INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.
CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION AS LIVED TEACHER EXPERIENCE: 
TWO CASES OF TEACHERS 

DISSEMINATION 

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for 
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate 
School of The Ohio State University 

By 
Jeaesik Cho, M. Ed. 

***** 

The Ohio State University 
2000 

Dissertation Committee: 
Professor Gail McCutcheon, Adviser 
Professor Robert Backoff 
Professor Karen Murphy 

Approved by 
Gail McCutcheon 
Adviser 
College of Education
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to create an understanding of how teachers "made sense" of the process of curriculum implementation from their own perspective. To this end, the study examined the way in which teachers used newly adopted reading curriculum materials. Pursued over two years, the research was qualitative in its description of varied meanings of experiences of two female elementary teachers in interaction with the intent and planned resources of the curriculum developers. Given Aoki's view of situational praxis in which teachers were viewed as active "meaning makers," the situated meaning of mutual adaptation between self and the intent of the developers was investigated in the context of each classroom. Phenomenology, based upon the work of van Manen, undergirded this study of curriculum implementation in relation to lived teacher experience. Data were collected by multiple methods such as conversational interviews, observations, document analysis, and the reflective journal of the researcher. These data were analyzed and interpreted to search for the essential structure of each teacher's experience.

Research findings revealed that both teachers had a significantly different view of the value of the curriculum. As a consequence, they demonstrated different meanings of fidelity of implementation in their everyday classroom situations. One participant, who was a beginning teacher, faithfully used new curriculum materials based primarily upon
the intent of the curriculum developer. Her account of what worked best for student learning was one of guaranteeing that the “right things” were covered at “right times” and in an organized manner. For her, this implementation process was highly meaningful because she saw herself in need of new skills and knowledge for teaching reading. In contrast, the other participant considered the new curriculum materials as “teaching tools.” In effect, she adaptively used the ideas of the curriculum developer. The critical decisions she made were directly related to her interpretation of students’ needs as she perceived them.

The nature of the teacher’s curriculum guideline in the change effort of this school should have been re/developed in a way that helped different teachers (in this study, e.g., years of teaching experience) meet their different professional development needs. This suggests a redefinition of the in-service support system to collaboratively include teachers, the principal, and representatives of the textbook company. This study of the teachers’ complex role and work in the curriculum implementation process clearly demonstrated the need for further theory development to achieve a significant re-definition of that role and work.
Dedicated to Steven and Peggy Puhl

who never stopped loving my family
I express sincere appreciation to Dr. Gail McCutcheon for her careful guidance and in-depth insight throughout the coursework and the writing of this dissertation.

I thank Dr. Robert Backoff for the demonstration of his profound knowledge, modesty, and spirituality. I will keep in mind your speech at your retirement ceremony!

I also thank Dr. Karen Murphy for her time and critical feedback. I could not complete this dissertation without your special help and support.

Most of all, I deeply appreciate research participants for their constant professional support. I am very lucky to know you, wonderful persons and educational professionals.

I thank Drs. Donmoyer and Howey for their early help in my doctoral program.

I fully acknowledge my great masters, Dr. Kyung-Sub Lee and Dr. Won-Hee Lee, for their encouragement. My special thanks to all of curriculum people in the KCSG.

Dr. Y. C. Kim deserves my special thanks for his warm friendship. I also thank my friends, Byong-Ok, Jung-Ho, Sang-Il, Sun-Hee, Myung-Hwa and Min-A for their forever friendship. A special thanks is extended to Dong-Ok/Young-Sang, Allen, Jane, and Paul for supporting me in different ways. I owe a great deal to Rev. Fr. John Lee/Joseph Lee.

Finally, I would like to express my full love and absolute respect for my parents, brothers and sisters. I am very appreciative of my lovely wife, You-Su, for her sacrifice and care. We are fortunate to have such wonderful two kids, Sung-Hun and Lucia.
VITA

June 24, 1966 ....................................... Born in Korea

1991 ...................................................... B. A., Education
                                  Taegu National University of Education
                                  Taegue, Korea

1993 ....................................................... M. ED, Educational Methods
                                  Kyungpook National University
                                  Taegu, Korea

1995 - present ...................................... Ph. D. Student
1999 - 2000 .......................................... Graduate Research Associate
                                  The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

PUBLICATIONS

Research Publication

1. Rethinking curriculum implementation: Paradigms, models, and teachers’ work

2. Generalizability in qualitative research (1998). In Y. S. Lee, & Y. C. Kim (Eds.),
   Ethnography in Education: Method & application (pp. 187-208). Seoul Korea: Education-
   Science Sa.

Field of Study

Major field: Education
Specialization: Curriculum Studies and Qualitative Research Methodology
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE OF CONTENTS</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract ...........................................................................................................</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication .......................................................................................................</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments ..............................................................................................</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vita ..................................................................................................................</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapters:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction...............................................................................................</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction .................................................................................................</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background of the Study ...............................................................................</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statements of the Problem .............................................................................</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual Framework of the Study ................................................................</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Educational Change Processes ......................................................</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum and the Role of Teachers .....................................................</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Reflection on Curriculum/Teaching ..........................................</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Study .......................................................................................</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions .........................................................................................</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology .....................................................................................................</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative Research: An overview ............................................................</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phenomenological Research ..........................................................................</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design of the Research ................................................................................</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Instruction in Implementation .........................................................</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance ......................................................................................................</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitions .......................................................................................................</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview for the Following Chapters ................................................................</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Chapter Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Review of Related Literature</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studies on Educational Implementation</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The RAND Change Agents Study</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fidelity-based Studies on Implementation</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Phenomenological View on Curriculum Implementation</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Phenomenological Point of View</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nature of Human Consciousness</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Concept of Everyday Life-World</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Phenomenological View on Curriculum/Implementation</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum as Experiential</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation as Evolutionary Processes</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Implementation as Lived Teacher Experiences</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Role and Work of Teachers</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Reflections on Curriculum Implementation</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Summary</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Methodology</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phenomenological Research</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection Procedure</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of the School</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaining Entry</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of Participants</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewing</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews in general</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversational Interviewing</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Journal</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document Analysis</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

With regard to the matter of educational change, implementation, i.e., 'putting words into action,' becomes complex. Despite a proliferation of new plans and educational reform programs, educational practice seems still to be stagnated (Fullan, 1991, 1994, 1997). Addressing why this is so is a complicated matter. The assumption is that one of the common problems of educational change would be failing to consider the diverse natures of teachers' thoughts and actions in classrooms. As Fullan (1997) noted, change programs do little to take into account subjective realities of teachers experiencing many problems explicitly drawn from their own daily curricula and teaching practices, instead focusing more on directly installing simplified and sometimes "unconnected, fragmented" (p. 217) innovative ideas on existing practices.

As implied at the beginning, the basic problem of educational change lies in the gap between plans and reality (MacDonald & Walker, 1976). To elaborate, the way in which innovative ideas created by the policy or program developers are developed and thus delivered to the hands of teachers seems well known. By and large, all responsibility for
use is assigned to the teachers. Presumably, the process of change is not always expected to happen according to the intent of the developer. Rather, change may take place in many different ways, depending on a variety of local educational contexts. Yet, because the stakeholders in education have different ideas as to what is supposed to be going on in practice, understanding the diversity of change is not easy.

For implementation as a “planned” change process to occur when the document is officially given to teachers, the process of implementation is functionally meant to deliver new, official, prescriptive courses of action from teachers to students (Clandinin & Connelly, 1992). As will be described later, the traditional research on implementation has mainly been concerned with examining the amount and degree of teachers’ changing behavior in terms of the developer’s original intent, reducing the emerging concerns of teachers as users, and enhancing the level of use toward the expected implementation outcome (Hall & Loucks, 1977). As a result, the meaning of implementation in the educational enterprise appears to be considered “a form,” in which teachers’ existing beliefs and behavior and their classroom organizations would have to be fitted to the categories of the developer’s initial intent (Paris, 1993).

Meanwhile, the relationship between theory and practice is also evident in matters of curriculum implementation. One traditional way to address curriculum implementation is to view curriculum as document and teaching as delivery, so the teacher is viewed as a “conduit” between the plan and the action (Clandinin & Connelly, 1992, pp. 364-378). Teachers’ individual thought and knowledge are little considered significant matters in this linear view of change or reform initiative. Ideally, teachers are expected to change in
behavior as they directly acquire and use the new knowledge and skills necessary to actualize an ideal of curriculum-as-plan (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982).

At this point, however, teachers' practical knowledge and theory of action become manifested to the point that new classroom practice seems unlikely as viewed from the standpoint of reformers and developers (Elbaz, 1983). In other words, in the teachers' attempt to implement a given curriculum to better their own classroom situation, teachers tend to use "a body of knowledge oriented to a particular practical context" (Elbaz, 1983, p. 15). This body of knowledge teachers use in their context is practical in that it directs teachers themselves to deal with "the exigency of a present situation" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, p. 25). To be sure, the identification of what teachers know regarding curricula, subject matter, self, and situation may provide for a different rationale for curriculum use, one that may be inconsistent with the developer's intent. From the perspective of teachers, new skills and knowledge suggested by the developer may not always be appropriate in their context, so that they feel the necessity of redeveloping the curriculum to be more relevant to their teaching repertoires and their students (McCutcheon, 1995, pp.34-35). This is viewed as a process of inquiry, in which teachers mediate what works in light of their ongoing experiences in conjunction with the "concrete" situation they face in the continuum of the past through present to the future (Elbaz, 1983, pp. 16-21).

In a similar but somewhat different vein, the concept of a theory of action is also useful in examining why teaching practice looks different classroom by classroom as does the change process. A theory of action is defined as "deliberate human behavior,
which is for the agent a theory of control” (Argyris & Schon, 1974, p. 6). With sets of
interrelated principles and assumptions based on personal biographies and experiences,
we human beings basically interpret things around us from our own perspective in an
attempt to control the present complex situation. Likewise, in the context of teaching,
teachers’ theories of action “drive the action in a classroom and underlie a teacher’s plans
and decision making” (McCutcheon, 1995, p. 35). The nature and function of teachers’
theories of action are likely diverse and complex, since every teacher develops his or her
personal theory of action from different resources and background over time
(McCutcheon, 1995, pp. 35-40). Therefore, from this point of view on teachers’ thought
and action, it may be argued that teachers’ use of new curriculum materials can be
different from the developer’s original intent, at least in practice.

Taken altogether, this kind of an alternative frame of reference regarding teachers,
teaching, and curriculum implementation is not new. Typically, most teachers work in
isolation and usually employ their own craft knowledge. According to Lortie (1975),
teaching is viewed as “individual personality” (1975, p. 240) in that the teachers learn
ways of teaching from their trial-and-error experiences over time, along with their
observations of other teachers in their daily situations. Indeed, incentives and
opportunities for teachers to learn new skills and knowledge in the systematic and
pedagogical way appears to be rare, especially in cases where the cultural and
organizational change of classrooms are “individually” situated by teachers within their
ordinary curriculum and teaching context (McLaughlin, 1990). For this commonly
encountered context of classroom and teacher change, narratives or lived experiences of
teachers regarding the meaning of implementation are crucial in figuring out the way in which classroom teaching and learning processes can be better understood and improved (Bailey, 1996).

This research focuses on describing and understanding the process of interaction between teachers and new curriculum materials. These descriptions will emphasize the perspectives of teachers. Given the fact that curriculum materials are already fixed entities (Ball & Cohen, 1996), the ways in which teachers define, use, and experience the new curriculum materials is central to the process of teachers’ learning and implementation for themselves and their students in their daily teaching and learning practice. The traditional research on curriculum implementation has exposed the ways that change occurs on a linear view of theory and practice relationship (Hall & Loucks, 1977). However, the phenomenon of how implementation occurs in an ordinary curriculum change situation, in terms of teachers’ lived experience, is unknown or at least under-examined (Carson, 1992).

In the rest of this chapter, after exploring the background of the study, statement of the problem, and conceptual framework, I will present the purpose of the study and research questions. The methodology of the study will follow. In order to understand the content of this implementation study better, I will describe some basic concepts and issues concerning reading. Finally, the significance and an overview of the study will be presented.

Background of the Study

There is voluminous literature on educational implementation (Berman, 1981; Hall,
This literature has tended to focus on such things as identifying institutional constraints and personnel concerns surrounding the implementation process, thereby determining a specific innovation process differently in different contexts (Haver, 1997; Hord & Huling-Austin, 1986; James & Hall, 1981; Lane, 1980; Marsh, 1987). A nationwide survey and field study was made to document the ways in which an innovative, externally funded, locally developed program was implemented and even continued after funds ended (RAND, 1974-78). Furthermore, the research dealt with not only understanding how teachers' ways of knowing influence the transformation of subject matter when a curriculum gets transformed into practice (O'Connor, 1996), but also figuring out the relationship between teacher beliefs and actual behaviors (Kimpston, 1985).

Statement of the Problem

Little research has been conducted to illuminate what it is like to experience implementation phenomenologically (Bailey, 1996; Carson, 1992). We know little about how curriculum implementation impacts what phenomenologists refer to as the life-world or the lived experience of teachers. Although the recent literature on change indicates that some research has theoretically explored the subjective realities of the teacher (Fullan, 1991), empirical efforts for understanding the emerging structure and meaning of teachers' dramatic educational experiences are rare under implementation in an ordinary curriculum change project. Therefore, this study is important because we can learn more about the reality of how teachers use new curriculum materials, the way in which they experience the relationship between self and the developer, and the process in which they
reconstruct new teaching practice directed toward their personal, professional growth.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

The study of implementation was first conducted in such areas as policy, social program, curriculum, and instruction in the early 1970s when "ambitious, sweeping federal reform efforts cast 'implementation problems' in bold relief" (McLaughlin, 1987, p. 171). Then it was widely observed that a number of innovative programs developed at the formal, policy-design level were little used in classroom practices. The assumption taken for granted, that more money or better ideas would directly make a difference, started to be reexamined (McLaughlin, 1990). Many attempts have been made to find the reason why local educators responded differently to federal and state policy, and how they used a package of innovation created on their own (Fullan & Miles, 1992).

The present study was aimed at understanding the matter of curriculum implementation that has been little explored within the field of curriculum (Snyder, Bolin & Zumwalt, 1992). When curriculum is only defined as document, it seems to fall into a simple change strategy under the broad curriculum policy (Ayers, 1992). Therefore, what is expected through the process of curriculum implementation is for teachers to be faithful and accountable to the intent of curriculum developers, so that innovations could be established as planned and originally intended at the policy level. Nonetheless, it is also reasonable to state that the teacher is the ultimate decision-maker who has to select and modify a package of curriculum materials to make it more meaningful for use in their own context (Spillane, 1999). In this respect, curriculum implementation can be understood as a process in which the individual teacher has to be actively involved in
redeveloping their own curriculum, fitting it to their own context, regardless of the original intent of curriculum developers, and thereby changing the original intent.

In what follows, in order to take into account how teachers actually define, use, and reflect a new curriculum at the classroom level, I will first draw a broad picture of how the field of implementation has developed and what matters conceptually in initiating a change agenda. Secondly, theoretical analyses of those studies particularly concerned with curriculum and classroom research are discussed in light of the role of teachers uniquely situated under the process of implementation. Finally, ways of telling what teachers actually think of the existence of new curricula and thus experience it on their own are examined to come to a better understanding of what this change means for this teacher in this classroom.

Local Educational Change Processes

The importance of the process of educational implementation was first recognized by those who started to think of the new assumption that adoption was just a beginning, not an ending (Hall & Loucks, 1977; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982; RAND, 1974-78). That is, it was observed that although innovation users agreed to use an innovation, they did not implement it as they were supposed to do, according to the plan in their contexts. Fullan and Pomfret (1977), theorizing the field of implementation for the first time, stated:

There is a singular lack of curiosity about what happened to an innovation between the time it was designed and various people agreed to carry it out, and the time that the consequences became evident. (p. 337, italics added)
In fact, this concern with the change process since the 1970s emerged as a result of the federally initiated reform movement beginning in the 1960s. There was evidence that most innovations failed to change or improve the status quo of educational practice as expected. For this reason, Patterson and Czajkowski (1979) noted:

We make our way through the initiation, development, and adoption phases of curriculum change, but then we do not take steps necessary to achieve a satisfactory level of implementation. Our innovations do not enter the classroom; they do not affect day-to-day interactions between teachers and students. (p. 204)

Since this observation of educational practice was made, a great number of researchers and theorists attempted to address “why so many educational changes fail to become established” (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977, p. 337; see also Frey, 1979; Hall & Loucks, 1981; Loucks & Pratt, 1979; Huberman & Miles, 1984). At that time, there was a widely accepted belief that “student outcomes do not ... tell us all we need to know to assess what went wrong or right with innovations in either the short or the long run” (RAND, VIII, 1978, p. 5). Therefore, to single out how local educators responded to state and federal policy, those concerned with the problem of implementation began by analyzing “local factors” (Berman & McLaughlin, 1976, p. 350) or “characteristics” (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977, pp. 367-390), which actually affected the intended project outcome in and across local settings.

Under the circumstance of such diverse local responses to external change initiatives, many strategies for making implementation more effective were suggested in
terms of school-based staff development (McLaughlin & Marsh, 1978), the new role of change facilitators (Hall & Hord, 1987), and reward systems (Fullan, 1991). However, a question of what implementation should look like between users and developers still remained problematic. While reflecting on the findings and theoretical model developments regarding implementation as a planned change process, Huberman and Miles (1984) wondered:

Should innovations be ‘done right’, carefully, according to the spirit and letter of their developers’ intents? Or should they be adapted to fit local realities, to permit an even fuller and better implementation? At our sites, adaptations always took place. (p. 279)

In this respect, the matter of implementation seems highly complex and individual due to a difficulty in taking local educators’ thoughts and actions into account by means of the rationalized perspective (Cohen & Ball, 1990). As Huberman and Miles (1984) implied above, teachers as implementers have different knowledge, values, beliefs, and theories of action, all of which, implicitly and explicitly, influence “actual use” of certain features of a package of innovations. That is, depending upon different interpretations of the original intents of developers, change takes place differently (McLaughlin, 1991).

To put the matter another way, the unique term fidelity has been used in the field of implementation for describing and explaining “the extent to which actual use of the innovation corresponds to intended or planned use” (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977, p. 340). Literally, fidelity is defined as “the quality or state of being faithful or accuracy in detail” (The American Heritage Dictionary, 1992). It is here analogous to the point to which the
quality or state of the intent of the developer is a standardized criterion by which the user makes a judgment what and how to do. Seen as a prime rationale, \textit{fidelity} goes, implicitly and explicitly, under the world of those who are working in schools and becomes “a common language to talk about the implementation of innovations” (Snyder, Bolin, & Zumwalt, 1992, p. 408).

Typically, the intent of developers is what has been called \textit{fidelity}, which is specifically described and prescribed in the guideline or the manual. So, users or implementers are advised to follow the steps designed to make practice better under the spirit of making things right. When this process of unpacking innovations as intended is faithfully established into users’ behaviors, it is viewed as “good” implementation or “high” fidelity (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977). This direct definition of what implementation is or should be like has been adopted and researched by those attempting to explain the broad phenomenon of what the individual teacher and/or school was doing under implementation. These researchers put emphasis either in the developmental process which the users supposedly went through at the personal emotion and cognition level, namely “concerns” (Hall, 1992), or in the actual behaviors of users in correspondence to the given implementation tasks (Kimpston, 1985). Toward this end, the process of implementation was quantitatively measured by means of an instrument designed to categorize each concern and behavior of the user. This instrument enabled the determination of who was actively being involved in unpacking innovations from the standpoint of the developers (Goldsmith, 1997; Haver, 1997; James & Hall, 1981; Kimpston, 1985; Marsh, 1987).
On the other hand, the notion of fidelity implementation has radically been shifted from a standard on which users' thought and behavior are supposedly dependent, toward an adaptive position in which the interactions between users and developers are mutually negotiated. McLaughlin and her colleagues (RAND, 1974-78), while observing the individual process of trade-off from the side of teachers in the classroom setting, argued that the notion of fidelity implementation must be situated between an innovation and a particular local setting. In other words, for those prioritizing "the significance of the actions and choices of teachers" (McLaughlin, 1990, p. 14), the adaptive process of implementation is seen as necessary and inevitable more so than the delivery of innovation (Clark & Yinger, 1977; Connelly & Ben-Peretz, 1981; RAND, 1974-78). The linear, rational assumption that "more money or better ideas ... would enable local educators to improve school practice" (McLaughlin, 1990, p. 11) was viewed as inappropriate and undesirable. Instead, the need for a balanced approach to the relationship between policy and practice started to emerge.

In sum, the discourse of implementation processes is not only broad in that local politics are involved at a school and district level, but also specific in that the beliefs and value of teachers as implementers are involved at the classroom level. Many school improvement strategies have been suggested as ways of linking local politics of implementation to specific, technical, and managerial dimensions and areas of classroom teaching by clearly defining and administrating teachers' effective work and roles (Fullan, Bennett, & Rolheiser-Bennett, 1990). These strategies or models tend to consider the notion of implementation as being a rational process in which both school and
classroom outcomes must be effectively aligned. Consequently, as Roitman and Mayer (1982) noted, this rational change endeavor has the ability to prevent "zones of drastic mutation, beyond which the innovation loses its integrity" (p. 1) in both direct and indirect manners (Fullan & Miles, 1992; Hall, 1992; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982; Porter, 1989). However, to understand the controversial question of why teachers use the adopted curricula rarely or not at all, we may need a more sensitive lens through which to find what they actually experience through change processes in and out of the classroom.

Curriculum and the Role of Teachers

A few curriculum scholars have involved themselves in exploring the matter of curriculum implementation in theoretical terms. Since the work of Bobbitt (1918) was published, the word *curriculum* has been defined as "content, or what is taught" in the educational enterprise (Osterman & Hunkins, 1988; Tanner & Tanner, 1975; Tyler, 1949; Zais, 1976). In so doing, curriculum-as-plan is officially developed, implemented, and evaluated. The process of education generally, and curriculum particularly, is controlled under this mechanism in which teachers are implicitly viewed as skillful managers who unpack the curriculum as document, i.e., the course of study, syllabus, and textbooks, and deliver it to the students (Clandinin & Connelly, 1992; McCutcheon, 1992). In brief, curriculum has undoubtedly been seen as "a rationalized product created outside of classrooms by experts and delivered to teachers for implementation" (Paris, 1993, p. 15).

As noticed, the narrow conception of curriculum minimizes the role of teachers to the extent to which the ideas of curriculum developers come as a standardized interpretation (Cornbleth, 1990). The curriculum guideline or manual provides teachers
with a limited range of choices for curriculum use (Ball & Cohen, 1996). By and large, curriculum as document has a legal and symbolic effect for teachers as users. The idea of "teacher-proof" materials is an example. In order to deliver the ideals of curriculum from the perspective of policy and/or the theoretical, some curriculum developers specifically prescribe "what the teacher should say and do at particular times" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, p. 138) to prevent teacher variables from actual effecting curriculum-in-use.

Disagreeing with the traditional conceptions of curriculum and the passive role of teachers in implementation, some scholars have provided for intellectual insights contributing to rethinking of teachers' work surrounding curriculum-in-use (Ben-Peretz, 1990; Connelly & Ben-Peretz, 1981; Connelly & Clandinin, 1988; Elbaz; 1983; Paris, 1993; McCutcheon, 1988, 1992). What has been most commonly found was that the role of teachers as "faithful" implementers was inappropriate in making the process of education more meaningful and individual in situated teaching and learning contexts. The premise underpinning such an inappropriate role of teachers is well described by the following statement of Ben-Peretz (1990):

Teachers are expected to adapt and mold curriculum materials to their own purposes and to the requirements of their specific educational situations. …

[T]here is no one predetermined set of goals for a set of curriculum materials, but rather an array of possible goals depending on how the teacher interprets and uses the potential embodied in curriculum materials. (p. 57)

It is in the classroom context that curriculum as plan becomes transformed into the individual learning processes of students who have all kinds of different knowledge,
skills, background, needs, interests, and the like. As Ben-Peretz (1990) depicts above, curriculum materials delivered should be conceived of as "the potential" (p. 45) that must be reinterpreted by teachers whose role is viewed as the curriculum developer at the situated classroom level. Such an interpretive process, Ben-Peretz (1990) maintains, is based on "teachers' expertise in knowing students" (p. 59), which enables them to transform generalized ideas developed outside of classrooms into explicit levels of learning experiences appropriate to students in particular circumstances. The role of teachers in this respect differs from that of what has been called "implementers" (Fullan, 1991) throughout the literature on change as a whole - implementers who are supposedly more faithful in prioritizing developers' original intent than teachers' personal judgment for curriculum use. That is, based on Dewey's (1938) philosophical notion of curriculum as experiential, the word implementation is replaced by enactment, defined as "educational experiences jointly created by student and teacher" (Snyder, Bolin, & Zumwalt, 1992, p. 418).

With the lens focused on both curriculum and teachers' work, the process of curriculum implementation becomes more than a delivery system. Therefore, curriculum-in-use is seldom conceived of as "a technological process" (House, 1979) in which teachers as knowledge consumers merely receive and deliver curriculum created by developers to students. That is, the teacher is "an integral part of the curriculum constructed and enacted in the classroom" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1992, p. 363). Through this view, then, it is therefore seen as beneficial that teachers are enabled to create "reasoned, self-conscious curriculum decisions in response to their evaluation of"
the needs and interests of their students and a shared commitment to educational excellence" (Paris, 1993, p. 15).

**Teachers’ Reflection on Curriculum/Teaching**

The notion of “change” has been broadly explained by several models that describe how innovations are invented and implemented within and across social systems (MacDonald & Walker, 1976, pp. 4-22). That is, it has been assumed that the status quo of educational practice would be changed if the process of knowledge creation, utilization, and diffusion becomes scientific and thereby transmitted from the center to the periphery (Louis & Dentier, 1988).

Specifically, for example, for those devoted to making teaching practice effective and efficient, the process of teaching and learning is one that must be controlled by a series of sequential steps that is empirically justified (Brophy & Good, 1986). In this respect, the relationship between teacher behavior and student achievement is highly seen as linear and correlated. Consequently, the form of the change process is reduced to a simple mechanism in which input determines output, regardless of the complexity and differences of situations.

Curriculum implementation is reflectively embedded in the process of teacher thinking, as opposed to the external process of teacher behavior corresponding to the instructions underlying the teacher manual. *Teacher thinking* is a recent development of research on teachers and teaching focusing on “the ways in which knowledge is actively acquired and used by teachers and circumstances that affect its acquisition and employment” (Calderhead, 1987, p. 5). We need to know “how and why the process of
teaching looks and works as it does” (Clark & Peterson, 1986, p. 256) to learn more about curriculum/teaching from the teacher’s perspective (Ben-Peretz, Bromme, & Halkes, 1986; Calderhead, 1987; Day, Pope, & Denicolo, 1990; Halkes & Olson, 1984; Russell & Munby, 1992).

As implied earlier, curriculum and teaching are more closely connected when teachers deliberate their course of action in terms of their students’ learning (McCutcheon, 1995). In essence, teachers tend to make use of their experiential knowledge unique to specific problem situations to make sense of what and how they handle those problems at a specific space and time. By first building the territory of teacher thinking, Elbaz (1983) pointed out:

While the specific situations in which teachers work vary considerably from place to place … their knowledge and its use are manifest. In program planning and in instruction, we see teachers choosing among alternative materials, deciding how to adapt programs to the needs of particular classes. … Materials often require further modification in the light of student response, or diverse uses to meet the needs of individual students. (p. 5)

With regard to teacher learning/change during the process of curriculum implementation, insights of those illuminating the nature of teachers’ practical knowledge (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988) or theories of action (McCutcheon, 1992) are basic in taking into account the changing process of the actual or everyday classroom practices (McLaughlin, 1990). This is because such constructs as “practical knowledge” and “theories of action,” as mentioned earlier, are theoretically and empirically embedded in
inquiring the meaning of implementation at the classroom level. In short, educators particularly concerned with teachers as knowledgeable subjects, not as recipients, have articulated the way that teachers continuously develop and change their own practical theories or knowledge in action toward making it to be public (Schonmann & Ben-Peretz, 1992).

By the same token, teachers' reflection is also a process or product socially constructed (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Elbaz, 1983) through the interaction with students, generally, and other educators or parents, particularly. Specifically, teachers' socially constructed reflection is "manifested in any encounter between the teacher and other parties" (Elbaz, 1983, p. 18) who are concerned with making a curriculum decision beyond the classroom level (McCutcheon, 1995, pp. 147-153). While actively interacting with students or other teachers, teachers attempt to make sense of what is going on in their situations and what other teachers think of in different situations. In brief, teachers' social engagement in the process of implementation, e.g., in the teacher's lounge or weekly grade meetings, is clearly an important aspect of understanding in what ways teachers come to use new ideas in certain ways.

In conclusion, matters of curriculum/teaching are ongoing and socially constructed within teachers' personal and professional reflection inside and outside the classroom. Particularly, the impact of "new" curriculum implementation on teachers' thinking and action or life-world might be more demanding than ordinary teaching practice. There have been a few attempts conducted with a phenomenological point of view to describe teachers' reflections on implementation (Bailey, 1996; Baird, 1999; Bussis, Chittenden,
& Amarel, 1976; Carson, 1992; Throne, 1994). The phenomenological research on
teacher thinking appears methodologically specific in illuminating how the process of
teaching works as it does.

Conceptually, this phenomenological view is here explained by Aoki’s (1983,
1988) analytically juxtaposed framework on implementation as *instrumental action*
versus *situational praxis*. That is, when implementation tasks prescribed and imposed by
developers out of context are so demanding, teachers’ personal, professional knowledge
evaporates in favor of technical managers who have control their workplace. This brings
about instrumental action. However, when implementation tasks allow teachers to use
situation-oriented knowledge among self, curriculum, and students, as Aoki maintains,
teachers tend to make teaching better as they become action-based learners in the context.

Aoki (1983) claimed:

> Rather than see theory as leading into practice, we need now more than ever
to see it as a reflective moment in praxis. In action-oriented language, praxis
is action done reflectively and reflection done on what is being done. Within
this view, knowing arises not from inward speculation, but from intentional
engagement with and experience of lived reality. (p. 26)

In brief, teachers’ reflection on the process of implementation can be viewed as
experiential in that they put self, external text, and students together to make
curriculum/teaching more situational (Aoki, 1983). Further, such teachers’ situational
experiences eventually move toward changing or improving classroom teaching and
learning by constantly examining the relationship between words and action (Aoki,
Teachers' learning processes between self and a new curriculum product seem complex, both internally and externally. This is especially true in contexts where the change policy relies heavily on teachers' personal commitments, as opposed to collective or effective school-based implementation.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to uncover the meaning of implementation as lived experience. More precisely, this research examined the way in which two teachers have experienced the new curriculum materials that were supposedly compatible with the district's revised language arts curriculum. The curriculum materials adopted in this school district were based upon a series of comprehensive elements that presented both whole language and phonics approaches being used in reading instruction. Teachers were expected to implement any aspect of the curriculum and teaching which they believed best met the needs of their students.

Research Questions

Therefore, the questions of this research were:

1. What does this educational change (the introduction of new curriculum materials) mean to two teachers selected?

2. How do they use the new curriculum materials?

3. What does this school's curriculum change process look like?

Methodology

The methodology chosen for this research was qualitative, in general, and phenomenological, in particular. Qualitative research methodology is a broad construct
that is concerned with describing the process in which research participants act in their normal life situations (Jacob, 1987; Lancy, 1993). It attempts to understand the particular way of their actions, their ways of life, and experiences from their world view. In this respect, qualitative research fits the fundamental concerns of this research by focusing on describing the way curriculum is used and experienced by teachers in naturalistic classroom contexts. With regard to the notion of phenomenology, I consider it to be an empirical mode of research aimed at unearthing a basic structure and meaning of human experience (van Manen, 1990). Under the overall tradition of qualitative research, the phenomenological point of view helped me focus on describing and interpreting what participants' experiences looked like before and during the use of new curriculum materials. In short, the interpretive mode of inquiry is fitted to the research questions and the purposes of this research (Patton, 1990, pp. 38-39).

Qualitative Research: An overview

Historically, the intellectual tradition of qualitative research is long and complex enough not to easily find universal agreement (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Jacob, 1987). The modern and contemporary development of qualitative research has appeared to experience diverse and even controversial philosophical challenges, both internally and externally (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Jaeger, 1988). In education, no doubt, there have been continuing debates on diverse issues such as objectivity/subjectivity, validity, ethics, and role of researcher in qualitative inquiry (Eisner & Peshkin, 1990; Erickson, 1986; Peshkin, 1988; Sherman & Webb, 1995).

Qualitative research has several common characteristics. Qualitative research is
conducted in a naturalistic setting in which researchers observe participants without any treatments such as manipulation or control (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Researchers, considered the major instruments, collect data through observations, interviews, and document analysis (Patton, 1990). The data collected is primarily analyzed and interpreted from the participants’ own perspective or emic view (Hymes, 1982, p. 25), which is the bottom line in understanding their worldview or ways of life. A phenomenon facing the qualitative researcher is seen as explained and understood through the insider’s point of view. Because the phenomenon under study is most “particularly” defined by its participants, and thus used in their daily lives, the researcher can make better sense of such unique meanings underpinning the phenomenon by looking through the eyes of the participants. However, not all qualitative researchers would agree that such an emic-based interpretation is the only one to seek, because the researcher also has to interpret aspects of what participants might take for granted by bringing the researcher’s point of view (Agar, 1996; Hymes, 1982, p. 25). This discussion will be made in chapter three. Lastly, generalization of the qualitative findings is possible in several different modes (Donmoyer, 1990; Eisner, 1998; Kennedy, 1979; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Schofield, 1990).

**Phenomenological Research**

The particular type of qualitative inquiry in this research was phenomenological. In fact, phenomenology has long been used in different disciplines with different perspectives (Holstein & Gubrium, 1994, pp. 262-266). Following the basic assumptions and methods in qualitative research traditions, I myself leaned heavily on the work of van

The difference between phenomenology and other qualitative research methodologies is crucial. Apparently, there is no one single answer to the question of the nature of the difference. Layman and even methodologists use the term *lived experience*, the main theme of phenomenological research, without typifying and referring to phenomenology (Marshall and Rossman, 1995, p. 39). In this respect, it is true that other types of emic-based ethnographies are also concerned with what others experience in their daily life situations (Wolcott, 1988).

However, when intentionally and continuously focusing on such questions, e.g., what is it? or what does other people's experience look like, we may uncover the difference. As van Manen (1990), who was also concerned with this matter, stated:

> Phenomenological research may proceed along similar lines .... From a phenomenological point of view we are not primarily interested in the subjective experiences of our ... informants, for the sake of being able to report on how something is seen from their point of view .... However, the deeper goal ... remains oriented to asking the question of what is the nature of this phenomenon ... as an essential human experience. (p. 62)

Specifically, to bring the difference between phenomenology and other emic-based qualitative research approaches, we must recognize the force of the essential phenomenological question regarding human action and experience. Based upon this phenomenological point of view articulated by van Manen (1976, 1982, 1984, 1988,
1990), I investigated what teachers experienced under implementation. More precisely, regardless of any particular teacher facing new curriculum materials, we want to know: How is this implementation working?, Is this what it means to do curriculum implementation?, or Is this what it means for teachers as implementers?, and the like (van Manen, 1990, p. 63). As van Manen (1990) reminded us:

Some qualitative studies consist of little more than endless reproductions and fragments of transcripts under the guise that the researcher has decided ‘to let the data speak for themselves.’ … Thus studies which do little more than present and organize transcripts fall short of their interpretive and narrative task. (p. 167, italics added)

Design of the Research

The participants were two 2nd grade female teachers in a suburban school district outside Columbus, OH. The school district has implemented a newly revised language arts curriculum and new curriculum materials since the 1998-99 school year. Both teachers were initially selected for the pilot research during summer and autumn 1998. In order to engage myself in learning and describing different realities of implementation across the classrooms under the same delivery, I purposefully selected cases of two teachers. This was within the boundaries of my research abilities. Teachers’ lived experiences during the implementation of reading curriculum materials were investigated through the data generated in the classroom visits, interviews, document analysis, and the reflective journal of the researcher.

The observations conducted throughout the first half of the 1998-99 school year
provided themes for interviews, along with the way in which teachers used new curriculum materials, including the teacher manual and textbooks. Formal interviewing was conducted a total of five times for each teacher at the end of the 1998-99 and 1999-2000 school year and the researcher explored several domains underpinning the life-world of teachers. Detailed descriptions with regard to the procedure of selecting participants and data collection and interpretation will be presented in chapter three.

Reading Instruction in Implementation

The elementary language arts curriculum consisted of the four areas of reading, writing, speaking, and listening, each having its own course of study and supplementary materials. The content of this implementation study was reading. Although the purpose of this implementation study was not to investigate the nature of subject matter, it should be noted that implementation is a process through which curriculum use is intertwined with content in teaching and learning activities. In other words, for this dissertation, reading instruction constituted “the form” in which the phenomenon of implementation was observed. Therefore, some basic concepts and issues concerning reading and reading instruction need to be discussed.

The role of reading has been regarded as fundamental for academic success and literacy alike (Calfee & Drum, 1986). While the phenomenon of speaking is naturally achieved in most cases as a human being grows, that of reading is still completely unknown to the extent to which it is viewed as a complex operational process of the mind in cognitive, social, and cultural contexts (Calfee & Drum, 1986, pp. 809-812).

