documents conceptualize literacy as discrete strands, which they list as: Oral, Reading, Writing, and Media Literacy. This breakdown of literacy into strands belies an integration of “the linguistic, the visual, the audio, the gestural and the spatial modes of meaning” of multiliteracies and restrict multimodality (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009, p.3).

Even the few times when OME (2006) document suggests multimodality, it positions multimodality as a tool to strengthen traditional print literacy. For example,

Grade 6 Writing expectation 4.2 states that students will “describe how their skills in listening, speaking, reading, viewing, and representing help in their development *as writers*” (OME, 2006, p. 116, author’s emphasis). Expectation 4.2 reveals that the document’s promotion of interconnecting modalities is to help students develop their print literacy (e.g. writing) skills. This finding is supported by the work of Heydon (2015b) which notes that

in Canada ... every programmatic literacy curriculum (Doyle, 1992) ... includes some mention of all of reading writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and representing (including through digital media), suggesting an acceptance of multimodality. However, assessment policies privilege print literacy (Bainbridge & Heydon, 2013)...True multimodal curricula (and pedagogy) may ...require more than simple inclusion of diverse modes and a change in assessment policy.
(p. 59)

In contrast to the form of multimodal curricula expressed in the quote above, the OME (2006) document includes multimodality to reinforce print literacy.

Multimodality is further marginalized considering that the OME programmatic literacy curriculum is an outcomes-based curriculum. According to the analysis presented in Chapter 5, the subject of “students” in sentences that introduce expectations are separated from the predicate. This separation of the subject from the expectation indicates a focus on the outcome rather than on children or the learning process. This point suggests meaning-making processes, such as through multimodality, are not fundamental to the outcomes. Wyse, Hayward, and Pandya (2016) warn that when literacy is conceptualized as the achievement of outcome-based expectations, it fails to encompass

different kinds of knowledge. Moreover, according to Wyse, Hayward, and Pandya (2016), outcome-based literacy is a

de-differentiating mechanism...[which] collaps[es] the knowledge boundaries between education and training; between academic and everyday knowledge; and between different disciplinary forms – another form of knowledge erasure” (p. 102).

The OME (2006) limits the different ways of knowing by employing a rigid definition of what counts as being literate. According to the OME (2006), being literate is a state to which students are striving to attain. For instance, across the documents, students are not positioned as “literate” in any grade but rather positioned as being in a state of “becoming literate” (OME, 2006, p. 4). As language is highly regulated by the OME’s expectations based on “standard English” (p. 9), only certain ways of communicating are recognized. An example of this phenomenon can be seen in the following sentence: “Teachers *give* students the language and techniques to describe their learning by modelling and thinking aloud” (OME, 200a, p. 12). This quote suggests how students must follow the document’s specific model of literacy, hence limiting the forms of literacy that can have official status in the classroom. This also curtails students and communities from being curricular-informants (Harste, 1984); that is, of having opportunity to have input into the literacy curriculum. The expectations in OME (2006) also limit different ways of knowing. For example, OME (2006) states that “the overall expectations outline standard sets of knowledge and skills required for effective listening and speaking, reading and writing, and viewing and representing” (p. 8). These two sentences show that that there is no reciprocity of knowledge where knowledge flows in two or more directions. Rather,

there is correct knowledge articulated as a standard set of linguistic knowledge and skills that the curriculum sets out. Positioning students as forever in the process of *becoming* literate negates the diverse literacy and ways of knowing students bring with them since only certain ways of knowing are considered literate.

The documents OME (2003) and OME (2004a) define knowledge according to Bloom's taxonomy. In Bloom's Taxonomy (1956), knowledge is simply learning information for recall and recognize. Bloom's taxonomy takes a linear and hierarchical conceptualization of learning. For example, OME (2003) uses Bloom's (1956) taxonomy to conceptualize knowledge and cognitive skills in alignment with traditional didacticism. According to Wyse et al. (2016), traditional didactic pedagogy tends to "to focus on a more prescribed curriculum emphasizing academic performance and more structured teaching methods" (p. 144). Didacticism is heavily promoted through the discourse of the programmatic literacy documents.

In didactic pedagogy, students are not learning based on their experiences and knowledge but rather learning in a highly structured manner defined by the teacher or curriculum maker. Not surprising then is that the most common main verbs in the curriculum expectations are "identify," "use," and "explain." These verbs are associated with the knowledge process of conceptualizing which Kalantzis and Cope (2004) argue is the most common knowledge process in didactic curriculum approaches. The following figure, Figure 8, is a screenshot of the Bloom's Taxonomy from in OME (2003).

Figure 8

Bloom's Taxonomy from 1956 in OME (2003)

Level	Definition	What the Student Will Do:
<i>Evaluation</i>	Judging the value of ideas, materials, or products	Give value. Make choices. Arrange ideas. Judge ideas. Present choices.
<i>Synthesis</i>	Putting together constituent parts or elements to form a new whole	Use prior knowledge to activate new knowledge. Change existing ideas. Create new ideas.
<i>Analysis</i>	Breaking down an idea into its constituent parts	Look at parts. See relationships. Organize parts.
<i>Application</i>	Using information in new situations or to solve a new problem. Uses knowledge.	Apply previously learned information to another situation.
<i>Comprehension</i>	Understanding the information being communicated but not relating it to other material or ideas	Organize previously learned material in order to rephrase it, describe it in own words, explain it, or predict implications or effects on the basis of the known facts.
<i>Knowledge (memory)</i>	Learning the information	Recall or recognize bits of information.

This version of Bloom's Taxonomy guides the pedagogy in the document designed for kindergarten through grade 3.

For the junior years, a new document was designed a year later, called *The Report of The Expert Panel on Literacy Learning in Grades 4 to 6 in Ontario* (OME, 2004a).

This document uses an updated version of Bloom's Taxonomy from 2001 to inform pedagogy. Both versions envision learning as a hierarchical and linear process (Berger, 2018). Both versions of Bloom's Taxonomy presuppose that some knowledge processes are better than others, even though all knowledge processes are needed to make meaning. In multiliteracies, literacy learning is viewed as an integrated process (Kalantzis & Cope,

2004), and is hence in conflict with Bloom’s taxonomy and the Ontario programmatic literacy curriculum.

In other instances, the literacy documents associate themselves with Neil Armstrong through intertextuality. Consider the following two statements:

- “One small step for man; one giant leap for mankind” – *Neil Armstrong* (*Nasa.com*, 2019)
- “Literacy instruction in the junior grades takes students another giant leap forward” (OME, 2004a, p. 5)

Both of these statements use “giant leap.” Moreover, both of these statements usher in a new era: Neil Armstrong and the Space Age; Ontario’s literacy curriculum and the 21st Century. As part of the scientific discourse found in the documents, OME (2006) document repeats the word “effective” several times, especially as a collocation of “teaching.” By doing so, the documents position certain types of knowledge (i.e. scientific) as acceptable in a highly structured learning environment.