Research on reading is mostly concerned with investigating ways in which children
learn to read in and out of school, which is closely associated with different philosophical claims (Moorman, Blanton, & McLaughlin, 1994). There are two polemic claims on teaching reading. The one is phonics-based instruction. Adams (1991), one of leading phonics experts, defines phonics as "a system of teaching reading that builds on the alphabetic principle ... [or] the teaching of correspondences between letters or groups of letters and their pronunciations (p. 50). Systematic phonic instruction, Adams maintains, "give[s] young readers an edge in spelling and word recognition skills" (p. 7). In particular, advocates of this phonics approach to reading instruction point out the importance of phonics at the early grade levels (Morrow & Tracey, 1997). While discussing this fundamental aspect of schooling related to students' literacy skills, Adams argues that:

Proficient reading comprehension depends not just on the ability to recognize words, but the ability to recognize them relatively quickly and effortlessly.

Reading achievement in the early years of school depends critically on the student's facility with the printed code. (Adams, 1991, p. 27)

On the other hand, some have a significantly different perspective on learning to read. They claim that because "children learn language by using it to express their ideas and accomplish meaningful tasks" (Stanek, 1993, p. 6), reading is "a transactional process between a reader and a text within a social context" (Richardson, Anders, Tidwell, & Lloyd, 1991, p. 560). In general, this kind of approach to reading instruction is called whole language. Advocates of this perspective on learning to read ask teachers to use the authentic literature by which students construct meanings on their own in their
own community (Goodman, 1991; Stanek, 1993).

The phonics approach versus the whole language approach to reading instruction in classrooms completely differ from each other (Goodman, 1991). Due to sharply different assumptions regarding students, learning to read, and the role of teachers, the debate over reading curriculum and instruction has continued up to the present time (Morrow & Tracey, 1997; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). The term whole language, for example, has been quite differently defined by the community of practitioners and language experts through social and political interaction, thereby giving rise to many ambiguous definitions and assertions (Moorman, Blanton, & McLaughlin, 1994, pp. 312-315; see also Dressman, McCarty, & Benson, 1998). In contrast, opponents of phonics-centered instruction with basal readers say:

When children fail to learn to read well through basal instruction, the blame goes either to the teachers for not following the basal carefully or to the children as disabled learners. (Goodman, 1991, p. 170)

To summarize, depending on teachers’ beliefs and/or school-district policy, a single perspective can be selected and utilized in the classroom and throughout the school. Notwithstanding the proliferation of followers in each perspective on reading curriculum, continuing findings on the effects of whole language versus phonics approaches noted that there was no significant difference regarding student achievements (McKenna, Stratton, Grindler, & Jenkins, 1995; Stahl & Miller, 1989). Moreover, according to a recent nationwide survey, most elementary teachers tend to balance their reading instruction between the two different perspectives on reading (Baumann, Hoffman,
In conclusion, as stated in the purpose of this study, the new curriculum material adopted in this school district was based upon a series of comprehensive elements that presented both whole language and phonics approaches to be used in reading instruction. This is called a children's anthology, "a collection of literacy pieces, such as poems, short stories, or plays" (The American Heritage Dictionary, 1992). Further, teachers have been expected to implement the aspects of the curriculum and teaching which they believe best meet the needs of their students. Therefore, this research was mainly concerned with describing teachers' actual use of newly adopted curriculum materials, not with figuring out which styles of reading instruction were better. That is, the purpose of this dissertation was not to decide whether a whole language approach or a phonics approach was better.

Significance

This phenomenological investigation sheds light on the fact that curriculum implementation is more than a delivery metaphor. Understanding teachers' lived experience through an interaction between self and new curriculum materials in context may be informative for the following reasons.

1. It is necessary to rethink and thus redefine the taken for granted meaning and process of curriculum implementation toward the context-specific understanding of what this teacher experiences in this classroom.

2. Lived teacher experience embedded in implementation is central in reconsidering "the role of curriculum materials" in teacher learning processes (Ball & Cohen, 1996).
This study provides a concrete example of how teachers actually use and interpret innovations from their own perspectives to better fit into their own contexts. In particular, this study is useful for those who are writing curriculum guidelines and teachers’ manuals to help them reflect on the actual ways teachers change their classroom practice. By the same token, this research has great relevance to classroom practitioners, especially those involved in curriculum implementation activities.

3. This study of implementation presents a particular example of how professional development in context can be better undertaken. It demonstrates a bottom line of how different teachers (in this case, different years of teaching experience) differently learn from themselves in day-to-day classroom teaching and from their colleagues in social context.

Definitions

**Adoption:** “decision to use” (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977, p. 336). A one-shot and beginning event of the change process.

**Curriculum:** what all students experience under the guidance of school (Dewey, 1938).

**Curriculum enactment:** an evolving approach to curriculum implementation to construct “the educational experiences jointly created by student and teacher. The externally created curricula materials … are seen as tools for students and teacher to use as they construct the enacted experience of the classroom” (Snyder, Bolin, & Zumwalt, 1992, p. 418).

**Curriculum materials:** “textbooks, teachers’ guides, and other materials such as
replacement units and instructional materials kits” (Ball & Cohen, 1996, p. 8).

**Constructs:** “man looks at his world through transparent patterns … which he creates and then attempts to fit over the realities of which the world is composed” (Kelly, 1955, pp. 8-9).

**Emic:** “insider’s point of view” (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 17).

**Fidelity use:** use of an innovation as originally intended (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977).

**Hermeneutic phenomenology:** “a descriptive methodology … to let things speak for themselves … [and at the same time] an interpretive methodology because it claims that there are no such things as uninterpreted phenomena” (van Manen, 1990, p. 180).


**Life-world:** “the world of lived experience … or the world of immediate experience … prior to critical or theoretical reflection” (van Manen, 1990, p. 182).

**Lived experience:** “the personal and … human consciousness of any individual with a concrete situation, the fusing of emotional, cognitive, and even psychological reactions to the situation” (Willis, 1978, p. 65).

**Mutual adaptation:** an interaction between users in context and a given innovation (McLaughlin, 1990; RAND, 1974-78).

**Personal practical knowledge:** “a particular way of reconstructing the past and the intentions for the future to deal with the exigencies of a present situation” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, p. 25).
**Phonics:** “a system of teaching reading that builds on the alphabetic principle, a system of which a central component is the teaching of correspondences between letters or groups of letters and their pronunciations” (Adams, 1991, p. 50).

**Social construction of reality:** a framework for understanding “how social actors recognize, produce, and reproduce social actions, and how they come to share an intersubjective understanding of specific life circumstances” (Schwandt, 1997, p. 19).

**Teacher-proof materials:** programmed and prescribed materials in order to minimize teacher influence, thereby “detailing what the teacher should say and do at particular times and giving answers to questions teachers might pose to students” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, p. 138).

**Teachers’ theories of action:** “consists of sets of beliefs, images, and constructs about such matters as what constitutes an educated person, the nature of knowledge, the society and the psychology of student learning, motivation, and discipline” (McCutcheon, 1992, p. 191).

**Theories of action:** “a theory of deliberate human behavior, which is for the agent a theory of control but which, when attributed to the agent, also serves to explain or predict his behavior” (Argyris & Schon, 1974, p. 6).

**Whole language:** “For teachers, whole language means ... a complete, integrated philosophical and factual base for making countless professional decisions ... . For learners, whole language means ... learning that is as real, relevant, and easy in school as it is outside school. It means reading real literature, not workbooks and skill sheets” (Goodman, Bird, & Goodman, 1991, p. 4).
Zones of enactment: “space where reform initiatives are encountered by the world of practitioners and ‘practice’, delineating that zone in which teachers notice, construe, construct and operationalize the instructional ideas advocated by reformers” (Spillane, 1999, p. 144).

Overview for the Following Chapters

In chapter two, the review of the related literature is organized around two broad themes of curriculum implementation: the studies in educational implementation and the phenomenological view of curriculum implementation.

The first part of the chapter two includes the reviews of the RAND Change Agent study (1974-78) that investigated local educational change processes and fidelity-based studies on implementation. The second part of this chapter, drawing on the phenomenological standpoint, covers the definition of curriculum as experiential, the role and work of teachers, and the process of teachers’ meaning making underlying implementation.

Chapter three discusses the methodology of this study. It includes the rationale for the selection of phenomenology, the procedure for collection and analysis/interpretation of data, and trustworthiness.

Chapter four reveals the accounts of two teachers. It describes the stories of teachers from the first person voice, followed by the reflections of the researcher on teachers’ lived experiences.

And, chapter five deals with a summary and discussion of the findings of this phenomenological study, followed by the recommendations and further action.
Chapter Summary

This chapter began by describing the basic meaning of what implementation is, pointing out the importance of the context in which implementation occurs. Particular attention was paid to the isolated educational context in which most teachers work. After reviewing many implementation studies in education, as researcher, I identified the unexamined question, “What is it like for teachers to experience implementation phenomenologically?” Then I stated the purpose of this study aimed at describing and interpreting the way in which two teachers experience their use of new reading curriculum materials. A brief overview of methodology adopted for this study followed. This chapter moved on to some relevant issues concerning reading.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This review of literature will consist of two parts: literature on implementation as a change process and the phenomenological perspective on curriculum implementation.

The first part will deal with the RAND Change Agents study in the 1970s and the fidelity-based studies on implementation since the 1980s, respectively. The focus of the review is on describing the history, purposes, instruments, and one of the major significant findings. The basic assumptions underpinning fidelity-based implementation research are also reviewed. For this line of research, the notion of implementation includes an instrumental view of how to support teachers as implementers so that planned change can be facilitated in light of the original intent of program developers.

The second part of the review of literature will explore an under-represented aspect underlying the matter of implementation over the last two decades. Unlike the first part of the literature review, the second part will attempt to explore an alternative perspective that takes into account the nature and function of implementation in relation to the process of teachers’ meaning-making. In particular, the perspective adopted in this study
was phenomenological in that the teacher as the subject was regarded as “active” in perceiving, defining, and using a curriculum being implemented. Therefore, ways of navigating a unique phenomenon during the process of implementation within and across their classroom contexts were major concerns. At the heart of this phenomenological research in implementation was the transactional process and product through which teachers interpreted their ongoing experiences in conjunction with the intent of the curriculum developers. To this end, a phenomenological point of view is first articulated by means of drawing on some major writings of phenomenology, ones that cover both Ted Aoki’s (1984) concept of implementation as situational praxis at the classroom level and socially constructed meaning-making processes. Given the assumption that curriculum as document can not help but be enacted differently classrooms by classroom, this review will, then, describe and analyze a body of research on teacher thinking, which helps highlight the structure and process of teachers’ personal and social experiences within and across situations.

Studies on Educational Implementation

The RAND Change Agents study

Under the sponsorship of the U.S. Office of Education, the RAND Change Agents study was conducted to examine federally funded programs designed to introduce and spread innovation practices in public schools during the mid-1970s. It was the first formal, nationwide research on educational implementation. Local school districts were given “seed money” to develop their own projects. The RAND Change Agents study (RAND study) consisted of a two-phase, four-year study. The first two-year phase was
designed to trace where these local projects were going over time. The second phase investigated what had happened after federal funding stopped (RAND, Vol. 1, 1974).

The RAND researchers surveyed a sample of 293 locally developed innovative projects from 18 states for an exploratory statistical analysis. Also, multiple case studies were conducted in both phases in 29 settings across the country. The RAND study investigated such characteristics as “perceived success of the project, fidelity of implementation, change in teacher behavior, difficulty of implementation, and expected continuation” to document in detail what was going on, thereby explaining specifically in what ways local projects succeeded and failed (RAND, Vol. II, 1975, pp. 13-17).

One of the many significant contributions the RAND study made was “a significant shift in the ways people thought about affecting planned change in education” (McLaughlin, 1990, p. 11). The shift was taken from a popular notion of the RDD&A model (Research, Development, Dissemination, and Adoption) that focused on direct delivery of innovations to practice toward the initiative of government or policy that emphasized post-adoption or actual use within practice. At that time, policymakers wanted to know exactly “what promotes various kinds of changes in the schools and what doesn’t” (RAND, Vol. I, 1974, p. iii).

In effect, one of the most important findings of the RAND study was a realization of local factors affecting more than “federal guidelines or funding levels” (McLaughlin, 1990, p. 12). It was observed that local practitioners did modify projects being implemented to their own context, whenever necessary. Therefore, project outcomes were affected by those “factors … [such as] project characteristics, individual
in institutional settings, and federal policies” (Berman & McLaughlin, 1976, p. 355). As a result, the RAND study concluded that

effective strategies promoted *mutual adaptation* or the adaptation of a project and institutional setting to each other. Effective implementation strategies supported that process of adaptation by provision of timely feedback, identification and correction of ‘errors,’ and building broad-based commitments to the projects. (McLaughlin, 1990, p. 12, italics added)

In summary, the RAND study examined the way in which most local educators, who were believed to have enough capacity and will for changing their practice, actually behaved within their own contexts. By specifically identifying local factors influencing the process of implementation, the RAND study concluded that the spirit of educational implementation was found in the interaction between the ideal of change and the practical situation in which change was to occur. In this regard, the work of actual teachers was described as relatively “flexible” in using a given innovative idea, compared to the traditional view of the work of teachers as implementers that was merely assumed to be “faithful” due to motivation that was externally imposed.

**Fidelity-Based Studies on Implementation**

Fidelity is a word used in varying contexts. When particularly used in implementation studies, it is defined as use of an innovation as originally intended (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977). Fidelity becomes an orientation or perspective on determining “the extent to which actual use of the innovation corresponds to the intended or planned use” (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977, p. 340). Historically, those working at the University of
Texas at Austin in the mid-1970s developed a series of implementation models to diagnose what happened to practice over time - models that focused on identifying the process of an individual teacher's change in the classroom or school unit. Unlike the RAND study which was designed to challenge the status quo of "the nation's education system" (RAND, Vol. I, 1974, p. v), these researchers were instead interested in conceptualizing the individual teacher's change process in terms of cognitive developments, on one hand, and technical needs for actual use, on the other hand (Hall & Loucks, 1977; Hall, Loucks, Rutherford, & Newlove, 1975; Hall & Rutherford, 1976; Hall, Wallace, & Dossett, 1973). In general, fidelity-based implementation studies are ones that use these instruments or models aimed at determining the degree of actual use versus the original intent of the program developer.

The fundamental assumption of this line of thought was threefold: (a) an individual change process, (b) a diagnostic model to assess it, and (c) facilitation/support. First, those working at the University of Texas at Austin proclaimed that "a school has not changed until the individuals within change" (Hall, 1992, p. 884). They argued the need for the use of case studies functioning to enrich the interpretation of the change process in schools and classrooms. Secondly, a series of models were used as a diagnostic tool to document the change process, gauging the relevance of the innovation for student outcomes. Finally, it was argued that the fidelity of implementation would be enhanced by the level of support of a facilitator with expert knowledge and leadership.

For example, Marsh (1987) examined fidelity-of-use attributes of an elementary social studies curriculum that was developed within the state education system of
Australia. The main purposes of his research were to categorize the concerns of 10 teachers at the school under study and judge how competent they were in their endeavors to implement the curriculum (p. 476). By using the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) instruments developed by Hall, Wallace, & Dossett (1973) noted above, Marsh (1987) administered a questionnaire on Stages of Concerns and Levels of Use, followed by a focused interview at the second and ninth school month, respectively.

What was found in Marsh’s (1987) implementation study was a high level of teachers’ personal concerns at both the beginning and the end of the school years, along with an above average innovative use during the second half of the school year. The major discussion of this research was focused not only on the problem of “no official guidelines” (p. 483) for use, which caused teachers’ feelings of insecurity that eventually led to a heavy reliance on the use of the teacher’s manual. But it also pointed out a psychological attitude of most teachers at this elementary school, who had “no desire to get beyond a basic level of implementation” (p. 485) with this new social studies curriculum mainly because they felt inundated by other day-to-day pressures.

In the same vein, James and Hall (1981) examined the stages of concerns and levels of use of 139 junior high science teachers, most of whom had attended a four to seven week summer institute at a large university in Kansas during the early 1970s. In the late 1970s, a federal survey reported a low extent of actual use of the new Intermediate Science Curriculum Study (ISCS). Researchers identified two categorical groups such as “actual users” (N=122) and “nonusers” (N=17) by asking the levels of their actual use in light of what users were supposed to use and cover at a certain time. Then, these
researchers described the different levels of intensity between both groups by saying that “nonusers can be expected to be most concerned about wanting to know more about the innovation” (p. 483). Overall, it was found that a significant difference between users and nonusers was only observed in terms of early states of concerns about self. Yet, when analyzing the different concerns “among teachers with different amounts of experience teaching ISCS” (p. 480), the researchers stated that “experienced teachers can be expected to be more concerned about whether their use of ISCS is having the desired affect on their students” (p. 484).

As it turned out, those using these CBAM models were mainly concerned with examining the problems from the individual and/or school level. Most of the implementation studies using these models enabled researchers to track different ways of innovation adoption by users, recommending the needs for staff development or assistance helpful in using an innovation (Goldsmith, 1997; Lane, 1980). In terms of assistance, Hall and Hord (1987) stated that the change facilitator is “a key in the CBAM model, i.e., a line administrator... or a teacher or central office curriculum coordinator” (p. 11). Hence, the role of change facilitators is to probe individuals and groups in order to understand them, determining which resources to use, when to use them, and how to use them. Most of all, the bottom line of CBAM studies on implementation, focusing on fidelity use of an innovation as originally intended (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977), is to facilitate a cycle of innovation from the constant probe through adaptation to intervention (Hall & Hord, 1987, pp. 13-17).

Although research on literacy and reading has, in general, nothing to do with
fidelity-based research on implementation, it might be helpful to review it briefly by relating its basic assumptions, processes, and findings to the present research in terms of what effective reading instruction looks like within certain situations. Beginning in the 1990s many research studies on reading have been done qualitatively, thereby leading to some insightful discussions with regard to how students might better learn differently in different contexts. As noted above, such qualitative approaches to teaching reading and/or learning to read are likely useful because of the increased emphasis on the “different” aspects of what effective reading instruction is like in relation to the varying needs and interests of students.

A study of nine first-grade classrooms regarding teacher characteristics and student achievement is one example (Wharton-McDonald, Pressley, & Hampston, 1998). Out of nine teachers nominated by language arts coordinators in four suburban school districts, five were classified as outstanding and four as typical. Researchers, then, observed and interviewed these nine teachers during the course of the school year. Of the five outstanding teachers, the researchers selected the best two and of the four typical teachers, the researchers selected the best one, based on observational measures of student reading and writing achievement and the level of engagement in actual learning processes. Eight domains, which emerged as common behavior patterns and thought processes of these three teachers, were described and then analyzed. One of the most important domains in this research was that diverse approaches to reading were highly “well integrated and balanced” (p. 114), which was only occasionally found in the other six classrooms. Another major characteristic was that these effective reading teachers
were able to “monitor student thought processes as they taught” (p. 116). It was concluded that given the complexity of the first grade classroom, the definition of effective and meaningful reading instruction might be better described in terms of “a cluster of practices and beliefs” (p. 122) of teachers, rather than a single critical variable.

In another qualitative case example, the work of Stice and Bertrand (1992) was concerned with examining what was going on in a single whole language classroom over the course of two years. By focusing on a teacher’s daily life in action and on selected students, whose academic achievements and socioeconomic background were lower, researchers qualitatively described ways that meaningful teaching and learning processes surrounding areas of reading and writing were constructed in the naturalistic classroom environment. The multiple roles of the teacher were found to help students learn to “elaborate on the information they brought to school from their life experiences” (p. 388). Students’ organizational patterns of activities were observed in ways where their choices were guaranteed. For instance, through student-initiated group activities, integrated topics associated with reading and writing could be accepted and studied if all other group members agreed on them (p. 390). In effect, achievements and assessments of these “at risk” students considerably increased after two years. The major contribution of these findings, concluded the researchers, was to identify the process element through which students were “grouped as dictated by the tasks to be addressed” (p. 392), rather than by “the convenience of the teacher or … a textbook or curriculum guide required in a particular way” (p. 392).

The last example is Olson and Singer’s (1994) study on teacher beliefs about
teaching reading and teachers' reflective change. The purpose of Olson and Singer's research was to examine the relationship between teachers' beliefs and knowledge and actual practices, with a focus on reconsidering what constituted an effective teacher. Twenty volunteer teachers of secondary school reading were selected, and they completed "a series of self-report inventories concerning their beliefs about reading and the teaching of reading" (p. 99). Researchers conducted at least three classroom visits for each teacher, two visits being done without appointments. After collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data, researchers found that "teachers have belief systems that influence their teaching and those beliefs are generally consistent with classroom practice" (p. 106).

Further, an interesting attempt was made in this research to describe some teachers who were a non-match between stated beliefs and instructional practice. Researchers went on to pinpoint the reflective effect of these teachers as an important aspect of the research process. That is, these teachers were now enabled to express what they did and why they did it in a more articulated manner than before (p. 107). Finally, based on these findings, researchers argued that the notion of effective reading teachers should be understood within the context of the individually situated learning process of teacher beliefs and knowledge about reading and teaching of reading.

In sum, this section has reviewed what fidelity-based implementation research is and in what ways teacher behavior is generally approached, followed by three examples of research on reading and literacy and teachers' beliefs on reading and teaching of reading. If the former exemplified the basic context in which this dissertation was
situated, then the latter shed light on some general dimensions of reading as subject matter of this dissertation. The researcher has no intention of arguing that fidelity-based implementation research is useless. The researcher also is not comfortable with the fact that implementation occurs without content. Instead, in this dissertation, this researcher attempts to focus on the assumption that teacher behavior and beliefs can be differently described and interpreted by different purposes and methodologies. As illuminated in three different examples of qualitative reading research, the alternative meaning as to who is an effective teacher has been gradually reexamined and thus reconsidered. That is, it can be seen that situated aspects and individual beliefs about what teachers do and why they do it are important in understanding teachers' daily teaching practices. In the rest of this chapter, another perspective on implementation, curriculum, and teachers' role and work in the changing process are reviewed.

The Phenomenological View on Curriculum Implementation

The Phenomenological Point of View

The history and development of phenomenology is somewhat long and complex (Silverman, 1984). For a long time, both phenomenologists and some psychologists have raised a basic question "Can the world view of the natural sciences comprehend fully and adequately the phenomenon of man as a person?" (Giorgi, 1970, p. xii). This question arose from the belief that the nature of human consciousness or mind could be legitimately explained by adopting scientific laws or the rules used in natural sciences. In building the theoretical framework of what Polkinghorne (1983) and Giorgi (1970) called human science, both phenomenologists and some psychologists started their argument
with the assumption that human beings perceive or experience the object or the world actively and holistically (Pollio, Henley, & Thompson, 1997, pp. 3-27).

As implied above, at the core of the study of phenomenology is a concern with identifying a dynamic feature of how the living subject experiences his or her world. To the extent to which the present study was primarily concerned with investigating human experiences of others, however, the definition and characteristics of phenomenology as a field of study differ from those drawn from pure philosophical phenomenologists. As will be discussed in chapter three, I mostly leaned on the work of van Manen (1990), which incorporated all other philosophical implications of phenomenology into methodology designed to conduct research on lived experiences of others. Consequently, what I mean by “the phenomenological point of view” is broadly defined and theoretically used in this present study, aimed at comprehensively subsuming and synthesizing the notion of “curriculum” and “implementation” by looking at teachers’ lived experiences with the use of given innovative materials.

Therefore, the phenomenological point of view used for this present research provided this researcher with “a lens” that looked at the phenomenon of change differently, not from the standardized, fidelity-based point of view, but from the first person perspective, that of the teachers. In order to frame the alternative point of view to be used in this present research, I will define phenomenology, both broadly and specifically. Broadly defined, phenomenology is “the science of the essential structures of consciousness” (Polkinghorne, 1983, p. 41). Specifically, phenomenology is concerned with a situation in which we human beings:
immediately experience it pre-reflectively rather than as we conceptualize, categorize, or reflect on it. ... Phenomenology aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our everyday experiences. ... It differs from almost every other science in that it attempts to gain insightful descriptions of the way we experience the world. (van Manen, 1990, p. 9)

In what follows, after exploring two significant aspects of phenomenology such as 'the nature of human consciousness' and 'the concept of everyday life-world,' some implications conducive to an alternative point of view, useful in conceptualizing the field of curriculum implementation, will be discussed. Before proceeding, it should be noted that the phenomenological perspective is inconsistent with the worldview adopted in natural science. In a scientific point of view, the world is viewed as a mechanism in which certain laws and rules are systematically in operation and thus humans, as biologically patterned beings, think and behave according to certain generalized regulations under certain circumstances. Accordingly, for those applying such a natural scientific point of view to personal and social life-world, human experience is mostly considered "a thing" that can be discovered by the a priori theory, or a predetermined set of categories drawn from the universal laws and rules (Polkinghorne, 1983, pp. 16-19).

In contrast, phenomenologists base their point of view on a position that Aoki (1988) described as "back to the things themselves" (p. 402), independent of concepts or categories influential in taking a particular phenomenon into account. Phenomenology describes ways in which humans make sense of their everyday life-world from their own perspective and sometimes learn from socially constructed realities in the particular
situations in which they are situated (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). In short, a relationship
between the living subject and his or her world is integrative and constructive, neither at a
distance nor deterministic, according to the phenomenological point of view (Holstein &
Gubrium, 1994).

The nature of human consciousness

Historically, during the early twentieth century the founder of phenomenology,
German Edmund Husserl, observed that the rational frame of reference taken for granted
in the western world at that time neglected the very basic element fundamental to
understanding and accounting for the world in which we live (Chamberlin, 1974). As
mentioned before, this was viewed as problematic, only if we credited it with such a
deterministic frame of reference derived from the field of natural science and unwittingly
limited the nature of human experience in consciousness to linear and atomic
characteristics. With an alternative perspective in mind, Husserl created a new field of
study phenomenology, mainly concerned with establishing “the theory of the essential
nature of the transcendentally purified consciousness” (Husserl, 1969, p. 161, as cited in
Chamberlin, 1974, p. 128).

At the core of Husserl’s phenomenology (1954/1970) was a systematic
investigation of the structure and function of human consciousness, which differed from
that of natural science aimed at discovering universal rules and theories distilled from
physical objects or phenomena under study. Focusing on how humans perceive and thus
experience objects, Husserl developed a rigorous but abstract method by which the
subject could get involved in a flow of “pure” consciousness actively engaged with
Eventually, phenomenology developed into a field that seriously attempted to illuminate how meaning was constituted in the process of human consciousness or perception. In other words, it is argued that human experience is actively built up through direct and intentional activities of consciousness. Thus, the way in which experience is produced is viewed as an internal interaction “between the object and the appearance of the object to consciousness” (Chamberlin, 1974, p. 129). Consequently, the meaning and essence of human experience is believed to be achievable by a series of moments when the subject deeply reflects on the very interaction between a total sense of meaning he or she intentionally assigns and particular acts of the perception of the object. For Husserl (1954/1970), this kind of deep engagement in the self-reflective process to make sense of what is being experienced occurs transcendentally to the point that the subject comes to realize the essential meaning of experience at a time (Polkinghorne, 1984, pp. 41-47; Willis, 1990, pp. 179-180).

Specifically, in order to understand the process of how human experience is constituted, two significant attitudes associated with human consciousness needs to be examined: intentionality and natural attitude, both of which all human beings experience in their everyday life-world situation. By intentionality, Chamberlin (1974) explained, “all thinking is thinking about something” (p. 129). That is, it is like “a basic configuration” (Pollio, Henley, & Thompson, 1997, p. 7) that makes human beings fundamentally relative to the context in which the appearance of the object to consciousness is situated. Put differently, once we humans begin by responding to a particular object, we
simultaneously experience it from many other perspectives in consciousness, but all the different perceptions are still of the same object (Chamberlin, 1974). To shed light on what the object looks like and why it is or isn’t meaningful for ourselves, we human beings tend to keep experiencing the relational and situational aspects between our multiple perceptions and the object that appeared in our consciousness.

Chamberlin (1974), relying on Husserl’s phenomenology, succinctly described natural attitude as:

the common sense, ordinary assumptions a person makes that things he [sic] sees are what they seem to be in everyday experience. ... [It] applies general knowledge to particular cases and then reduces new generalizations, employing logical powers to relate isolated cognition to one another. (p. 130)

At this point, importantly, the question of “what is real” emerges. What phenomenologists such as Husserl (1954/1970) and others (Schutz, 1932/1967; Schutz & Luckmann, 1973) have in common is that in order to interpret and explain human action and thought, one has to look at the very way in which reality is fundamentally constituted within the world of everyday life. Natural attitude is consciously embedded in the manner in which the ordinary person takes for granted his or her everyday experience, which is self-evident in the boundary of the day-to-day life situation operating in our common sense knowledge (Chamberlin, 1974, pp. 130-131).

Therefore, due to our natural attitude, taken for granted in everyday life experience, things surrounding us are seen the way they are. For this very reason, the reality of day-to-day life situation “can not be examined and evaluated by the procedures of the
empirical science,” (Chamberlin, 1974, p. 131), but by the self-reflection, asserted by Husserl (1954/1970), on “what is momentarily perceived in a faithful conceptual expression” (Chamberlin, 1974, p. 131). Given this assumption of Husserl, it is truthful to say that we human beings seldom doubt the reality of the everyday life-world and thus take it for granted as real from the first person or subjective perspective.

However, our taken for granted or natural attitudes are not understood “meaningfully” unless we deeply or seriously reflect on them. Bernstein (1976) explained Husserl’s philosophical method, called epoche, which will be discussed in the following chapter, with the notion of bracketing. Epoche, Bernstein stated, is a way of reflective performance to transform “what seems to be so obvious and unproblematic into an enigma” (p. 130). It requires a complete sense of transformational reflection through which an actor comes to understand the general structure of meanings of what is taken for granted. Indeed, epoche is analogous to “a religious conversion” (p. 130) in which a person is enabled to look at the world in a totally different manner. For this reason, Husserl’s phenomenology has been viewed as mysterious or radical (Chamberlin, 1974, pp. 130-131).

But, the fundamental value of epoche, asserted Bernstein (1976), is that we can be “free from ourselves” (p. 130), without the help of presupposed scientific concepts, thereby recognizing what is taken for granted as a bounded place in which self-conscious inquiry can be conducted. We human beings live by experiencing things surrounding us as they are, taken for granted as real. Because this everyday life-world exists prior to the objective or conceptual world, the view is that we need, first, to pay a great deal of
attention to what happens inside our experience and how meanings are constructed in relation to the world in which we live. By performing the epoche, it is believed that we can better make sense of a deep ontological or existential sense of the experiences surrounding our daily life.

**The concept of everyday life-world**

The taken for granted nature of "what is real" regarding the everyday life-world under the natural or common sense attitude is simultaneously interwoven with a social dimension. Obviously, Husserl's (1954/1970) transcendental point of view on what is essential or real is aimed at finding out the "universal" structure of human experience encountered within pure human consciousness, not within the social dimension. In this regard, Schutz (1932/1967) argues that reality is "socially" constituted:

I take up an Other-orientation toward my partner, who is in turn oriented toward me. Immediately, and at the same time, I grasp the fact that he, on his part, is aware of my attention to him. In such case, I, you, we, live in the social relationship itself .... I, you, we, are by this means carried from one moment to the next in a particular attentional modification of the state of being mutually oriented to each other. (p. 156, italics in original)

It is here clearly acknowledged that "the individual apprehends the other as a subject, rather than merely as an object" (Collins, 1974, p. 145). Of course, the work of Schutz (1932/1967) is partly based on that of Husserl (1954/1970), wherein the essential experience of humans resides at the everyday life-world taken for granted without help of scientifically oriented theories or concepts. In the introduction of the book *The Structures*
of the Life-World (Schutz & Luckmann, 1973), Zaner and Engelhardt noted:

Everyday life intrinsically involves the suspension of doubts concerning the reality of the world. It invokes a kind of epoche ... . As a phenomenological endeavor, Schutz's study is an explicit focusing on that implicit epoche, which is tantamount to adopting a second epoche and establishing a critical phenomenological attitude. This epoche of the ('natural') epoche has the force of making it possible to undertake the description of the world as taken for granted in everyday life. (p. xxviii, parenthesis in original)

Above all, Schutz's point of view regarding what is real is "a synthesis between the continental tradition in sociology ... and the phenomenological method for analyzing individual experience which owes its chief formation to the philosopher, Edmund Husserl" (Collins, 1974, p. 139: see also Burger & Luckmann, 1966, pp. 1-18). For several decades, two such traditions have differently interpreted the nature of the life-experience of others living in society. On one hand, the nature of reality in society has been studied by traditional social scientists in terms of "objective" reality that is viewed as existing "out there," other than a phenomenon which is itself under study. Although those traditional social scientists began their inquiry with life-experiences of others within the society, they typically examined the products and patterns of human actions and thoughts for an underlying structure and function, with a goal of generalizing what is observed toward the universal laws (Collins, 1974, p. 140). On the other hand, phenomenologists have been concerned with reflecting on the very process by which individuals come to know their life-experiences on their own and in a social setting. It has
been argued that the meaning of reality can be only understood, not discovered, by the
"subjective," or personal, experience of individuals per se.

Together, Schutz's (1932/1967) social phenomenology provides for a lens that helps us understand how the subject assigns meaning to action in a social world, for instance, between the teacher and students or among teachers in the school system. To a large extent, such a school system is an organization in which the principal, teachers, students, and others re/exchange meanings with each other in social environments. Although the school as an organization is likely in operation under the circumstance of fixed rules and regulations, institutional practice is usually set "by practical difficulties" (Collins, 1974, p. 140), which emerge at that particular temporal and spatial situation.

Furthermore, using the social phenomenological point of view of Schutz (1932/1967), school is a place where those living in school do not likely act in accordance with complex bonds of cause and effect depending on the ratio of probability, but "mutually beneficial relationships with others" (Collins, 1974, p. 140). Specifically, the life-world of school is inherently an inter-subjective world in which members share the fundamental structure of its reality. Ultimately, each individual influences and, at the same time, is influenced by the others in re/constructing social worlds. The life-world, or lived experience of social actors consists not only of a reality where actors can know and learn what is going on for themselves, but also a reality in which they can reciprocally change their actions by adopting others' points of view. Such a developmental process of constructing a reality is not just passive but pragmatic. As Schutz and Luckmann (1973) succinctly pointed out:
We act and operate not only within the life-world but also upon it. Our bodily movements gear into the life-world and transform its objects and their reciprocal relations. At the same time, these objects offer to our actions a resistance, which we must either subdue or to which we must yield. The life-world is thus a reality which we modify through our acts and which, on the other hand, modifies our actions. We can say that our natural attitude of daily life is pervasively determined by a pragmatic motive. (p. 6, italics in original)

Within the natural attitude and/or the life-world, we typically plan and organize what to do and how to do in the pragmatic way, expecting certain consequences. At this point, Schutz and Luckmann (1973) stressed that the orders of reality we human beings assign for the purpose of achieving a certain consequence, become constituted “through the meaning of our experience” (p. 23). Put simply, what most human beings do and how they do it depend on “the stock of knowledge” (p. 99) that is historically and biographically embedded in their action and thought - the stock of knowledge that determines the way the person thinks and acts, and vice versa. Thus, the meaning of experience is stockpiled from confined social interactions with significant others such as parents or those persons heavily influencing the way of life of the person.

A finite province of meaning ... consists of meaning-compatible experiences.

... [A]ll experiences that belong to a finite province of meaning point to a particular style of lived experience ... a cognitive style. In regard to this style, they are all in mutual harmony and are compatible with one another.
(Schutz & Luckmann, 1973, p. 23, italics added)

To summarize, a few universal law-like statements can not conceptually explain the everyday life-world. Nor can that life-world be controlled by a set of variables that are predetermined by an outsider. Instead, the structure of the life-world is made up from a unique set of realities represented by the stock of knowledge the individual has acquired via a number of resources, implicitly and explicitly. Being aware of the other as a subject like me, the individual typifies situations he or she encounters, horizontally and vertically, in ways that put relevance on particular events and together construct social reality in day-to-day situations.

**Implications**

We human beings live by taking so many things for granted around us in our daily physical and social life under the standard of what Aoki (1988) called “scientific rationality,” which highlights a sharp distinction between our thought and action, presupposing thought leading to action. As a result, in approaching a phenomenon, we tend to first deconstruct parts from the whole and then put them together in order to explain the nature of the phenomenon in terms of our concepts or theories (Aoki, 1993).

No doubt, our reliance on scientific concepts or theories is necessary in the natural world in which subject matter is a thing existing in a relatively stable environment. The problem occurs when we blindly attempt to explain human thought and action in a particular context. More precisely, the problem arises when human consciousness or experience leads to being compartmentalized and thereby limited by the a priori theory truthful beyond space and time (Aoki, 1988).
Phenomenology, applied to education or the field of curriculum, involves a different discourse of what is generally referred to as ‘educational experience.’ Phenomenology pays attention not only to a broad view of what educational experience means and thus how it should be meaningfully achieved, but also focuses on a specific view of what teaching and learning should look like and thus how they need to interact in concrete situations.

Nonetheless, “phenomenology does not simply yield ‘alternative’ explanations or descriptions of educational phenomena” (van Manen, 1982, p. 298). Instead, phenomenology needs to be more sensitively, thoughtfully, and dialectically understood. Therefore, it might be better for us to understand the usefulness of phenomenology in education, for it enables the researcher to gain valuable knowledge by inquiring into the lived experience of those living in a particular situation. That is, phenomenology helps us to bring to light the existence and importance of the life-world or lived experience, thereby providing us with an insight fundamental in seeking out “the quality of the lived experiences of people who live within the situation” (Aoki, 1988, p. 413).