Research Question #2: How are Students and Teachers Conceptualized?

Both students and teachers take on passive roles in the programmatic literacy documents. One way that teachers are conceptualized as passive is through the limited times the word *teacher* is used in the subject position or as a subject with an active verb, as in Chapter 5. By avoiding the word *teacher*, one can defer authority away from teachers since the word “teacher” in itself has an authoritarian undertone (Clandinin & Connelly, 1992). Tyler (1949) was also famous for not including “teacher” in his rationale. This fact led Schwab to assert that “a statement that does not contain a direct or implied reference to a teacher is not an adequate curriculum statement” (Clandinin &

Connelly, 1992, p. 366). Further, Foucault (2002) posited that agency is diminished when persons are in object positions.

The documents give teachers as students passive roles by defining appropriate behaviours. The term “appropriate/appropriately” is the most common modifier used in the literacy curriculum expectations. The term “appropriate” is collocated with applying concepts/skills and with expected classroom behaviours. The emphasis on defining appropriate literacy behaviours limits creativity and critical thinking. To support this observation, I found that the words “critical” and “creative” were not used at all in any expectation in any grade while “appropriate” was mentioned consistently across grades and strands.

OME (2006) states that “effective teaching approaches involve students in the use of higher-level thinking skills” (p. 23). Effective teaching has, according to Pinar and Reynolds (1992) the seductive appeal of rendering literacy pedagogy, simplistic, a technology, and capable of perfection or best practices. Efficient pedagogy suggests that “effectiveness” is a matter of skills and technique that can be learned, such as through Ministry-led workshops (Craig & Ross, 2008; Pinar & Reynolds, 1992). In fact, OME (2006) uses the words “effective” and “effectiveness” repeatedly along with best practices; for example, in a single paragraph in the OME (2006) document, the word “effective” is used five times:

research has shown that *effective* readers and writers unconsciously use a range of skills and strategies as they read and write, and that these strategies and skills can be identified and taught to enable all students to become *effective* communicators. The language curriculum focuses on comprehension strategies for listening,

viewing, and reading; on the most *effective* reading and writing processes; on skills and techniques for *effective* oral and written communication and for the creation of *effective* media texts. (p. 5)

At a policy level, “effectiveness” is positioned within the context of competitive market systems and ‘school improvement’ but this language also prevents alternate ideas of what might be considered good teaching to be nurtured (Wrigley, 2003), including teaching that is responsive to the cultural, linguistic, and modal diversities that make up classrooms. Moreover, the idea of effective teaching sets up impossible roles for teachers. For example, in the effort of making “schools more ‘effective, too much emphasis has been placed on increasing the pace of teaching” (Wrigley, Lingard, & Thomson, 2012, p. 100). Multiliteracies expresses this as complex in its need to be responsive to modal, linguistical, and discursive diversity.

Programmatic literacy curricula that doles out and enforces roles and learning processes is what Freire (2018) metaphorically described as the banking model of education. According to Freire (2018), this form of education is “an act of depositing” (p. 72) knowledge from the teacher into the student where the student holds this knowledge and can give it back in its original form. By employing the discourse of economics, the OME programmatic curriculum invokes the banking metaphor. For example, students are said to need a “bank” of words for reading (OME, 2004a, p. 73). Moreover, the environment is repeatedly described as “rich” (i.e. OME, 2003, p. 13). Students who do not have certain skills are called “impoverished” (OME, 2003, p. 14). Teachers are to “capitalize” on literacy “gains” (OME, 2003, p. 37). The teacher is the depositor of this

“richness” and capital. Students who are not performing are deemed financial burdens (“costs of illiteracy” p. 65) as they will require social assistance (OME, 2003).

The banking metaphor ties in with the metaphor of water, another prevalent metaphor in most of the documents analyzed. Water describes both knowledge and the learning environment. For example, in *Many Roots, Many Voices* (OME, 2004b): Knowledge is characterized as water, while students are characterized as sponges. Evidence of this metaphor can be found in the following excerpts:

- *absorbing* language at a remarkable rate (p. 33)
- schools facilitate the *flow* of knowledge, ideas and feeling between home and school and across languages (p. 14)

The document *Supporting English Language Learners with Limited Prior Schooling* (OME, 2008b) states “younger children tend to be ‘*language sponges*’ and automatically pick up the skills they need by being totally *immersed* in an English-language environment” (p. 43). From OME (2003), water is used to describe the environment of learning. The following are some examples of the imagery of water in the milieu:

- Children need to be immersed in a literacy-rich environment, filled with books, poems, pictures, charts, and other resources (p. 13)
- Reading instruction – in fact, all of school life – should immerse the children and their families in a rich French-language environment (p. 68)
- The group composition is fluid and changes according to the teacher’s observations and assessments (p. 25).

These findings indicate an *overflowing* environment, conjuring up images of students drowning in text. This idea of drowning relates to Freire’s work, which illustrates how an

“oppressive reality absorbs those within it and thereby acts to submerge human beings’ consciousness” (2018, p. 51). Freire explains that the perception of the oppressed is “impaired by their submersion in the reality of oppression” (p. 51).

In the case of the Ontario curriculum, the texts “submerge” students in texts containing sanctioned ways of knowing, a way to control and limit divergent ways of thinking about themselves and their situation, preventing transformative learning. This implication is drawn from Freire’s idea that “the oppressed, who have adapted to the structure of domination in which they are immersed, have become resigned to it” (2018, p. 48). Therefore, the water metaphor may work as a tool to dominate students.

Students are minimized as active agents in several ways in the programmatic literacy curriculum and supporting documents. Students are minimized through the use of abbreviations. For instance, only students who are learning English as a language are abbreviated: for example, ESL, ELL, and ELD. Students who are learning French, for instance, are not called FSL. Abbreviation is primarily reserved for students from diverse linguistic communities. This abbreviation alludes to the fact that they, as people, are seen as abbreviated, incomplete, riddled with gaps through the discourse of the curriculum. This idea is not a far stretch when taking into account the language that is associated with them. The results presented in Chapter 5 show that diminutive language such as “gaps,” “little,” “small,” “limited,” and “only” is almost exclusively used in association with linguistically diverse students.

The programmatic literacy curriculum also indicates that students’ needs are determined based on their levels of achievement. In the OME (2006) document, students’ needs describe what measures should be taken to achieve the standard level 3

(e.g., p. 16), to improve (e.g., p. 6), or to become literate (e.g., p. 4). Through these predetermined needs, the OME creates somewhat standardized student needs and presupposes standardized knowledge of students. Freire (2018) argues that these needs are socially constructed since they are based on assessment and not determined by the students themselves.

Moreover, according documents such as *Me Read? And How!* (OME, 2009), some students do not know where or how to direct their attention. For example, OME advocates explicit teaching, modelling desired results, and pointing out connections for male students specifically: “Teachers helped boys to recognize the relationship between reading and writing by making constant connections between the two areas” (p. 15). Similarly, the document *Supporting ELL with Limited Prior Schooling 7-12* (OME, 2008b) states that “concepts, skills, and strategies must be explicitly taught and modelled” (p. 14). OME (2008b) also promotes explicit instruction by presenting tips and strategies in the imperative, speaking directly to teachers, such as “Give clear directions. Explain them explicitly” (p. 60) and “Model the process and the product” (p. 60). The imperative structure shows that the rigidity of the curriculum and its standardized and prescriptive nature. While a pedagogy of multiliteracies include explicit teaching and demonstrations, problematical here is a discourse that identifies some students in deficit terms (e.g., boys, ELLs) and standardizes pedagogies to fix the deficit.

Interestingly, while some documents target the deficits of specific categorized students, like those above, others construct students generally as lacking. For instance, students in general said to need their “confirmed” by the teacher, as demonstrated in the following sentence from OME (2004a): “teachers provide constructive feedback to

students, give them information to identify, support, and confirm what they know and can do, and help them set goals for further learning” (p. 13). By stating that students need to have what they know and can do confirmed, the programmatic curriculum positions students as dependent on teacher evaluation for their learning.

The results of the CDA support this point. Thinking skills in the document are always mandated to be first modeled by the teacher; students are to think aloud so that the teacher can guide them and apply the thinking strategies appropriately, in what curriculum-makers call “learning in an apprentice-like relationship” (OME, 2004a, p. 57). In such a configuration, teachers model how to create appropriate discussion questions, the “students’ own questions may begin as ‘copies’ of the teacher’s questions but, with practice, the process of inquiry takes root in students’ ways of thinking and becomes the basis for the independent construction of meaning” (p. 35).

Moreover, students are described by the documents as empty receptacles rather than full, complete beings, as illustrated through the discourse of lacking associated with learners. For instance, one telling statement from OME (2003) reports that “If [children whose first language differs from the language of instruction] do not have access outside the school to rich language experiences in the language of instruction, the school is expected to fill the void. it is the school’s responsibility *to fill the void*” (p. 10) (Bold and italics added for emphasis). This didactic style, which Freire (2018) calls “narration,” conceptualizes children as “receptacles” to be “filled” with the curriculum expectations by the teacher (p. 72). This dynamic creates an imbalance of power in which students are controlled by the teacher who enforces the curriculum.

Interestingly, the documents exert power over students through the very word “student” as it is used in the Ontario programmatic literacy curriculum documents. Investigating how the word “student,” “child,” and “literate learner” was used, I concluded that they are not synonymous. Student is a status; children in the classroom are students, not learners, even though learning happens in and out of the classroom. This point suggests that “student” is not a term for learning but a signifier of what they are learning; since curriculum cannot control what students learn at home, they are called “children” when they are spoken about in out-of-school contexts such as where they live, in relation to their parents, students before school age, and their human rights. Once they are at school and institutionalized, they become students—primed for a certain type of learning. The distinction between using children or students becomes apparent.

However, a third term is also used in the document: “literate learner.” This status is reserved for the hypothetical student who “successfully” adopted the knowledge prescribed by the curriculum. Importantly, English Language Learners are not called students yet until they learn English at a level that will allow them to be primed and attain “student” status. Without fail, students are always positioned in the documents as being able to “become” literate learners, implying that students are illiterate. Since the word to describe children at school is student and not “literate learner”, the curriculum’s presupposition about children is that they are illiterate, unknowing, and unthinking entities. In their literature review of literacy education, Gillen and Hall (2013) found that children thrive when they “use literacy as it is appropriate, meaningful and useful to them, rather than a stage on a path to some future literate state” (p. 14). Moreover, the researchers state that literacy is “not about emergence or becoming literate; it is about

being literate and allows the literacy practices and products of early childhood to be acknowledged in their own right, rather than perceived as inadequate manifestations of adult literacy” (p. 14). The presumption that students are striving towards adult literacy robs children of their inherent thinking and knowing faculties, of their “sapiens” in *homo sapiens*, and thus a prime example of erasing certain types of knowledge.

Digitizing Students to be Passive and Efficient. I found in the documents is the conceptualization of students as digitized beings. According to the analysis, the document *Me Read? and How!* (OME, 2009), there is a heavy emphasis on the role of technology to support print literacy and also to empower boys to *become* literate. For example, the document explained that in one of the literacy intervention for boys that “technology grabbed their interest because they used it constantly in their lives, and learning how to use the programs and being able to solve their own problems made them feel independent and empowered” (p. 55).

From the documents, I found themes of students needing teachers to activate them. In this sense, students are presented as needing to be “activated.” For instance, students’ prior knowledge needs to be “activated,” and “activate” a student during game by tapping them on the shoulder. The student responses on the survey also express the connotation of needing to be activated:

- “Tap my creativity” (p. 6)
- “Point me toward my goal” (p. 6)

Students seem to be automated, similar to the technology that is used to “power” them. In this sense, students are digitized. The implications are that students are conceptualized as passive beings and not as active designers.

Research Question #3: How is the Milieu Conceptualized?

According to the analysis, the milieu promoted in the OME literacy documents is a highly structured and controlled learning environment. The inclusion of Bloom's Taxonomy provides context for the document's highly structured environment for pedagogy. The pedagogy espoused in the documents is described as "best practices" (i.e. OME, 2006, p. 23) founded on objective scientific research that help "all students all students to become effective communicators" (i.e. p. 5) and "the knowledge and skills" (i.e. p. 7) they "need" (i.e. p. 28) to be "successful" (i.e. p. 28). Taking on a patina of objectivity, the documents use nominalizations and sentences in the passive voice, borrowing from the style of scientific discourse. This is especially true in the programmatic literacy document.

The milieu promoted in the programmatic literacy curriculum is a highly structured and controlled learning environment. In all of the documents, there was a pattern of using the word "target" to describe the pedagogical approach which contributed to the how the milieu was conceptualized. I will use the data from OME (2009) to discuss this point.