Relying on this basic phenomenological idea regarding the importance of human experience and existence within the situation, what I mean by the phenomenological point of view is consistent with the following expression of van Manen (1982):

The phenomenological attitude is mindful on the ease with which we tend to rely on a reconstructed logic in our professional endeavor. (p. 296)

From a phenomenological point of view we keep reminding ourselves that the question of knowledge always refers back to our world, to our lives,
to who we are, and to what makes us write, read, and talk together as educators. (p. 298)

With the above phenomenological attitude and point of view in mind, when defining “curriculum” and “implementation,” I find myself acknowledging that both meanings become more than “a document” and “putting words into action according to the plan of others,” respectively. As Aoki (1988) implied above, in order to theorize the concept of curriculum implementation, what should first be considered is a careful look at the life-world of teachers who live within the situation and see how they make sense of their changing classroom situations. From the phenomenological point of view regarding implementation, it seems of little importance “the exact time” when teachers use and “exactly how” they use curriculum materials adopted. Instead, perhaps what is really important for us to know is how intentionally and thus how relevantly teachers use given curricula materials by means of their knowledge or theories of situational and social guidelines (Aoki, 1983; Elbaz, 1983).

The Phenomenological View on Curriculum/Implementation

Curriculum as experiential

Strictly, curriculum has long been conceived of as a different entity from teaching or instruction (Bobbitt, 1918). That is, curriculum is only concerned with “the what” or content and teaching or instruction with “the how” or method or technique (Johnson, 1967). Disagreeing with this traditional conceptual distinction, a philosophical attempt was made to define the meaning of curriculum as experiential (Dewey, 1938). To a large extent, this notion of curriculum appears to include all kinds of events that happen to the
students and teachers—actions that encompass both planned and improvisational teaching and learning activities. Emphasizing life-experience as being encountered both in and out of school, Dewey (1938) argued that “experience is truly experience only when objective conditions are subordinated to what goes on within the individuals having the experience” (p. 41).

Dewey’s (1938) philosophy of experience challenged the traditional meaning of curriculum as subject matter or knowledge designed by the logic of the adult mind, shedding great light on making integrative the distinction between curriculum and pedagogy. In this integrative notion of schooling, the value of education is established by the continuous reflective interaction of the individual with an environment in which he or she lives (Dewey, 1938, pp. 33-50).

Given this argument of curriculum as experiential, a critique of traditional educational practice attempts to reduce the distinction between curriculum-as-plan and curriculum-as-lived, particularly from the perspective of those who live within the situation (Aoki, 1983). In this regard, both curriculum and implementation are closely interwoven when teachers deeply reflect on the question of what content is realistically meaningful to teach for their students, individually and in-group, in their classrooms. Such a critique should not be taken to mean that curriculum-as-plan developed and delivered by other than classroom teachers is useless and not valuable. Instead, the critique may help us reconsider the problematic nature of the traditional, dichotomous aspect between curriculum and implementation.

For instance, Aoki (1983) defined implementation as “situational praxis” (p. 23), as
opposed to implementation as “instrumental action” (p. 19). In building a conceptual framework to go beyond the limited view on traditional implementation in education in the early 1970s, Aoki was skeptical of the instrumental assumption that the rationally planned change was likely to occur as intended in every classroom situation. His major criticism of this instrumental view on educational change was about the taken for granted notion that the teacher was implicitly viewed as “a being-as-thing, a technical being devoid of his [sic] own subjectivity” (p. 23).

From Aoki’s (1983) perspective on educational change, however, teachers were human beings whose consciousness was dialectally active, not passively static. For teachers as human beings, the meaning of change was at the center of the situational relationship existing between themselves, students, and innovation within each individual classroom. Consequently, curriculum-in-use was, Aoki continued, situated and transformed in the name of praxis which required the teacher to combine thought with action toward students’ individual sense-making. In short, curriculum implementation was defined as the process of the interpretive act that was embedded in everyday practice toward the “transformation of the self and the curriculum reality” (Aoki, 1983, p. 27). That is, Aoki contended that learning from new textual materials ought to be reexamined by teachers’ critical reflection on the situated phenomenon between self and the individual student’s lived experience.

Implementation as evolutionary processes

Majone and Wildavsky’s (1978) study has been widely regarded as one of the most significant papers conceptualizing the meaning of implementation from the
phenomenological perspective in the field of policy analysis and evaluation (Farrar, Desanctis, & Cohen, 1982; Fullan, 1991). For Majone and Wildavsky, implementation was defined as *evolution*. Traditional implementation theories such as *control* and *interaction* were critically reconsidered to frame the matter of implementation in a real relationship of thought to action of actual practitioners. It was argued that no predetermined goal was complete enough in nature to anticipate many hidden constraints faced by practitioners. That is, implementation as a rationalized plan was deemed to be an "infinite regress" (p. 106), in which its direction and meaning became elusive within context-specific interpretations.

Further, the notion of implementation process as an interaction based on the political consensus was also viewed as inadequate in their evolutionary frame of reference. In this regard, the actual satisfaction of "psychological and social needs of the participants ... [is] partial, at best" (Majone & Wildavsky, 1978, pp. 107-108), since such a formal and informal interaction between the center and the periphery could distort the intrinsic worth of political ideas.

Eventually, Majone and Wildavsky (1978) concluded that because implementation problems were not like puzzles with unique solutions, the notion of implementers as technicians was firmly inappropriate. In this respect, the best meaning of policy implementation was imbedded in the process of attempting to reformulate problems and possible solutions within the newly emerging situation. As Majone and Wildavsky stated boldly:

Reformulating problems means changing solutions. ... Policy ideas in the
abstract ... are subject to an infinite variety of contingencies, and they contain worlds of possible practical applications. ... They are endlessly evolving. ... Fixed prescriptions - 'knowing that' - give way to 'knowing how' - adopting the right rule at the right moment as events unfold, in order to bring out one potential result over many others. Knowing how is a craft, not a science. (p. 113)

In summary, the phenomenological view on implementation is a worthy approach toward describing a change process as it exists. It is concerned with illuminating the view when a force is placed in the mind, generally, and the life-world, specifically. This perspective on implementation attempts to trace the process of human experience that is evolutionarily transacted with the world in which a person begins to feel a difference. To the extent that those living inside the context can only describe this picture of changing realities, it is highly personalized. It is also valuable because we are able to see from the insider’s point of view what is actually going on and why it occurs in practice.

Curriculum Implementation as Lived Teacher Experiences

The role and work of teachers

Many curriculum scholars have extended Deweyan philosophical ideas, i.e., the educative dimension of the life-experience of students (1938), toward the epistemological dimension of teachers’ narratives of experience in action (Ben-Peretz, 1990; Connelly & Ben-Peretz, 1981; Connelly & Clandinin, 1988; Elbaz, 1983; McCutcheon, 1988, 1992, 1995). The major interest of those scholars is in what is termed ‘curriculum processes’ or ‘curriculum-in-use,’ which entails what teachers actually do or enact while involved in a
continuous cycle of everyday teaching and learning practice. Put simply, they ask, “What do teachers learn from their daily teaching experience within their classroom?” In this line of thought, therefore, a generally agreed conceptual distinction between curriculum as plan and teaching as delivery is conceived of as integrative, called “curriculum enactment” (Snyder, Bolin, & Zumwalt, 1992, p. 418), in which both teachers and students are engaged in creating and thus making sense of curricula, self, and society.

As described in the previous section, curriculum is defined as experiential, experience that is likely to occur only when teachers and students together engage in meaningful activities by interpreting subject matter in relation to life experiences within social environments. In order for this kind of learning to occur, consideration of what students already know and have experienced in their life situations, not just from textbooks, becomes to a crucial starting point for the teachers’ work and role to be pedagogically situated. Equally important is the teachers’ self-examination to clarify their knowledge of concrete teaching and learning tasks while also emphasizing considerations of what and how to teach (McCutcheon, 1995). Due to these reasons, teaching is viewed as a complex and value-laden activity or decision-making process which teachers’ values and beliefs and students’ needs and interests are interwoven one with another (Ben-Peretz, 1990; Elbaz, 1983; McCutcheon, 1980, 1995; Paris, 1993). In this respect, this view of curriculum/teaching is inconsistent with that of traditional curriculum scholars such as Johnson (1967) and Tyler (1949) who are mainly concerned with an effective identification and determination of what is taught before actual teaching performance.
In general, the role of teachers varies, depending on different tasks and emphases of professional activity (Heck & Williams, 1984; Porter, 1989). In terms of the relationship of the role and work of teachers to curriculum implementation, one of the controversial aspects is whether the teacher is viewed as a knowledgeable person versus a knowledge recipient (Clandinin & Connelly, 1992). In fact, from the conventional perspective, educational researchers other than practitioners raise questions associated with problems of teaching, experimenting with the effectiveness of specific skills and techniques on teacher behavior, and generalizing the findings to other contexts, subject matter, and teachers (Brophy & Good, 1986). Under this tradition of scientific knowledge production and utilization, the notions of curriculum, teaching, and knowledge are viewed as independent of teachers living within specific contexts. Therefore, it is generally believed that the role of teachers can be specifically prescribed and controlled by curriculum developers in the name of good or standardized implementation, i.e., the implementation of teacher-proof materials with the purpose to minimizing teacher influence, “detailing what the teacher should say and do at particular times” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, p. 138).

By challenging such a traditional technical idea of curriculum development and implementation, Ben-Peretz (1990) argued that “curriculum materials, the ‘texts,’ are more than the embodiment of their developers’ intentions … depending on their purposes and the demands of their classroom situations” (p. xiv). Likewise, Elbaz (1983) identified problems with the typical process of curriculum development and evaluation, in which goals and objectives of developers limited actual teachers’ role in ways that confined the
measurement of restricted outputs. As Elbaz (1983) stated:

Thus, standardized conceptualizations of the curriculum development process tend almost to dismiss the teacher as an active participant. He [sic] is seen not in terms of agency but as a facilitator, enactor or conveyor; in short, he [sic] is seen as an instrument. (p. 7)

Regarding the actual impact of the conventional system of curriculum innovation on the personal and professional lives of teachers under implementation, Elbaz (1983) pointed out:

Whatever difficulties impede the implementation process can be attributed to the teacher’s personal failings. This creates *a paradoxical situation* in which teachers’ active role in the creation of new instructional arrangements is denied, but they are credited with a generous share of the responsibility for failure. (p. 6, italics added)

Rethinking and thus redefining the role and work of teachers in curriculum implementation seem to require another theoretical framework in which ideas, beliefs, and methods of developers outside of the context should be understood as "hypotheses" (Stenhouse, 1975) or "tentative" (Reid, 1979). The traditional, linear delivery system of curriculum innovation may result in the undesirable and inappropriate consequence by simply taking for granted the dualistic position between theory and practice (Ayers, 1992).

According to an analytical framework of Ben-Peretz (1990), the role of teachers can be largely identified in three different ways: (a) "teachers as users of teacher-proof
curricula, (b) as active implementers, and (c) as partners in development” (p. 58). The first role of teachers in implementation where teachers are expected to use materials precisely as directed is the most extreme case, although still popular (Ball & Cohen, 1996; Paris, 1993). The second role involves the merits of teachers, where the implementation strategy of developers and school exactly fit to the present and future needs of teachers, so that teachers adopt new curricula ideas and learn new knowledge and skills (van den Akker, 1988).

However, teachers have different values and beliefs in association with the newness or innovation, so that they are deemed to respond differently to new external ideas. In this regard, the third possible role of teachers for Ben-Peretz (1990) is persuasive, in that curriculum materials adopted is defined as “potential”(p. 49). In other words, because a set of curriculum goals and objectives, methods, and evaluation strategies in written text does not include all other unintended, sometimes hidden, learning outcomes, “choices and modifications” (p. 56) of teachers from an array of possible alternative ideas are inevitable. Ben-Peretz distinguished two different levels of curriculum interpretation between developers and teachers. The developers’ first level of curriculum interpretation is based on “the definition and clarification of content elements and possible educational messages to be conveyed to the students” (p. 60), while teachers’ second level of interpretation is based on their “perceptions of reality” (p. 61) leading to different and individual teaching-learning settings.

Carson’s (1992) hermeneutical reflection on the meaning of implementation is clearly in conjunction with the role and work of teachers. In a case study with both a
formal teacher and present consultant at the district level, Carson investigated what his participant had in mind while facilitating in-service training and how to regard the possible role and work of teachers.

During four ongoing conversations with his participant, Carson (1992) kept finding himself at odds with the dual senses of the role and work of teachers in terms of the ambiguous notion between implementation and evaluation (pp. 82-83). That is, once a new idea, i.e., social studies inquiry instruction models, was delivered in action, the consultant started to consider the basic form of instruction initially trained to be maintained as intended, unwittingly anticipating the increase of students' achievement, which from the teachers' perspective was not sure. According to him, “teaching is a largely private activity done in isolation from colleagues. Curriculum implementation makes this more public” (p. 94). In this regard, maintained Carson, the meaning of the role and work of teachers turned out to be controversial for the following reason:

The application of knowledge about the change process and effective implementation procedures has been a mixed blessing for teachers. On the one hand, an exposition of complexity of the change process has shown the need to give time and inservice help for implementation. But on the other hand, by exposing more aspects of practice as objects of attention, it has also laid these too open to finer and more complete control. (p. 72. italics added)

More recently, Spillane (1999) pointed out the necessity of allowing more room for the teachers’ role and work under the implementation of a great deal of contemporary
external reform initiatives. Basically, he was uncomfortable with the historical blind spot in arenas of policy implementation where teachers’ actual reconstructed efforts have not been clearly defined and thus have been under-examined. In order to interpret teachers’ real efforts from the interactive perspective between theory and practice, Spillane created a term “zones of enactment” referring to:

that space where reform initiatives are encountered by the world of practitioners and ‘practice’, delineating that zone in which teachers notice, construe, construct, and operationalize the instructional ideas advocated by reformers. (p. 144)

To a large extent, Spillane (1999) positively took into consideration zones of enactment by trusting teachers’ potential capacities and will for reform. He explained the six Ps’s model that consisted of interrelated sectors such as professional, policy, private, public and pupil, all of which encircled personal located at the center. The key remark of this zone was that “the new ideas about practice that teachers encounter through the policy and professional sectors can only work in and through teachers’ existing knowledge and beliefs” (p. 169).

However, Spillane (1999) did not argue that the zone of enactment was only related to the personal. Instead, relying on help from other fields like sociology and cognitive psychology, he also considered zones of enactment social. He noted that “through collaboration with others using a variety of material artifacts” (p. 171), zones of enactment came to be meaningful. Consequently, Spillane’s major concern regarding teachers’ efforts to reconstruct new ideas of reformers was first with recognizing the
personal zone of enactment. At the same time, for those teachers who changed their core instructional practice, the zone of enactment was socially constructed by deliberately including “fellow teachers and local and external ‘experts’ on the reforms” (pp. 171-172).

To summarize, reconsidering the role and work of teachers in the process of implementation necessitates creating different views on curriculum and teaching. The assumption that the teacher is a knowledgeable person who is able to decide the appropriate path for putting words into action has been described. This assumption lies in the divergent position of curriculum as experiential in contextual differences, where living teachers and students learn from each other in multiple ways. The convergent position of curriculum as document may restrict the role and work of teachers, who may feel security only by means of coverage and mastery of external ideas by students. The fact that most teachers make decisions on their course of action, depending on their perceptions of reality within their classroom settings, appears self-evident only when we look at how deeply teachers reflect on action and in what ways they construct their micro social reality together across classrooms to make sense of what to do within their own classroom. In the following section, empirical findings with regard to the actual use of curriculum innovations adopted will be reviewed.

Teachers’ reflections on curriculum implementation

Drawing on the notion that curriculum and teaching are integrated and continuous in the work of teachers in classrooms, curriculum scholars and others began to examine teachers’ mental lives or thought processes in the mid-1970s (Ben-Peretz, Bromme, & Halkes, 1986; Calderhead, 1987; Clark & Peterson, 1986; Clark & Yinger, 1977; Day,
The term *teacher thinking* refers to a body of research concerned with "the ways in which knowledge is actively acquired and used by teachers and the circumstances that affect its acquisition and employment" (Calderhead, 1987, p. 5).

Research on teacher thinking emerged in an effort to search for an alternative perspective on teaching, which differed, theoretically and methodologically, from the mainstream research on teacher behavior and effectiveness that was designed based on conduct in controlled classroom settings (Brophy & Good, 1986). For example, Clark and Yinger (1977), the first who reviewed the research on teacher thinking in the 1970s, stated its legitimacy and necessity as follows:

> The teacher-behavior approach has contributed a great deal to our knowledge of ... how this behavior relates to student learning and attitudes. ... But if the results of such research are to be applied by individual teachers in their classrooms, adaptations will have to be made. Each class consists of a unique combination of personalities, constraints, and opportunities. Teacher behavior that is sensible and effective in one setting may be inappropriate in a second setting, and it is the individual teacher who makes decisions about appropriateness. (pp. 279-280)

As clearly outlined above, the point of view of Clark and Yinger (1977) is context-and person-oriented, in which individual teachers' knowledge and beliefs and values are emphasized in assessing theory or truthful statements made out of context. For Clark and Yinger, accounting for "the mental processes that underlie behavior" (p. 280), is
fundamental in approaching what teachers do and how teachers plan. Accordingly, it is the teacher who makes decisions about appropriateness through their personal belief system. Indeed, many personal beliefs of teachers are tacit or not well articulated unless facing and engaging in concrete problem situations. Unless one identifies the historical and biological characteristics of the particular nature of problematic situations, Clark and Yinger maintained, it is invalid to bring external criteria justified in one setting to the other setting.

Likewise, more recently, research on teachers’ thought processes was well summarized by Elbaz (1991) who succinctly grouped a number of research projects on teachers’ mental lives into three major themes: (a) story, (b) the ordinary versus the extraordinary, and (c) voice. Since the mid-1970s, researchers on teacher thinking have continued to tell stories of ordinary classroom lives and unique practical problems (Elbaz, 1983), exploring expertise of the teaching profession by comparing novice and expert teachers (Berliner, 1986), and listening to teachers’ actual concerns with curriculum reform and change (Clandinin & Connelly, 1998).

Alongside these historical and epistemological notions, it is now clear that the meaning of curriculum implementation in this school of thought refers to particular thinking activities of teachers who are experiencing the newness of the curriculum being implemented. Indeed, teachers’ consciousness was not so much straightforward and objective-driven as descriptive and reflexive (Elbaz, 1991). Teachers’ thought processes, for example, in terms of curricula planning activities, were likely intuitive in using “mental dialogue” with self (McCutcheon, 1980), reflective in preferring “content, needs,
and interests of students” to behavioral objectives (Zahorik, 1975), and interactive in perceiving specific practical problems (Clark & Yinger, 1987; Shavelson, 1983).

Just as the scope and themes of research on teacher thinking is broad and complex, so are the theoretical approaches themselves. For example, after analyzing twelve representative case studies regarding teacher thinking, Connelly and Clandinin (1988) identified eight different approaches such as literature on innovation, Kelly’s personal construct theory (3 cases), phenomenological inquiry (2 cases), and the like (pp. 14-15).

Surprisingly, three quarters of twelve case studies have different conceptual frameworks. As introduced later in the work of Bussis, Chittenden, and Amarel (1976), George Kelly’s construct theory is highly influential in research on teacher thinking. The concept of construct theory is that “man looks at his world through transparent patterns ... which he creates and then attempts to fit over the realities of which the world is composed” (Kelly, 1955, pp. 8-9). Given this psychologically oriented construct theory, other approaches used in studies of teacher thinking overlap in one way or another, because most attempts were likely made to illuminate how and why teachers do what they do from the teachers’ particular world view. Even for those with no specific conceptual approach, the relationship between teachers’ beliefs and actions could be described by looking closely at what teachers use as their principles and categories that guide interactive teaching practices (Marland, 1977).

In their study of teachers’ deep understandings on curriculum, children, and environment, Bussis, Chittenden, and Amarel (1976) portrayed sixty primary teachers’ curriculum understandings regarding open education. The purpose of their inquiry was to
“gain a better understanding of the other person’s meanings, interpretations, and ways of constructing a situation” (p. 114). The standpoint of Bussis et al. was called *neo-phenomenology* assuming human beings as striving “to make sense of experience, to understand it, ... in order to make it meaningful, manageable, and predictable” (p. 12). In-depth interviewing was conducted in terms of teachers’ teaching priorities and perceived qualities in children.

Bussis, Chittenden, and Amarel (1976) began their neo-phenomenological inquiry with the assumption that although innovative ideas and their materials were valuable, educational change was eventually “determined by the teacher’s interpretation and use of them” (p. 1). In effect, their inferential coding efforts shed light on a different outlook of the classroom change process, one that had to do with phenomenological insights on “children as persons” (p. 121). That is, without the deep understanding of teachers’ personal mental point of view, the authors concluded, it may be impossible to improve curriculum and teaching practice to a significant degree.

Bailey’s (1996) research on alternative meanings of curriculum implementation in the elementary science curriculum was informative in relation to an aspect of teachers’ thinking and narratives. Bailey’s definition of curriculum and curriculum implementation was experiential and situational praxis, respectively. Curriculum meanings in three levels of a science curriculum document, an in-service process, and a primary teacher were compared through a qualitative case study.

Presumably, Bailey (1996) described that the meaning of implementation in the first two levels was clearly documented and then delivered as curricula-as-plan. However, the
actual work of the teacher under study, Bailey pointed out, was inconsistent with this kind of curriculum as instrumental action (p. 9). Bailey found that although facing the concept of the science curriculum-as-plan, the participant tried to create curriculum-as-lived under the process of curriculum implementation on one’s own. As Bailey also implied, this transformation of curriculum and teaching into lived teacher experience was due to the consideration of the needs and interests of students within the unique process of everyday teaching and learning practices.

Baird’s (1999) recent phenomenological investigation regarding what science teaching and learning look like is a representative example. As Baird stated, “there has been under-representation of studies that illuminates such work ... [that] arise directly from teachers’ lived experience” (p. 76). Relying on van Manen’s (1990) phenomenology, Baird asked twelve secondary teachers to periodically reflect on phenomenological questions, for example, “What is it, to be a science teacher? ... What is science teaching?” (p. 77).

To the extent to which Baird’s (1999) study thoughtfully researched these phenomenological questions, it goes beyond Aoki’s (1983) analytical framework that was outlined before. After analyzing the patterns of teachers’ lived experiences, Baird concluded that most teachers were experiencing Fuller’s (1969) notions of developmental concerns of self, task, and impact over time (p. 78). However, it seems dangerous to reduce all of the findings of teachers’ lived experiences to Fuller’s cognitive developmental concerns that supposedly progress in a linear manner, because the essential themes of making a phenomenon what it is can be described in a dialectic
fashion. Nonetheless, Baird's phenomenological investigation of teachers' cognition is informative to the point that we are told how vividly and even actively the individual teacher perceives the ordinary process of education from his or her own perspective.

It would be useful to take an example that illuminates a teacher's definition and reflection of her changing teaching practice from her point of view. As a classroom teacher, Throne (1994) was aware of a historical pattern of educational reform, defining "the pendulum swings from one opposing ideology to another" (p. 195), describing her kindergarten language program as a case exemplifying the debate over the phonics versus the whole language perspective. Facing an either/or choice of this kind, Throne gradually acknowledged that involving herself in this debate may be harmful for educators who needed to see "how each complements the other" (p. 203). Throne began her reflection by looking at the dramatic differences in her students' experience with textbooks and, at the same time, imaging their diverse backgrounds and environments. She concluded that what was really needed was as much "inquiry [as possible] into understanding" (p. 207) of students' different learning styles and needs and interests.

To summarize, the notion of curriculum implementation as lived experience encompasses various personal and professional ways of life. As the literature on teacher thinking indicated, personal knowledge and theories of action were obviously in operation even though the specific prescriptions delivered were considerably known to be effective and efficient. For those living in classrooms, the scenario of curriculum implementation as texts was apparently seen as far reaching. There seemed little evidence that transforming new theory into teacher behavior had occurred as exactly intended by
curriculum developers. If so, however, the change direction was beyond an either/or choice that was frequently imposed by the typical policy of the pendulum swings from one opposing ideology to another.

Chapter Summary

The major purpose of this study was to uncover the meaning of curriculum implementation through the lived experience of the two teachers selected. In addition, this study was designed to figure out what ordinary change projects of the school district, without specifically prepared external assistance, looked like. This summary will demonstrate how this chapter reviewed the relevant literature for these purposes.

The first half of this chapter sketched the origin and some initial contributions of educational implementation by reviewing the RAND Change Agents study. Most of all, the relationship between policy and practice came to be reconsidered as researchers identified the importance of local educators’ change initiatives within their contexts. The meaning of change, the RAND study concluded, must be understood as a balance of policy and local politics. As the focus of change policy was shifted from adoption (decide to use) to implementation (actual use), the new interest came to emerge by change researchers who attempted to track the extent to which teachers actually used a given innovation. The focus of these studies on implementation was on technically reducing the gap between intended and actual use.

The second half of this chapter, relying on basic insights drawn from phenomenology, first articulated the alternative way in which to approach practice presented to us by phenomenology. The phenomenological recognition of interior
experience and the importance of the life-world were highlighted, followed by concrete implications associated with an understanding of teachers’ everyday lives under implementation. By defining curriculum as a process where insiders construct and interpret their experiences, this researcher linked implementation as evolution, not just as a form, to research on teacher thinking, wherein teachers’ everyday teaching practice was primarily reflected and investigated. After presenting teachers’ role and work in implementing curriculum, several studies done using the phenomenological point of view in terms of teacher change and implementation were reviewed.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In order to uncover teachers' lived experiences during the process of implementation, the methodology employed in this study is phenomenology. Phenomenology, as a science of human consciousness or experience, has its roots in philosophy. It has been extended to other disciplines such as psychology and sociology with different theoretical and practical implications and applications. Accordingly, the notion of 'phenomenological inquiry' can be viewed and used differently depending upon the different intellectual tradition and its particular conceptualizations. For instance, under the umbrella term qualitative research, a phenomenological mode of inquiry can be used either as a single framework or a component of theoretical and methodological considerations.

Throughout this chapter on methodology, this researcher mainly relies on van Manen's (1990) work that deals articulately and comprehensively with the empirical notion of 'lived experience,' which covers the fundamental methodological strategies of phenomenology. His work on phenomenological research aligns with the purpose of this research aimed at describing teachers' experiences lived through curriculum
implementation processes at the classroom level. As mentioned in previous chapters, this phenomenological consideration of implementation is better fitted to the understanding of the practical aspects of how to take into account this teacher and this classroom under the circumstance of this local school’s change policy.

This chapter consists largely of three parts: the rationale for a phenomenological research methodology, the procedure of research, and trustworthiness. Specifically, first, basic methodological assumptions and their relevance to this research on implementation are articulated. Second, the detailed procedure for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data is described. And third, after exploring theoretical insights regarding validity in qualitative research, the researcher presents ways in which this research is credible.

Phenomenological Research

At the core of phenomenological research is the question of how lived experience of others can be described and how the inquirer can re-achieve it in written text form. The reason why this particular mode of inquiry is adopted and used in this study is explained.

Rationale

In the research about curriculum implementation, the change strategy for teachers’ classroom behaviors has been largely pursued in ways that prioritize the curriculum developer’s ideas out of context over actual teachers’ personal definitions and reflections on curriculum (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977). In effect, various situational meanings and particular reasons for individual teachers’ curriculum use have not been sufficiently studied. Given this problem of curriculum implementation, questions raised for this research were focused on describing individual teachers’ actual definitions, uses, and reflections regarding a curriculum innovation at the classroom level.
Methodologically, qualitative research in general and phenomenology in particular have the ability to address these questions. Broadly, the research questions stated in chapter one were inherently concerned with describing two teachers' classroom changes per se. Thus, the inquiry focus was on describing, rather than explaining, what actually happened in two classrooms by investigating how teachers used new curriculum materials, implicitly and explicitly, in their daily classroom situations. One of the general assumptions of qualitative case study is to focus on small cases and describe in depth what a local reality is like and how it proceeds over time (Stake, 1995). In doing so, it is believed that we can better take into account, and thus understand, processes in which local realities are being constructed. For this reason, two case study teachers were selected for this research, with an emphasis on describing and analyzing teachers' actual curriculum uses in depth and from multiple methodological angles to understand concrete experiences of teachers in context.

Qualitative research was appropriate to this study because it pays great attention to the meanings people under study assign to their actions in their ordinary life situations. Indeed, teachers' curriculum use is viewed as an ongoing process in which they constantly try to make sense of what they do and how they do it. This is true of the social contexts inside and outside the classroom. Because this research assumes personal and social meanings to be fundamental aspects of teacher behavior, it is necessary to understand how qualitative research attempts to describe “the ways different people make sense out of their lives” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 29).

Furthermore, it is also assumed that teachers' thoughts and actions on implementation need to be understood from their own perspectives. In other words, it is
likely that teachers interpret new curriculum materials in relation to their classroom situations, along with their own personal beliefs and values. By following the way these two teachers defined and used curriculum materials, one may start to see the grounded position on which these teachers stood. In this respect, the general assumption of qualitative research is appropriate, because it first attempts to account for other people’s behavior or culture from the insider’s point of view (Hymes, 1982).

As is often the case in qualitative research, the major instrument in this research was the researcher himself. During the implementation process, the researcher collected observational and interview data from the teachers in order to understand their worldviews and actual curriculum use in context. This research was designed to use the researcher as the key instrument (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Eisner, 1998; Erickson, 1986; Merriam, 1998) for collecting data from other people. By the same token, this activity of the researcher was also associated with matters of interpretation. Although the insider’s perspective was adopted, as noted above, the final interpretations and representations are done by the researcher (Agar, 1996). The way in which descriptive data are to be interpreted is not always clear-cut, because teachers’ personal values, beliefs, and unique contextual problems are involved in many ways. As mentioned before, this research was interpretive in that the researcher was first incorporated into the teacher’s subjective world.

For this subjective role of the researcher, Eisner’s (1998) viewpoint is helpful in validating the assumption that interpreting teachers’ perspectives is possible. Based upon the function of the positive interplay of human cognition, Eisner argued that the way we human beings interpret and represent a thing or person is likely to be done neither
subjectively nor objectively (pp. 50-60). It is not purely objective, because the symbol, i.e., language, used by the researcher can not depict all qualities and aspects. It is always only partial and incomplete, according to Eisner. Nor can it be purely subjective, asserted Eisner, because the researcher as a human being experientially mediates matters all the time and thus constructs negotiated meanings. Given this experiential dimension for human cognition, as long as coherent and plausible descriptions are constructed, Eisner believes that the researcher's interpretation and representation can be meaningful and thus persuade the reader.

Thus far, generic and broad characteristics of qualitative research have been explained. In what ways, then, is phenomenology more specifically appropriate for questions raised for this research? Based upon the exploration in chapter two of the phenomenological perspective, focusing on the concepts of human experience and the everyday life-world, what follows is an argument for the methodological necessity of empirical phenomenological research in terms of the purpose and questions of this research. Specifically, two salient themes are addressed here. In achieving the lived experience of teachers, an interwoven notion of phenomenological description and interpretation is first presented. The significant aspect of writing in phenomenology follows.

Most of all, as implied in chapter two, what makes this research phenomenological is the specifically oriented methodological approach to the essence of the experience. While ethnography deals with the lived experience of members living within a particular culture or society (Hymes, 1982; Wolcott, 1988), phenomenology puts great emphasis on describing the immediate experience of particular participants under study. In this regard,
the beginning and ending point of phenomenological research is turning to the phenomena themselves or letting persons under study speak for themselves (Aoki, 1988; Holstein & Gubrium, 1994; Schwandt, 1994).

Simply put, in order to understand the uniqueness of a phenomenon, topic, or concept, it is necessary to first look at what happens to make it as it is. The very concern of phenomenological research is with describing lived experience and interpreting the central meaning of lived experience. van Manen (1990) defined phenomenological research as:

1. The study of lived experience.
2. The explication of phenomena as they present themselves to consciousness.
3. The study of essence.
4. The description of the experiential meanings we live as we live them.
5. A poetizing activity. (pp. 8-13)

Educational implementation as a change process has been largely defined by what Fullan and Pomfret (1977) termed fidelity, which first and foremost reflects the developer’s perspective and is thus indicative of the linear progress of change by supposedly measuring expected teachers’ behaviors in prescribed manners. Fundamentally, this perspective on practice considers the shape of change to be logical and sequential under the guideline or manual that requires teachers as users to follow the authority of the program developer’s ideas. Under the circumstance of fidelity-based change strategies, the purpose of research is to measure the location of the stages and levels of the implementation project.
Unless fidelity research, however, the purpose of the present research was to uncover the meaning of implementation from teachers' perspectives. If fidelity-based studies on implementation focus on the direct response of teachers to the external change requirements from the developer's perspective, then this phenomenological study is concerned with describing teachers' ongoing experiences lived through their daily teaching activities. Further, this research on curriculum implementation pursues the meaning of the individual teacher's responses to the intent of the developer in terms of her specific classroom situation, not vice versa.

Phenomenological research helps us see and understand the real features of an experience of a particular person. Unlike fidelity-based research aimed at pulling out the aggregate of a number of teachers' external concerns and behaviors at a particular space and time, phenomenological research places its focus on the experiences of individual teachers as they live them, making it possible for teachers to speak for themselves in a reflective manner. Therefore, in chapter one, the question "what does this educational change (the introduction of new curriculum materials) mean to the two teachers selected?" was raised.

In asking such a meaningful question, as in many other qualitative studies (Jacob, 1987; Lancy, 1993), the major task of this research was to describe what the selected teachers define, do, feel, think, and reflect. That is, the meaning of lived experience involves not only a situated moment such as emotions, memories, images, and the like, but also a constant movement inside and out through those situated moments. Describing such explicit and retrospective experiences of the teachers is the major consideration of this research.
However, capturing *lived* experience of others is not simple, because any "form" of expression for a certain phenomenon or experience can be quickly turned into secondary, as opposed to immediate or original experience. van Manen (1990) stated:

Experiential accounts or lived-experience descriptions - whether caught in oral or in written discourse - are never identical to lived experience itself. All recollections of experiences, reflections on experiences, descriptions of experiences, taped interviews about experiences, or transcribed conversations about experiences are already *transformations* of those experiences. (p. 54, italics in original)

There is no single, truthful way to make phenomenological research "phenomenological" without seriously accepting this transformed nature of experience. It is dangerous, therefore, to think that in the name of describing teachers' lived experience, the researcher transmits the experience of teachers into texts in a mirror-like fashion. In the sense of phenomenological research, *describing is part of interpreting and vice versa.* Without deep reflection on the part of the researcher on the experiential worlds as teachers live them in their everyday existence or their life-world (van Manen, 1990, p. 11), phenomenological investigation is impossible. Such reflections by the researcher are part of the research process toward a descriptive and interpretive account of the essence of experience that is basic to the whole stories or narratives of living human beings under study.

Phenomenology and hermeneutics overlap and are interdependent in the work of van Manen (1990). Hermeneutics refers to a theory of interpretation toward understanding. But not surprisingly, it means more than that, since "hermeneutics is far
from a univocal school of thought” (Smith, 1993, p. 184). In attempting to interpret the meaning of human action and/or social action, so many internal and external factors must be considered. In effect, the ultimate purpose of hermeneutic understanding of teachers’ lived experience for this research is different from other positions that are situated objectively, philosophically, and ideologically (Gallagher, 1992; Smith, 1993).

Consequently, one thing that should be made clear at this point is the sharp distinction between phenomenology as description and hermeneutics as interpretation. As van Manen (1990) argues, the substantive work of description is unlikely to be free from that of interpretation. That is, interpretation is by no means something followed by ‘pure description’ in a technical sense. As implied above, both activities overlap in nature and are interchangeable in a practical sense under the spirit of the phenomenological research study.

Finally, this theoretical and practical position of van Manen (1990) is clearly self-evident to the extent to which he places his great emphasis on the art of reflective writing. Writing about the study is both a beginning and an ending during the process of research. In other words, the value of phenomenological writing is transactional and transformational. The researcher may discover “something” never felt before while writing about the phenomenon (p. 13). In short, phenomenological writing requires a high level of reflection, skill, and capacity. Yet, it is possible when the researcher continuously writes and rewrites, “again and again, now here and then there … to arrive at a finely crafted piece” (p. 131).

Therefore, phenomenology involves a concomitant aspect of an interpretive research activity and, at the same time, a hermeneutic writing process. For van Manen
(1978, 1984, 1988, 1990), two types of descriptions are salient: “an immediate description of life-world as lived ... [and] a mediated description of the life-world as expressed in symbolic form” (van Manen, 1990, p. 25). The former has to do with describing the state of the lived-through quality of lived experience. The latter has to do with describing the state of the expressions of lived experience by means of “blushing, talk, action, a work of art, a text” (p. 25). Because most of the forms of lived experiences are the latter cases, the interpretive act of the researcher is necessary and can only be accomplished by writing activities. Hence, it is believed that the only way the researcher can arrive at deep layers of meanings of others is in writing that gets the researcher closer to the deep structure and ongoing construction of others’ lived experience.

To summarize, drawing on the hermeneutic phenomenological human science methodology (van Manen, 1990), this research emphasized the essence of the implementation phenomenon experienced by two teachers. It becomes clear that the focus on lived teacher experience is ontological or existential, rather than sequential or developmental. Given their narratives based on the day-to-day curriculum/teaching experiences during implementation, the researcher also experienced lived teacher experiences, vicariously and empathically, which helped to determine the essence of experience in written form.

Data Collection Procedure

Selection of the School

As is often the case with many qualitative researchers, the selection of the present research setting is “purposeful” (Patton, 1990, p. 169). Not long after formulating the research topic on curriculum-in-use or the process of curriculum implementation, the
researcher obtained information regarding a school district in a suburban area near Columbus, Ohio, in which the process of adopting new curricula materials had just completed. The subject matter of implementation was the language arts curriculum. Some inner controversies arose among teachers concerning adopting new curriculum materials, particularly surrounding the area of reading.

As Stake (1995) mentions, the value of case studies is built upon an assumption that there must be a significant aspect to learn more and in depth about concrete human behavior and organization (p. 4). Although it was hard to anticipate what was actually going on in that school, one thing that the researcher was intrigued with was the possibility that the teachers' situated use of new curriculum materials would be as high as was their active concern with curriculum adoption processes. By leaving the major research theme to be investigated (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 41), the researcher decided to select this school district, actively approaching the building principal to obtain permission for the research to take place within his facility.

Gaining Entry

In June 1998, an appointment was made with the elementary school principal. In consideration of the importance of the first impression and how it may influence the degree of acceptance of the gatekeeper, the researcher presented precisely what the research purpose was and how it was to proceed, by providing the research proposal along with a personal introduction of the researcher himself (Punch, 1994, pp. 86-87). Most of all, the emphasis of the first meeting with the principal was primarily on the intention of the research itself, which was descriptive, not evaluative. In addition, the necessity and significance of the research on implementation was also emphasized.
Secondly, the researcher encouraged the principal to express questions and concerns he had in mind, based on the presentation. The principal asked a few questions as to the numbers of participants, the length of fieldwork, the practical value of the research, and the like. The mood of the discussion was friendly and the discussion was productive. Supportive, the principal pointed out the necessity of the collaborative relationship between university and school. Although literature indicates that most gatekeepers tend to be most co-operative to the outside researcher when the purpose of research is identified with clarity and value (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, pp. 33-35), the researcher attributes the key factor of the success of gaining access to this school to the research-based philosophy of this principal.

Thirdly, at the end of the meeting with the principal, the researcher explained the ethics of research by mentioning the possible problems of the research and the responsibility of the researcher, i.e., the minor disturbance of classroom learning due to the existence of the researcher and the protection of participants. The researcher explained in some detail the code of the Human Subject Review Committee at the university to which the researcher belongs, confirming the need to get formal approval from the committee as soon as the preliminary or pilot research was completed. In short, the researcher promised to maintain a careful awareness of the potential disturbance of classroom observations and confidentiality issues for both the school and the research participants (Punch, 1994, pp. 92-94).

Lastly, by reiterating once again the purpose, process, time period, and significance of the study, the researcher gave the principal a week to review the proposal. The researcher noted that participation was voluntary, so that the principal could reject, if
uncomfortable, this research agenda after reviewing the given proposal. This could happen at any time, even during the actual research process (Spradley, 1980, pp. 20-25). A week later, the researcher made a phone call and received the formal acceptance of the principal, thus setting up the second appointment for help in selecting research participants.

Selection of Participants

A phenomenological description of what teachers experience using new curriculum materials in their daily classroom situations requires a careful, purposeful sampling procedure. It must basically reflect the common ground on which most humans, given a similar situation, are likely to experience the materials in a similar fashion. This does not, however, mean that most humans will experience the same thing under a certain circumstance. This means, instead, that although we human beings respond differently to the same event, there would exist the certain essential structure of experience, regardless of different background, beliefs, value, and knowledge (van Manen, 1990, p. 31).

Nonetheless, no phenomenological researchers specifically prescribe ways of sampling (van Manen, 1990). For example, in an effort to investigate motherhood, who needs to be selected for research on the transformational experience from being a woman to being a mother? (Bergum, 1991). This example does not allow for any woman at a certain stage of pregnancy can be selected. The more important criterion for phenomenological research is the degree of “a commitment of turning to an abiding concern … [or] a deep questioning of something” (van Manen, 1990, p. 31) largely from the side of the researcher. This is because the fundamental aim of phenomenological
research for van Manen and others (Baird, 1999; Bergum, 1991) is re-achieving or re-learning the lived experience of others.

Putting this matter differently, Stake (1995) formulates three different types of case sampling: intrinsic, instrumental, and collective. For the instrumental case study, for example, when a particular program is implemented, a case to be selected can be "something else" than the personnel with unique talents. That is, it is viewed that there might be some important lessons to be learned in studying the person selected, rather than studying another person who selected him - or herself. Stake contended:

We may choose a teacher to study, looking broadly at how he [sic] teaches but paying particular attention to how he [sic] marks student work and whether or not it affects her teaching. ... Case study here is instrumental to accomplishing something other than understanding this particular teacher.

(p. 3)

Clearly, however, Stake's remark about choosing a case as instrumental is inconsistent with the spirit of empirical phenomenological research noted before in terms of the target of research in and by itself. Notwithstanding, Stake's criterion provides for insight into selecting participants in the territory of empirical phenomenological research. In other words, participants to be selected in this research are not representative of those who fit an ideal type as a teacher in terms of professionally agreed upon teaching criteria. Nor are they reflective of those falling into an intrinsic category of case, "which is given ... [or someone whom] we really need to learn about (Stake, 1992, p. 3). Thus, the cases of teachers selected in this research are, asserts Stake, likely to be instrumental in studying the impact of newly adopted curriculum materials. At the same time, however,
their experiences lived through the daily interaction with those materials are also major targets of the research.

With this basic sampling criterion in mind, the researcher selected two teachers. As stated in chapter one, both were 2nd grade female teachers, who were initially selected for the pilot research during autumn 1998 in order to engage myself in learning and describing different realities of implementation across the classrooms under the same implementation process. In addition, the researcher believed that researching two cases was within the boundaries of the researcher’s abilities under the circumstance of the given time frame. Three interconnected criteria were as follows:

1. Different perspectives on teaching.

2. Activities of the curriculum development committee associated with the current curriculum development and implementation.

3. The same grade at the same school (if possible).

The first criterion was mainly because the researcher intended to study “two cases” of teachers in terms of their own perceptions and uses of new curriculum materials in their own classroom contexts, rather than the controlled result of adopting a specific reading instruction strategy. As mentioned above, the reason for selecting two cases was for the researcher to learn the different realities of classrooms in which different teachers experience the same implementation process in school.

The first teacher was introduced to the researcher by a university faculty member, who had the teacher as a student in her classroom. The researcher met her right after his first meeting with the principal. In the same manner used in the explanation to the principal, the purpose of the research and other necessary responsibilities that researchers
should ethically explain were delivered as sincerely as possible. The research proposal was also given to her, along with a request to review it and respond the following week. Furthermore, the researcher stated that participation must be voluntarily, so that, if uncomfortable, she could reject the proposal or drop out at any time during the research period.

After finalizing the full agreement, and with the support of both the principal and the first teacher, the researcher and the principal collaborated in the process of identifying the second teacher. In fact, because of a lack of specific information on the first teacher, prior to the collaboration with the principal, the researcher conducted a short, informal interview with the first teacher regarding how children might best learn to read. She defined it as activity-based teaching to read. Further, the following pilot classroom visit confirmed her point of view on teaching to read, because the researcher could observe active interactions between the teacher and students by means of activities drawn from textbooks and life experiences of students during the reading instruction.

Later, the researcher found out that in relation to the second criterion, service on a curriculum committee, each grade had a representative for the revision and adoption of the curriculum and its materials, respectively, over the last year. The first teacher selected was not a representative on these committees, so the principal recommended a second teacher who had joined the committee and was teaching at the same grade level.

At this point, the researcher reminded the principal that the purpose of this research had nothing to do with the comparison of the effectiveness and efficiency of reading instruction itself between the two teachers selected. More importantly, the researcher went on to explain that the present implementation research was absolutely different from
the commonly undertaken implementation research, in that the focus of research was on
describing qualitatively teachers’ individual and personal experiences, rather than on
measuring whether or not the teacher used curriculum materials.

As a result, the second teacher to be selected turned out to be a beginning teacher,
taught the same grade level as the first teacher, and served as a representative of the the
district-wide curriculum development and adoption committee. When the second
meeting was over, the principal took the researcher to the classroom of the second teacher
for a formal introduction, wherein the principal explained the present research. After the
principal left, the researcher gave the research proposal to the teacher and clearly noted
that participation must be voluntarily and the researcher would maintain confidentiality.

In addition, the researcher also conducted an informal interview with her regarding
how students learn to read. Her answer was that students, at least at the lower grade level,
first needed to acquire basic knowledge and skills to read. Yet, as a beginning teacher,
she said, she had been attempting to teach as best as she could by incorporating all other
strategies in her teaching. A week after our first meeting was done, a pilot classroom
observation provided evidence. Students were directly asked to decode a few words in
accordance with a rule of pronunciation along with comparison to and contrast with
similar patterns of vocabulary. The class moved on to the practice book in which students
were asked to identify a list of words having the same sounds. By and large, the teacher
appeared to emphasize basic skills and knowledge useful in comprehending the sound
and meaning of words. As mentioned before, this did not mean, however, that her
instruction was only based on such a word attack strategy. Other activities, e.g., peer
group read aloud or story composition, were also occasionally evident.
In sum, the criteria for selecting the two participants were consistent with the purpose of this research which was to uncover the meaning of implementation as lived experience, in this case, the way in which two teachers experienced the new curriculum materials, materials that were supposedly compatible with the district’s revised language arts curriculum. The curriculum materials adopted included no specific, single approach to teaching reading. Therefore, this research describes two different realities of implementation in and across the classrooms.

Observations

Data were collected during a two school year period 1998-2000. Overall, during the first half of the 1998-99 school year, prolonged and consistent fieldwork was done, the in-depth interviews being conducted during the rest of the time. Therefore, most of observational data was drawn in autumn 1998 (a total of 9 and 10 visits for Carol and Kelsey, respectively). As interviews were continuing, 2 visits were made for each classroom in spring and autumn 1999, respectively. Classroom visits were normally made for two to three hours in the morning once a week in each classroom. An all-day-long visit was also made one time for each classroom. No video or audio equipment was used to collect observational data.

As soon as the first year implementation process was launched, the pilot observational study began to identify the relationship between actions and thoughts/beliefs for each teacher. No specific instrument was used for this process of identification (Richardson, Anders, Tidwell, & Lloyd, 1991). As it turned out, the classroom practices of the two teachers selected were consistently different from each other, and what they believed about teaching reading was what they actually did in action. For instance, the
degree of use of teachers' curriculum materials was different between the two. One teacher frequently used the teacher’s manual, placing it beside her during the teaching process, and looked at specific pages. For this teacher, who believed that the acquisition of basic skills and knowledge were important to reading, at least in the lower grades, her actual teaching practices were mostly focused on getting students familiar with specific vocabulary.

On the other hand, the other teacher did not directly use the manual during the class. Instead, asking students to do certain tasks as a group or alone, she sometimes came to her desk, briefly looking at the manual and her lesson plan. This teacher believed that students might better learn to read while doing something or participating in certain activities related to their experiences. Most of her teaching practices consisted of varying tasks or a series of activities. The pilot observation study ended with an assumption that both teachers’ thoughts and beliefs were consistent with their actions in daily teaching situations, and actual observations continued.

Meanwhile, the role of the researcher during classroom visits was primarily as an observer. Since this research was focused on describing curriculum-in-use, the researcher could not help but become an observer sitting in the rear of the classroom. At times, however, the researcher sometimes joined the learning activities of the students, rather than just remaining aloof. At the minimum level, the researcher also joined in the classroom teaching process, i.e., teachers asked him to present on his home country, Korea, which the participant thought helpful for students in understanding better the culture of China as a topic of social studies. Overall, the researcher tried to be unobtrusive in the process of teaching and learning (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, pp. 40-45).
The field notes were made up of two sections: descriptive and reflective. For the descriptive purpose, the researcher noted teachers’ actions, students’ responses, their interactions, and the like. The reflective notes were designed to focus on situating the researcher in theoretical, methodological, and analytical considerations, i.e., part of teachers’ lesson plan, problems and concerns of the researcher, or emerging questions and issues for the researcher to later ask of the participants.

**Interviewing**

Interviewing is one of the most important data collection methods in qualitative research, particularly phenomenological research, since it can directly yield empirical data from participants. Depending upon types of research purposes and strategies, the nature and format of interviews may be different. In this present study focusing on experiences of teachers, a conversational interview was viewed as most appropriate. After briefly describing the range of the types of qualitative interviews, the reason why conversational interviewing was necessary will be explained.

**Interviews in general**

An interview is an activity conducted between at least two people, the interviewer and the interviewee. It involves a process by which the interviewer intends to obtain information necessary for his or her questions from the interviewee. In qualitative research, interviews can be used in two ways: “Either … [interviewing] may be the dominant strategy for data collection, or … [interviewing] may be employed in conjunction with participant observation, document analysis, or other techniques” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 135). Either way, however, the basic purpose of the
interviews is to gather descriptive data that include "the experience of other people and
the meaning they make of that experience" (Seidman, 1998, p. 3).

Qualitative interview strategies and procedures are different in traditions and
focuses (Creswell, 1998, p. 65; Dexter, 1970; Spradley, 1979), while the basic structure,
elements, and operation are largely identical (Kvale, 1984). In essence, the format of
qualitative interviews is less likely to be closed or structured, in which subjects or
participants "must fit their experiences and feelings into the researcher's categories"
(Patton, 1990, p. 289). Yet this does not mean that such a structured type of qualitative
interview is not worthwhile and not used in practice. Instead, because it is assumed that
individual interviewees "define the world in unique ways, ... [the interview] needs to be
more open-ended" (Merriam, 1998, p. 74). Given this assumption, it is believed that more
meaningful data in relation to the context can be gathered through open-ended or
unstructured interviews, in which interviewees can freely express their points of view,
feelings, or knowledge in their own words.

Typically, qualitative open-ended interviewing is explained in terms of the extent to
which "interview questions are determined and standardized before the interview occurs"
(Patton, 1990, p. 280, italics in original). Due to the dynamic of the research setting,
qualitative researchers sometimes encounter chances to talk informally with participants
"in the natural flow of an interaction" (Patton, 1990, p. 280). Or, when not knowing
"enough about a phenomenon to ask relevant questions" (Merriam, 1998, p. 75), the
researcher conducts interviews with no predetermined set of questions. Both cases are
called informal or unstructured open-ended questions. In most cases, however,
qualitative interviewing is likely conducted in the *semi-structured* format, which Merriam (1998) describes as follows:

Usually, specific information is desired from all the respondents, in which case there is a highly structured section to the interview. But the large part of the interview is guided by a list of questions or issues to be explored, and neither the exact wording nor the order of the questions is determined ahead of time. (p. 74)

Meanwhile, as Fontana and Frey (1994) broadly discuss, many critical issues should be dealt with under the open-ended qualitative type of interview. Central to these issues is the definition and characteristics of "good interviewing," which are not so much effective or technical as moral with an authentic relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee. This does not, however, deny the assumption that "good interviews produce rich data filled with words that reveal the respondents' perspectives" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 136). Rather, this does mean that in order to gather such data, the reciprocal and mutual relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee must be established. In this sense, the role of the interviewer should not be in the position of unduly interrogating the other (Merriam, 1998, p. 80), but in the position of "learning about ourselves as we try to learn about the other" (Fontana & Frey, 1994, p. 374).

One of the strategies for developing a respectful and nonjudgmental relationship between interviewer and interviewee is to conduct "conversational" interviewing, which is highly recommended by phenomenological researchers, who attempt to involve both the interviewee and the interviewer in hermeneutic or understanding discourses. According to this logic, interviewing is not just a technique to "let method rule the
question,” (van Manen, 1990, p. 66) but a co-creative dialogue between knower and knower. In what follows, the nature and procedure of conversational interviewing is explained while at the same time describing what the researcher actually did to get personal accounts of experiences.

**Conversational interviewing**

Overall, informal interviews or talks were conducted at every classroom visit. As a method of collecting data, such informal interviews are sometimes considered as an important and effective research strategy (Patton, 1990). Under the circumstances, the researcher attempted to ask a few questions based on the observations of the day. For instance, the teachers were asked, although not always, to reflect briefly on what mattered most, using curricula materials or the intent of the developer of those materials.

Formal, semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions for teachers were conducted a total of seven times for 30 or 40 minutes each in the classroom (two in autumn 1998 and three in spring 1999; two in autumn 1999). In spring 2000, follow-up interviews were also conducted two times for each teacher (e.g., For Kelsey, one for about 1 hour; the other for 30 minutes over the phone. For Carol, one for 30 minutes; the other for 40 minutes over the phone). In addition, one informal and one e-mail interview were conducted with the principal by the end of the 1998-99 school year, formal interviewing being conducted two times in autumn 1999 and spring 2000. In order to record and report data, all of formally conducted interviews were tape recorded with the permission of teachers and the principal every time and later transcribed. The interview instrument for teachers was adapted from Bussis, Chittenden, and Amarel’s (1976) phenomenological inquiry and Carson’s hermeneutical method (1992) and was initially
developed during a pilot phase of this study during autumn 1998. Furthermore, it was partly revised and redeveloped in response to evolving questions and issues as the research unfolded over the two years (see Appendix).

Each set of questions was given, if not always, in advance but the researcher also took advantage of opportunities to talk about peripheral or other emergent issues and topics. For this reason and others as well, all interviews were productive in that the researcher could obtain many concrete examples such as 'underlying curriculum adoption processes in school and personal opinions' and 'feelings, or personal philosophy and value over curriculum materials.' The format and style of the interview used in the present research was open-ended, in which the researcher talked less and listened more with patience (Seidman, 1998, pp. 63-66). Jotted notes were also made while listening during interviews.

In particular, after the second interview, an attempt was made to shift from the unstructured or open-ended interview method to hermeneutic phenomenological interviewing (van Manen, 1990, pp. 66-68). This was mainly because phenomenological research puts more emphases on interviewing than other methods (Baird, 1999; Bergum, 1991; Carson, 1992; Kvale, 1984). Specifically, in trying to recover the immediate experience of participants to the fullest, disciplined questioning was necessary. By distinguishing the hermeneutic phenomenological interview from other anthropological, psychological, and sociological interview methods, van Manen (1990) mentioned the very specific purposes as follows:

It may be used as a means for exploring and gathering experiential narrative materials that may serve as a resource for developing a richer and deeper
understanding of a human phenomena, and ... as a vehicle to develop a conversational relation with partner ... about the meaning of an experience. (p. 66, italics added)

With the importance of the phenomenological interview as a means in mind, the researcher then explained to participants the changed nature of the interview by using the word *conversation*, which informed participants of the fact that the researcher would actively participate in the interview to some extent. In doing so, the researcher made use of the ideas of Bergum (1991) with regard to the nature of what conversational interviewing is like:

The word ‘conversation’ implies a discussion and best captures the attitude of this interaction. Like an interview, the conversation has a central focus, but it is not one-sided. The matter of the conversations not only involved descriptions of experience, but, eventually, they involved reflection. (p. 61)

Also, before embarking on the somewhat new sense of the interview method, the researcher led the discussion regarding the definition of the life-world or lived experience by asking the participant their views on the topic. Not being a native English-speaker, and acknowledging the possibilities of misunderstanding something when participants spoke fast or misinterpreting the cultural meaning of language, the researcher politely requested that the participants be patient and speak slowly and use ordinary language as often as possible.

Two closely interrelated tactics used in this conversational interview method were as follows:

1. A hermeneutic commitment of questioning by relating parts to whole (Carson,
2. Asking participants to think of a specific instance in a consistent manner (Kvale, 1984, pp. 184-185; van Manen, 1990, pp. 66-68).

First, the researcher kept maintaining a hermeneutic circle of the parts and whole while listening to and talking with participants. In this regard, Carson (1992), in reference to Gadamer’s (1975) theory of philosophical hermeneutic inquiry, informs researchers of the nature of the dialectic of questions and answers in conversation. The present researcher admitted the following presumptions:

The preoccupation with the problem of curriculum implementation can be seen as a negativity of experience, i.e., ...the relationship between curriculum as plan and curriculum as lived in classroom is not as transparent as we had assumed it to be. (Carson, 1992, p. 74)

According to Carson (1992), such a preoccupation of the researcher with regard to implementation itself is a question that is not to be solved by direct research, but by an uncovering of the very question. Further, the way of uncovering such a preoccupation needs to be open and mutual in that one authentically considers the other’s opinion as important (Carson, 1992, p. 74). Simply stated, because the nature of the preoccupation begins with the experience of misunderstanding of a phenomenon, more concern should be dialectically made by engaging both the interviewer and the interviewee in revealing common meaning. For example, while talking about ways of in-service training in school, the researcher tried to figure out what happened and thus what the participant felt, both specifically and broadly, to elicit a common meaning that teachers might experience as a result of the school-based change endeavor:
Researcher (RE): You said late October or early November, one representative from the textbook company came here for in-service training. Who joined that training session?

Participant (PA): Anybody who wanted to go.

RE: Wanted to go?

PA: Some people could not go because of prior arrangement ... but if you could go and you wanted to go, it was up to you ...

RE: Was it planned before?

PA: We did not have anything ... 

RE: You requested and then they came?

PA: Yea, everybody was feeling sort of the same way ... a little overwhelmed. And so we decided that we would call the company and have somebody come in and talk to us about it.

RE: Interesting!

PA: ... [The textbook company] told us when we bought the books somebody would come in for staff development. Nobody ever made an appointment ...

RE: The textbook company seemed to break a promise?

PA: Yes, that was what all of us thought. But after we called and
requested, then they were here right away.

* * * *

Secondly, while the conversational interviewing proceeded jointly, the researcher directed participants to think of a concrete example whenever a significant issue or problem came to the surface (van Manen, 1990, pp. 66-68). This interview tactic was used for exemplifying stories or experiences as they were lived. Under the certain circumstances of asking the definition and meaning for participants, the researcher found it necessary to raise intentional questions such as “What do you mean by that?” Or, whenever participants began to generalize about the experience, the researcher inserted a question that turned the discourse back to the level of concrete experience: “Can you give me an example?” (van Manen, 1990, p. 68). To some extent, such questions were likely to involve part of a self-interpretive process on the spot (Kvale, 1984, p. 181), which may be critical in interpreting interview transcriptions and writing qualitative findings.

Reflective Journal

As van Manen (1990) argues, “hermeneutic phenomenological research is fundamentally a writing activity” (p. 7). Throughout the data collection period, the researcher kept a journal. It was constructed in three ways. First, while returning home after observations and conversations, the researcher tape recorded his observations about what happened specifically and what the researcher learned, felt, and experienced. Secondly, based on tape recording in the car and field notes, personal reflections were entered in the researcher’s journal (see one example in chapter 4, pp. 234-236). Finally, being aware of the importance of the role of the reflexive journal as an important validity means (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 318), the researcher self reflected, occasionally, on the
research progress, preliminary analyses, uncertainties of phenomenological findings, relevant issues in other literatures, and the like.

**Document Analysis**

Document analysis is one of the most common of three data collection methods, along with participant observation and interviewing, in qualitative research. Its form and content may vary, ranging from "the personal to the official document" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, pp. 97-102; Patton, 1990, pp. 276-281) and from "the written to the non-written form," e.g., audio-visual materials (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, pp. 102-109; Creswell, 1998, p. 120). To a larger extent, collecting documents plays an important role in making qualitative research comprehensive. It may give broad information to help the field worker or the researcher in understanding the setting and the participants historically and biologically. Also, documents collected during the fieldwork provide for additional resources useful in cross referencing or validating other data from observations and interviews.

During the research process, documents such as the newly revised reading curriculum, the teacher’s manual, new textbooks, practice books, lesson plans, worksheets, personal letters, e-mail communications, and photos were collected for analysis.

In hermeneutic phenomenological research, according to van Manen (1990), the method of document analysis appears to be more than a typical technique designed to collect data. Basically, the concern in phenomenological research is with collecting clues or stories of concrete, lived human experiences and attempting to re-create and describe the essence of these experiences. Personally constructed writings or reports are
considered highly informative, if guided appropriately and written authentically (van Manen, 1990, pp. 63-66, pp. 73-74). In doing so, a specific request is necessary by asking “Please write a direct account of a personal experience as you lived through it” (p. 65). Yet, van Manen warns that participants should not be too concerned about the factual accuracy and feel burdened over with it.

In the beginning of the research, autumn 1998, the researcher provided participants with a notepad designed to obtain a personal log of issues, concerns, and problems in their daily life situations. As it turned out, only two entries from one participant were made in a whole month, even though encouragement was occasionally given. Both teachers expressed a lack of time to reflect on the items requested, and they promised to delve into such matters when talking with the researcher. Hence, this created opportunities for additional on-site informal interviews in order for the researcher to gain information about these teachers’ ad hoc concerns and experiences in using curriculum materials. Through this experience, the researcher learned that interviewing was an effective way to obtain the desired data. The participant teachers were willing to discuss and co-construct knowledge with the researcher in the semi-structured interviews. However, due to time and/or other constraints, the teachers were reluctant to write about their implementation issues on their own.

**Reflexive Data as Social Construction**

Occasionally, the researcher became aware of social interactions between the two teachers during the research period. Both teachers had been teaching at the same school and same grade level for two years. Such interactions were evident, not only when they felt unsure of requests from the researcher, but also when they met in the formal grade
meetings and informal daily situations. Indeed, it was also natural for the researcher experientially to encounter one teacher after the other teacher. This was highly evident to the researcher when asking the same interview question in turn.

For instance, when it was time to ask the participants to stop entering logs, after realizing the unrealistic method in the context of such a busy classroom life, the researcher explicitly figured out the fact that both teachers had already discussed with each other the problems with the log assignment. Presumably, one teacher felt uncomfortable with writing something on her daily life situations, asking the other teacher what she had done. After identifying the same feeling in each other, both teachers agreed to explain to the researcher the unrealistic nature of the writing task.

This socially constructed reality was also in operation in the regular grade level meeting, which occurred every two weeks in the 1998-99 school year and every month in the 1999-2000. Each participant listened to what other teachers thought and thus taught in similar and different manners, sharing experiences with one another. This social stock of knowledge experientially influenced the method and process of implementation of each participant in one way or another. In particular, the special research project with the university researcher was likely to make both teachers more attentive to such regular grade level meetings. Likewise, both female teachers, who are of similar age and consider each other a close friend, tended to exchange what worked and did not work in teaching practice during their daily encounters in each classroom or during lunchtime.

Data Analysis/Interpretation

Many qualitative researchers might agree with the assumption that early data analysis needs to be simultaneously done with data collection, since it enables the
researcher “to focus and shape the study as it proceeds” (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 127). Therefore, one is generally encouraged to do some rudimentary analysis in the process of collecting data to produce a set of tentative categories useful for ongoing data analysis and interpretation (Merriam, 1998, pp. 161-164). Later on the actual data analysis and interpretation involves a more complex and time-consuming process. Some researchers prefer to rigorously engage in a causal or logical approach to analyzing and interpreting a bulk of data to overcome the notion of qualitative analysis as an intuitive activity (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 2).

Meanwhile, a few “interpretive” qualitative research traditions have developed their own particular analysis and interpretation systems. This is true of data analysis and interpretation in phenomenological research. The difference between philosophical and empirical phenomenology is self-evident. But, as discussed in chapter two, its basic mode for analyzing and interpreting the meaning and structure of human experience is similar in terms of the reflexivity of the researcher. In this section, three interpretive methods were used such as (a) epoche and bracketing in phenomenology, (b) hermeneutics, and (c) thematic analysis. However, the order presented here does not reflect the order of actual analysis and interpretation conducted in this research. The approaches were utilized, both individually and collectively.

**Epoche and Bracketing**

As mentioned in chapter two, epoche and bracketing refer to the pure philosophical reflection of consciousness and the self-examination during the epoche, respectively (Bernstein, 1976). In a sense, these concepts are a beginning point of phenomenological reflection, analysis, and interpretation. The epoche used in philosophical phenomenology
is abstract or complex for not only subject matters to be reflected, but also the process to be utilized. It is, therefore, believed that these subjects can only be encountered while an actor is deeply and intentionally engaged in a deep philosophical reflection on the essential aspect of the phenomenon.

Husserl (1970) explains two levels of epoche. Through the first or psychological epoche, one merely perceives oneself thinking, feeling, and acting on common experiences to clarify what a phenomenon is like. As a result, one “certainly has experiences of things but has no idea yet of inner structures” (p. 248). The second or pure epoche has to do with making evident the fact that “what was taken for granted in the first interpretation of the universality ... was ... a self-misunderstanding” (p. 250). That is, by deeply reflecting on a phenomenon, one comes to know things, seeing them as they appear, turning to the things themselves by intentionally staying away from preconceptions or prejudgments (Moustakas, 1994, p. 90).

Meanwhile, bracketing is also in operation during the epoche. Here, one brackets to search, identify, and reflect on the taken for granted or natural attitude. Bracketing is a serious self-conscious examination, in which elements and essential structures of a thing or phenomenon are “uncovered, defined, and analyzed” (Denzin, 1989a, p. 55). The most important role of bracketing is, of course, the act of suspending one’s beliefs inherent in pre-conceptualized prejudices for the purpose of elucidating the essential structure of the world (van Manen, 1990, p. 175). In this sense, bracketing is viewed as critical in that one rethinks the meaning taken for granted (Moustakas, 1994, p. 89).

The implication of epoche and bracketing for the process of analyzing and interpreting the findings of this research was both direct and indirect. It was direct in that
these processes played a role in helping the researcher get into the life-world or lived experience of teachers. It was also indirect in that some basic notions, i.e., returning to things themselves or suspension of judgment, were used in an ongoing fashion, along with the following other specific techniques such as hermeneutic and thematic analysis.

Because phenomenological analysis requires a holistic approach to capturing the essence of human experience, the researcher ought to see not only fragments or incidents of experiences, but also an overarching experience lived through the flow of consciousness of the researched inside and out of the context in which participants live. To encounter such a deep sense of the experience of the teacher facing implementation, the researcher utilized the following reflective processes, which were done in a back and forth manner until capturing a clear sense of what a certain experience was like:

1. After finding a quiet place, I pondered what this teacher actually did in a specific situation, with a focus on how concrete curriculum use was made in relation to significant statements drawn from interview transcriptions.

2. I wrote down what ideas the teacher used, directly and indirectly, including specific ideas from the teacher's manual, and described them as they were. I also wrote down in what ways the teacher did not use new curriculum materials and in what contexts.

3. I explored what this teacher might have taken for granted.

4. I interpreted tentatively what this experience was like for this teacher.

5. I suspended possible prejudices or pre-conceptions of the researcher for this teacher's natural attitude or the taken for granted.

6. I continuously inspected the tentative meaning of what this teacher
experienced in the specific situation.

These processes of the epoche and bracketing required several hard practices with patience. Once again, they proceeded not linearly, but reflectively. The epoche and bracketing used here were both preliminary and actual, and combined with the following reflective methods.

Hermeneutics

Literally, hermeneutics is a theory of interpretation. The origin and development of hermeneutics is long and complex (Silverman, 1984). Beginning in the field of biblical commentary, where interpretation was a matter of grammatical works to reproduce the functional and exact meaning of texts accurately, the field of hermeneutics has now included varying interpretive works in terms of different ways and concerns of making sense of textual meanings. That is, the aims of interpretation vary in terms of whose authority is prioritized in the process of decoding languages as a primary concern and whose interests are dealt with under the broad social and political contexts. In short, hermeneutics as a theory of interpretation covers various layers of textual meanings and different degrees of contextual considerations (Gallapher, 1992, pp. 1-29).

As one exemplar of hermeneutic traditions, Gadamer’s (1960/1997) perspective is largely viewed as useful in this research for analyzing and interpreting lived teacher experiences, because his basic idea for achieving understanding is located in the active process of knowledge construction through the self-reflection of the interpreter. Like the phenomenological perspective on Verstehen, or understanding involving meaning constructions for human behavior in context, Gadamer argues the interrelationship between the interpreter and a text. That is, interpreting a text is viewed as understanding 111
the self of the interpreter, rather than as discovering a meaning that exists in advance (Smith, 1988, p. 195). When the interpreter reflectively engages in and thus closely belongs to the text being read, meaningful understandings occur.

For Gadamer (1960/1997), there is no fixed or predetermined way of interpreting a text. Analysis and interpretation are in the self-reflective process of revealing "a prejudice" (p. 277) that originates in the notion of pre-judgment. As a result, meanings are achieved when the interpreter brings such a prejudice into his or her active knowledge construction process. As mentioned in the discussion of conversational interviewing in this chapter, this process is based upon dialogue between the interpreter and the text being read in terms of "historical consciousness" (pp. 300-307) that connects the existence of the interpreter to living or changing traditions. In other words, the interpreter is not seen as passive, in that he or she attempts to be open to his or her misunderstanding. Simultaneously, the meaning the interpreter constructs is viewed as historical in that he or she questions and answers and even challenges ongoing discourses out of context.

However, given Gadamer's (1960/1997) assumption that interpretation begins with the prejudices of the interpreter, how can it be actually possible to analyze and thus interpret texts or human actions? Surprisingly, while discussing the notions of phenomenology and hermeneutics, Polkinghorne (1983) claims, "there is no such thing as the correct interpretation" (p. 226, italics in original). This statement is, in fact, expected in the logic of Gadamer's viewpoint involving dialectical interaction between the interpreter and the text being read. This dialectical interaction is, of course, dependent
upon the degree of reflexivity on the part of the researcher. Therefore, the researcher as an interpreter should keep reflecting on and revealing his or her prejudice or beliefs:

The interpreter gains understanding by grasping the meanings carried by the linguistic articulation of the text. He or she does not approach the text as a blank page, but has expectations, and approaches the text with prejudgments about what will be found there. These expectations are beliefs and practices, concepts and values, that make up the interpreter’s own life-world.

(Polkinghorne, 1983, p. 226)

Putting matters differently, as an interpretive anthropologist, Geertz’s (1973) viewpoint on cultural interpretation needs to be mentioned in this regard. Disagreeing with the formalistic or technical way of analyzing and thus interpreting a culture in terms of “the factual base … [or] established codes” (p. 9), he claims that “understanding a people’s culture exposes their normal-ness without reducing their particularity” (p. 14). By discussing the notion of “thick description,” referred to as what an actor brings to his or her experience, Geertz says, “data are really our constructions of other people’s constructions” (p. 9). This is because there is no way to make meanings of others’ experiences understood perfectly or completely, so all we can do is just continue to interpret.

Taken together, given these hermeneutic and cultural theories of analysis and interpretation, the major analytic and interpretive point central to this phenomenological research is twofold.

First, as van Manen (1990) and Denzin (1989a) also point out, the inquirer must be
aware of the hermeneutic circle in which parts and whole move back and forth, a movement that increases the depth of understanding in the dialectic manner. This framework is important, not only because it implies that there is no objective interpretation of human experience of others, but also because it provides the researcher with a direction by which to interpret all textual or interview transcriptions. Two case studies of teachers were analyzed using similar processes. The researcher continued to build a dialectic relationship of the part (facts of lived experience) to the whole (a phenomenon). This was an ongoing process of being in the classroom, interviewing with the teachers, and writing in a research journal (Bergum, 1991, p. 62). For example, the researcher listened to the tape recordings again and again to catch on to the sensitivity of the participants, noting their key expressions or sentences in the reflective journal, and double checking what the researcher has learned and understood before returning to the classrooms.

Second, these interpretive or hermeneutic considerations gave the researcher self-critical reflexivity (van Manen, 1990). This hermeneutic reflexivity was pragmatic in the sense that the researcher first inserted himself into a complex teaching practice to gain insightful descriptions of ways actual teachers make sense of change in their classrooms. In this regard, the researcher constantly raised a question of "who am I, then?" The future identity of the researcher is a potential curriculum developer or theorist, who is supposed to develop curriculum, curriculum materials, or theories about these materials and their implementation. Therefore, the observation and interpretation of the teachers' experiences could not be separated from the self of the researcher. The researcher critically reflected on this matter by constructing the hermeneutic circle between the
researcher and each participant. Through this hermeneutic phenomenological reflection, the researcher critically reflected on another question, that of “what if teachers do not use curricula I have developed?” Eventually, the researcher can not help but interpret this implementation process from both the insider’s and the outsider’s perspective. In the following chapter, this reflexivity will be presented from the researcher’s present and future perspective.

Thematic Analysis

The thematic analysis was conducted at a time when necessary data had all been gathered. This analysis and interpretation made use of transcriptions of interviews as major data resources. According to van Manen (1990), a theme refers to “the structure of experience” (p. 78) that occurs frequently in the text. What follows is the procedure of thematic analysis used in this research.

1. After reading carefully all texts, situation by situation, in conjunction with curriculum implementation, coding was done. This continued until a group of meaningful descriptions were incorporated in constructive manners. Metaphorically, van Manen (1990) calls these overarching descriptions of lived experiences “knots … around which certain lived experiences are spun and thus lived through as meaningful wholes” (p. 90).

2. Such thematic descriptions were deliberately weighed to find out which ones were richer in nature. Through this deliberation, those descriptions were later screened by holistic, selective, and line-by-line approaches. That is, the researcher weighed the degree and level of their expressions by situating self in their life-world scenes and drawing the big picture of their classroom practices.
3. Incidental themes were discriminated from essential themes. By replaying the question, "Is this phenomenon still the same if we imaginatively change or delete this theme from the phenomenon?" (van Manen, 1990, p. 107), a narrative elaboration of the lived meaning of implementation for each teacher was constructed. Whole but still ongoing stories of each participant as a result of this elaboration were used for writing final descriptions by reflectively engaging the researcher in a continuous balance between parts and whole, without relying on concepts or theories outside context.

Trustworthiness

To a large extent, those in the territory of the qualitative or interpretive inquiry paradigm have not explicitly considered and used the matter and the language of what is called 'validity or criteria' in the sense that has been seriously taken into account by conventional or quantitative researchers (Donmoyer, 1990; Schofield, 1990). Nonetheless, under the heritage of alternative perspectives in anthropology and sociology, much emphasis has been made on the art of descriptive understanding of multiple intentions (Geertz, 1973, pp. 3-30) and realities of human actions in social worlds (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975; Denzin, 1989a). As a result, it is now believed that the art of empathic understanding of others and the logic of rigorousness from the side of the researcher would cover the internal value and external persuasion of the process and product of qualitative research.