In this document, the term "target" is repeated ten times to describe the author's recommended literacy pedagogy for boys (e.g., pp. 20, 21, 22, 23, 58, 60, 62, 77). For example, the document recommends that teachers "use direct, targeted instruction and specific strategies" (p. 20), and that "targets and timelines were set for each of these students, and targeted assessment tools were used" (p. 62). A look at the definitions of target as a verb and a noun, since they are used in both ways in the documents, is helpful

for analysis. The most common definitions according to the Oxford English Dictionary are as follows:

- As a verb, target means to “*select as an object of attention or attack*”
- As a noun, target means a “*person, object, or place selected as the aim of an attack*”

These definitions evoke violence. To explore this idea further, I looked at what Oxford Dictionary called “other definitions” for target:

- As a noun, target is “*an objective or result toward which efforts are directed*”
- When a person is the objects of “targeting”, the definition is “*a person or thing against whom criticism or abuse is or may be directed*”.

This latter definition is evident in the following sentence from OME (2009):

“In addition, the school targeted a group of weak readers with a program called “Read 180”, which focused on students transferred but not promoted from Grade 8” (p. 77)

In this sentence, the students are the direct object of the verb target and are thus positioned in a context of violence.

Targeting minds. Although “thinking” is not one of the 4 strands of the programmatic literacy curriculum of Ontario, concerns with thinking skills takes up large amounts of the texts’ contents. Curiously, in discussing student thinking, the metaphor of window is used: “The unique response of each student provides a ‘window’ into the student’s reading process, as well as his or her comprehension and thinking processes” (OME, 2004a, p. 66). The window can be interpreted as a hole into the heads of students. This “window” into students’ minds allows teachers to peer into, examine, and manage

students thinking, to “assess” student’s innermost processes to deem them appropriate or not. Teachers not only assess, but also teach students how to self-assess and self-monitor, similar to Foucault’s (1980) concept of internalized surveillance.

Laying the Groundwork for Discrimination. Under this subheading, I present the case, as already suggested above, that there are potentially dangerous implications for the conceptualization of student diversity in the documents. Specifically, I argue that the OME programmatic literacy documents lay the groundwork for discrimination. They do so by categorizing students into in-group and outgroup, stereotyping cultures, instilling the sense of competition, and failing to provide anti-racism, anti-ethnicist, or anti-discriminatory pedagogy.

In-group Out-group. According to my analysis, the curriculum documents separate students based on difference. This separation is part of van Dijk’s (2006) theory that ideology creates an “Us” and a “Them,” also known as an “in-group” and “out-group” (p. 124). van Dijk’s theoretical framework explains how discourse places people into different groups. According to my analysis of the documents, when students come from non-English speaking backgrounds or diverse cultures, the document places these students in the out-group. I interpret *diversity* in this context to mean “not part of the in-group”.

According to Hong and Cheon (2017), the in-group and out-group configuration influences how students view one another and their differences. English Language Learners are especially vulnerable to perceptions of being marginalized through the programmatic curriculum’s spotlight on ELL errors and effort—not achievement. For example, in OME (2004b), the document instructs teachers in the imperative to

“establish a supportive classroom climate in which newcomers’ language errors are accepted as a normal part of the language-learning process” (p. 19) and “give priority to errors that interfere with communication” (p. 21). OME (2008b) discusses student errors and how to approach them. For example, the document suggests that teachers “provide feedback on one kind of error at a time” (p. 60), “note specific, habitual errors and provide direct instruction later” (p. 60), “select common errors as the language feature of the week, teach them explicitly, and provide opportunities for practice” (p. 60) and “encourage ELLs to keep an editing checklist containing examples of errors and corrections, for their reference” (p. 60). The imperative voice with which the documents address teachers connotes that there is only one way of approaching these phenomena. In contrast, there are alternatives to talking about errors. For example, the classic reading researcher Ken Goodman (1965; 2005) talks not of errors in literacy learning, but rather of *miscues*. Miscues are evidence of communicators actively trying to make meaning and convey that meaning to others. Miscues are thus not conceptualized as problematic but rather as “window[s] into how the reader made sense of print” (Goodman, 2005, p.4).

By focusing on errors, however, the OME documents relay the message that ELLs are faulty. Conveying that ELLs are not enough relates to Freire’s contention that a person feels like “an uncompleted being” when they are “conscious of their incompleteness” (Freire, 2018, p. 43). The idea of not “being” enough is underscored by the disproportionately high frequency of stative verbs and nominalizations associated with ELLs, as found in Stage 1 analysis. The focus on errors of the out-group is also consistent with van Dijk’s concept of the ideological square, in which the negative

attributes of the outgroup are emphasized (or even created) and while negative attributes of the in-group are de-emphasized.

Metaphor of construction building. The construction building metaphor is the most prevalent across all documents and within each document. This construction metaphor is important because it demonstrates how the documents create new identities for students, so that they fit into the *Us/Them* dichotomy and find “their place in society” (OME, 2008b, p. 2). The following is a list of examples of construction building metaphors in the documents I analyzed:

- “The first language provides a *foundation* for developing proficiency in additional languages” (OME, 2001, p. 7)
- “teaching *builds on* the cultural backgrounds and first languages of the children” (OME, 2003, p. 55).
- “consider a student’s literacy in the first language as *a foundation* for developing literacy skills in the language of instruction” (OME, 2004a, p. 42).

The metaphor of building denotes how learning builds upon previous knowledge but it also shows how diverse cultures are “built on” (e.g., OME, 2004a, p. 55), “scaffolded on”, and used as a “foundation” (e.g., OME, 2004a, p. 7) on which certain ways of knowing, thinking, and behaving are paved.

In fact, only when discussing students from diverse cultures do the documents use the phrasal verbs “scaffold on” and “build on”. For example, in OME (2004a), there are 15 instances of either “scaffold on” or “build on” (and their word forms *building on*, *builds on*, *scaffolds on*, and *scaffolding on*).

As indicated in Chapter 5, under OME (2004a), the most common object of the

verb phrase scaffold on or build on is children’s “first language”: for example, by scaffolding on the first language, the teacher helps students make meaningful connections that support literacy development in the language of instruction, while enabling students to develop content knowledge in all subjects (OME, 2004a, p. 7). Table 22 shows the data from OME (2004a).

Table 22

Frequency of the Terms “Scaffold on” and “Build on” with Object in OME (2004a)

Scaffold on or Build on	
Object of verb phrase	# of occurrences
First language	7
Prior knowledge	2
[Each other’s] Ideas	2
[struggling or diverse] students’ strengths	2
Personal and cultural backgrounds	2
Foundation from child’s early years	1
Total	15

The difference between the verb *building* and the phrasal verb *building on* is important: *Building* is creating new structures. *Building on* is creating structures onto of those that already exist. In this context, building on and scaffolding on without regard for students’ funds of knowledge is an erasure of diverse ways of knowing.