Validity

Explanations of the trustworthiness of qualitative research studies can be largely grouped into two different arguments. One has to do with taking into account the
difference of the fundamental assumption and aim between qualitative and quantitative inquiry. For instance, as Eisner (1998) argues, "qualitative inquirers do not seek those universal, invariable, and eternal natural laws represented by the aims of physicists" (p. 39), so that different notions of validity and criteria must be considered. By using the term persuasion in the field of law, Eisner maintains that readers are to accept the process and product of qualitative work when seeing an argument that is represented in a coherent, insightful fashion by means of multiple resources available inside and out of context. In essence, for Eisner and others (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Patton, 1990), the degree of the appropriateness and fittingness of research purpose to methods determines such persuasion. Hence, comparability between qualitative and quantitative inquiry is possible to the extent to which the dynamic nature of social situations and the living quality of human minds are to be fully understood (Eisner, 1981; Firestone, 1987).

On the other hand, the logic of some qualitative methodologists is strict in that qualitative inquiry needs to meet specifically constructed criteria whose rationale originates in conventional or scientific inquiry paradigms. In doing so, juxtaposed criteria against internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity used in positivist or quantitative research paradigms are created such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability, respectively, in what Lincoln & Guba (1985) called naturalistic inquiry (p. 300), to differentiate, and thus legitimate, different philosophical and methodological assumptions.

These alternative criteria of Lincoln and Guba (1985, 1989) provide for specific ways and techniques to increase credibility and reliability. For example, using internal validity as a technique of credibility, 'prolonged engagement' is when qualitative
inquirers are "involved with a site sufficiently long to detect ... distortions that might otherwise creep into data" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 302). In order to learn natives' senses of customs or cultures, it is suggested that anthropologists spend at least a year, which may make them familiar with a whole life cycle. In general, qualitative researchers are also encouraged to be involved in a site until discovering patterns of behaviors or social order. This information on the process of collecting data, if the data are analytically analyzed, enables the persuasion of the reader.

To summarize, the notion of validity in qualitative research in general and phenomenology in particular needs to be differently understood from that of traditional or scientific research. Its philosophical and methodological assumptions differ in many ways. In reference to the nature and function of human cognition or experiential nature within daily social lives, we can thoughtfully follow the argument as to how human knowledge construction and transformation occur, and thus can be validated. Yet, articulated versions of validity in qualitative inquiry are also available due to those who concerned with the considerations of solid validity in comparison with the conventional research paradigm. The next section presents how this researcher tried to make data collection and interpretation credible.

**Strategies used in this Research**

Four kinds of salient strategies were adopted in this research to produce and maintain credible and reliable data.

1. Because phenomenological research finds interviewing to be a crucial method (van Manen, 1990), careful and consistent attention was paid to an appropriate time
length and quality level of interviews, which occurred only after sound relationships with participants had been developed. As stated before, during the first half of the first year, during long periods of classroom visits, the researcher successfully established rapport, defined as "a distance-reducing, anxiety-quieting, trust-building mechanism that primarily serves the interest of the researcher" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 94). As an indicator of rapport encountered in this research, the continually increasing willingness of both teachers to share their stories, both in and out of context, helped provide specific and concrete examples of their classroom lives.

Given such a productive relationship between researcher and researched, the first interview was done. After that, by discussing the definition of what phenomenological research looked like, the researcher could also establish their dedication to full involvement in this research. For instance, when given the interview questions, participants brought their jotted notes to the researcher, citing specific ideas, examples, and reflections.

2. All of the transcribed data was sent back to participants during summer 1999 and winter 2000 before the final analysis was begun. Although both participants did not read them line by line, their comments were positive concerning the transcriptions. Later, when reviewing some key sentences with both participants during the follow-up interviews in spring 2000, their responses were also consistent. In addition, during the writing of final reports, their feedback was occasionally solicited for double-checking and confirmation.

3. All data were triangulated. Triangulation refers to the way in which data is
collected and analyzed from different sources, methods, theories, and investigators (Denzin, 1989a, b; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To yield more credible data, efforts are made to approach reality or human actions more than one way. In this research, the notion of triangulation pertains to "methods." That is, different methods such as interviewing, observations, and document analysis were used. Because data were gathered in multiple ways, the range of analyzing meanings of teachers' experiences was comprehensive. For depth, the researcher also reflectively triangulated different modes of collected data to find out convergent and divergent meanings. In other words, triangulating was not so much a technical process by which to merely choose and drop data as it was an interpretive process by which to search for meanings in context (Mathison, 1988).

4. The overall research purpose and design was shared during phone calls and face-to-face meetings with two colleagues taking qualitative methodology classes. In particular, before the final writing stage, a conference was held in March 2000 to present overall outcomes of this research by focusing on key expressions or written sentences made by participants, along with the reflections of the researcher on that data.

Chapter Summary

This methodology chapter consisted of three parts. First, phenomenological inquiry, adopted in this research, was appropriate to the purposes set by the researcher. In reference to the work of van Manen (1990), a rationale was singled out by virtue of focal points of empirical hermeneutic phenomenology. Then, the researcher described the whole procedure of this research including the strategy for gaining entry, data collection, data analysis and interpretation, and the credibility and validity of this research.
CHAPTER 4

REPRESENTATIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS OF DATA

Introduction

In this chapter, the case studies of two teachers are described, analyzed, and interpreted. The two cases are reported separately. And a section deals with a social interaction between the two teachers during the process of implementation. This chapter consists of four parts. In order to make teachers' meaning-making processes over the use of curriculum materials better understood, I begin this chapter by describing the research setting: (a) the school, (b) the two teachers, (c) the adoption processes of curriculum materials, and (d) the major aspects of curriculum materials. These descriptions help the reader come to understand the broad context in which a curriculum change phenomenon is situated.

In part two, the teacher’s curriculum use is recounted by stories derived from many pages of field notes and interview transcriptions illuminating participants’ thoughts, actions, and reflections. These stories demonstrate the lived experience of these teachers. First, each teacher’s definition of curriculum implementation is described. Drawing on a participant’s perspective, I describe what teachers think of curriculum implementation, in
general, and the reading curriculum, in particular. Secondly, ways in which each teacher tries to make sense of curriculum materials adopted are described. The focus of this description is on the teacher's experiences while encountering and thus using new curriculum materials in her daily classroom situations. Thirdly, in order to understand impacts of new curriculum materials on teachers' "life-world" from the teachers' perspective, I describe teachers' reflections on their experiences during the implementation process.

In part three, social contexts across two classrooms and beyond are described. More often than not, teachers' social discourses regarding implementation become a critical resource in understanding each teacher's learning process toward her own classroom change effort. Hence, I describe in what way these two teachers interacted, both socially and professionally, and consequently learned from each other during this curriculum implementation process.

Finally, in part four, the researcher reflects on each teacher's life-world or lived experience undergone during this reading implementation process. This etic, or outsider's point of view, makes it possible to analyze and interpret teachers' theories of action that were explicit with the use of the new curriculum materials in context. In particular, I reflect on what matters and does not matter for the school principal and teachers alike facing certain decisions underlying curriculum implementation in the school context.

It is likely impossible to separate the description, analysis, and interpretation task anywhere as clearly as this listing might imply. In phenomenological research, descriptions and interpretations overlap. I, as a researcher, am not convinced that I am
able to describe "exactly" what I saw and was told in the same way that participants immediately experienced it. This kind of a pure descriptive consciousness or experience is only possible for those living in context. All I could do was try to "re-achieve" what teachers immediately experienced in textual form. In other words, while describing teachers' actions, emotions, or cognition regarding specific matters as closely as possible, I could not help but concomitantly mediate my own frame of reference to help me make sense of the situation. By keeping aware of a hermeneutic circle between parts (what was explicitly seen and told) and whole (an overarching process of how this teacher learns from self and context), I engaged myself in describing/interpreting and thus "reconstructing" teachers' lived experience so as to make sense to me and the reader alike.

The names have been changed to protect the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants, the school, and the textbook company. Also, certain minor editing changes have been made in presenting verbatim data or interview transcriptions.

Research Setting

The School

It took about 25 minutes to drive from my house to the Evergreen Elementary School. Evergreen was located in a school district on the outskirts of one of Ohio's major cities. I had to change local freeways a couple of times to get Evergreen. I could see a number of huge car dealers and farms along the way. I got lost on my first attempt to visit the school. The school was in the middle of a residential area, and I passed the street
where I was to turn right due to my excitement as I was beginning the project. The Evergreen Elementary School building itself was old fashioned and faded in color. The small square of the parking lot was full of cars in rows. Upon entering the building, I easily found the school office full of people working and visiting, wooden cases, a copy machine, and pictures.

While waiting for the principal, Mr. Smith, I saw a picture from a newspaper posted on the board in which Mr. Smith was presenting an award to a retired teacher in appreciation of continuing volunteer activities. The big smiles of the two people in the picture, headlined ‘Outstanding Teacher’s Advice: Love Students,’ made me feel comfortable. The principal’s office was connected to this outer office, and soon, Mr. Smith, a man in his early 50s, welcomed me.

According to Mr. Smith, this school was going to move the following school year to a new facility currently under construction. I was able to do my research in this new school facility during the second year. The new school, which even received a name, was a large and highly modernized facility. Everything was completely different. This school consisted of 650 K-3 students and a total of 58 teachers and staff. Many experienced teachers had taught here for between 7 and 20 years. As a result of increase in student population, a number of new teachers were also in the building. “This school,” Mr. Smith said, “was a very small rural school and has changed dramatically in 10 years to become very large with about a 50% increase in the last 5 years. Before, we were a very white middle class school district.” Due to two low income housing complexes recently completed in this school district, Mr. Smith continued, “we have become racially,
socially and ethnically, a very diverse school district.”

Principal Smith had been working at this school since 1984. He believed that “good education was providing an opportunity for all students to learn at their optimal potential regardless of their ability level.” In responding to my question regarding the role of the teacher in education, in general, and in the process of implementation, in particular, he defined the role of teachers as “inspiring young boys and girls to want to learn and then provide them with appropriate activities to enable them to learn.” During the research period, I sensed that teachers and staff respected him. As the two participants in this research said, he was “supportive” of their classroom teaching and his management of the school was “democratic.” Indeed, his perception of teachers tended to be very positive and optimistic. I heard support for this perception directly from Mr. Smith. He spoke with a gentle voice, “we have very, very good teachers who are dedicated and work very hard with all students especially those who are having problems.” For the current implementation process, he explained:

I give teachers the direction but I also give them a lot of freedom to explore and to try new ideas, and if they fail, I try to help them pick up the pieces and try something else. I feel if teachers don’t take risks, they are never going to grow. Without growth, nothing is going to happen. I trust teachers. … We select good materials to teach, and honestly, our teachers do 90% of the work involved.

The Evergreen Elementary School’s mission was “To Teach All Students to Become Effective and Responsible Citizens.” Recently, the school experienced the
growing increase of parents' participation in official meetings to talk about reading or math. Such official meetings at the school level were full of parents. Mr. Smith explained, "We usually have between 80 and 90% of parents' participation" for those meetings on subject matters. Yet, as he reminded me, "this number itself does not mean that almost all of our parents take care of their kids on a daily basis." As the local report card for the building proficiency test results (4th grade, 50.4% in reading, 1997-1998) in the state of Ohio showed, he said, "we are just above [the state] average [47.1%]." The school district revised language arts curriculum this year, 1998, and adopted new textbooks after eight years. Mr. Smith hoped that this implementation process at his school, the one discussed in this research, "helped teachers improve their instructional practice," but also "provided parents with more chances to work with their kids."

**Teacher 1: Mrs. Kelsey Backer**

The first participating teacher was Kelsey, 28, white, and married. She came from a state near Ohio. After graduating college, majoring in elementary education (K-8), she pursued a master's degree in reading. The main reason to study reading was her long-time personal habit and hobby of reading books. After graduation, she taught as a substitute teacher for two years. Due to the employment market in her hometown and state as a whole, she had come to the state of Ohio to get a full time teaching job. This school was where she started her teaching career full-time in 1997, a year before this research began. She was, therefore, one of many beginning teachers in this school, consecutively teaching the 2nd grade for two years.

Her family background influenced her future. Her parents and a few relatives were
teachers. Her father was still a high school teacher. For this reason, she grew up having a lot of volunteer experiences in association with school activities and a day care center near her home. Her mother, having left teaching when Kelsey was 3 to be a full time mother, was always beside her to help her grow and learn to work together. Particularly, she remembered two great teachers, one elementary and one high school, who treated her very specially and positively. What both teachers had in common was that while they expected her to be excellent in her academic achievements, they simultaneously gave her a lot of direct and indirect feedback in those instances when she failed to meet these high expectations. Both teachers looked forward at all times to her continued improvement.

“They never gave up,” she said, “and this always made me feel good and helped my self-esteem.” In short, she said “I liked THAT feeling a lot and both teachers really inspired me to become a teacher.”

Her actual experience as a beginning teacher has not been easy. When she was asked what her teaching life looked like thus far, she said, “I am JUST trying to survive my first two years of teaching.” Her first year teaching was “kind of scary.” She believed that she had, then, enough education to teach students. As she reflects now, classroom teaching was so demanding and uncertain not knowing whether or not what she was doing was really appropriate for student learning. This year as a second year teacher, she confessed that she had changed her survival strategy to the extent that she wanted to open her perspective by attempting to “learn what I am doing.” In other words, she told herself, “I just want to learn a lot about myself this year.”

Under the seemingly overwhelming process of the reading series implementation,
her survival efforts stated above, i.e., learning about herself, have been explicitly
challenged. "Every week [of reading class] is new!" she said. She has made continuous
efforts to get familiar with the use of the new curriculum materials, and to "try to find out
what works best for my class," which had made her tired, "both mentally and physically."
In sum, as a beginning teacher, Kelsey has been experiencing some difficulties in
teaching. Such practical difficulties in Kelsey's teaching of reading have likely been
accelerated as the new reading series has been implemented. Under these circumstances,
she has been seeing herself as a "learner to digest new knowledge."

Teacher 2: Mrs. Carol Steinberg

The second participant was Carol, 29, white, married, with two children. She grew
up in a very small town in Ohio and lived there through her high school graduation. No
close family or relatives were classroom teachers or school administrators, but still, she
made up her mind to pursue higher education and a teaching degree. To support her
college tuition, she had to have both academic and athletic scholarships. While playing
volleyball at college, she majored in elementary education. She remembered having a
learning disability when she was in the 2nd grade. At that time, a wonderful 2nd grade
teacher worked really hard to help her all through the year and, fortunately, she
maintained average academic progress. Her encounter with such a wonderful teacher was
imprinted in her mind, and now she believed undoubtedly that this teacher prompted her
to become a teacher.

Seven years have passed since she started her teaching career at this school. Most of
that teaching experience has been at the 2nd grade level. Beginning in the 1999-2000
school year, she has been mentoring another beginning teacher next door, not Kelsey. All of her lesson plans have been shared with her protégé. With regard to the new reading series being implemented, she has been specifically consulting her protégé by saying “this is not a good thing to teach, this is what you need to teach, you hit this later on, etc.” She believed that her protégé, who has been so overwhelmed by the new reading series, as was Carol herself the year before, has been grateful for this type of specific help. Nonetheless, she did not insist that her protégé follow exactly what she says. “She can take what she wants and use it, or she can change it. It does not bother me one way or the other.”

In spring, 1999, Carol earned her Master’s degree in administration. A professor, who recommended her as a research participant, said that she was very insightful and thoughtful during her course work. A few courses remained to be completed for her to obtain a principal’s certificate. After this, she hoped to continue taking coursework for the superintendent certificate. If given the opportunity in the future, she would like to work at the higher education level. Regardless of whether her dream comes true or not, she liked teaching and making a difference. Carol conducted a number of experiments and activities during my observations that led me to believe she was a skillful, and thus apparently competent, experienced teacher. Classroom organizations were not at all fixed. Most of classroom organizations were small groups that consisted of 5 or 6 students’ desks. But its organizations were occasionally in different shapes depending upon the type of daily classroom activities. She had constantly involved parents of students or upper graders as volunteers in her classroom teaching, grading, or with class
preparation. In sum, she was active and busy in utilizing professional development, mentoring a beginning teacher, and teaching her daily classes.

**Adoption Processes**

Adopting a textbook series is one of several elements in many conventional curriculum development processes. Its process may vary depending on the policies of the school district but is generally viewed as complex and time-consuming due to many different values and interests of the adoption committee's members regarding types of textbooks. The researcher learned about the adoption process of this school after the language arts curriculum was already complete. Based upon one of the sampling criteria, the researcher selected Kelsey as a representative for the 2nd grade to get information about the adoption committee of this school and her experiences. In what follows, basic activities of the adoption committee and some issues are described.

Eight years have passed since the previous reading curriculum series was adopted. The major driving force for considering the selection of new textbooks was that the others were "out of date." Generally, it makes sense that curriculum materials need to be updated every five or six years to include new knowledge of the subject matter and to meet new needs of society. Interestingly, adopting new curriculum materials every five years in this school was viewed as something special for Principal Smith, who said that new curriculum materials will "assist teachers in covering particular areas we have been weak in during the last 4-5 years that showed up in standardized testing."

The curriculum coordinator of the school district initiated the adoption of new language arts curriculum materials. Due to the experience of adopting math curriculum
materials in our school district in the previous year, the overall procedure of the Committee was viewed as “smooth and working well,” according to Mr. Smith. For the actual activities of the Committee, 17 members with representatives of each grade and the principals had met 8 times at the school library either after class at 4 p.m. or in the morning at 8 a.m. through half of the year. The meetings lasted one hour or so. This Committee was also given an opportunity to review and thus redevelop the current Graded Courses of Study.

Most of the members agreed on the fact that the state curriculum had not changed much at all and “the Graded Course of Study still met all of the state guidelines.” Technically, therefore, it was suggested by the Committee that the only thing that should be done was to add ‘lists of new books’ and ‘new skills and strategies’ at the end of each section of the language arts. This unanimous course of action of the Committee for the technical revision of the curriculum resulted, in particular, from the reasonable arguments by some members whose concern was with the problem of the sequence of the curriculum.

A problem discussed in the committee, Kelsey recalled, was the nature of the Graded Course of Study: Would it be broad or specific? She argued that the Graded Course of Study was so broad and general that she occasionally encountered ambiguity in its interpretation. “It needs to be more specific and directive,” she said. As it turned out, her point of view on the Graded Course of Study in the Committee was not accepted by most of teachers who “did really like the way the Graded Course of Study was,” which allowed them to go in many different directions. For this matter, Principal Smith added,
“a teacher needs to be as creative as possible,” so the Graded Course of Study needed to be broader and has to act as a guide only. Kelsey could not complain about the opinion of a majority of teachers and her principal. However, she continued to argue that they [most of teachers in the Committee] were all experienced teachers who felt comfortable with “going their own way.” But for the beginning teacher like her, the current general characteristic of the Graded Course of Study was not as helpful as it might be to experienced teachers.

The major criterion of the adoption policy of the school district was to find the best fit among the nice publishers’ materials to the Graded Course of Study and the goals and objectives of the state curriculum. In reality, however, beliefs and values of representatives on language acquisition and instructional strategies were all quite different, which also influenced the selection of curriculum materials to a large degree. In particular, the discussion of the Committee regarding the reading area was controversial. According to Kelsey, this debate on reading lasted for a long time. Some argued that reading curriculum materials needed to be designed as specific and prescriptive in guiding instructional activities. Others argued that because the technical approach to the instruction of reading was deemed to minimize classroom activities, the nature of reading curriculum materials needed to be more open than prescriptive.

These different perspectives on the teaching of reading among members of the Committee were reflected as both “theoretical” and “emotional” for Kelsey. For the former, she argued that “because the lower graders like K through 2 really need to master certain basic skills” and teachers are supposed to teach “certain skills in a spiral effect,”
the new curriculum materials needed to be something that “everybody in school would use to achieve clear objectives at each grade level.” For the latter, she experienced how such different points of view among teachers could cause friction between staff members. Kelsey noted that “it was confusing and it created bad feelings here in our school, in a sense.”

Regardless of which point of view on reading was better than the other, the Committee selected one out of three finalist textbook companies. By and large, the selected textbook company provided the Committee with sufficient evidence that the reading series involved comprehensive approaches to reading. The committee was convinced that textbooks had “things laid out for teachers by covering enough of all of the state’s goals and objectives.” In short, the presentation to staff from that textbook company was effective in persuading most of the teachers at all grade levels that the curriculum materials were designed to meet needs of the teachers, no matter what theoretical perspectives they had on reading. The textbook company called this language arts series *the children’s anthology*, a collection of children’s literature, in which students are given “real stories,” along with “a variety of skills and knowledge” necessary for reading and writing. The Committee was told that the textbook company would provide teachers with “in-service training as the new school year began” and “would be happy to consult by phone at any time” on any questions concerning the use of curriculum materials.

**New Curriculum Materials**

The new language arts curriculum materials were as follows: textbooks, the
teacher's edition, reading workbooks, practice books, phonics readers, trade books, instant readers, computer software, instructional supplementary kits and aids, audio tapes, and the like. Published by a national textbook company, the package of curriculum materials cost the school system about three hundred thousand dollars for the K-12 grades (a total of 1825 students enrolled in 1998-99).

In the anthology, a collection of children's real literature, eleven developers, who were all Ph.Ds, developed the language arts curriculum materials. Eight of them were from university faculties across the country. The textbooks were theme-based. For the first half of the school year, textbooks consisted of a total of three broad themes, each having four stories. Therefore, twelve stories were taught for half of the year. In total, for a year (180 student days), 21 stories were taught for 25 weeks to cover goals and objectives of the State Department of Education in Ohio, in general, and the district's Graded Course of Study, in particular.

Broadly speaking, the manual was regarded as important by the teachers, because it ought to provide them with all of basic and detailed information for use of curriculum materials. Therefore, the teacher's manual tended to be specific, which was also the case in my country, Korea. Not surprisingly, this teacher's edition for half of the year was made up of 700 pages. It was very heavy. It covered all of the information the teachers need to know (e.g., weekly suggested lesson plans, all of the pages of textbooks included, instructional skills/strategies, assessment tools, a list of resources, etc).

An overall structural, organizational analysis of what the teacher's manual looks like is necessary, for it informs the reader as to a basic sense of what the curriculum
developers intended precisely to tell teachers as users. Three salient aspects of the teacher’s manual are examined: (a) the introduction to the manual written by the series’ authors, (b) suggested ways of groupings and assessment options, and (c) the weekly suggested lesson planner.

First, the introduction to the manual was in the form of a letter from the curriculum developers, one that said “Dear Educators,” this language arts series “is a fully integrated reading and language arts program that will leave a lasting mark on your students’ literacy and also their lives.” After that, developers presented four major characteristics of this series: (a) the inclusion of high-quality trade-book literature, (b) skills and strategies to be used, (c) intervention strategies, and (d) flexible grouping and classroom management. In particular, the first two characteristics addressed some significant aspects of this language arts series. The first characteristic talked about the nature of “authentic children’s literature” created by award-winning authors and illustrators, along with “meaningful thematic units” that encouraged students to relate “readings in other content areas and to their own life experiences.” The second one dealt with the image of students who are to be “fluent, lifelong readers and articulate, effective communicators” as a result of learning from this series. In doing so, developers believed that the literature selected in this series would play a “springboard-like” role in instruction. Indeed, developers finalized their letter for teachers as users by asserting that this series “will help you provide your students with the tools and strategies they need to make their imprint on the world around them.”

Secondly, the series had a chart of flexible groupings that included four different
levels (below, above, ESL, and bilingual) and three dimensions (reading, integration, and literature). As mentioned above, students’ grouping and classroom management was one of four characteristics explained by the series’ developers. The chart had 12 cells, each of which had not only a bold, capital letter-head like BEFORE, AFTER, WHILE, DURING, etc., but also a specific strategy such as teacher-led, cooperative, pairs, independent, etc. For instance, the first story, THIS IS THE WAY WE GO TO SCHOOL, of the first thematic unit, the first cell in below-level readers by reading/responding said, “BEFORE reading the selection, use the Previewing the Literature page of the Intervention Strategies Manual (p. 2). TEACHER-LED GROUP.” Overall, this series emphasized a teacher-led instructional strategy for the below-level readers and independent or cooperative grouping for the above-level readers. Most of the cells in the chart of grouping and management indicated specific page numbers for further references.

With regard to assessment options, this series suggested three formal tools such as skills assessment (multiple-choice diagnostic tests), holistic reading assessment (a mix of multiple-choice with open-ended questions), and integrated performance assessment (a comprehensive question designed to gain a student’s reading and writing progress). In addition, this series displayed eight different kinds of supplementary assessment options for teachers to integrate instruction and assessment. These additional assessment options included observational checklists, portfolio, self-assessment checklists, anecdotal records, and the like. In sum, more than 10 different kinds of assessment options were listed on a single page. Three formal assessment tools, if emphasized, included only a very brief orientation to each assessment with simple examples.
Finally, each story had a weekly Suggested Lesson Planner that was displayed over two pages. By specifically indicating the page number, each subheading had one or more topics that were necessary to be taught for a day. For example, Day 1 had 10 different contents, which meant that a teacher was supposed to include in his or her lesson plan 10 different kinds of skills, knowledge, or activities for a single day. Further, the 10 kinds of specific items were spread over different pages in the teacher's manual. These items were not in order, however, so teachers as users had to flip each page here and there. Some of the skills and practices were placed in different supplementary books such as Practice Books (pp. 25-26), Report Card # 3, Daily Language Practice (1-2), Phonics Practice Book (p. 236), and so on. In sum, this Suggested Lesson Planner was designed to operate like 'an index system' in which elements of what was supposed to be taught were functionally arranged for the sake of the teachers as users.

For the portion of reading, specifically speaking, such an index system indicated building background/vocabulary strategies/reading the selection (Day 1), summarized and retold the selection/response corner activities/assessment (Day 2), idea bank activities (Day 3), vocabulary workshop/reading trade books (Day 4), and reading trade books (Day 5). The manual covered a total of 45 pages where teachers needed to flip in a back and forth manner. With regard to phonics, the weekly Planner demonstrated only a single set of consonant digraphs, e.g., /ng/ng, /ngk/nk, for five days a week, along with Phonics-Vocabulary Connection (Day 1), Big Book of Rhymes/Phonics Practice Book (Day 2), Phonics Practice Reader/Phonics and Decoding Mini-Lesson (Day 3), Practice Book/Grammar and Comprehensive Mini-Lesson (Day 4), and Phonics Activity
Book/Phonics and Decoding Mini-Lesson (Day 5). A total of 12 pages of the teacher’s manual were ones to be flipped through, and six different kinds of other supplementary books were noted as specific references that needed to be consulted.

To summarize, new curriculum materials adopted at this school district and thus being used in classrooms were a package of a number of resources and a voluminous manual developed by a group of people, almost all of whom were university faculty members with Ph.Ds. The major merit of these curriculum materials was a collection of children’s literature or theme-based literature designed so that it could be approached differently depending upon teachers’ priorities. Overall, developers of these curriculum materials intend to provide teachers with specifically informed directions aimed at helping students become “fluent, lifelong readers and articulate, effective communicators.” Importantly, most of the styles of language used in this series tended to be directive and straightforward, i.e., “Invite children to read about the theme on page 13. Encourage volunteers to tell how they are special. Then draw attention to the sentences …” A brief, only one page-long, list of assessment and management options was provided. The Suggested Lesson Planner was a layout in which all kinds of specific contents, skills, and instructional strategies and resources were systematically indexed item by item.

Kelsey’s Story

This “story” of Kelsey’s lived experiences with the new curriculum materials draws on specific narratives told in her own voice. Her concept of curriculum implementation is
first described. Her actual use of curriculum materials is presented. Finally, her reflection on self, particular actions, and ongoing experiences during this implementation process is presented.

**Definition of Curriculum Implementation**

The following interview transcriptions revealed her view of curriculum implementation and initial problems she faced:

* * * *

Researcher: What is your definition of curriculum?

Kelsey: I think of curriculum as document or the published materials for my grade level which my school has now adopted. This is the way we also talked about it in the curriculum committee in our school district.

Researcher: Where did you learn this idea of curriculum?

Kelsey: Well, I have never thought too much about it because I always thought that a teacher's job was to make it work in the classroom.

Researcher: What do you mean by implementation, then?

Kelsey: ... I think it means ... like [questioning] 'Am I on schedule?' ... Am I keeping up with the plan that shows where we should be at this time in the schedule?

Researcher: What kind of problems do you face as you work with these materials?

Kelsey: I haven’t had much help. We have all been so busy. I talk sometimes with Carol or other teachers at our grade level when we have time, but there really is no one else who knows exactly or could answer my
"Curriculum as document or goals and objectives" was the focal point of her definition of curriculum, which, in turn, was synonymous with "the Graded Course of Study." Viewing curriculum in this light is the same as "developing lesson plans in light of goals and objectives" stated in the Graded Course of Study. "I think the official document determines what we teach," she said, "and justifies why to teach." She claimed with emphasis, "How can we know whether or not we are teaching the information that we are supposed to cover?" Although not consulting the Graded Course of Study on a daily basis, it was important for her to keep the goals and objectives in mind since they stated what she was to teach and why.

Moreover, the way in which to interpret the Graded Course of Study as the definition of curriculum was guided by her social experience as a member of the Curriculum Committee. She remembered that what was discussed in the Committee was "the exact coverage differences between the state curriculum and the Graded Course of Study." Joining in these official curriculum talks, she felt a high level of responsibility, recognizing that she was working on behalf of all of the 2nd grade teachers in the district. These talks and experiences were seen as meaningful. "I was able to make sure my teaching was consistent with the Graded Course of Study and what was actually happening in my classroom," she reflected. Personally, however, she had wanted the mission of the Committee to go beyond reviewing the current Graded Course of Study in relation to the mandated curriculum of the state. This reflected her concern directly with
implementation between plan and action. "I guess that the actualities of the curriculum, [then and now,] could be more faithfully established only when I am given more specific guidelines."

In this regard, she clearly exposed her perception regarding how to implement new curriculum materials in her classroom: The more specific the curriculum, the more effective its implementation. At first, she attributed this specific, linear style of her work to her personal view. To make things work better, she thought that "Everything [to be taken] needed to be clear and goal-driven" taking action, because she did not want to "lose control" once a plan was actually under way. In her personal life, she "wanted to be perfect" and did well in an organized manner. Likewise, this perfection-driven tendency had no exception in the realm of her new teaching career. "The existing abstract nature of the Graded Course of Study was of little use in determining specific ways of implementation," she said. Fortunately, "I was officially told that the teacher's manual was incorporated into the model of the curriculum of the state and sufficiently matched with the Graded Course of Study." In developing lesson plans, "I compare the objectives and prescribed steps of each of suggested lesson plans in the manual with the Graded Course of Study." That is, "I keep narrowing down what was to be taught week by week." The scrutinized examination of the curriculum materials made it possible to go through this reading implementation process. In short, "What I needed for implementation to be effective was to place myself in the plan of the curriculum developer" to see if the prescribed implementation methods in the manual actually worked.
This apparent relationship between the curriculum and its implementation process was, of course, "not as technical" as might be assumed. "I just try to make sense of where I am and who I am" in the complex world of the teaching profession in which she states, "I have been working over the two years since finishing school." That is, "I am still in the stage of survival as a beginning teacher," Kelsey reflectively told herself "whenever facing difficulties." In terms of the perceived expectation of Principal Smith, "I like his encouragement for all of us to be creative" in implementation and teaching at large:

Mr. Smith wants everybody to have her own curriculum. He does not feel tied down to the thought that you have to do it in a certain way or you have to teach this way. ... He does not feel like that. He wants us to be creative and go out and do it on our own as long as you are covering those objectives.

Yet, Kelsey reflected, "I thought that the initial implementation process was more difficult and even confused," just because "no one helps me." For her, "teaching was still new" and extremely challenging day-to-day. In coping with this process of becoming a teacher, her aggressive search for what things worked better in her classroom was ongoing. "I need to get a little more experience before I decide to go out and do everything on my own." That is, she was willing to follow the manual as intended at this time:

For the last year [before implementation], I did not agree with everything in the way they [developers] wanted me to teach. I thought it was boring to do so. ... But this year I feel like there are so many choices and so many different types of information and different ways that I can present it to the
kids. ... I might feel I have to do it their way [as suggested]. But, sometimes, I really do not agree with doing it that way.

As a whole, "the quality of new curriculum materials is good," she said. The reason to follow the intent of the curriculum developer was obvious in this regard: Following the sequence of the manual has many more possibilities for "information transfer to the students” than her own implementation methods. Given the open perspective of the principal on implementation, the best way she could go during this implementation process was to closely following the intent the curriculum developer expressed in the published materials. By making choices within the manual, she stated, “I wanted to do my best job giving students all of the information they need.” Her strong personal commitment to putting curriculum into practice relied mainly on the intent of the curriculum developer, but “not always” of course. The views of the curriculum developer were occasionally filtered and thereby modified in a slightly different manner. In short, “Going out of the official curriculum and implementing on my own” was her long-term purpose, but, at this time, those wishes were seen as impossible without more practical experiences.

Curriculum-in-Use

Kelsey’s classroom teaching activities are described to figure out patterns of how she used curriculum materials in action. Such patterns underlying Kelsey’s classroom activities are holistically described by triangulating field notes, documents such as the teacher’s manual, and informal talks with the researcher. In particular, much attention is paid to her thoughts and actions to observe how the intent of the curriculum developer is
actually received, either similarly or differently. An analysis and interpretation of her actions and thoughts from her perspective is partially made here but discussed in more detail in the following reflection sections of this chapter. Described are three reading classes that are highly context-specific. Two of them were in 1998 and one in 1999.

Tell children to pretend to beat a drum each time.

After saluting the national flag and reciting a pledge, 24 students sat down with some noise. A few seconds later the gentle voice of Principal Smith was heard from the speaker to greet and inform students of the announcements and about the lunchroom menu. On the board was written the morning work: Reading practice book, pages 29-30, 31-32. Standing in front of the classroom, Kelsey asked students to take their phonics reader book out and to open to page 9. Students did so slowly. Kelsey asked them to "wink" to her when hearing words with /ng/ or /ngk/ sounds. After one more time pronouncing the sound /ng/ or /ngk/, those signs were written on the board. By looking around at students to see if they paid attention to her, she slowly read the following sentences from the page of the manual:

Sing a song with me.

It will not take long.

Thank you for the ring.

The boat sank in the storm.

Did it belong to you?

I will take the money to the bank.

Today, she was going to teach consonant digraphs such as /ng/ng and /ngk/nk. Her
lesson plan was highly structured and well organized. Most of the common class work of the day was specifically divided and type written. The way that the reading instruction was designed was less descriptive than prescriptive to some extent. Behavioral objectives of the reading class were stated in the lesson plan. For today, she stated, students will be able to identify words that end with /ng/ and /nk/, and words that begin with /r/.

Following the statement of this reading objective, the activity the students were supposed to do was described in the name of Reading Block (9:30-10:20): page. T 162 ("T" refers to the Teacher's manual) mini-lesson and T 162-163, Practice/Apply.

Reading the Practice book 32. Buddy reading. Then, five different kinds of group activities were type written, along with ways on how to proceed: (1) Reading Instant Reader with teacher, (2) Computers, (3) Library, (4) Publishing Center, and (5) Listening Center). For instance, what students will do in the Group Number 1, Reading Instant Reader with teacher, is (a) reading record (miscue analysis) and (b) circle read (name of the book); then each child must an complete activity page to go with instant reader at his/her desk.

Kelsey read the sentences seriously. Students' participation proceeded to identify words with sounds /ng/ by responsively making excited "winks," along with giggles here and there. Kelsey's fluent and articulate voice with an emphasis on those words /ng/ continued. After that, the sound of /ngk/ followed. Texts were repeated with an emphasis on that /ngk/ sound. Once completing the reading aloud of the texts, Kelsey complimented the students' good job at catching and differentiating exactly those words by following with the winks. Then, she continued to give a different activity, "Now, I
want you to put your thumbs up when hearing those words, okay?” Most students promptly raised their hands in the shape of thumbs up as soon as she gave that assignment. Again, the texts from the manual she had in her hand were repeated in terms of the /ng/ sound first and then the /ngk/ one, and all students responded by quickly raising their thumbs up. The mood of the classroom on this morning was getting more exciting as students’ small hands went up and down. “Very good. Good job, children,” she praised students.

This activity of “winking” was aimed at helping students differentiate specific vocabulary words in text. In doing so, the teacher was given a clue indicating students’ abilities at a glance. As realized, the word *wink* itself included the sound /ngk/, which was drawn from a suggestion in the manual. The major value of this activity was “auditory and kinesthetic,” according to Kelsey. The teacher’s manual on page 163 informed teachers of this idea and relevant activity in detail. In fact, the manual prescribed two different kinds of activities at the same time by means of two different words, *wink* and *ring*. The suggestion of the manual read:

Tell children to *wink* when they hear a word with the same ending sound as *wink* and to *ring* shape with their fingers when they hear a word that has the same ending sound as *ring*.

Kelsey said, “It was a review. It was a quick review [suggested in the manual.] I had taught these two sounds in texts before. I thought this idea was good to review these sounds, because I could see students’ responses quickly.” As stated above, the manual suggested teachers to review the words such as *wink* and *ring* in relation to each other in
terms of the ending sound /k/. Because it was a quick review, Kelsey did not want to spend much time. It was also enough for students to “have fun in the beginning of the day.” Therefore, she wanted to focus on having students just respond to those words with the sounds /ng/ and /ngk/ to a kinesthetic evidence of “wink” turn by turn. Further, she also thought that because students could “have more fun, and so, more actively participate” in this review activity, a different activity such as “thumbs up was added” to reaffirm the results. In sum, “I basically chose the idea [of the curriculum developer], because I can determine whether students make differentiation while hearing and allowed recognition of problems arising in an effective, easily recognized manner,” she said. The thumbs up activity she added was a supplementary activity “to maintain student interest.”

After completing these fun activities, Kelsey asked students to take the reading practice book out by pointing at the page number written on the board, 29. She told them, “Let us check together to see if you make the correct answer.” Along with pictures depicting something for kids to do, six words with the ending sounds /ng/ and /nk/ (ding-dong, bang, drink, honk, clink, and thank) were listed at the top of the yellow box in the workbook. Students’ work continued to fill out the following page number 31, which was designed to help student learn the study skill and strategy. This worksheet, consisting of five questions with multiple choices, was intended to assist students to prepare for tests that lay ahead. She noted, “I use a lot of worksheets in reading or phonics practice books, either for homework or morning work or class work.” And “I think these worksheets are useful, because students can be given a lot of practice related to themes in textbooks.” For example, concerning today’s worksheet for study skills, she claimed, “because
students had already been taught a couple of times before in previous units, they had little difficulty in filling out these questions.”

Then, Kelsey swiftly moved to the board after grabbing the manual and wrote a dozen vocabulary words from it on the board:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{strong} & \quad \text{trip} & \quad \text{brook} \\
\text{drum} & \quad \text{drip} & \quad \text{try} \\
\text{price} & \quad \text{print} & \quad \text{dry} \\
\text{drink} & \quad \text{dream} \\
\text{drop} & \quad \text{chops} & \quad \text{dragon}
\end{align*}
\]

In writing these words on the board, she kept the manual in her hand to look at closely. Some students, completing their work early, started to talk with friends sitting near to them. Today, her classroom organization was teacher-led, six desks in a column and four in a row. Four computers were in the back, along the larger reading center on the side of the classroom. The space for Kelsey between the board and the first row of the student desks was relatively close. Around the board were arranged all different kinds of small and large colorful cards such as numbers, alphabet letters, spelling words, and calendar parts.

While turning around to students, she spoke up, “Okay, boys and girls, if you finish them, place those worksheets in the box on my desk.” Most of the students returned to their desks, but, five students continued their work until finished. “I will give those who have not yet completed some time later in the day,” she carefully commented to settle the class down. Slowly, Kelsey pointed to a list of words she had just written on the board, saying “hit the table just one time when hearing /dr/ sounds.” Now, the other activity began, according to the lesson plan, “identifying words beginning with /tr/.” This was
mainly drawn from the idea of the manual:

Say words that begin with consonant clusters with r. Tell children to pretend to beat a drum each time they hear a word that begins with *dr*. Have children name the initial clusters of the words that don’t begin like drum. Some examples are: *trip, drip, print, drink, drop, brook, try, dry, dream, and dragon.*

In fact, Kelsey mixed words that began with */dr/* with those that did not and, at the same time, put additional words such as *strong, drum, price, and crops* into this activity. Despite slight modifications of this kind, the prescription of the curriculum developer was largely maintained. She believed, “This drumbeat activity is very interesting and very related to the theme of this week, *Max Found Two Sticks.*” As she described, the character Max happened to be given two sticks from the marching band and tried to make his own sound and rhythm. Indeed, reminding students of this image of the character Max, as Kelsey began reading the words aloud from the first column on the board, students simultaneously tapped on their desks like a drumbeat. A lot of loud sounds were made! Most students were extremely absorbed in catching the sound being heard by looking at words on the board. Kelsey explained, “This was exactly what I wanted my kids to do. I wanted them to recognize the */dr/* sound as they heard it.” No matter what, “I *don’t* want kids to be bored,” she said with great emphasis. Kelsey continued to pronounce those words one by one and students became highly excited and loudly tapped together on the desks whenever hearing words that began */dr/*.

Overall, most students exactly identified the */dr/* sounds. When repeating this
activity, she chose only such words that began with /dr/ and students kept making the sound of drumbeats without pauses. With the activity of “winking” for sounds /ng/ or /ngk/, this kind of phonics-based review or actual teaching practice was typical for Mrs. Kelsey Backer, particularly on the mid-week days of Wednesday or Thursday. That is, she believed that students needed to drill those kinds of phonics or basic skills “after reading stories of the week and “before some sort of comprehensive review” was provided on Friday. The curriculum developed in today’s class consisted of specific skills stated among the Suggested Lesson Planner in the manual. Kelsey selected them on the grounds that students should learn how words with particular sounds should be read according to phonic systems. She selected this idea because the manual specifically included “components necessary for motivating students” in relation to the story of the week.

You guys are good listeners!

Kelsey was about to teach today’s lesson. The instructions for reading and math such as ‘Reading practice books 39, 43-43’ and ‘Math book 39, 41-42’ were written on the board. Within the two columns, a lot of words were listed on the board, both of which were to be directly taught today. Kelsey, coming to the front of the classroom, asked students to pay particular attention to the list on the left side of the board. This list was easily recognized due to the numbers in front of each word. Kelsey told the students that it was a time for reviewing words with sounds /tr/ or /n/kn or gn, which included silent letters. The words were (1) sign, (2) wrap, (3) knot, (4) wrinkles, (5) wreath, (6) knife, (7) knock, and (8) know.
While pointing at and, simultaneously, drawing a line under such consonants as *gn*, *wr*, and *kn* in each word, she read them aloud, both slowly and articulately. After that, she had students follow her example. Kelsey now delivered the meanings of the first three words such as *sign*, *wrap*, and *knot*. In the manual, the objective of the lesson about these words with silent letters was to have students understand the relationship between letters and sounds. That is, students will be able to identify the letters */w/* and */k/* in the words, which were letters of silence in the words like */r/* and */n/*, respectively. Reminding students of this very point, she finished up by reading aloud the rest of the words one by one, followed the students' repeat recitation. Following the basic idea of the manual for the words with silent letters, the first part of the objective of her lesson plan today was, students will learn *wr*, *kn*, *gn* sounds (reviewing them on page 10, phonic books).

The classroom structure of today was somewhat unique. Today, it was like a triangle. There were only two columns (two desks each) in the classroom, with the distance between both columns getting wider and wider at the end. On the wall was a huge picture of dinosaurs with names that reflected this week's reading lesson *Dinosaurs Alive and Well*. Throughout this week, first of all, students had had time “to learn new vocabulary” and “read and discuss the story in the textbook,” followed by “the assignment of reading at home.” Then, she planned to teach “new skills and strategies for the following three days.” On Friday, the past four days’ lessons would be reviewed. Today was Wednesday, so the new skill to be taught was about initial clusters with *l*.

According to the rest of her lesson plan, students will be able to decode with
the letter "l" clusters (in the beginning of words). Students will read the story on the carpet area; look at textbook 101 (Teacher manual 185, practice book, 43-44). Now, Kelsey had students pay attention to the other list of the words written on the right of the board. These words were: play, flabby, flexible, trap, slide, pouch, flag, fort, blue, fellow, flow, and place. Students were reminded of the reading textbook they had read yesterday. After that, the list of the words on the right side of the board was directly introduced. As with the first three words such as play, flabby, and flexible, Kelsey’s explanation was that when a consonant like /p/ or /f/ was followed by the letter /l/, the sound was not heard like /p-l/ or /f-l/ (sounds exaggerated,) but like one word /pl/ or /fl/.

To make sure students could recognize the /l/ sound combined with a consonant, Kelsey asked students to put their “thumbs up” when hearing those very words, but otherwise, “thumbs down.” Kelsey began by pronouncing the first word, play, out of the list on the board. As expected, most of students promptly put their thumbs up in air as if they spoke “Yes, it is” in their minds. Kelsey quickly commented, “Good.” After that, by looking at words on the board and students turn by turn, Kelsey continued this activity intended to help students identify the letter /l/ clusters. Overall, most of students correctly responded, because words were heard in order out of the list. Of course, Kelsey knew this fact about delivering words in order to students. Now, Kelsey slowly told them, “I am going to pick five words, so put your thumbs up when you hear the letter /l/ sounds.” A bit of tension arose! Students seemed to get excited waiting to hear which words would be selected. To see exactly students responded, Kelsey used the teacher’s manual, rather than looking at the board behind her. As she stepped aside and started the first one, slide,
the responses of students were made neither instantly nor after a time. As soon as some students, who accurately caught the word with the /l/ sound, put their thumbs up, other students followed in a few seconds. This pattern amounted, but "I don't much care about this fact in social context, because students learn from each other. As they can fix what's wrong, students are going to learn anyway," she said. At the end of this activity, Kelsey complimented, "You guys are good listeners!"

According to the manual, the mini-lesson was provided for facilitating an activity of phonics and decoding. The main intent of the curriculum developer in the mini-lesson was to help students recognize how the initial clusters with /l/ were pronounced in relation to a consonant:

**Model**

Write these words from page 101 on the board: play, flexible, flabby. Ask students to read the words aloud and tell how the words are alike. If necessary, underline the /p/ and /t/ in each word. Help children see that each word begins with a consonant followed by the letter /l/. Remind children that when a word begins with a consonant and /l/, the sounds of both letters can be blended together.

**Apply**

Have children listen as you say each of the following words: cloud, slice, pouch, flag, fort, blue, clown, comet, clap, plum, clever, fellow, flake, place, park, and blink. Tell children to raise their hand if the word you say begins with a consonant followed by the letter /l/.
Given the specific texts in the literature, the curriculum developer assumes that students might have difficulty in pronouncing those words like \textit{play}, \textit{flexible}, and \textit{flabby}. These words have nothing to do with new vocabulary words to be learned in this unit for this week. As prescribed, the strict rule to make a sound is emphasized line by line. The teacher is advised to use an assessment by having students raise their hands to see if they are able to identify those words. "I followed this mini-lesson very closely," she commented, not only because "it was easy to do so," but also because "I wanted to assess" the degree to which "my kids were actually able to discriminate sounds" as they heard those words in a whole group. In particular, Kelsey hoped that the curriculum that she worked on with students would go beyond a skill-based practice. That is, during this assessment practice, "I hoped students would be aware of spelling," not to mention a chance of "refreshing meanings of each vocabulary word they had learned."

She believed that in comparison to the manual, her instructional strategy was neither more nor less different. For instance, in order to make this class effective, "I prepared a list of words on the board in advance," rather than writing them during teaching. To get students motivated, "I used a specific technique like thumbs up and down," rather than having students merely raise their hands. And, she only "picked some of application words" from the list to be "most appropriate to learn at this time." In sum, Kelsey liked this Mini-Lesson that helped guide her lesson plan to be specific in terms of what and how to do it. Yet, she knew that when developing objectives of her lesson plan and thus actually using methods in the manual, she slightly added or deleted some of ideas on her own. This was because "sometimes I just considered it a better way in using
the manual.” Nonetheless, as her comment indicated, i.e., “I can’t complain about the way the manual is,” Kelsey attempted to follow such ideas as the prescriptive curriculum and method (in today’s class, “pre-selected contents” and “teacher-led instruction”) stated in the manual.

Now, after successfully participating in the whole class activity, students were asked to take out the practice book. The page number was 43. Some students could not find the right page. Kelsey came to the students who needed help. Routinely, students were reminded not to forget to put their names at the top of the worksheet. A few seconds later, the instruction was read: Read each question. Write the word that makes sense and makes the answer YES. With a big picture of a dinosaur, the worksheet included the seven words with the initial clusters with /ll/ followed by a consonant, which was just taught. As a demonstration, Kelsey read the first question, Is the sky ____? YES! She paused for a moment for students to think. A student picked the answer “blue.” Kelsey delightfully confirmed the answer, blue, and read again the whole sentence. No doubt, students were seriously engaging in the worksheet and filling out the given answer in the blank.

Once every students’ answers were correct and filled out, students went to the next page. Kelsey explained that this worksheet was more difficult than the previous page done a few seconds ago, so, careful attention needed to be paid. Students were asked to put pencils down. Kelsey described in detail how to do this work, “This worksheet is supposed to be done on your own. Answers must have the same vowel sound as star.” Kelsey commented and emphasized the /t/ controlled long /a/ sound. Now Kelsey’s tip
was given, “Do the questions that you know or the easy questions first. Then, go back to the questions that where you were not sure. I will give you 12 minutes.” Now the students started and Kelsey walked around the room helping students. After some moments, Kelsey found a student raising his hand. The question he got stuck on was question # 2: I ___ inside a cow. Quickly, she pointed out the answer as verbs like “start or park,” followed by a caution that the answer “park” could be either verb or noun. The struggling student gave her the answer, park: I park inside a cow. Silently, she encouraged the student to first look at the question # 7: You might drink me in a ____. Kelsey whispered, “I think you are right. But after checking the # 7, you will clearly realize it.”

In the long run, the curriculum developer of this worksheet wanted students to answer the final question, What am I? _____, by applying the /r/ controlled long /a/ sounds such as far, yard, carton, park, farm, start, and part to the short sentences. This /ar/ lesson was done yesterday. Under the quite climate of the classroom, Kelsey kept walking around the classroom to help students individually. “Boys and girls, if you didn’t finish it, I will give you time later. If you finished it, place it in the container in the back,” said Kelsey.

Students then were asked to take out the reading book. Having seen most students took the book out, Kelsey encouraged students to quickly open the unit, Dinosaurs Alive and Well, by saying “Hands up if you find the right page!” The direction she gave was for buddy reading, in which one lower and one higher student read the book together. The pairing was already “set up” in the way they sat, so students spread out fast, e.g., on the carpet area, in the middle or rear of the classroom, around the computer area, etc.
Through buddy reading, she thought, “lower students can get help from higher students who correct ill-pronounced words.” And, all of the paired students were working very cooperatively. But, some vocabulary words were really difficult for the lower students to read. For instance, Bryan got stuck in the word *arguments*. He stopped and retried it but could not make it. The female higher student helped him read it one time. But, he was still uncomfortable with reading that word. The partner helped him two more times slowly and then he could barely make it. The page he was working had only one sentence: *Try to think of fair ways to settle arguments*. As long as he felt he made it, he quickly turned the next page, and both continued. The female higher student was by far over the 2nd grade level and read very fluently. Sitting on the flour, Kelsey was working with other buddy groups.

**Rhymes.**

The specific learning environment in Kelsey’s new classroom was not much different from that of her old one. However, one thing that was physically different was a separated small room where the computers were placed. This room with eight computers was shared with the classroom next door, so four students at a time were assigned to it throughout the day. In case the next door students were not working, students could be assigned double. Under the process of implementation, students learned how to read using five different kinds of software programs, entitled the *Instant Reader CDs*, designed to teach students how to decode a variety of vocabulary words in varying texts. Every day, each student gained access to this self-regulated learning program for 10-15 minutes. The classroom was brighter than before, and had a big wooden case where
students put their things. Along the window, a lot of small and big books were neatly arranged in plastic containers.

On this morning, students did work by following the instructions on the board, “My favorite thing to do during the holiday,” which directed them to write a few sentences in their notepads. Kelsey was a little busy preparing today’s lesson on her desk.

Unexpectedly, an event occurred. The school nurse accompanied by one of her students came in and interrupted her busy preparation. Kelsey was told that her student was abused again last night. The nurse brought a small pack of ice for treatment, to be placed in the very spot where she was hurt. After taking a look at the spot, Kelsey consoled the student. Kelsey has been worried about this kind of new situation, one that had been very rare last year. This year, she had more students who had single parents or low-income family backgrounds than the last year. Having a lack of support from parents of these students with lower abilities was for her an emerging concern she has seen as a challenge, she said, “I keep an eye on these students as special care,” both emotionally and academically.

As soon as she finished her morning routines, Kelsey began the first class of the day with spelling. Students were writing 10 words in their spelling worksheets in accordance with each word written by Kelsey on the board. After that, reading block class followed. Today’s lesson was called “Phonemic awareness: Listen to the sound.” After correcting the misbehaviors of two students who were not ready to listen, she wanted to demonstrate “how we should read the rhyme of the poetry.”

**Brown Bear’s Supper**
How should Brown Bear
catch fish in the brook?
He could learn on a log;
Use his paw as a hook.
Then Brown Bear would have
many fine fish to cook.

Kelsey read this poetry, both slowly and articulately, with an emphasis on words with /oo/ sounds. Then she asked students to read this poetry aloud. A harmonious voice of students spread through the classroom. She added her voice to this recitation. Sitting in the carpet area, students were seriously and joyfully reading the Big Book hanging on the wooden frame. As a kind of supplementary material in this reading series, the Big Book included larger printed texts and the background of a smiling picture of bear. This Big Book had 5 different topics ranging from poems to stories used for refreshing the learning of students, along with a review of some vocabulary and phonics. Standing beside the Big Book chart, Kelsey quickly moved to the board to write the letters with vowels /oo/ and /ou/ and then pronounced both letters. An emphasis was made in the notes that these letters with vowels /oo/ and /ou/ were obviously different but had the same sound. An example word, hook, for these sounds was now written under the sound /oo/, followed by her demonstrating pronunciation /hook/. Returning to the students in the carpet area, Kelsey explained what they had to do in the following activity: Finding words that had the same /oo/ sound as the word hook from the text of this poetry. According to the manual:
In the rhyme, have children read and frame words with the same vowel sound as *book*. As children frame the words, write them on the board in appropriate columns.

In getting into this class of poetry, Kelsey used the word, *hook*, in text, instead of the word, *book*, out of text of this poetry. As suggested in the manual, students were expected to find out for themselves the same pattern of words called *rhymes* in terms of the letter with the vowels /oo/ sound. Throughout the Suggested Lesson Planner of the manual, a new skill related to the phonics was supposed to be taught for the whole week by means of different materials. This week was about the vowel variant, /oo/oo, ou, which was taught in the practice book yesterday and now in review. She was intriguing students with the fact that this class of poetry was like “a discovery,” in which students would be given sets of colorful strings to search for the words with the vowels /oo/ sound. Now, “who is going to be the first?” said Kelsey with a smile. Her lesson plan today was as follow:

**Concept:** students will review vocabulary; Fluency; vowel variants oo, ou.

**Objective:** DOL board clues with vocabulary words; T 630.

The form of her lesson plan had changed a little in a year. It consisted of two titles: concept and objective. The main idea as to what was to be taught was stated as a concept for introducing or reviewing new skills and/or strategies for the instruction of reading. Specific activities, referring to the manual or resources, were listed under the name of Objective. The overall structure of her lesson plan in this year was apparently more concise than that of last year by only stating major ideas as to what she was going to do.
As she noted this change, she said, "I was getting familiar with this reading series and more competent to know how and what to do." So she felt that "it was not necessary to write down something to do in detail."

At the beginning of this activity, Kelsey continued to give each student a different color of string to be placed under each word with the /oo/ sound on the Big Book. As soon as a student finished this job, Kelsey wrote the very word in the table drawn on the board. That is, under the headline of the letter /oo/, words like book, brook, and cook were listed. At the next column were words such as should, would, and could listed under the headline of the letter /ou/. It was enough motivation for students to voluntarily participate in the activity as they began seeing many different colors of strings being placed one by one. In particular, the way of the participant structure was totally different from the manual in terms of the emphasis of "kinesthetic and visual effects," although following the manual in terms of the way to make a table for arranging each word. In summarizing this activity of being aware of rhymes patterned as the sound /oo/, Kelsey noted, "I used my own idea." That is, while encouraging students to think aloud any other word having this pattern, she had students make up words using _ook as many as possible and then left them for the further inquiry during the rest of the week. For this, she said, "I just wanted to make sure to see if there were any other words like this pattern and to keep students thinking of such a possibility."

For the rest of the class, students had opportunities to read the textbook as a whole. Each student, randomly selected by use of a small box full of sticks containing their names, was entrusted with reading a page. Whenever students got stuck or
mispronounced words, Kelsey corrected them. The difference between fiction and non-fiction was questioned after the completion of the reading. Her explanation of why this unit was fiction followed. Quickly, students were asked to take the Small Board out for the spelling and phonics game. Somewhere in the classroom, a few students started together to hum the song from Jeopardy, a TV quiz show, followed by a whole chorus of all of students. By hearing 10-12 words from Kelsey, students wrote them down on their own board secretly and then were given the correct spelling of the words. Finally, students were asked to raise their hands to tell how many words they hit correctly. She noted, “This game consists of a mix of phonics and spelling. I thought, in order to spell words correctly, students should listen carefully. Their knowledge of phonics would be basic to help them be able to spell words correctly.”

Reflection

Kelsey’s ongoing experiences in the school’s curriculum implementation process are now described. In reconstructing her stories, the researcher lets her speak for herself in the beginning as a first person voice. The voice of the researcher is also inserted in this text. After that, the researcher interprets and describes her experiences as to how she “makes sense” of new curriculum materials while using new curriculum materials in context. The story, or narrative, that follows relies on her perspective or emic view.

The underlying three reflective experiential themes of her case study are chronologically identified and presented: (a) the uncertainty in use, (b) “high” fidelity as a learning process, and (c) moving one step forward.

The uncertainty in use.
Kelsey (hereafter, I, in this thematic description) was so overwhelmed when getting the series. Perhaps, all teachers in our school district might have the same feeling. Compared to the previous series, it was totally different in terms of the quality and quantity of textbooks. The previous one was the basal reading series where stories in textbooks were not literature-based, so I was not very excited to teach students how to read. Also, the basal reading series of the last year did little to provide me with resources that I could specifically incorporate into my classroom teaching. But, I am not saying that the previous reading series was extremely terrible or completely not useful. From my perspective as a brand new teacher, it was somehow very easy to follow because the series had stories or what to teach in conjunction with a set of skills to cover like skill # 1, skill # 2, skill # 3, etc. Very fortunately, because I was given previous lesson plans from a teacher who had taught here for a long time before me, I believe that I could well manage to teach the basal reading series.

* * * *

Researcher: Did it work out in your teaching? What was it like?

Kelsey : It [a previous lesson plan] was a wonderful base as a foundation that I followed and it covered everything that I needed to cover for the curriculum and tests, which made my teaching really easy.

* * * *

In contrast, the new language arts curriculum materials we selected this year were just so overwhelming due to the great amount of suggested activities
and prescribed teaching skills. It was something different from the sample I had
looked at when serving on the Selection Committee in our school district. I didn't
know why. Perhaps, because all of the other competitive samples resembled in
one way or another, I might have, then, technically treated this reading series
among them not to think of real teaching practices while investigating its overall
structure and its fitness to the graded course of study from an objective
standpoint. The question of how this series could be actually used in my
everyday curriculum planning and teaching activities seemed to less seriously
get my attention. At any rate, not until a package of new language arts curriculum
full of supplementary materials was delivered to my classroom did I find myself
stuck. Nobody knew how to use new curriculum materials. At the grade meeting,
I found most of teachers raised many questions and issues similar to those in my
mind regarding how to use them.

* * * *

Researcher: So, what was it like for you to use this series in the beginning?

Kelsey : Getting into new series was just so time consuming and exhausting
because it has so much to do and so many things to learn from it.

It took all of my time. I brought them to my home for developing
my weekly lesson plans over the weekend, spending at least 4 or 5
hours. But I was not so sure that I was doing right.

Researcher: I remember the log that you wrote at that time, don’t you?

Kelsey : Yes. I said that I was worried about getting all skills and strategies
taught in a week. It had too many to be taught in one week. Also, I was concerned about finding enough time for reviewing certain skills. I was also not sure the way I was using the Instant Reader: “Do I need to read with each child using instant readers? Or, can they be used as an extension to the lessons?”

* * * *

As you know, I have a master’s degree in reading. I knew about what mattered and what didn’t in reading instruction. I have believed that I have knowledge and skills on the subject of reading and that was why I was hired at this school and asked to serve on the Committee. Yet, under this uncertain circumstance I relied on my belief or theory that for at least K-2, we really had to primarily help children master those basic skills or phonics if we were to expect children to be competent readers in the future. Insofar as I am concerned, the 2nd grade is a turning point, in which children have to completely know the skills necessary for reading books, not to mention as many word attack strategies as possible that are to be used for making sense of unfamiliar texts.

“High” fidelity as a learning process.

(Back to the researcher) Kelsey was engaging in actual use of new textbooks. In order to do so, her primary rationale was clear to keep herself away from the tendency of other teachers facing the new reading series. She noted, “Before people EVEN engage with new materials, they ALREADY decide ‘That is okay. I have already got MY idea. I don’t want to go into this new book of this new series.’” In a broad sense, she claimed that
teachers had an obligation to use this new reading series, just because "our school, paid by parents, purchased it for use." No matter what, she said, "at least we have to try it."

The other rationale, as important as the first one, had to do with her personal and professional learning strategy, which might be seen as sort of her survival strategy. She didn't want to disappoint the expectation of others. At this point, for her to become a better teacher meant to be a learner, who read all kinds of books and joined many workshops if possible. So, struggling with making sense of such overwhelming nature of the teacher's manual was a naturalistic attitude for staying with the way she was.

In her everyday teaching life under the implementation process, the way in which Kelsey actually used the teacher's manual was largely according to what and how the curriculum developer had prescribed. Perhaps, this kind of trust in the prescription of the manual was like the way we believe in the accuracy of a map and thus use it to find a place we want to go. Yet, she assumed, even more, that using the manual as faithfully as possible was not just for escaping her mental and physical stress this year, but "preparing for the better implementation during the next year." Regardless of how stressful it was, the manual was used for her lesson planning process from the start and continued on:

For the first year, I wanted to use it just the way in which it was told for me to use it, because I wanted to get a real good feel for it. I wanted to see if I really liked it or I really didn’t like it. I wanted that opportunity to give me a chance, plus I was new. ... I wanted to be confident in myself.

In doing so, the meaning that Kelsey could assign to those overwhelming curriculum materials came from a need for rediscovering her authentic role as a teacher.
“The only problem that I had was that the book had just so many ideas and skills to be covered in one week,” she said. Without any reference as to how she had to use the Suggested Lesson Planner, she developed her lesson plans. “It was workable,” however, she expressed, “and easy if I was going through the Planner.” It was so obvious and even self-convincing that she found herself believing that “it was ALMOST impossible to use all of contents suggested in the Planner.” “I could not help but select what I believed was important and valuable to cover,” she commented, which was partly based on a reference of the salesman promoting this textbook that “tested skills” basically had to be taught. Given this information by the textbook company, Kelsey didn’t hesitate to implement such basics as intended by the curriculum developer. In addition, following her own judgment on “what is worth teaching to meet various needs of students,” she carefully picked and chose other contents but “felt upset” not to know how much she had to teach. Yet, once selected, it was not likely problematic, since “the steps or procedures of how to do things were there” and would be utilized “as closely as possible” for her self-testimony of “how things might work out in the first year.”

Mrs. Kelsey Backer might have been embarrassed if asked, “You were a member of the Curriculum Revision and Adoption Committee. You selected these Language Arts Curriculum materials. But, how could you dare have felt upset or even confused to use them?” In fact, the researcher asked this question. Her reflection on this question was characterized by not only “how busy and complex” the teaching profession was. But it also characterized our common life experience as to “how things get translated into reality.” As she speculated:
I found it perfectly laid out. It was going to be easy to put into my classroom to use. But, in the beginning, it was so hard, because it had so many parts in each unit to teach. I did not have time to get to everything that I wanted to teach. I had to pick and choose what I wanted to teach. ... It was like when something looked REAL good but then we actually put it into use, it did not work out [as we intended].

Being aware of “how things worked out and who I am at this time,” the curriculum that was pre-selected in the manual or she selected was shaped into teaching in favor of following the intent of the curriculum developer, which was, in turn, seen as “worthy in my learning process.” For instance, she liked the Mini-Lessons, which represented the nature of what this teacher’s manual was about or what this curriculum was like in a sense. As described in the previous section of her curriculum-in-use, Mini-Lessons were repeatedly used as intended by the curriculum developers. Mini-Lessons consisted of three elements: assessments, models, and practice/apply. Kelsey thought of Mini-Lessons as worthy, since she could “easily read the texts written in simple, technical language,” so that she quickly understood the main point of what students should know at the present time. Further, “the procedure was clear,” she maintained, in terms of “a mix of auditory, visual, and kinesthetic activities.”

Fundamentally, her explicit emphasis on helping her students, i.e., “to master basic skills first at this lower grade level,” was reflected in use of those Mini-Lessons. Accordingly, students were asked to put their thumbs up and down or tap the desk as Kelsey pronounced words. The intent of the curriculum developers was that if the teacher
followed this procedure, then students would be excited to respond to what they heard, understood, and knew in varying modes, so the teacher could effectively assess the degree of the progress and understanding of students at a glance. Kelsey reflected on her actions and on what she learned from these prescriptive lessons:

I wanted to know whether or not my students could discriminate those sounds. I wondered, ‘Can they do that by showing me with their signs?’

These Mini-lessons usually had one or two activities that I could review. It also gave the practice book page or additional pages that I could see in different books. It was easy to understand and implement it [for my assessment purpose]. A lot of the time my students were asked to raise their hands. I could constantly assess my students. If they made a mistake, they could quickly change it, because they saw the other students in the room and thought, ‘Oh, that is right, this was not a /ng/ sound.’ It was a quick assessment that I could get for understanding. … I could see their understanding while I was teaching.

For Kelsey, this reading implementation was “a learning process” that provided her with a clue regarding “how this new curriculum was organized and how students could get interested and thus learn more.” What it meant to implement new curriculum materials in her classroom in this respect was “adopting and using such specifically suggested procedures to see how well students understood progressively.” Making use of such Mini-Lessons or other suggestions with clear objectives and specific steps in the manual was giving her an explicit learning experience in that she could “get the true
understanding of the whole reading series.” This was exactly what she felt good about herself working with new curriculum materials in the initial implementation process, regardless of an ongoing physical and psychological stress not knowing so-called “official” use suggested by the textbook company.

The visit of the representative from the textbook company was the most critical event that Kelsey experienced in this early implementation process. It was mid-November, 1998, about two and half months after this Language Arts Curriculum implementation had begun. Originally, the textbook company had boldly promised to provide for in-service training in the very early beginning of the school year. “We teachers, including myself, waited for such a long time,” said Kelsey, “and I was so glad to have a chance to learn how best to use this series.” Through this in-service training, which she preferred to call “a visit” some days later, the one primary tip was conveyed: “Don’t stress out.” By this was meant the fact that the teachers as users “didn’t have to be afraid of not covering all of contents stated in the Suggested Lesson Planner,” with an exception concerning what are called “the tested skills.” In fact, such an exception was one that Kelsey already knew from the salesman of this textbook company. This psychological and practical tip aimed at reducing the limitation of the actual coverage of the Lesson Planner should have been [officially] told before,” as Kelsey regrettably expressed. At any rate, this visit by the representative gave her a broad guide and was very helpful in making sure that she was on the right track:

He gave us a LOOSE guide that we could follow. He went over the 3rd grade, not my 2nd grade, … pointed out that you should definitely do this and this …
every time we came to a plan in the manual. ... I just had kind of WHAT A RELIEF after he had talked to us, knowing that there were some important things here, but not everything was important. He said that we had to just think about students, and their needs to decide what was important to teach. And basically, I felt like that all along.

Now, Kelsey had a clear sense of what the “flexibility in use” meant from the representative of the textbook company. “I felt highly comfortable with this series, by now, knowing what should be hit or not necessarily hit,” she reflected. Moreover, she was pleased to hear the important information that this implementation process had to be oriented to meeting needs of her students. Nonetheless, one basic issue, which remained uncertain, even after having such an official visit, was “the balance” between good implementation and higher test scores. Obviously, for Kelsey, it became clear enough “in what way textbooks should be used.” The criterion was twofold: tested skills and needs of students. According to the representative, good implementation meant “a mix of both elements depending on the judgment of a teacher.” But, the representative did not mention “What if my students didn’t do a good job on tests?”, she was curious. Hence, the initial decision that “this reading series must be digested, both specifically and completely,” for her learning purpose was largely maintained. This resulted in “the continued emphasis on the tested skills or basic skills.” She continued to reflect on this matter:

Basically, I felt that needs of students were important but I was just afraid of tests at the end of the school year. In order for all my students to know all of
basic [tested] skills before the testing, I really had to make sure of the scope and sequence chart. I wanted to make sure that my students were prepared for it. I wished that the test would not be there, because I felt a lot of pressure to get so many things covered before the test.

In effect, the in-service training played a positive role in making her uncertain courses of action verifiable to the point that the curriculum making was limited to certain contents or tested skills. The inclusion of various needs of students in her teaching practice was largely “suggestive in case I had extra time.” Getting her students to prepare for tests at the end of school was compelling. Of course, Kelsey knew that there was no obligation for the teachers to follow the steps prescribed in the manual. But, it was still somewhat unsure for her “whether to go from or neglect” the prescribed procedure suggested by the curriculum developer in delivering skills to her students. Indeed, it was at this time more urgent that, first of all, she completely made sense of “the structure and effectiveness of this reading series” in terms of specific skills-based instructions, which she believed “helped students learn to read at this grade level,” plus provided “better preparation for the tests.” The fact that the organization of the manual was “spiral” particularly made “me feel safer” to the extent that “I made selections from among an array of specific lessons or activities suggested in every unit that was repeatedly hit or could be reviewed as I followed the manual.”

Moving one step forward.

At a point, Kelsey started to be comfortable with using new curriculum materials. Perhaps, it was the time when the representative from the textbook company came in and
told her about how things needed to unfold at a minimum level. Even if not obligatorily asked to be as faithful as possible in using curriculum materials as intended originally, Kelsey intentionally attempted to follow the intent of the teacher’s manual for a complete understanding of what it was like. In the meantime, as she experienced, maintaining fidelity was regarded as “quite successful” in not only getting familiar with textbooks, but also learning how to teach better. As school moved to the newly constructed building in a new academic year, certain small steps of change were occurring. Such small changes of how she was putting words into action was internal to her evolving emotional and cognitive understandings. As she reflected, for instance, on her changed lesson plan:

My lesson plans were pretty much the same. I wrote the basics of what I was going to do like I did in the first year. … That could keep me organized. But, beginning in the second year, I wrote less, because I knew more of what I was going to do.

To some extent, this change was seen as remarkable, because Kelsey was “always worried about the sub teacher coming in” if she was sick. Being specific was “the way she was.” This characteristic of being specific in her actual course of action remained as it had been. But, knowing a lot of what to do after one year of implementation was explicitly helping her in easier planning. Further, based on these experiences, “I was able to work with students differently in teaching reading,” she noted. Admittedly, she directed her classes in favor of a whole group last year for the sake of emphasizing basic reading strategies and skills. During this direct teaching, she occasionally realized “some of lower and higher students” appeared to be “less motivated.” Having students not to get
bored was one of her several new attempts in the new school year. In particular, “being a little more relaxed” in managing the flow of teaching, “I could give students more opportunities,” even if only a short period of time in-between classes, to read books in a pair, called buddy reading. Although this focus on buddy reading was due to her observation of a handful of students whose reading abilities were lower in the second year of implementation, she contributed this change to an emerging competence that she could make things a bit better.

More importantly, Kelsey found herself “freely adding” her own ideas or learned techniques to the existing fidelity-based implementation process. In a sense, such an effort was seen as “putting things together.” As reflected previously, she prepared to make things better in the future as a result of just being strict to the exact intent of the curriculum developer at least in the initial year of implementation. Probably, a phenomenon of things getting better was taking place gradually. The following comment on her action showed her changing use of new curriculum materials. The class, then, was reading poetry in terms of rhymes with the /oo/ sounds. The intent of the curriculum developer was “having students frame words with the same vowel sounds,” along with teachers’ behaviors “writing those words in appropriate column on the board as students read aloud.” By using the Big Book, Kelsey encouraged students to read the poetry aloud in interesting manners. The steps in the manual were followed at large. But, the pattern of students’ repeats was meaningfully organized on her own, e.g., to read words silently or by yelling out. Further, a technique that Kelsey learned from the workshop, which was not supported by the textbook company, was intentionally added to the process of how to
discriminate those words. Within the boundary of the intent of the curriculum developer, Kelsey attempted to adjust what she wanted to go through in action:

I used a wick stick like a string with wax that was put below those words with the /oo/ sounds. That was my own thing. I got it at the workshop, not from the textbook company. ... I liked it, because it really highlighted the words in the poem. ... As we read it again, we read it silently, but every time we came to the /oo/ sound, then students had to yell it out. That way helped students SEE those underlined words and KNOW those words having /oo/ sounds.

"I was proud of my making this class meaningful and exciting by having students participate in the process of teaching in varying ways" other than exactly following the procedure in the manual. That is, the way in which the students selected were asked to put a different color of the strings to each word with the /oo/ sound was what she thought was "something of value in this lesson of poetry." She was highly convinced that her small creative application of what she already knew, to this class, made it possible a harmonious "balance of the visual and the kinesthetic activity." Kelsey remembered teaching this poem in a similar manner last year. One thing that "I was so sure about what made me feel good" during this lesson this time was that "I knew that this way was helping students specifically know basics of what was supposed to be known at the given time." Her reflection on previous experiences learned mostly from the workshops in the last two years since beginning to teach was already implicitly and even productively under way. "I am delighted to recognize this time an actual sense of what it was like to
apply something I already knew to the prescribed steps in the manual,” she noted with enthusiasm.