From these examples, I read the documents as promoting a highly regulated notion of literacy and literacy learning environment. This reading is further supported by the *Expert Panel on Early Reading’s* use of the vehicle metaphor to illustrate the role of

literacy in students' lives: "As these children grow older and literacy increasingly becomes a vehicle for teaching" (OME, 2003, p. 38). In this metaphor, literacy is the car that forces the driver to focus ahead linearly: the vehicle is constrained by the established rules of the road; a good driver arrives at the destination safely, a weak one will break the driving rules and be punished either by law or in a car accident. The act of driving is based on "automaticity" from "mastery," words also repeatedly used with literacy learning across all documents and reported in Chapter 5.

Moreover, vehicles do not allow for transformation— they are just a mode of transportation. Freire interprets this method of teaching as "changing the consciousness of the oppressed, not the situation which oppresses them, for the more the oppressed can be led to adapt to that situation, the more easily they can be dominated (Freire, 2018, p. 74). As such, literacy in the OME programmatic literacy curriculum does not support multiliteracies which promotes diverse ways of knowing and transformative learning.

Stereotyping the other. I found that the documents promote stereotyping of cultures relegated to the out-group. One way that the documents show an inclination for stereotyping student cultures is by recommending that teachers match ELL and newly arrived students with other students who share the same first language, gender, or cultural identity. As such, for example, from *Many Roots, Many Voices* (OME, 2004b), teachers are to pair students from non-English speaking backgrounds with students who appear the same as them:

- Assign a classroom partner [to] ESL the student; – someone of the *same gender and, if possible, the same language background* – to explain or model routine classroom tasks or to help the student in other ways (p. 40)

- Select a student ambassador – preferably one of the *same gender who speaks the same language* as the newcomer – to take the student on a guided tour of the school and introduce him or her to its facilities (p. 40)
- Connect parents with *similar needs, interests, or concerns*: newcomer parents, for example, may share an interest in a particular topic, such as parenting in their new cultural environment (pp. 44-45)
- Give English language learners opportunities to work with *same language* partners (example: think, pair, share in first language) (p. 15)

According to Hong and Cheon (2017), focusing on culture-based groupings may actually “increase perceived stereotypicality and incompatibility between native and foreign cultural representations” (p. 815). Further, in several instances across the documents, students are encouraged to use their “own” language and embrace their “own” culture. For instance, the document states that teachers should “encourage students [in the mainstream] to share information about their own languages and cultures to raise awareness for all” (OME, 2008b, p. 59). In this quote, the document uses the phrase “own” language instead of first, native, or home language. The use of the word “own” is a way to highlight the Us/Them dichotomy (van Dijk, 2011).

van Dijk (2011) explains that “central to most ideologies is the representation of the relation between our *own* (in-) group and *other* (out-) groups, between Us and Them (van Dijk 2011 p. 396, emphasis added). Moreover, the document states that the purpose of sharing information of students’ “own” language is not to learn the new language but rather to “raise awareness” about differences among students. This focus on difference is also part of the Us/Them ideology (van Dijk, 2011).

To encourage students' diverse linguistic and cultural identities, the documents insist that teachers choose materials that "reflect" these students. This practice is justified by stating that students do better when they see themselves in the materials used in the classroom (OME Language, 2006). However, this theme of reflection invokes the metaphor of the mirror: the environment as a mirror reflects one's identity back to them. Just as the mirror reflects a distorted reality (i.e. left and right are inverted), so too might the materials, since the materials are chosen by the teacher, from the teacher's point of view of what represents the child. In fact, OME (2008b) states that teachers should be "reinforcing students' self-identity by providing inclusive learning resources and materials representative of diverse cultures, backgrounds, and experiences" (p. 23) and designing "lessons and activities and choose resources that take into account students' background knowledge and experiences" (OME, 2008b, p. 59). The result is an assumed representation of the child since the representation is through eyes of the curriculum and teacher, and not through those of the child. There is a danger here in the discourse of the documents of essentializing and further minoritizing learners.

Watson (2011) warned that teacher assumptions on what students need based on gender identity, for example, actually alienates all students. A pedagogy of multiliteracies positions students as designers of the curriculum so that they co-create the learning environment; in this way, the materials would reflect students' evolving characters (Kalantzis & Cope, 2004).

Cultural Identity as a way to Other Students. The documents deal problematically with the notion of culture and identity. They only prescribe cultural identity to the *Others*, those in the out-group; members of the in-group have a personal

identity. For example, in the OME Language Curriculum 1-8 (2006), which addresses normalized students, the document states that “the expectations encourage students to explore issues related to personal identity and community concerns as they interact with increasingly complex and/or challenging texts” (p. 121). From this excerpt, I noticed that the document attributes a personal identity to normalized students (those in the in-group), while ELL, ESL and ELD students are addressed in separate and supplementary documents. In the ESL/ELL/ELD supplementary documents, students are not designated a personal identity but rather given a cultural identity. For example, the document *Supporting English Language Learners* (OME, 2008b) discusses

enabling ELLs to develop a sense of personal identity and belonging by sharing information about their own languages and cultures, as well as their experiences in their countries of origin and as newcomers to Canada (p. 23).

This sentence indicates that English Language Learners do not have a personal identity developed, only a cultural identity. Being assigned a cultural identity is a form of *othering* students by differentiating them from normalized students whose cultural identities are neglected.

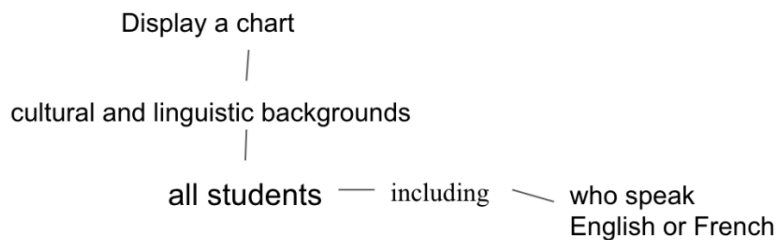
In addition to semantic structures of “othering”, grammatical structures also show how students become “othered” through discourse. Consider the following sentence from *The Report of the Expert Panel* (OME, 2004a): “Texts of all types, including texts in other languages for second-language learners, must support student learning and be consistent with the curriculum” (p. 22). This sentence is constructed with a phrasal interruption that physically separate the words between the two commas. In short, this

sentence creates a dichotomy. In this particular example, the phrasal interruption serves to separate “texts in other languages” from texts of all types.