Meanwhile, to Kelsey, it was still obvious that using some of curriculum materials as intended originally was “productive in helping improve the reading skills of students.” “As practice could make perfect,” she said, “my focus on having students encounter basic knowledge and skills needed in learning to read was continuous.” Following a sequence of daily oral languages listed in the back of the teacher's manual was one example. A whole entire series of basic vocabulary words and exemplars of sentences was used in a daily base. As part of morning works and extra activities, she “incorrectly” wrote those words and/or sentences on the board and expected students to “find all of the mistakes and correct them.” The fidelity of implementation was maintained, because Kelsey found it very effective in assisting lower and average students to get some sense as to how consistently they had been learning to read day by day and thus to inspire “the sort of self-confidence” in their reading ability. As Kelsey reflected, sets of the Instant Readers were also “the other example” being used in the same manner over the years. Unlike the Trade Books, which were being flexibly used as supplementary for reading textbooks whenever necessary, Instant Readers were used in focus and faithfully:

Students read the Instant Reader in a small group. They reviewed the main skills. The Reader was really good. I used it every day and week. It was really good to students. Instead of using the worksheets, it actually got them to read real literatures and apply those skills they learned in the center time. It was really good. I could help them and coach them along.
In conclusion, Kelsey's use of new curriculum materials was evolving and changing, if only in a small degree. More correctly, as she repeated the use of the reading series, the changing image was appearing on her mind, followed by her intentional effort to go outside of what was previously done in action. The recipe of how to use information from the textbook company may have influenced her towards doing so, but her own intentional attempts were getting involved in action from her active reflections on feasible ways of making a difference. Largely, previous professional learning experiences out of school were applied to her existing courses of action. Nonetheless, Kelsey regarded those undertakings as neither ambitious nor dramatic. Rather, it was like “a small progress” in which she was vividly enabled to connect what skills or techniques she had already known to the present task she faced. To the extent to which those connections were limited to skills or techniques as replacements, her style of teaching as a teacher-led practice was stable, exemplified by her continuous high fidelity to implementation in many areas of curriculum materials. The fact that such a changing pattern of implementation methods was just “a new beginning” for Kelsey demonstrated a significant evolution in her view of herself as a key actor in the curriculum implementation process.

The following letter showed how she made sense of what has been transpiring around her and the existence of the researcher. As stated clearly, she has been changing what she used to think and act. The impact of the new language arts curriculum on her life-world or the world of lived experience was continuing as she was constantly situating herself in particular events considered to be meaningful for her professional growth.
Dear Jeasik

As I reflected on the past two years I was able to put my thoughts into perspective. I felt that through our meaningful conversations in implementing the languages arts curriculum I was able to contemplate the ways in which I needed to change and the approaches that I felt confident in keeping as a part of my routine. Your interview questions were thought provoking and many times I would think of other solutions and scenarios in my mind as afterthoughts. This gave me the inspiration to try other approaches and different techniques.

My students enjoyed having you in our classroom. They felt so important answering your questions and they loved having a visitor in the room, especially one they considered to be so kind and helpful.

Your research and questions were helpful in gaining deeper insights to what it is I want to see accomplished with this new implementation. Thank your for your time.

Sincerely

Kelsey Backer

Carol’s Story

This section focuses on Carol’s story in her own words. Her view of curriculum implementation, actual uses of curriculum materials, and reflection are presented.
Definition of Curriculum Implementation

Her view of curriculum was vividly illuminated in following interview
transcriptions:

* * * *

Researcher: What do you mean by curriculum?

Carol: For me, curriculum is narrowly defined by many people as a course of
study, document, and the like. I think it is much more than that. ... I
have found that no matter how good and detailed a program is, I have
to use my own judgment about how and when to use it. ...

Researcher: What do you mean by that?

Carol: ... any idea in the curriculum material is just a suggestion. I mean
‘good’ suggestion. But I think I have to choose what I am sure will be
good for my class on any specific day and at any time.

Researcher: By this, you mean you feel free not to follow the suggestion?

Carol: Absolutely. They [curriculum developers] do not know what my
students’ needs are at any particular time. I do. And so, I pick and
choose what I know is best for my students. Overall, within a year, I
usually find that I have done many of the things included in the
curriculum for my students. Following the sequence or suggestions in
the book is important. ... I have found good resources on my own and
they work better than anything I have found in the teacher’s manual.

* * * *

179
Carol's view of curriculum was distinct from typical goals and objectives-based language. Certainly, as expressed above, the view of curriculum as standardized objectives was not enough to include her understanding of what curriculum should be. "I know that the pat answer on curriculum as an outline, or foundation, from which everything we teach is derived and it is also something that needs to be met by each student in our school district," she said. Having a different view of curriculum was only possible, she maintained, when "twofold meanings of a metaphor like a ladder or a stepping stone" were explored. Assuming that curriculum as product only included "one side" of her classroom work, she found it possible to specifically create "the other side" which focused on how a curriculum needed to be interpreted in a specific situation in terms of the role of the teacher and the achievement of students.

The twofold meanings of the metaphor were explained as the limitation of the prescriptive curriculum and the possibilities of her ongoing classroom curriculum. For her concept of the limited, prescriptive curriculum, "I can't help but accept the fact that the school curriculum played a role of a ladder or a stepping stone by which students will move on to the top of the requirements." This was the first element of Carol's explanation. However, "I was concerned about the technical process and undesirable product of this widely accepted notion of the school curriculum as a ladder or a stepping stone," she continued. For the issue as to why the curriculum had to be taught as prescribed, "I was uncomfortable with the general perception that teachers might easily take, which would be":

The state curriculum and tests are played upon us too heavily, so that teachers
have a tendency to just teach what the curriculum is, and say ‘I have done my job, I have taught it. Here is what I taught, this is how I taught it.’

For the problem of the technically anticipated-product of such a notion regarding what should be taught step by step, she brought up the accountability issue imposed increasingly on teachers, including herself: “If most of students fail to reach the top of the ladder,” that is, what they need to know for their grade level, “we teachers may face the fact that a lot of people move out of the district or the principal becomes upset, and people lose their jobs.” Carol was mindful of the newly intensified role and stricter accountability of teachers as implementers of the state mandatory curriculum. This kind of the uncomfortable view surrounding her teaching profession was an aspect of her perception of what teachers were supposed to do in light of the expected, prescribed image of the curriculum as one of simply functioning like “a ladder or a stepping stone.”

In short, “the reason why I want to stress these general concerns and issues” facing the teaching profession was that “we need to rethink the taken for granted question associated with our daily professional role in teaching, “what can I and can I not do in my classroom?”

As she sought out her own meaning of curriculum and implementation, she tried to express, logically and arguably, her personal point of view on what she could and could not do under these circumstances inside and out her classroom. At first, “I want to defend my personal view. [That is,] I know it is an ideal, but curriculum would be better if it were individually based,” said Carol. Yet, she rapidly withdrew her opinion by realistically mentioning the fact that “there is the standardized curriculum and test, and
nowhere can we escape it.” Secondly, “I tactically regard the state and the school curriculum as “my core objectives,” which should be translated meaningfully into her personal, holistic goal and objective toward “helping students learn.” Together, Carol did not deny the entity of the standardized curriculum, but instead juxtaposed it with her practical situation to make room where she felt safe. In other words, following “strictly what I am supposed to do” as intended by the standardized curriculum and prescribed by the teacher’s manual did not necessarily mean, “my work of curriculum and teaching was complete or done!”:

[The limited view of the work of teachers] does not guarantee the evidence that I really have helped kids. My whole objective is to help students learn. If I find that the standardized curriculum does not include this aspect of curriculum, then I try to teach something else. For instance, if students already know some portions of the curriculum, they are bored and are going to lose interest in school … .

Therefore, her definition of implementation, itself, lies in the bottom line of her curriculum objective toward “helping students learn at their own level of learning,” particularly “for those in above and below levels.” To a certain extent, her personal meaning of implementation was nothing but having a chance to get “new tools” that might be more useful than old ones in helping students meet their different needs. Yet, she claimed, “the use of such new tools ought to be viewed as flexible, depending upon my own intuition and rationale.” The following transcript represents her basic concept of curriculum implementation:
Researcher: What if a curriculum developer comes in and sees your flexible uses of certain curriculum materials, and says “Mrs. Steinberg, I think, your use of my materials is incorrect or somehow misled!”

Carol: I would say, … there is no one RIGHT way of doing things. As I understand myself, I am never going to do this same thing exactly the same way I did two years in a row, because of the make-up of my students. … I probably would not offend him or her, but I probably would more or less show him and give him some reasons why things were done. I would also express to him that I have many years of experience teaching at the 2nd grade level. … I tried, it but it did not work. I had kids confused, so I changed it.

In conclusion, Carol demonstrated her personal, professional view of curriculum implementation. Rather than merely “going ahead and doing what is said in the book,” she believed, “I have found good resources on my own, and they work better than anything I have found in the teacher’s manual.” Further, because of varying needs of students, an analysis of “which implementation method is better” could be multiple, so that “I believe that the curriculum could be defined as flexible and individual.” Given this, with years of teaching experience, Carol argued, “any method needs to be flexible [and] … adaptive depending on students’ needs and their interest in learning.”
Curriculum-in-Use

Carol’s actual use of curriculum materials is described in this section. Like the previous case study of Kelsey, the researcher explores her classroom teaching activities to figure out patterns of how she uses curriculum materials in terms of the manual. The researcher attempts to follow “the flow” of her teaching. By holding preconceptions on how things have to go on in light of particular teaching models, three reading classes are presented, all observed in 1998, in the old building.

The review of vocabulary: Don’t show it to anybody!.

Carol’s lesson plan was by and large complex. Beginning with type-written descriptions of the morning routines and calendar, a lot of her handwritten entries followed, according to each class. She developed a daily detailed lesson for each subject in a one-inch space, so that her five page-long weekly lesson plan looked quite messy. On the left margin, she put certain information such as specific pages of practice books, drawings, types of resources, and the like. This complexity was mainly caused by the amount of her plan densely written in the one-inch long space, along with the structure in which five days’ plans were written in a row. Each page of her lesson plan, therefore, was full of her handwriting with all of the space covered.

Under the headlines of each date was written what she and the students were supposed to do. But, here and there, many traces were found where she erased, added, and changed certain elements of her thoughts, which meant that she continuously “re/developed” her plans during her daily teaching activities. Today’s lesson for her reading class was as follows (wksh refers to worksheet):

184
vocab. wksh, Tues. - Review vocabulary by passing out wksh & together.

27-28 We will complete the sentences. Then have students work in teams to get their sentences in correct sequence. (Glue down & illustrate) Do a partner read of sentences. Go back & complete pg. 27 together sequencing.

At 9:30, today’s class began. Most of students, sitting on the floor in the middle of the classroom, were reading in pairs. Because of the high temperature, a big fan making some noise was in operation near the edge of Carol’s desk. Carol was about to go to the front of the classroom after speaking in a bit of a husky voice to the researcher, “I want to give as many as opportunities for kids to read, because they have little chance to go to the library on a daily base.”

Her classroom was organized today like a horseshoe. Four computers were located in the left front corner of the classroom. On the right wall of the classroom was a list of the students’ names indicated five student groupings. The reading center or the carpet area was in the right rear of the classroom. Two posts relating to social science study were seen just besides the board, where Carol now stood. She counted “Five, four, three, [pause] two, one!” Students quickly returned to their seats from the places where they were around the classroom. After confirming that all students were sitting up at their desks, she swiftly distributed word cards to each student by moving here and there. Students receiving the cards instantly looked at what was written inside and tried to peek at that of their friends. “Do not show it to anybody!” she spoke up while coming back to the front of the classroom.
Vocabulary words to be reviewed today were then quickly written from her memory on the board: sound, called, strong, thanks, appeared, spare, brought. A reminder for students not to show their card to others was again mentioned when she was about to finish up writing these words. According to her lesson plan from yesterday, “students working together will look up definitions of these words, write a sentence with each, draw a picture, [and] share the words with each other in 3 large groups.”

Tomorrow, Wednesday, Carol planned, “the sound of /r/ with another consonant will be discussed.” Then, for the following two days, she will “use the Big Book of Rhymes about ‘chums’ to introduce the /ng/ and /ngk/ sounds and review these sounds by applying different words.”

Now, students got settled down and tried to listen as to what they were going to do with word cards they had received. Standing in the middle of the classroom, Carol smiled first and then described in some detail what she wanted the students to do. That is, she was going to pick a student and ask her or him to describe the word at hand, according to her directions. “It is going to be fun,” said Carol, “and raise your hand” when the word being described “matches with those on the board.” As she picked Toni, the game started. She directed him, after looking inside, to describe the word by using “body languages.” The rest of the students sitting in desks seemed to think of this order as difficult for Toni to do. Toni also appeared to show this feeling, but, as if he decided an appropriate clue, he suddenly jumped on his site two times. A second later, almost all of the students raised their hands at one time. For those raising their hands holding the cards, Carol exclaimed with an exciting voice, “Show different hands.” By selecting a
student from the audience, "What is this word?" she asked. "Sound," the student answered. "Oh, oh," Carol replied and asked the student who jumped to see if the word 'sound' was correct. The student nodded negatively. Again, students raised their hands. Yet, Carol did not go ahead and select another student, but instead explained the reason why the answer 'sound' was incorrect. Carol noted, "he [the student] made a sound but what makes her jump?" The following student selected gave the right answer, "strong." The next word to be reviewed was "spare." Carol directed that this student explain the word "orally." The student seemed to get stuck not being able to find the appropriate clue. Carol whispered to the student, providing some help. The clue was figured out and slowly expressed, "Just like something we have enough of ... ?" The right answer was easily given on the first try. In cases where the same word was chosen, Carol tried to have students demonstrate the clue differently.

In fact, this review of vocabulary was partly based upon the idea in the manual but substantially different from it. According to the Teacher’s Edition or manual, there was a section "Hands-on Activity":

**Play a game with children.** Have children write the Key Words on cards for their Word Files. Then tell children to bring one of the cards with them, and have them sit in a circle on the floor. Invite children to pass the cards around the circle to the rhythm of a drumbeat. When the drumming stops, have children hold up the card they have if you give the appropriate clue ... .

The major intent of the curriculum developer for this hands-on activity was similar
to that of Carol in terms that the students were given the appropriate clues and meanings to make new vocabulary better understood. As described before, however, Carol modified this procedure in ways that prepared the cards of the Key Words to be reviewed in advance and asked students selected to express what it meant to them in varying manners. The manual highly directed the step-based organization of student grouping to give learning opportunities as a whole. Yet, Carol made use of students’ intuitions in eliciting the clues to the meanings and then had them think aloud to explore new vocabulary, both individually and collectively, in a dynamic fashion.

Specifically, for Carol, learning was not going to occur “without thinking [even] at this lower grade level.” Students “had to think first” and use their idea before doing something in class. In this regard, therefore, teaching could be meaningful only when the process of learning involved “many different thinking skills.” To a broad extent, her perspective on students’ thinking-based learning was convergent with the development of “problem solving” abilities. As practiced in today’s class, the simple review of vocabulary did not have to go through a mere process of rote-memorization. For learning to occur, she explained, students had to “be challenged to think of the meaning” of the given word, “select” the best form of representation; and “see” if their thought and representation were in effective.

Simon says, “Don’t go back to your seat!”

The topic of the reading book that the students learned this week was “Dinosaurs, Alive and Well! - A Guide to Good Health.” This literature, written by award-winning authors and illustrators, was under the first theme Learning about Oneself. In this unit,
curriculum developers noted that "students are encouraged to feel good about themselves and to take an active role in their own physical and emotional well-being." It was Wednesday. After teaching and reviewing new vocabulary words over the last two days, Carol was going to touch on concrete experiences relevant to the theme of this literature, along with specific skills and knowledge regarding the concept of antonyms, or words with opposite meanings. According to her lesson plan, "have students exercise physically and mentally and then learn antonyms by passing out cards. Together find out the opposite words."

At 9:30, students sat and talked with each other in the carpet area. Carol, sitting in the rocking chair, was placing her left fingers on her right wrist to find out where the pulse was to be found. Some students, catching this scene of what Carol was doing, were trying to mimic, then most of students followed along gradually. Being aware of what the students were doing, she suddenly asked, "who does exercise every day?" A couple of the students slowly raised their hands. "What do you do, Jeff?" her questions continued. Responses from the students were jogging, playing baseball, and biking. "Good. Exercise makes your body stronger and harder." She moved to the board and wrote the words harder and stronger. "Put your left fingers on the wrist of the right hand like this," said she. A moment of silence was observed. She questioned, "Do you find something? What is it?"

This opening activity that Carol attempted to do was regarded as kinesthetic, which was partly drawn from the teacher's manual, entitled IDEA BANK ACTIVITIES in Day 3, part I for Reading, Listening, and Speaking, and Viewing, consisted of four suggested
teaching elements such as 'Listening and Speaking, Real-Life Reading, Oral Language, and Kinesthetic.' The idea of the kinesthetic prescribed by curriculum developers was as follows:

**CHECK YOUR PULSE**

Demonstrate how to take your pulse. Gently press your first two fingers on the side of your neck until you find your pulse. Then have children do the same. Once they find their pulse, have them count and record the number of heartbeats they feel as you time them for twenty seconds.

Then have children do some light exercise such as toe-touches. Have children take their pulses again for twenty seconds after doing the exercises and record the results. Discuss the difference in pulse rates and why they might be different before and after exercising. Remind children that exercise helps the heart pump stronger and keeps them healthy.

The curriculum developer suggested that the teacher find the pulse on the side of the neck, whereas Carol had chosen to take it on the wrist. But, right after explaining what pulse was, and what made it to do so, Carol mentioned, "the pulse could also be found in other parts of our body such as the neck or the leg." Now, as prescribed, the number of pulses in twenty seconds was measured. "Twenty seconds, okay, ready ... start," she said. Most of students were seriously doing this activity in a frozen gesture. By promptly turning her gaze from the clock to students, Carol carefully asked, "Okay, stop.
How many times did you get?” The answers of students selected varied, ranging from seven to twenty five. As soon as she explaining that each could be different from the others in terms of the accuracy of the place measured, Carol spoke up, “Everybody stand up!” She was about to have students do exercise to see if their pulses would be different.

Following the prescription of the manual, “Then have children do some light exercise such as toe-touches,” Carol instructed the students to stretch their bodies “higher and higher” by raising both hands up. She continued to ask “higher ... higher.” Then, Carol’s directions suddenly changed, “Everybody sit down!” One or two seconds later, “Everybody stand up!” Her rhythmical voice swept through the classroom, which caused the students to have a lot of fun. Suddenly, a student in the middle of crowd raised his hand. “Tom?” she said. “My brother does this,” he said. “To do exercise?” she replied. He nodded. “Yea, Tom’s brother exercises to develop ...?”, she did not finish her speech but instead expected the students to find the appropriate word. But no answer came from students. “To develop muscles,” she completed.

Indeed, Tom brought his life experience to the class. To support the experience of Calvin and relate it to her following activity, Carol brought a reading textbook from the desk of a student near her. By showing the specific page of the textbook, where dinosaurs were doing exercise, Carol concluded these activities with the proposition, “The more we exercise, the healthier,” which was part of the last reminder of the curriculum developer, “Remind children that exercise helps the heart pump stronger and keeps them healthy.”

Moreover, Carol had another activity in her mind beyond this reminder of the
curriculum developer. “Close your eyes, please,” Carol continued. What she tried to extend was “Exercise of the mind.” By having students calculate “7+2” in their minds, she whispered, “Can you answer it in your mind?” Silence! Students nodded positively. “Now, where is the mind?” she went on to whisper. Silence continued. Carol looked over the students and said, “It is an image. We can imagine whatever we want. We can exercise in our mind.” In fact, this unit of the reading textbook, *Dinosaurs Alive and Well*, consisted of five sub-themes, two of which were ‘Exercise Your Body’ and ‘Exercise Your Mind.’ According to the textbook, “Your body is not all that needs exercise - so does your mind. Every time you ... make decisions, figure something out, or learn something new, you’re exercising your mind.” She asked students to imagine any kind of exercises or play activities that were popping in their minds. Students kept closing their eyes. Carol encouraged, “What’s is your mind telling you?” To finalize this activity of imagination in mind, she prodded all of the students to say something one by one. Every student was invited to say something such as “I am drawing, I dance ballet, play baseball, or piano, etc.,” some of which overlapped. In this tranquil morning, all of students were invited to share their imaginations with each other.

Overall, this classroom activity was “very similar” to the prescription of the manual. Based upon the thematic unit of the reading textbook of this week, Carol utilized these mind and body exercise classes to get into the story. As the curriculum developer intended, students demonstrated a few activities related to what and why characters of the story did in life-experience situations. As she explained, “I changed a few things in there. [But] I liked the idea. It was a good activity ... with some good points.” For her, such
good points were referred to as “an activity” that required “thinking skills utilized in a form of active participation.” As she informed, “My emphasis on this class was to let students understand what it meant to do exercise and imagine.”

Returning to the class, Carol brought another topic to students, which was *antonyms*, or *opposed words*. Continuous activities occurred in the carpet area where the lesson of exercise was just done. She just briefly explained the meaning of *antonym* by emphasizing the word *opposite*. Then, students were asked to do something in the opposite way that Carol was going to do something. She smiled, then. Students appeared to wonder what she was now going to do. Suddenly, she stood up from the rocking chair. No action was made for a second. But, soon, some students followed to stand up but quickly realized the rest of friends remaining on their seats. Alas! They flopped down on their seats.

While giggling here and there, all of students seriously paid attention to Carol standing up. As expected, she sat back to her rocking chair. All of sudden, students together jumped to their feet. Not long after students stood up, Carol was ready to deliver another order. As she looked through students standing in a boasting manner before her, Carol said, “Now, you can only do things when hearing the condition ‘Simon says.’ You don’t have to do anything without hearing ‘Simon says,’ okay?” Students, absorbed in what Carol said, just nodded. A moment of silence took place between Carol and the group of students. Carol broke this silence by speaking up “Simon says, … ‘Don’t go back to your seat!’” Another short moment of silence was made. And at the same time, some of students moved about but remained firmly in place. With a smile on her lips,
Carol says, “You guys do good job. Okay, game is over. Go back to your seats!” She stood up. Again, some students were about to move. But the rest of students realized that this order was a fake, by LOUDLY saying, “No—.” After having students go back to their seats, Carol did a few things more, like “go to under or over the desk.”

The teacher’s manual prescribed the lesson on antonyms by having the teacher use a pocket chart where a group of opposite words could be placed in order:

Point out the word right and ask children to find word in the pocket chart that means the opposite of right. (wrong) If necessary, tell children that right and wrong have opposite meanings and that words with opposite meanings are called antonyms. Ask children to match each pair.

Have volunteers add these four words to the pocket chart – hard, weak, scared, different. Have children tell what each word means and suggest words that have the opposite meaning. Make cards for the new words, and have a volunteer place each card next to its antonym.

The curriculum developer asked the teacher to use a pocket chart to get the attention of the students and to directly explain the formal relationship between right and wrong. Drawing on a form of direct instruction, the manual suggested a procedure in which the teacher provided students with a series of questions about meanings of pre-selected opposite words. Anticipated behaviors of students followed.

In contrast, Carol developed a totally different path to have students understand
meanings of opposite words. Basically, she was convinced that this prescriptive idea was “NOT going to work in her classroom” in terms of its “static,” or, step-by-step procedure in which “students would get bored.” Her alternative thinking, therefore, based upon a kinesthetic activity, was to “help students make sense of antonyms” by having them directly perform a pair of opposite words in action. For her, central to the use of the “kinesthetic” activity was a process by which “students learn better when they actually do.” In other words, she believed that students, while they went over and under the desk, “felt the opposite sense and learned” what the opposite word meant. In short, if the intent of the curriculum developer was to use a pure concept-based process, then that of Carol was to create her vision of “true learning” or an activity-based sense making process.

Compound words.

Carol’s class today was about teaching compound words. She was busy doing something with a couple of envelopes on her desk. She removed a bundle of word from one envelope. She looked over those words to see if they were correctly copied. This morning the classroom was organized as small groups. Students were writing their journals. In the ceiling, a number of long threads were hanging - threads that were for displaying art works or something else.

Students were told to stop writing and to put their notepads in the back of the classroom. She wrote a word *funnu* on the board. After settling down, Carol asked students to explain what this word *funnu* meant. Nobody answered. “Yes, this doesn’t mean anything,” she said. A further question, what was the meaning of part of this word, *fun*. Students began together to mumble. Attention was now paid to the ending part of the
word *nu*. Some students expressed the lack of meaning of the word. “Yes,” Carol replied and explained that because the word *fun* made sense but the word *nu* did not, the whole word *funnu* could not be a meaningful word. Her explanation continued to point out that a mix of two words, as a compound word, had to make sense.

According to Carol’s lesson plan:

Introduce compound words. Display some word cards with compounds and have students pick out words. Give students some words in an envelope and they are to put them together and record them on the board.

Carol quickly moved around each group of students to give them an envelope. “Don’t open it yet,” she cautioned students. One group, however, already opened it and poured the word cards on the desk. She neglected the behavior of the group and went on to explain how to do this project to each group. Eight different words were included in each envelope: *in, some, way, play, where, butter, ground, body, fly,* and *side.* The way Carol wanted students to work with those cards was playing the puzzle game. The rule was: *as a pair, make four sets of compound words as quickly as possible and stand up when finishing with this work, and as a group, five or six students should cooperate to solve this problem.* The game began. Students were talking and, sometimes, arguing with each other. “Everybody should participate. Don’t bicker, work together,” she cautioned while coming to one group of students.

Apparently, some groups proceeded well to find meaningful compound words and some did not. The words like *someway, groundbody, inpath,* etc. were challenging for
those who worked slowly. Yet for those who quickly figuring out the words like *playground* or *inside*, this work went easily. The teacher’s manual prescribed the introduction and its activity in some detailed and complex manner:

**Compound words**

Write the word sunglasses on the board and ask children to tell where or when they may have worn *sunglasses*. Underline each word of the compound and explain that sometimes two words are put together to make one word called a Compound Word. Write the following lists of words on the board:

Cart  Way  
Far  Thing  
Door  Wheels  
Horse  Bank  
Some  Yard  
Back  Away

Have small groups of children look through “Emily and Alice Again” to find compound words formed by using one word from each list. Have them mark the spot with a self-stick note. When all groups are finished, ask one group at a time to read aloud a sentence from the story that contains one of the compound words and to draw a line on the board to connect the words of the compound. Encourage children to add compound words to the list.

Carol used totally different examples of compound words in contrast to those suggested above. She did believe, “Kids may not think of these examples [e.g., *cart-*
wheel in the manual] as compound words." Further, "I couldn't make sense of such steps," she argued, because "the class can be led as a team or as cooperative work," as opposed to teacher-led. By using "useful or meaningful" examples, e.g., "play-ground" or "butter-fly," Carol felt that students in an introductory class would better make sense of the meaning-structure of compound words. While the curriculum developer suggested that teachers have students search other compound words in texts, Carol pursued this activity by having students write a sentence including a compound word. This was because she wanted students to reaffirm a better sense of compound words while writing a sentence on their own.

"My whole class objective was that of an integrated curriculum" by connecting the notion of compound words to such elements as writing, grammar, and art, rather than "just following the simple direction," i.e., introducing new knowledge to students and then applying it to texts. "How boring it is!" With this idea on her mind, Carol closed this activity by having students write a sentence including a compound word. An example was demonstrated on the board: i (not capitalized) painted my toenail in orange and pink (no period marked). Students were asked to think of what the problems were in this sentence. Two students were invited to correct the sentence grammatically. Students were reminded of two things: (a) use a compound word like she did the word toenail in the sentence and (b) use a capital letter in the beginning and put a period in the end of the sentence. After that, Carol distributed the worksheet she had made to the students, followed by the instruction that "Given those words on the desk, pick one compound word among them, write a sentence at the bottom, and draw a picture at the top of the
worksheet. I will give you five minutes.”

For a while, students were trying to write a sentence and draw a picture. Carol was moving around to each group to see if students had any difficulty in doing this task. According to the manual, the teacher was advised to use the practice book at the end of this lesson on compound words. Indeed, Carol used that practice book later in the class but utilized the worksheet she made first by integrating the grammar lesson as well as art work. Students were optionally asked to present what was written and drawn. As long as a few students presented their compositions and drawings, Carol asked students to highlight the compound word in the sentence. Later on, she called for students, “Put your name on your paper and raise your hand when you are done. I am going to put your paper in the air.” A moment later, Carol and all of students could see twenty-six worksheets on the ceiling.

In closing the lesson, a reading of one of the Trade Books entitled *Jimmy Lee Did It* quickly followed. The purpose of the Trade Books was to help students read varying additional stories for supporting the current overarching theme. Before starting to read this book, Carol asked students to think of who Jimmy was. Carol had a student read it aloud. The story of from this book was like a mystery. Whenever finding messes all over their house, a boy kept telling to his sister “Jimmy Lee did it, (not me).” Carol invited the other student to read the rest of it. The overarching theme was “Celebrating Me,” which helped students understand the fact that “people are special and all of us are unique in some way.” After the reading of the book was complete, Carol asked who Jimmy Lee was. Responses of students varied. In the end, “Jimmy Lee is the boy himself,” a student
answered. Carol’s response followed, “Yes, he is.” Turning to life experiences, students were asked to think of what they did everyday in their house, like “Who makes your room messy and who cleans it up?” After a moment, students were silently reading for themselves one more time.

Reflection

Carol’s experiences demonstrating her concept and practice of curriculum implementation are now described in this section. Carol’s reflective stories range from her personal strategy as experiential, through her deepened voices underlying her action and thought in context, to her experience of change. Carol’s reflective narrative is an interpretive text reconstructed by the researcher. By deeply and holistically understanding Carol’s thought and action from her perspective, this text can be both alive and meaningful. Carol’s lived experiences are presented along three dominant themes: (a) I know “who I am,” (b) implementation as adaptive, and (c) outspokenness: changing or unchanged.

I know “who I am”.

In Carol’s view, the basal series she had used for 6 years was not good. As far as she remembered, this school had used it for the past 8 years. The basal approach was one that pre-chose stories for the students and the teachers, and all of activities went along with those stories. In her opinion, most of stories and activities were not interesting. Over the past few years, while the state and the school curriculum and test policy were constantly changing, she regretted having to use the outdated textbooks. Not only did she dislike the basal reading series, but she also thought that it played an inappropriate role in exactly
covering the changing curriculum. Yet, she didn’t blame her school district. Definitely
not! She knew that replacing textbooks cost a lot of money and was time-consuming. It
was just the right time to adopt new reading series this year, not only because the old
series was so outdated, but also because the district was recently concerned about the fact
that students were not doing a good job on the reading portion of the state proficiency
test.

One thing that should be noted was that even though Carol disliked the previous
basal reading series, she was not an advocate of what is called whole language
philosophy. As she claimed, “the practice of whole language was at risk in any goal to
cover the curriculum.” However, she did not take an easy path that guaranteed the
coverage of the curriculum in the basal series. Nor did she go out to the zone of the
unlimited freedom where she could be a perfect curriculum developer. She perceived the
sort of double pressures that challenged her curriculum making and teaching. Just as
things constantly changed outside the classroom, so did the make-up of the students
inside the classroom. She had a position, “neither whole language nor basal or phonics-
based approach could have been the one single prescription that I thought would work."

Furthermore, she noted, “I think that the nature of textbooks or curriculum materials
was problematic due to the generalized, commercial characteristic of the textbook
company.” It had to do with the similar version of the curriculum distributed among all
the other states. For instance, she explained that “like the state of Ohio’s mandatory
curriculum was very similar to that of California, which was very similar to that of
Texas.” Because of these similarities state by state, textbook publishers could gear their
products to the commonality of each state model. Therefore, she continued, “textbooks could be directly sold in our school district and other ones in Ohio or in other states.”

Thinking about this macro perspective on the relationship between textbooks and the state curriculum, she came to the conclusion that the reading series adopted in her school district this year was “not necessarily one that could be considered the most appropriate materials for my school and classroom.” At best, she thought, new curriculum materials were approximate in her classroom but not something that would deserve absolute and blind respect.

It was not easy for her “to put things together” for the coverage of the state curriculum and the fulfillment of the various needs of students. The major drive that made it possible for her to be enthusiastic towards pursuing both the intended and the enacted curriculum at a time was that she had been gradually feeling competent and professional about herself engaged in teaching over time. Perhaps, without a reliance on steps or procedures prescribed in the manual, she believed, “I now quickly came to gain insight into how to differentiate this curriculum to both the lower and higher students, along with not losing the interests of the average students.” In a sense, based upon these three large groups of students’ abilities, Carol intended to enhance literacy by using the basic skills from the textbooks, which had to be performed as activity-based for the whole class and then be individualized as an ongoing assessment process. Carol ardently claimed, “I am the only person who knows my students best. The books don’t know my students.” The prescriptive steps in the manual were regarded as if the curriculum developer delivered a curriculum to ALL of her students at the same degree. She believed
this and commented, "That's it!" An example of this was reflected below:

I wanted to have some reading assessments. I had some students who could not even read one of the stories out of the book yet. The assessment that they [curriculum developers] were giving us was not working for everyone. The middle group of my students could do them, because they could read those stories. But my lower students could not even read the stories. There were some ideas that they had us re-teach. It said 'Re-teach this.' There were no concrete materials to help me re-teach. They were coming up on their own. I used the series, but I did a lot of on my own in-between, because it was not enough to reach all of my students. If I had all the students in the middle of my classroom, average students, I would have been fine with my teaching for a year. But because I had many lower and higher students all the time, such ideas for middle students would not fit my teaching at all. Lower students need more time and different ideas. And higher students get bored.

Her constant concern was with how to differentiate reading curriculum and teaching to fit into students’ different levels. During daily classroom practices, she kept maintaining 5 different groups of students in terms of reading ability: lower, below average, average, above average, and higher. She had specifically had students read the Trade Books at their own levels - Trade Books that she frequently checked in light of the varying criteria such as the difficulty level, the size of printed texts, numbers of vocabulary, styles of books, etc. Through informal, individual-based assessments, students were checked as to their progress. To some extent, new curriculum materials,
especially like stories in the textbooks or Trade Books, provided her with "something" for students to "read repeatedly," not something that she ought to use to follow someone’s guideline of "how to have her students learn to read." This was because of her strong commitments to checking and seeing constantly how students progressed individually day by day.

For instance, for lower students, she had them (individually) read aloud in front of her whenever she had spare time at lunchtime or some other time to see if there was any progress. As she reflected, she had "five students who were perhaps below the level of the 1st grader and four or five higher students above the level of the 5th or 6th grader." She really did not want these struggling or talented readers left out, along with taking care of the average readers in the whole class. Regardless of the expected, accountable behavior associated with the better use of new curriculum materials, Carol believed that it would be much more important for her to "help all of students to go up to the next level" by using this kind of ongoing contacts in many different ways. Apparently, she feared that if she just maintained teaching all of students in the same way, higher students would lose their interests, not to mention the lower students. In short, the impact of these overwhelming new curriculum materials on her classroom were, on the bottom line, not deeply influential in changing her curriculum and teaching practice, in the way as intended by the curriculum developers. In fact, the broader intent of the curriculum developers was fully actualized, because Carol thought that "students could enjoy reading good, life-related, quality stories all the time." Yet the specific or day to day intent that each story could be better used and thus actualized in making students' experiences more
productive and meaningful had little penetration into Carol’s everyday implementation process in the first year.

More importantly, she had a reason why she had to make use of her experience in the implementation process. As she confirmed before, basic to her point of view on this new reading series was a high level of credit, largely because of the inclusion of a lot of good stories from the real literature, along with the elements of phonics. Undoubtedly, Carol believed that she ought to use this series because it was paid for by taxes: “I had to prove that I was using it in an academic fashion.” Indeed, she confessed that she was using it. However, use of new curriculum materials was unknown. “No one had ever told me how to use those curriculum materials. I had to figure it out on my own,” she said. The manual was, in the end, no help, at least, for her to attempt to use this series. Carol didn’t make sense of why the teacher’s manual was organized in such a complex, non-user-friendly way. The reason why she was confused and uncomfortable with consulting the manual to use each unit was the fact that “no one from the textbook company came in to train the teachers.” Her first impression and analysis of the teacher’s manual were:

It was too overwhelming to new teachers and even a veteran teacher like myself. It had too much stuff. It was not organized in a way that was easy for teachers to read. For instance, if you were on page 647 for spelling, and then you had to go to 752 to do language and then you had to go back to get all the material from the resources that they wanted you to do in a logical way. It should be page by page, day by day and each lesson should flow and be interconnected. For instance, teaching a long /i/ sound in reading needed to
be related to that of a spelling word /oo/ sound in language. But they were not related each other. Further, there was no application of stories, nor were there applications to the next skill. It was just like sets of little isolated lessons.

More or less, her feeling was somewhat paradoxical in that she experienced tensions inside her mind, even if the tensions were not severe. That is, it was like a complicated, dualistic experience. Carol saw herself facing an obligation in the use the new textbooks and, at the same time, found herself making a critique on the less integrated features of the manual. Indeed, this initial context which she faced made it possible for her to "be herself," which helped her rely more on her experiential knowledge accumulated over time. In other words, basically, she was not interested in using new curriculum materials according to the manual. But, the fact that no extra help or support came from the textbook company could possibly be an excuse in defending the way she was using the textbooks on her own.

In brief, Carol had a clear vision of how to make students' learning to read successful - a vision that would be accomplished in the active, meaningful manner that allowed students to make sense for themselves under her constant assessment efforts. As it turned out, the balance that she made in this early implementation process was to selectively take out small portions of what she thought were the most important skills to teach from each unit for each week, and put her concrete, prior experiences into action. "I know who I am," she reflected, "and I was definitely using many essential ideas from the manual but I was eventually changing and modifying those ideas to fit my students and the class."

206
Ongoing planning as adaptive.

Behavioral objectives were neither stated on the board at the beginning of the class nor reminded to the students. “I am concerned about the coverage of the curriculum,” she asserted, “but I am less concerned about the process in which the coverage of the curriculum has to be performed as concerns behavioral objectives.” In other words, “I tried to be less dependent on the prescriptive step in my teaching practice.” Her actual use of new curriculum materials as an ongoing modified process between plan and action began in the weekly planning process. By engaging with the Suggested Lesson Planner of the manual and the Graded Course of Study, she carefully explained her course of action:

Basically, I look at the stories first. For instance, if I am going to teach a story “Coyote,” I sit down and read the story. Okay, I know what it is. Look at the plan that they [the curriculum developer] offer in the book. And I have a checklist made up for that part of the course of study of what I need to teach or what skills I need to teach. I look at what skills I have not taught on that checklist yet and compare those with what the book says I need to teach from the story.