In order to further understand how syntax can create an Us/Them dichotomy, consider the following sentence from *Many Roots, Many Voices* (2005) on how teachers can create an environment that welcomes cultural diversity: “Display a chart near the school entrance showing the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of all students, including those who speak English or French” (p. 41). The comma separates “those who speak English or French” from “cultural and linguistic backgrounds of all students”. This separation in syntax and grammar is replicated in the mental models of the consumer. Thus, even though semantically there is the word “including”, functionally, according to van Dijk (2011), there is a separation, and this separation divides groups of people. Applying van Dijk’s concept of mental models as networks of discourse represented in the mind, the following diagram, Figure 9, represents how this sentence is configured in the mind of the text consumer.

Figure 9

Sample Diagram of How Syntax is Configured in the Mind of the Text Consumer



From this model, sentences reproduce implicit and syntactical separation in the mind. This mental model of separation is then reproduced when thinking about students, language, and culture in general (van Dijk, 2011).

Discourses that divide students creates Us/Them categories which exercise control through a specific kind of othering: racialization. According to Gans (2017), racialization is both an act and a process. As an act, racialization is defined by Omi and Winant (2014, p. 111) as “the extension of racial meaning to a previously racially unclassified social relationship, social practice or group”. As a process, Gans (2017) explains that racialization

generally begins with the arrival of new immigrants, voluntary or involuntary, who are perceived as different and undeserving. It may be accompanied by self-racialization on the part of those doing the racializing. However, if and when the racialized are no longer viewed as undeserving, they may undergo deracialization, although subsequent changing circumstances can sometimes result in their reracialization (p. 342).

The purpose of the racialization, deracialization, and reracialization is to “other” members of society based on a political agenda: “Racial and ethnic identities are socially constructed and they are reconstructed throughout the historical process as a response to social, economic and political changes” (as cited in Ari, 2018, p. 10). The symbolic elite employ “racism or racialization as a tool to divide the working class for different reasons: to cheapen the labor, to create a flexible and easily replaceable workforce to do the dirty work in the secondary labor market, and to keep the working class disorganized” (Bonacich, 1980, pp. 13-14)” (as cited in Ari, 2018, p. 10.). In this sense, classifying and

racializing students dehumanizes them, since these processes relegate them to second-class or “other” status.

According to Fylkenses (2018), from a critical discourse perspective, when the term *cultural diversity* derives meaning from being in relation to another term (i.e. the dominant or normalized group), it means “a student of color, race, other, ethnicity, difference/different and minority” (p, 30). I conclude that, based on normalizing dominant culture, the term “diverse cultures” simply means not part of the in-group (Fylkenses, 2018).

Othering immigrants through the discourse of Economics. I found that the documents use the discourse of economics to describe the cultural diversity of students in Ontario. For example, the document *Early Reading Strategy*:(2003) states “with immigrants representing almost 25 percent of Ontario’s population, there is rich cultural diversity in many of the province’s classrooms” (p. 1). This rich diversity is something that teachers can “capitalize on” (*Early Reading Strategy*, 2003, p. 49). The documents position culturally diverse students as “resources” to be “capitalized” on. This pattern is similar to colonizer discourse which sees Indigenous peoples and their resources as theirs to exploit (Freire, 2018).

This idea of using the out-group as steppingstones for the in-group to prosper socioeconomically is seen with the discourse of economics and the conceptualizing of diverse students as bringing “rich resources” that “all students” can benefit from” (e.g. *Many Roots, Many Voices*, 2004, p. 7). Teachers are instructed to “capitalize” on these rich resources. This economic discourse speaks to the ideology that immigrants and members of the out-group are exploited for their economic potential and to be part of the

perpetuation of the dominant socioeconomic group. Supporting this claim, Devore and Bridwell-Bowles (2000) observed that English literacy functions “as a metonym for global capital” (p.4) and that English literacy education is “largely about assimilation” into the “dominant culture” for economic purposes such as filling the labour market (p. 3).

Students from culturally diverse background are further *Othered* by being pitted against the in-group through the discourse of competition. Competition is an integral component of the economic discourse that further divides the ingroup from the outgroup (van Dijk, 2011). Opposing groups must compete for resources such as top performance, teacher praise, scholarships, and acceptance into programs with limited number of spaces. To highlight the discourse of competition, the documents use words such as “outnumber” (e.g. *Me Read? And How!*, 2009, p. 6), “keep up” (*Expert Panel*, 2003, p. 42), “catch up” (*Supporting ELL 1-8*, 2008, p. 11), “as quickly as possible” (*Supporting ELL 1-8*, 2008, p. 7). For example, in *the Expert Panel on Early Reading* (2003), the document repeats the same sentence with the phrasal verb “catch up” on two different pages: “Research findings on early reading difficulties are very clear: children who continue to experience difficulties in Grade 3 seldom *catch up* in later grades” (p. 4 and p. 33). The document explains that “children who continue to experience reading difficulties in Grade 3 seldom *catch up* later” (p. 4). It also mentions that [children who struggle with reading in Grades 1 to 3] have a “much harder time *keeping up* with their peers, and they increasingly *fall behind* in other subjects” (p. 7).

Moreover, the quality of learning and teaching from the figure on *Key Factors of School Improvement*, the imperative is “Focus on the development of skills and *pace of*

work” (p. 44). This discourse ties in with “multiculturalism’s marketing scheme of ‘othered’ cultures and identities...leaves the hierarchization of cultures and knowledges undisturbed” (Mohanty, 2003 p. 21). Students from “diverse” cultures are expected to compete to become literate in the valued ways of knowing (of the dominant culture). Moreover, the document considers “diverse” ways of knowing as a limitation on communication and instructs the ingroup to be “sensitive towards” students who present such diversity (as discussed earlier in the chapter).

Issues of racism and discrimination at school absent from curriculum. According to my analysis, the existence of discrimination at school or in students’ lives is not discussed in the documents. The implication is that discrimination is not an educational issue; rather, it is dismissed as something that may happen outside of the school. Instead, the document simply defines itself as a place *without* discrimination, a “safe” place.

This idea is perhaps based on the assumption that students will live peacefully together through mere contact with one another. Absent from the documents is a clear articulation of how students learn to live peacefully and justly in a diverse society. The assumption implicit in all the document is that students will learn to respect others; assumption is that by contact they will learn, but this is refuted by psychology and history (Hong & Cheon, 2017). Without a practical and viable theory for living in diverse societies, discrimination becomes inevitable, since, as Freire points out “no reality transforms itself” (2018, p. 53). Hence, the literacy documents studied in this study lay fertile ground for discrimination.

Curriculum Orientation

Through the study, I am able to identify that the OME programmatic literacy curriculum and supporting documents show coherence with one another and together suggest what Eisner and Valance (1974) called a *curriculum as technology*. As mentioned in Chapter 2, curriculum orientations bear implications for teachers and students since each orientation is comprised of values and beliefs that shape what is taught and how (Eisner, 2002). The orientation of *curriculum as technology* “focuses on process. It is also concerned with the how rather than the what of education. It conceptualizes the function of curriculum as essentially one of finding efficient means to a set of predefined, nonproblematic ends” (p. 7). The orientation of *curriculum as technology* links to the findings of the curriculum’s concern with speed and time as well as its “predefined” ends listed as the curriculum expectations for each grade and strand of literacy.

Eisner and Valance explain that this orientation is “concerned not with the processes of knowing or learning, but with the technology by which knowledge is communicated and ‘learning’ is facilitated” (1974, p. 7). This statement resonates with the findings that show materials and technology are used in service of the curriculum and traditional print literacy. Often, materials are explicitly defined as no more than tools for motivating “struggling” readers. Furthermore, according to Eisner and Valance (1974), this type of curriculum orientation “is concerned with developing a technology of instruction” (p.7). Again, with the themes of activating students and developing automaticity repeated in the curriculum documents, it is evident that the OME curriculum document is oriented towards technology of instruction.

Implications for this orientation are that “the focus is less on the learner or even on his relationship to the material than on the more practical problem of efficiently packaging and presenting the material to him” (Eisner & Valance, 1974, p. 8). This idea is shown through the conceptualization of teachers as providers of the curriculum rather than designers and students as passive recipients of knowledge. I will discuss implications for students and teachers in the next section which addresses my initial research questions.

Since the curriculum technology approach sees “curriculum as an input to supply and demand systems”, it is not a surprise then that the curriculum documents studied were replete with “terms of industrial systems, accountability, or systems analysis” (Eisner & Valance, 1974, p. 8). In fact, assessment and data drive pedagogy and expectations in the curriculum, as concluded from the data in this study. Moreover, .According to Rose (199), in literacy education, “Inscription devices (e.g. statistics) can be used to accumulate knowledge with ‘aspir[at]ions’ to ‘shap[e] conduct’ (Rose, 1999, p. 52) (as cited in Heydon, 2015b, p. 60). In this sense, assessment data is a technology of control.

Importantly and in direct contrast to a pedagogy of multiliteracies, “the curriculum-technology approach rests on certain ‘stable’ assumptions about the nature of learning, namely that learning does occur in certain systematic and predictable ways and that it can be made more efficient if only a powerful method for controlling it can be perfected” (Eisner & Valance, 1974, p. 8). This point is evident in the *Expert Panel on Early Reading Strategy* (2003) which states

Teachers and administrators will recognize that, currently, some schools are more successful in teaching children to read than others. It is important to continue to review one's own school practices to see how they compare with those of more effective schools. Blaming socio-economic or similar factors for low achievement does a disservice to students, teachers, and schools. Research has demonstrated that schools can outperform predictions that are based on the background or prior performance of students. (p. 41)

In this excerpt, the language of the curriculum document demonstrates its commitment to standard literacy education and placing responsibility for students' literacy achievement on "school practices" rather than pointing to potential systemic reasons for inequalities. Moreover, with standardized outcomes or "performance", the document (re)states the idea of standard English as industrial capital which discounts different ways of knowing, learning, and communicating (Devore & Bridwell-Bowles, 2000). In this sense, the curriculum displays no interest in new ways of knowing.

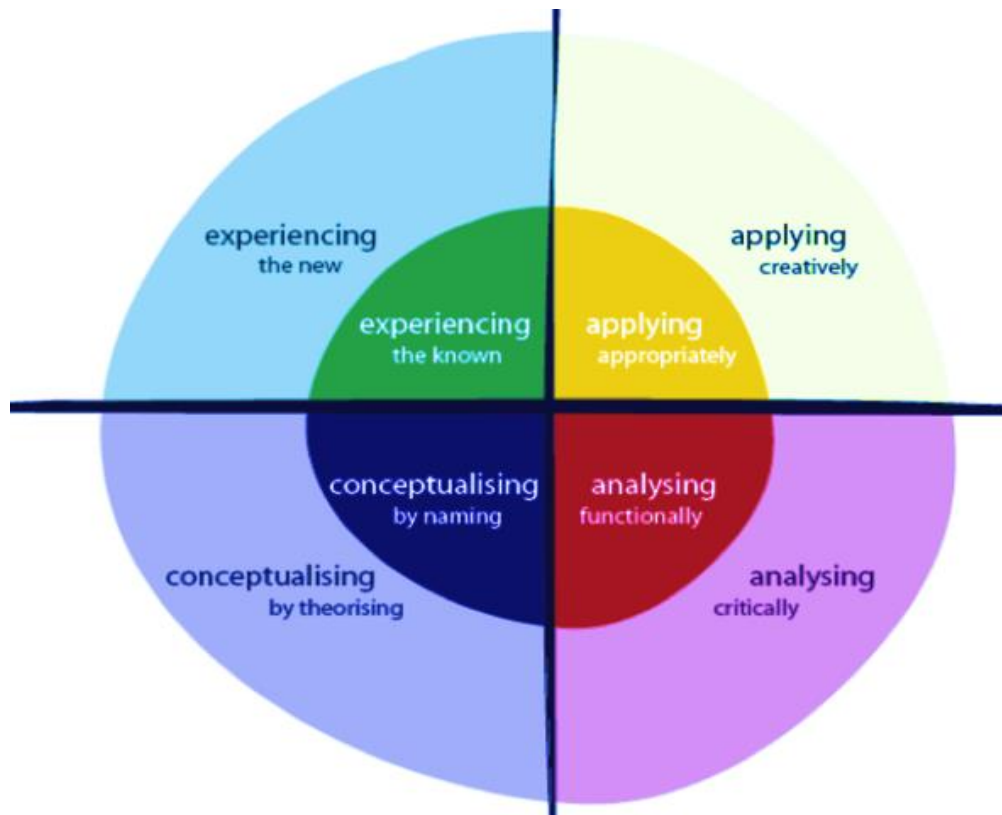
Significance and Recommendations

This CDA identified that there is curricular discrimination at play in Ontario. Bringing together social theories, literacies of literacies and discourses, as well as curriculum, the study builds on extant knowledge to illustrate how programmatic curricula can be studied and what they make more or less possible for children, teachers, and communities. The study also points to suggestions for ameliorating programmatic literacy curricula such that it can contribute to equity and social justice. Foremost is that all levels of curriculum and curriculum-making must take into account and responsibility for its discourses. The implications for potentially discriminatory discourse can be seen

in the lived experiences of students and teachers who internalize these discourses. In what follows, I offer specific recommendations for amelioration grouped beneath headings corresponding to Schwab's curricular commonplaces. This grouping allows for some clarity of reading, yet it should not bely that all recommendations relate to each other and no single recommendation can be implemented with good effect if in isolation.

Recommendations for Subject Matter

To more fully address the complexities of literacies and literacy learning in contemporary times, literacy curriculum might be based on transformative learning models in lieu of Bloom's Taxonomy. Kalantzis and Cope (2015) proposed a model of learning informed by multiliteracies pedagogy, which accounts for non-linear learning and transformative learning. Figure 10 that follows illustrates the Transformative Knowledge Model.

Figure 10*Transformative Knowledge Model*

Note: Infographic from Kalantzis and Cope (2015)

This configuration includes the four pedagogical principles of multiliteracies theory: applying, experiencing, conceptualizing, and analyzing. There is no point of entry or inherent hierarchy because the process is interconnected. As such, transformative knowledge can be gained through any combination of pedagogical practices while learners use new information to continue adding to their knowledge base. Such a configuration promotes interactive curriculum design where teachers and learners, for instance, can be engaged in curriculum-making, thereby opening opportunities for creative, democratic, transformative literacy learning. Programmatic curricula can

discursively promote creativity by explicitly using the root “crea” in the curriculum expectations. Moving towards concepts of creativity also allows for transformative learning.

As Kervin and Comber (2019) suggest, technology is a medium for experimentation in communication. Students and teachers may co-create to find creative ways of learning and making meaning, instead of being a tool to support print literacy. Additionally, programmatic literacy curricula would make steps toward transformative learning (Kalantzis & Cope, 2015) if it were to learn with and from students and communities rather than targeting and surveilling.

Recommendations for Teachers and Students

A pedagogy of multiliteracies suggests students as designers of literacy curricula in ways such that they co-create learning environments which account for their knowledge and meaning making practices (Kalantzis & Cope, 2004).

Teachers “cannot think for [their] students” (Freire, 2018, p. 77). Literacy curricula hence would do well to promote what Freire calls “authentic thinking, thinking that is concerned about *reality*, does not take place in ivory tower isolation, but only in communication” (p. 77). In other words, authentic thinking is generated through communication between teachers and students and occurs in students’ lived experiences rather than in hypothetical situations in which the teacher models correct ways of thinking and responding. Without this authentic thinking, the OME programmatic literacy curriculum does not support multiliteracies which promotes diverse ways of knowing and transformative learning.

In Schwab and Foucault's terms, as well as the terms of a pedagogy of multiliteracies that positions teachers and students as co-designers of literacy curriculum (Kalantzis & Cope, 2015), programmatic curricula need to place students and teachers in active positions syntactically and followed by active verbs. To encourage synergies between teachers and students in curriculum design, I would also suggest that programmatic curricula discursively demonstrate this relationship; for example, curricula might employ prepositional phrases like "with teachers/students" instead of "for students".

Recommendations for Milieu

Because programmatic curricula that promote students copying of sanctioned forms of literacy or knowing are constraining, I suggest that the OME programmatic literacy curriculum encourage different ways of expressing knowledge so as not to erase diverse epistemologies (Diaz Beltran, 2018). I recommend a reconceptualization of students as already literate and education as a way to expand their literacy. In this way, the curriculum can integrate multiple ways of knowing instead of erasing them in favour of one standard form of literacy (Díaz Beltrán, 2018).

Since the programmatic curriculum focuses on talking about errors with respect to English Language Learners, I recommended the OME investigate alternatives to talking about errors. For example, the classic reading researcher Ken Goodman (1965; 2005) talks not of errors in literacy learning, but rather of miscues. Miscues are evidence of communicators actively trying to make meaning and convey that meaning to others. Miscues are thus not conceptualized as problematic but rather as "window[s] into how the reader made sense of print" (Goodman, 2005, p.4).

With regards to the figurative language of the programmatic curriculum, I recommend more transparent language (van Dijk, 2000). Programmatic curricula must be explicit about how they conceptualize key components of curriculum; in the case of cultural diversity or any other similar term, this conceptualization must be congruent with equity of language, culture, and literacies. A practical and viable theory for living in diverse societies must be explicated and undergird all aspects of programmatic literacy curriculum.

Because focusing on culture-based groupings may actually “increase perceived stereotypicality and incompatibility between native and foreign cultural representations” (Hong & Cheon, 2017, p. 815), literacy curricula might instead look to see how students interact based on personae, that use their affinities, attachments, orientations, interests, stances, values, worldviews, dispositions and sensibilities (Kalantzis & Cope, 2015).

Moreover, as programmatic curricula are political texts, I suggest that teacher education programs assist teacher candidates in examining the “power issues entwined with the purpose, content and implementation” (Hökkä, Eteläpelto, & Rasku-Puttonen, 2010, p. 852) of programmatic curriculum both in teacher education and the literacy programmatic curriculum for which they are responsible for teaching.

Opportunities for Future Research

As print literacy is the focus and diversity of cultures is said to be represented in the materials at school, CDA of these resources is warranted for future scholarship. I also implore further research on the practical effects, theoretical issues, and possibilities of cultural consciousness on student experiences in globalized and transnational classrooms in contemporary Canada. Ultimately, I recommend research into the usefulness of

critical discourse studies as mandatory parts of teacher education programs. This research should investigate whether or not critical discourse studies help teachers understand their interpretations of figurative and political language of the programmatic literacy curriculum.

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Curriculum Vitae

Name:	Susan Ibdah
Post-secondary Education and Degrees:	<p>University of Western Ontario London, Ontario, Canada 2005-2007 BA.</p> <p>The University of Western Ontario London, Ontario, Canada 2013-2014 M.A.</p> <p>The University of Western Ontario London, Ontario, Canada 2015-2020 Ph.D.</p>
Honours and Awards:	<p>Don Galbraith Preservice Science Teaching Award 2011-2012</p> <p>John Dearness Preservice Literacy Teaching Award 2011-2012</p> <p>PSAC Graduate Teaching Award 2014-2015</p> <p>3MT Three Minute Thesis Finalist 2016</p>
Related Work Experience	<p>Teaching Assistant The University of Western Ontario 2014-2019</p>
Publications:	<p>Ibdah, S., and Heydon, R (2019). Initial Teacher Education in Canada. <i>Bloomsbury Encyclopedia of Education</i>.</p> <p>Ibdah, S. (2016) The Institutional Incapacitation of Teachers: An OME Curriculum Document Analysis: <i>International Journal of Excellence in Education</i></p> <p>Ibdah, S. (2013). Internal and External Forces and the Three Little Pigs. <i>Science Teacher Association of Ontario Journal</i>.</p> <p>Ibdah, S. (2013). A shirt by any other name. Social Foundations. UWO: University Press.</p>