As noticed explicitly, it was specific for her to use both the Graded Course of Study and the Planner in the manual. By making use of her own checklist, she wanted to make sure of the basic components of the curriculum and attempted to relate them to what the curriculum developer suggested was covered in that story. In essence, once she identified the whole picture of what needed to be taught in that week, her daily lesson planning process turned out to be highly “selective” in actualizing “those skills into a series of
activities for the students" by reflecting on her priorities to teach day by day.

And then I use the Suggested Planner ... but only taking some pieces of it.

Like Monday I might like the /oo/ sound, so I teach /oo/ all day long. On Tuesday, I might put it in review, the /oo/ sound, but add something new and continue to the end of the week. I can plan a great lesson, but then it tends to go totally flat [as I teach it with students.] I try to take a look at the Planner by questioning, ‘What do I need to know for my student?’ ... ‘How have I taught it yet?’ ‘Is this a re-teach or review or just an introduction?’ etc. If it is an introduction, I usually take three days on it. If it is a re-teach or review, I spend a half or whole day.

Carol put an emphasis in an active teaching and learning interactive process, one that she believed could lead her students to better understand new concepts and skills associated with reading. Once beginning to teach, “I seldom stopped moving ahead.” Indeed, she hardly came back and looked at her lesson plan or the teacher’s manual, even for a short moment. As she reflected on what she was normally doing in action:

I never looked at my plan. ... It was just used at my desk and I never walked over to it unless I needed something. ... I didn’t start my class unless I had all my materials ready. If I started, then I went at a flow. If an activity I started in the morning was working, I went with it and kept going. If students understood it, then we didn’t stop. ... But, if students had fallen asleep and got totally bored, then I stopped. I went back to my desk to take off on the next topic and started right away. ... It was a lot of work but this was
WORTH it.

The meaning of implementing this reading series was likely to lie in this example of her “complete readiness for a flow of daily teaching activities.” Carol was extremely competent in doing what she was doing to the extent to which she was ready to defend her own idea on this kind of unpredicted course of action she made against the curriculum developer of the textbooks. “I have objectives in my mind that can explain why I am changing or modifying the lesson,” maintained Carol, “since the books don’t know my students. If things didn’t work, I modified or change quickly on the spot.” This mode of thinking and action was highly situation-based. In this regard, her ongoing mental dialogue with self in context was even more critical of the intent of the curriculum developer due to the fact that the activity suggested might be “either monotonous or have only a single focus.” As described in the previous section of her curriculum-in-use, her modification of certain activities to her own style of cognition and further to her students was obvious. The following transcription had to do with her comparative reflections on self, actions, and the intent of the curriculum developer in terms of how students would learn better and more:

My class was a similar activity to the manual [including elements such as] key words, cards, a drumbeat, holding the cards, which was a DECENT activity. But it was STATIC. The study showed that when kids acted something out in a dramatic way, they tended to remember it a little bit better. It was proven that kids who could play when they were learning and thought of learning as a play tended to retain a little bit more information. So
instead of just having kids hold up the cards, I made them think of what they were doing, and watch others in the room. They were using a lot more kinesthetic energy, which was action; auditory, listening to each other; and then they are using visual, so that students engaged in all the different types of [sensitivities together] … . I was incorporating those things very similarly to the plan in the book, and yet totally different. For instance, ‘Move the card around’ was kinesthetic but not as much as the one I was doing in. There was NO DRAMA involved. Drama is a big part of learning, especially for kids at that age level.

“I have enjoyed engaging in active play with the students,” she reflected. Not only did she believe that students would have fun by participating in a game together, but she also liked to be part of the game by creating improvisational questions and motivations. Typically, for instance, introducing new vocabulary words to students is often seen as technical: if the explanation of the teacher on the meanings of new words is given, then students get to recognize those words as they encounter them in texts or even as they have a test on them.

For Carol, this is not the case. When new vocabulary words were reviewed, according to her theory, students would better memorize and be familiar with them by their alert engagement with other students in social contexts. The manual provided her with such a social context with several elements and steps to be used. Yet, Carol felt it more valuable to ask a student to represent a word card at hand in unexpected fashions, e.g., body languages or oral explanations, to the audience
while maintaining a participatory social climate. Rather than following a turn-by-turn activity prescribed in the manual, she was excitedly making “a game plan” in which students were “not to be bystanders” but those “thinking aloud in their minds and being members of the ongoing plots.” One of the most dramatic game plans that she made was the activity of “what Simon said?” to help students understand the meaning of the opposite words. By pointing out how to guide students to what the opposite meanings were, Carol pondered about her reasoning and experiences:

Compared to the one in the book, where it said ‘the students sit in their desks and they find the words in the pocket chart and point to the opposite one,’ HOW BORING! The kids would be lost!, mine was very kinesthetic. If you have the person just tell you the opposite word, you would simply have to listen ... This is not going to keep their attention in the class. By picking the objectives of teaching the opposite, I was creating a sense of the opposite. ... I made the kids feel it and thus act, which was very kinesthetic. ... Students all moved on the desk or under the desk, because that was what Simon said. And then, they would learn over and under as opposites. Rather than sitting in their seat, and saying over or under, they actually saw and did the different actions and they learned the difference. The plan in the book was boring and did not represent true learning that was why I didn’t do it.

Having students read stories as a whole group, a pair, and individual was “flexibly” utilized in her classroom. As she used to do these routine activities per se before the new implementation, having students read as many books as possible other than the assigned
textbooks was a stable plan. In her own bookshelves, a lot of books she purchased over years were used as part of individual or group activities in terms of the levels of reading abilities. Having students at different levels take a chance at reading those books was “one of my favorites.” To do so, classroom teaching was more like “working with” than merely “working on” students. Specific reading skills and strategies were meaningful only when they could “meet needs and interests of my students” to the extent to which “I and students participated together” in processes of learning and teaching in context.

Through those activities like “Simon says,” Carol wanted to get closer to students’ world. Her intentional fake in the opposite activity of “Simon said”, e.g., “Okay, game is over. Go back to your seats!” was the case: Students got confused in case of straightforwardly following this statement but quickly recognized it as a fake without an order of “Simon says.” Central to the point between a curriculum (the concept of the opposite words) and teaching (having students know it) was this kind of the implementation event “as a purposeful activity” that she freely attempted to draw from sources other than the manual.

Therefore, in Carol’s case the implementation process went beyond fidelity, because she didn’t much care if her rationale was believed to meet the original intent of the curriculum developer. Instead, the activity she was working on with students must have multiple purposes, two of which were “thinking skills and cooperation.” Reflecting on the class on the concept of compound words, once again, she emphasized the importance of why she could not help but modify the ideas in the manual. Indeed, after looking over the teacher’s manual, she instantly adapted the way as intended by the curriculum developer to her own course of action. As with the prescription for compound
words “Write the word sunglasses on the board and ask children to tell where or when they may have worn sunglasses. Underline each word ... explain that sometimes two words are put together to make one word ...,” Carol expressed, “I couldn’t make sense of such steps” to introduce the meaning of the compound words by simply asking “Who have worn sunglasses before? and then underline each word ...” For her, this technical idea of teaching the compound words could be dramatically different, and so was done in favor of “having students work together as a team.” Developing a group of word cards appropriately used in the class was part of her joyful curriculum selection process that was connected to ways to introduce the students to the task. The implementation method that she chose independently was “students have to think or they have to rationalize, and they have to talk to each other or they have to cooperate.” In doing so, she remembered being “highly uncomfortable with example words” listed in the manual and explained what was on her mind:

_Cartwheel, Faraway..._ How many times are you going to see the words like _Cartwheel_ as a 2nd grader? For _Faraway_, kids may not think of it as a compound word. They may think of far and away. It did not make a lot of sense. The words [that I selected] are very useful, because kids are daily seeking or daily writing, such as _playground, inside, somebody, nowhere_, and _butterfly_. First of all, all of students know those words, and second of all, they are able to read them. ... Third, they know the meaning of each word and each compound word. If they don’t know the meaning, they wouldn’t be able to put them together. Fourth, they can use them later on.
In conclusion, for Carol, a genuine fidelity use of new curriculum materials was not seen as an authoritative source to be blindly followed. The implementation methods that she made a selection from, either the manual or her previous teaching experiences, were variously considered but mostly convergent with her patterned flow and rhythm of teaching in favor of *having-students-think-first-and-act-together*. Such a patterned process between the intended and the actualized curriculum was a place “where I feel good myself as a teacher.” By engaging in the role of a creative curriculum gatekeeper, she was screening, simplifying, and actually making use of some of workable, meaningful ideas presented in the manual. As a tool, use of textbooks was little help in dealing with what should be covered. Instead, what students really needed to know was constitutive of her action as experiential. Therefore, the way in which a curriculum was transformed into meaningful experiences of students was ongoing in that she had used it to make it possible to successfully meet the needs of students before.

**Outspokenness: changing or unchanged.**

Like any other teacher in the educational system, Carol was given a plan from the top and expected to implement it in her classroom. Probably, like some other teachers, she found it necessary to adapt such a plan to her own context and then implement modified works into action. The expected outcome of this implementation process following an adoption of new curriculum materials in this school was “changing or improving teaching practice” as a whole. For Carol, because the original plan of the curriculum developer of the new reading series in itself did not always fit into her teaching rationale, such a gap between the intended and the actualized change or
improvement process appeared to be wide. Apparently, Carol was unlikely to change or did not change her pattern of teaching behavior in congruence with the implementation methods outlined in the manual.

However, Carol was experiencing an evolving change of her teaching practice reflected in much of the manual. Having a strong sense of personally oriented rationale in using textbooks, Carol's change process was not seen as remarkably painful, but somehow "natural." Her basic feeling of the manual as a master change plan over the last two years was:

The quality of the lessons was okay. They had a lot of good ideas; new ideas, fresh ideas but they sometimes lacked practicality. They were a little bit unrealistic sometimes, a little over the kids' heads. ... They didn't offer a lot of those things for us to easily follow but instead say 'Just go get it.' It took a lot of time. It didn't know my kids. I had just taken some of their lessons and adapted them to my ideas.

Her view of the teacher's manual was determined by both "the lack of practicality" and "the problem of organization" that was difficult to follow. For Carol, the more difficult nature of the manual was language that the curriculum developer employed - one that mostly began with "Have children do something or Write certain words on the board" and ended with "Have children suggest other things or Encourage children to add something." The middle portion of most of the lesson plans consisted largely of a series of steps, for instance, "Have them mark the spot with a self-stick note. When all groups are finished, ask one group at a time to read aloud."
“I was not intentionally getting those scripts that were merely listed” in a technical sense that presupposed a process of teaching and learning. More deeply, however, the relationship between self and the curriculum developer was situated. As she repeatedly defined, “I don’t learn from the manual. The manual is just a tool to guide me.” The intended change process by following those prescribed steps was little desirable to the extent to which she could be detached from the evolving or enacted change process within her classroom. She wanted (or were forced to) to navigate a change process on her own by using the compass at hand. In doing so, she felt competent to make better choices by using her style of implementation methods. The imagined voice, “Just go get it,” from the curriculum developer was one that she realistically was mindful of a misled sense imposed on the teachers, which was taken for granted by the community in education. At the very least she wanted, as a base, for all of the educators in the school “to be flexible” in making a difference - flexibility that was outspokenly expressed as an excuse of her modified course of action that might be seen as idiosyncratic from a single rationalized perspective.

From her perspective, modifying an idea to her classroom context in itself was regarded as “a shape of change,” which was the best way that she could publicly express herself. There was a situation, described as one of her curriculum-in-use sections, in which she implemented the way of how to take the pulse. Students were asked to do exercise lightly and to count the pulse in twenty seconds. It was not exactly implemented according to the manual. But Carol reflected on that class as one of some occasions when the manual was used as intended originally:
Actually it was very similar. My activity and the one from the book ... probably I got the idea from the book. It was very close ... the activity was very similar. And the procedure was very similar as to how the lesson was carried out. Sometimes, I found the activity that fitted what I was doing or what would work really well. This was probably one of them. This was what I thought, ‘Hmm, things are not too bad. Let me give a shot.’ I changed a few things in there. ... It was a good activity. I didn’t hate the book completely. There were some good points. I did use it. Sometimes I said, ‘That’s a good idea. I’ll probably use it, because it’s a good activity.’

As a matter of fact, she was a bit surprised when asked to reflect on the fidelity-based concept of change. This kind of fidelity use was mentioned once or twice before in terms of the quality of the lesson but not related to a particular situation in which she actually did follow the lesson. The fact that she did not even exactly remember whether or not to follow the procedure of the manual was where she looked at the manual and used such a good activity related to the topic of the reading textbook in an unconscious manner. As she immediately recognized, therefore, such a decision was “reflectively” made on the way as it was. A line between self and the curriculum developer came to merge only “if I found concrete meaning” in the guide texts.

With regard to the extent to which to use an idea in the manual as intended originally, she pointed out the particular connection between the theme (mental and physical exercise) and “a meaningful activity.” The class consisted of practices in which students could figure out why exercise was necessary in daily lives as demonstrated by a
few of dinosaur characters in the reading textbook. As such, Carol was searching for a
thematically related kinesthetic and thinking activity in terms of what was being read that
week. Encountering such meaningful activities from the manual were rare but not
impossible, and more likely during the second year of implementation as she became
more familiar with the whole structure of the manual. Indeed, this activity was found in
the section, Idea Bank focusing on integrating language arts as a whole, located at the end
of each unit according to the structure of the manual. A bunch of fragmented, synoptic
activities listed in the middle of the manual, however, was “not something I looked
forward to seeing because of its isolated nature” taking skills-based approaches out of
context. Instead of following such isolated skills-based activities, she continued to use her
know-how to teach phonics or basic skills. For instance, activities related to life
experiences of students were strategically used to teach words at all times. A technique of
**Peanut-Butter-Jelly Sandwich Words** was intended to teach words with “two vowels in
the middle without a sound of /a/ like Boat or Coat” and **Layer Cake Words** with “one
vowel in the middle and the other at the end without a sound /e/ like Hope or Cake.”

In the second year, Carol found it necessary to change her proactive style of
teaching itself. Her focus was slightly shifted from what dominated in the implementation
process to what students were like at this time. Typically, although she thought “she was
never going to do this same thing exactly the same way she did two years in a row,” the
new make up of students appeared to force her to change what she had taken for granted.
In addition, she had five or six students who were far lower in reading, plus some had
behavior problems:
My kids didn’t do well with acting things out [in this second year of implementation.] They were a more mature group than a year before. They didn’t enjoy it; they didn’t do a good job … The year before these kids got enough of that kind of stuff! It just depended on the nature of my students. … They were very embarrassed, so I had to be careful as to what kind of activity I used.

The impact of “this different nature of students” on Carol was substantially challenging her strong sense of dependence on her proactive implementation methods. A more reflective understanding of how to approach students differently was being vitally made during the second year. What decision she made in this challenging situation was “more emphasis on writing” than ever before. But, writing didn’t have to be taught as completely separated, but more as highly correlated to the class of reading. In a sense, two areas were mixed in a back and forth manner but in a way that “students felt natural” in doing so. To an end, however, “having students take as many opportunities to write as possible in a daily base” was a crucial rationale. As she recognized, therefore, she “adapted herself to” the new population of students whose group characteristics were shy or only slightly active in nature. Allowing students to write more was turning out to be effective during and after the reading class. Importantly, in doing so, she made use of The Teacher’s Guide to the Four Blocks, which had nothing to do with the implementation of ongoing new curriculum materials. She personally purchased it. Because she felt it “necessary to use another idea” to make her teaching better to this particular group of students, she “bought and used it” in her classroom. Developed by a famous reading
theorist, The Guide was designed to help teachers incorporate four blocks (guided- and self-reading, writing, and activities) into teaching.

The Teacher’s Guide to the Four Blocks was partly incorporated into the newly adopted and currently implemented teacher’s manual in Carol’s classroom. Carol’s intent was, of course, to use The Guide as supplementary. More exactly, she was “using textbooks a little bit more than the first year of implementation” and, at the same time, “trying to incorporate” some ideas of the Guide into her reading instruction. For instance, she had students read some pages of the reading textbook aloud as a whole, encouraging them to draw a picture of what was read in their minds, and having them summarize orally and in a written form. Or, she wrote 10 words drawn from the book on the board, asking students to write a creative paragraph after hearing an example related to everyday life-situations. This kind of the changed pattern of teaching reading compared to the first year of implementation was largely caused by the changed social and biological characteristics of students, who were mostly too shy to engage in and/or did not do a great job in processes of group activities. At any rate, she seemed to think of this shape of her reading class as “a major change process.”

More or less, it was experimental for her to apply some ideas from the Teacher’s Guide to the Four Blocks, designed to facilitate a specific teaching approach to reading instruction, to her classroom. During the second year of implementation, her class was likely to be considered in-between from her point of view. That is, she tried to use “a little more” new curriculum material implementation than the first year to keep fidelity use for accountability, and she experimentally incorporated a different style of teaching
reading into her practice to see how things worked out. In effect, Carol felt good about this incorporation between the official use of materials and some meaningful, creative approach to reading/writing instruction, recommending it to other teachers at the same grade level, that they might try it the way she did in the forthcoming year.

In conclusion, Carol was changing her teaching practice because her activity-based implementation strategy did not work very well with the current nature of the students she now encountered. In order to find a better alternative way of teaching to read in this less active group of students, she personally searched for a fresh teaching approach to help those shy students give more meaningful seat work than before. As a consequence, given an understanding of different literacy levels of beginning readers from the book purchased, Carol could use a variety of formats to make each block as multi-level as possible. Admittedly, based on some positive experiences finding good activities from the current manual, she was a bit comfortable with the notion of high fidelity of use. Further, following the prescriptive procedure as intended originally was not likely to be problematic if those activities were assumed to greatly help students learn to read, both directly and indirectly.

However, one thing that she never gave up on was her faith. She wanted to be a flexible person who “has to be willing to say that this idea [from the manual] doesn’t work out in the middle of lesson.” In this sense, she had not changed her personal implementation concepts compared to those of the first year of implementation. What she was apparently changing was an increased use of the textbook. As to the introduction of another teacher’s guide to her existing teaching practice, her efforts at adapting any idea
to her classroom was the same as the previous year. Simply put, Carol saw herself changing her behavior of teaching during the implementation process over the last two years to the point that she used textbooks “somewhat more” and “sometimes as originally intended.” Yet, from the fidelity perspective, she seldom changed the way she was involved in planning and teaching. Regardless of the increase in the “amount” of the textbook use, her modification was still creative in that she incorporated other ideas into action, other than materials officially being implemented; just one year after implementation began.

Teachers’ Social Construction of Reality

Principal Smith gave teachers a high degree of freedom in implementing new language arts curriculum materials. Following his personal and professional perspective on school management, his intent for “teachers to be creative” in curriculum planning and teaching needed to be viewed as a thoughtful, positive implementation strategy. The curriculum materials adopted in this school district were internally regarded as more resourceful than previous ones. Therefore, Principal Smith was likely to assume that teachers would appreciate the high quality textbooks and thus would be willing to try to use them in their classrooms.

In this part, attempts are made to learn how teachers make sense of their social, professional world given the high degree of freedom in implementation provided by the principal. It is crucial at this point to understand the personal and social/professional setting in which the stories of these two teachers took place. The focus is first on ways in
which two participants, "as friends and colleagues," interacted with and thus learned from each other in an effort to make the use of new curriculum materials better understood.

Secondly, specifically oriented professional/social constructive learning experiences of two teachers at the grade level are described.

**Personal/Social Interactive Learning Between Two Teachers**

In the beginning of this study the existence of the researcher became part of the teachers' conversations. It would be so natural that two teachers wanted to know what the researcher did and what questions he asked in each other's classroom. The fact that both participants might have felt insecure at the beginning of the research was understandable. One afternoon, for instance, when stopping by Carol's classroom to say "Hi!" after finishing the observation of Kelsey's classroom, the researcher noticed this sense of feeling compared, as Carol curiously asked, "How was it? Did you find something different from my teaching? I bet she has a different teaching style." Kelsey also confessed once that when having lunch together with Carol, she had had an intentional chat with Carol to see whether the same questions were asked of both teachers. In short, these feelings and exchanges between two participants were highly informal and began to diminish as time went on.

Most of the opportunities for the two teachers to talk were at lunchtime or stopping by the other's classroom. In reality, these encounters between the two teachers were relatively short. Once students arrived at the classroom at 8:45 in the morning, the two teachers seldom had a chance to meet before lunchtime. Not until making sure that all of their students started to eat in the designated area could they go back to their classroom.
for lunch. Also, because of duties in the cafeteria and playground, having lunch together between and among teachers was not an everyday event. In the afternoon, the teachers had about 45 minutes without students by sending students to gym, art or music class. Yet, these breaks were not at the same time for the two teachers. Except for the formal grade meeting every two weeks, the two teachers hardly had a chance to sit together and talk about their concerns.

This routine of their school and classroom lives was, more or less, similar before and during this implementation process. Nevertheless, the many demands of curriculum developers for use of curriculum materials encouraged the two teachers to talk to each other a little more than ever before. Given the limits of their daily school routines, both teachers continued to exchange ideas and information to make sense of what and how to do. To be sure, the teachers were overwhelmed during the whole first year of implementation. One way in which Carol and Kelsey tried to escape from such heavy burdens of uncertainty in using new curriculum materials was by frequently checking with each other to see if the other had good ideas. As Carol reflected:

Informally, the only way we really learn from each other is by watching and listening. We sometimes share information through emails or talks at lunchtime. After school we run to each other’s room to share some ideas. Or, before school, we sometimes talk and try to get ideas.

As Carol reflected above, it would seem natural for two teachers to talk intimately with each other about any kind of matters. In most cases, however, what the teachers talked about was either the problems of students’ behaviors and learning progress or
specific ideas related to the use of workbooks and self-made worksheets or ways of assessment. Often, Kelsey shared with Carol her inquiry into the idea of the manual and actual experiences of what happened. By and large, one teacher brought something to the other and vice versa. For instance, Carol informed Kelsey of an interesting activity or game. Or, Kelsey gave Carol a technique of assessment that was successfully done in her classroom. It turned out that their talks were a give-and-take pattern of what worked or did not in "my" classroom. On one hand, both Kelsey and Carol largely agreed that these informal talks inside and outside the classroom were useful, and they actually tried to implement the other's ideas in their own classroom. But, on the other hand, because the classroom situations were different and the teachers were both professionals who had their own theory of action, not all information or ideas acknowledged in a face-to-face situation were "actually" tried in the other classroom. Carol politely mentioned this inevitable matter of social reality between her and Kelsey:

If she disagrees with it, she doesn’t necessarily have to say, ‘I don’t agree with you.’ She can just develop her own philosophy. ... It is just because her class and my class are totally different and she has a different personality from what I have.

The informally constructed, give-and-take pattern of their talks was also value-bounded, so in the case of Carol, there was a selective aspect about the actual trial of the other's ideas. In other words, learning experiences from a peer appeared to occur all the time. But, Carol (perhaps Kelsey too) related suggestions of Kelsey to her own situations, and made a choice alone. The main rationale by which Carol accepted the use of Kelsey's
ideas was a specific consideration associated with the betterment of student learning. Such a selection of ideas of the other teacher was not always as productive as might be expected. Teachers' talks "continued and were readjusted" in case the attempt failed. The following transcription demonstrates what it was like for Carol to select and use an idea of Kelsey:

One day, Kelsey gave me a good idea of how students' writing work could be done better. I said 'I am going to try if you don't mind, because it would be helpful for my kids.' She said, 'No, I don't mind.' So, I took an idea and I tried it. But, it didn't work. My kids couldn't summarize the page of the book. At lunchtime, I told this matter to her. And she said, 'What did you do?' I explained my direction of how I did it. She replied, 'This was how I did it specifically, so you can try this next time.' I tried it next week, and, surprisingly it worked out. It was just a little fine tune tool that I was not clear on . . .

Professional/Social Interactive Learning

The teachers sometimes confessed that they were very busy in getting so many things done within a day inside and outside the classrooms. Given this lack of time, how did the two teachers and other teachers of the same grade interact, socially and professionally, to make sense of the use of new curriculum materials? Such interactions among teachers were mostly undertaken in regular grade meetings, which had continued since this implementation process began.

The seven 2nd grade teachers at the second grade met for forty-five minutes every
two weeks on Wednesday morning. All of them were female. "It was pretty much informal," Carol said, "like we just come and tell, turn by turn, what problems we have or how things work by opening questions up to all of us." There was no head-teacher officially designated, so no one dictated or initiated the process of this meeting. As the demographic information of this school indicated, teachers were sharply split in terms of years of teaching: those under 5 years and those with more than 15 years. There were a few teachers, including Carol, in-between these two groups of teachers. This was evidence that the community of this suburban school has been growing in recent years. For example, this year, 1999-2000, five out of seven teachers were beginning teachers with under 5 years of teaching experience at this grade level. Naturally, therefore, experienced teachers, like Carol, usually guided and shared some insights with the rest of teachers. The mood of these social, professional meetings was overall intimate and friendly, according to two participants. At this grade meeting, teachers felt free to raise issues or concerns regarding all kinds of matters and work together. As Carol reflected:

We did a lot of planning together for language arts, social studies, science, health, etc. at that time. We were bringing ideas, worksheets, or things to the table and just shared to get ideas of what objectives we were supposed to cover for that unit and then people would take them back to make their own plan. It was really informal type of things.

With regard to the implementation of the language arts curriculum, teachers' concerns were relatively high. Although these teachers did not agree with the classroom observations of other teachers in conjunction with particular uses of this reading series,
teachers tended to generally share their unique experiences with the rest of teachers in this intimate atmosphere. For instance, as Kelsey said, “When a teacher says, ‘I tried this idea but it was awful. My kids didn’t understand it,’ some teachers typically shared similar problems, and then some teachers offered their suggestions on how they did it.” By and large, this group of teachers tried to help other teachers facing problems by offering their own experiences or insights.

Meanwhile, these teachers collaboratively made a decision whether or not a certain curriculum material would be kept in use at the next year of implementation. For instance, Carol and Kelsey (and some teachers teaching this grade for two years in a row) did not purchase the phonics practice book in the first year of implementation. What they did was to get a copy of the phonics practice book and photocopy some pages whenever necessary. At the end of the year, they realized that what they photocopied really worked out for students. In the beginning of this year, Carol told the rest of teachers to purchase that phonics practice book by telling of her experience. Kelsey and other teachers, who taught 2nd grade last year, agreed with her opinion, because they had the same experience. Further, Carol continued to persuade them by saying that

we may not get the whole way through the book. But, it would be a benefit for students to have over the summer, because a lot of parents ask what they can do with their students over the summer. We can say use this book, because we did not get over half of the book.

As a consequence, all of the teachers agreed to purchase the phonics practice book. As another example, one day, Carol raised the problem of the grammar practice book,
which was currently been using at the second year of implementation. She argued that the grammar practice book was so “laborious and out of context, or too easy” that most of her students did not complete each unit within an appropriate time. One teacher partly disagreed with her opinion. For this teacher, according to Carol, the grammar practice book had been used for writing assessments, so that students’ writing skills could somehow easily be acknowledged. Some other teachers agreed with this point, too. Yet, Carol and other teachers insisted that the grammar practice book could not be sufficiently useful for all of the students at different levels of writing. In the end, this question that she raised about the practical usefulness of the grammar practice book led them to the tentative conclusion not to purchase the book but to copy certain pages as needed for writing assessments.

In conclusion, 2nd grade teachers met regularly to talk about what was going on in their classrooms, to plan certain matters associated with the coverage of the curriculum, and to discuss the ongoing process of implementation. In particular, feelings of uncertainty regarding how to use new curriculum materials had been an overshadowing concern in these group meetings. From the perceptions of Carol and Kelsey, nobody knew which way was the best way. Two things that they knew, however, were that this language arts series was fully integrated with the state curriculum model and that the teacher’s manual indicated special items for each unit that were directly related to Ohio’s proficiency test. Given both certainty and uncertainty about the new series, these teachers tried to learn from their peers how to fix their problems and collectively to make better choices of how to incorporate materials into their daily teaching practices.
Regardless of different classroom situations, however, teachers in a position of helping a teacher in trouble tended to use their hunches or experiential knowledge. In the intimate, less hierarchical relationship of this group, no one directed the teacher in trouble by saying, “Take a look at the manual again and see what it says.” This sense of reliance on the manual was not true of Carol, one of two experienced teachers, who expressed her professional opinion, i.e., “I don’t learn from the manual, which is just a tool to guide me, and experiencing other teachers makes me a best teacher.” The teacher’s decision was largely an ongoing process and seemingly determined by how thing actually worked in context. In search of the better idea and the choice that would be helpful in improving specific implementation contexts, seven teachers at this grade level constructed their social and professional reality for the sake of “not letting each other sink.”

In addition, it is valuable to conclude this section of teachers’ social and professional lives with Carol’s personal, “existential” reflection on what it meant for teachers living in a time of change. Her voice also characterized ways of how teachers actually experienced their everyday professional lives in a broad context:

Our grade meetings were all extras on our own time. We were never given stipends or extra amount of money for the work before or after the regular school day. It was not school time when we were meeting on. ... We were not given ‘extra money or extra thanks’ for it at all. But it is things that we do to make sure our kids are successful. If we want to be good teachers or if you want your kids succeed, there are certain things that you have to do, whether
the Board or whether parents or administrators recognize it or not.

Researcher’s Reflection

In this section, the meaning of curriculum implementation that the two teachers held is interpreted from the researcher’s standpoint. Reflecting on what two teachers thought of newly adopted curriculum materials and how they used them in classrooms, the researcher first synthesizes their theories of action in which their personal beliefs, values, and knowledge regarding curriculum and teaching are organized and used in action, both implicitly and explicitly. In doing so, some major aspects of what two teachers have “taken for granted” about the process and product of implementation are described. And then, the researcher identifies the intent of curriculum developers to juxtapose theoretical assumptions with what had been done in each classroom. In this juxtaposition, the researcher utilizes hermeneutic understandings in-between the two parties, developers and implementers, to make sense of what actually did and did not occur in these classrooms. Thirdly, what this researcher actually learned from the reading implementation process in this school setting is reflected upon within a broader sense of what educational change means. Finally, a self-reflection on “who the researcher is and will become” is in the epilogue of this study.

Kelsey’s Implementation Process

Theory of action.

Kelsey’s theory is mainly expressed by two of her key statements that encompass the whole process of this implementation in her classroom. One is that “especially for K
through 2, the lower grade level, we need to approach it a little more traditionally... . I think that these kids really have to master certain basic skills.” By this, however, she does not mean that she is so called a “traditional or phonics-based teacher.” She declined to be labeled as that type of teacher. Rather, she “just” wants to draw a whole picture of how students come to learn. The picture that she envisions in her mind is that making the learning of students successful can only be achieved by the cooperation of each grade teacher per se. Assuming that the lower graders are “still young” and need the teacher’s specific direction in learning to read, she points out that this is why the curriculum or Graded Course of Study is necessary. In this regard, she believes that her role as a teacher is to teach what her students are supposed to know in the 2nd grade, so that her students have no problem starting to learn at the following grade level. As she argues, “as long as I keep doing this kind of effort over and over again, by the end of the year, my students understand and thus master the subject of reading.”

Her second essential statement is one that directly illuminates what she expects to happen to her teaching. In this second statement she emphasizes her changing emotional and cognitive state and her interpretation of what she is doing in the middle of the process of implementation:

I just keep trying to learn more and more about this series. This is the best thing, because it is going to change my knowledge base. It is going to change my teaching style. I can teach something one way now, but I may find a better way to teach it from the manual. I am going to include that stuff in my teaching. But then again, this series is just very flexible too, so that I can pick
some of many good ideas. ... I like the flexibility of this series, but I want to learn as much as I can from it. It will make me better.

Her wish and expectation regarding this implementation process is very high that the manual may enable her to learn new knowledge and teaching skills. She defines herself as open in putting new or better ideas into her existing practice. The importance of this implementation process comes out when she sees as an optimistic possibility that teaching practice can be changed or improved by use of new curriculum materials. Her favorable viewpoint is also in part due to the developmental acknowledgement that the manual is flexibly organized, so that she is endowed with a choice among a great number of ideas. Yet, the major reason that she comes to appreciate the value of new curriculum materials appears to be her humbleness. She defines herself as having few teaching repertories accumulated experientially at this time in her new teaching career. Because she is hungry for a good teaching repertory, she believes that following the direction of the teacher's manual is the prescription that she would take for her growth.

Taken all together, Kelsey’s theory is that the curriculum is given by the textbook developer and must be covered by means of teachings; therefore the meaning of implementation at this time is to deliver new ideas to students through the faithful use of the manual. The major reason why this is so can be explained by her active approach in linking this implementation event to a chance of exploring new ideas, knowledge, and teaching strategies and skills through the book; this is directly viewed as transmittable into her young students’ language development and acquisition. In effect, she heavily makes use of the manual during her teaching practice, because covering specific content
in the manual is equivalent to the scope and sequence of the Graded Course of Study that she has to cover (by state law). Furthermore, she prefers to closely adopt and follow suggestions and specific steps prescribed in the manual, because they are logically and actually seen as a correlated set of procedures for delivering main ideas and factual knowledge in the reading curriculum of the students.

Implementation as a change process.

One day, the researcher had reflected on one of Kelsey’s classroom practices in terms of the matter of fidelity use. Indeed, the following reflective note showed how Kelsey’s faithful intent to make use of a part of the new workbook was actually frustrated in a sense. The researcher began his reflection with the unrealistic intent of the curriculum developer and ended with the process and consequence of Kelsey’s actual use:

It seems to me there would be no other language than ‘the teacher-proof curriculum material’ to express today’s activity in her classroom. ... Kelsey appears to prefer a format of direct instruction to deliver a curriculum to her students. Her efforts to give students right answers or have students fill out workbooks were normally observed today. Use of the reading practice book was the case. It was just there as a form to be filled out, one that was drawn from one of the life-experience activities, the video rental application. The activity of the book is far from reality. When checking a video out, no one fills out a piece of paper including such information as a movie title, date, address, or money. It is done by an electronic scanning system. If so, what is
the intention of this activity from the perspective of the curriculum developer? I don’t know! But, in doing so, it needs so much labor from both the teacher and students to fill out this workbook. It is hard for 2nd graders to rent movies for themselves or even to recall their addresses. As I observed, having the teacher use this activity of the workbook was unrealistic, demanding a great deal of time and labor. Consequently, Kelsey found many unexpected factors, i.e., students didn’t even think of their favorite movies, didn’t know their addresses, rental prices, and the period to rent, etc. In facing those complex situations, Kelsey could not help but have the students just fill out a standardized answer drawn from her and some smart students.

(From the reflective journal, Oct. 14, 1998)

Clearly, the researcher’s point of view was dualistic. That is, the intent of the curriculum developer was unrealistic, so was that of Kelsey. Specifically, the researcher was not pointing out the problematic characteristics of the design and the user-friendly format of this portion of curriculum materials. Nor was the researcher exposing Kelsey’s failure of instruction on this day. Instead, the researcher was questioning how to interpret this phenomenon of the implementation process in this particular space and time. The researcher continued to reflect on this matter:

Kelsey seemed to view this idea of the workbook as appropriate, because she could make students interested by asking questions like ‘Have you guys ever been at the Blockbuster movie rental places?’ or ‘What is your favorite movie?’ In fact, when she asked these and some other interesting
questions, she observed some interesting responses from students. But,
suddenly, most of students appeared to want to talk about the stories of the
movies they saw. The classroom was getting louder and seemingly out of
control. Some students started to talk with friends nearby. ... Kelsey quickly
moved on to the intent of the curriculum developer, i.e., students are able to
fill out this workbook by drawing on their own experiences. The mood of the
classroom dramatically shifted from students’ emerging fever to a difficult
process of labor. (From the reflective journal)

As is clear from the above, the researcher found Kelsey’s fidelity use of this portion
of curriculum materials to be “successful” from the perspective of the curriculum
developer. In other words, she “used” this workbook, “enticing” students’ life-
experiences, stopping the mushrooming responses of the students, and having students
“fill the page out.” Yet, the process was not going smoothly: some students could not
spell names of movies and others could not recall their addresses. From the point of view
of the researcher, however, there is a missing aspect on the side of both Kelsey and the
curriculum developer. As implied before, the curriculum developer oversimplifies the
role of the teacher by trying to organize the life-experiences of students into a few
specific items that can be filled out. Therefore, the expected work of teachers is merely to
bring a fragment of students’ prior experience to a predetermined category. On the other
hand, Kelsey takes for granted that this standardized worksheet can be or must be used to
fulfill one of the requirements of the Graded Course of Study, and that the actual process
would proceed linearly during the class. Hence, although fulfilling the requirements of
the coverage of this workbook in a faithful manner, Kelsey could hardly take into account the differences of students such as background, cognitive capacities, and writing abilities. Kelsey reflected on her action:

You are right. I was probably a little bit idealistic, I think that it is true that those kids are not really ready for knowing their whole address, town, that I really needed to give them. I was cut off not knowing their address as well. I think then, I should have prepared to have their address with me. The worksheet seemed to assume that our children know addresses, zip, etc. I thought that it was a difficult page. In fact, the course of study included an item that children are supposed to know how to fill out a form. There are several pages like this in the book . . . .

As she noted above, the worksheet that she used was one of five or six in the practice book and was one of the curriculum activities required in the course of study. (The curriculum goal is that the students will use the correct check out procedure.) Kelsey knew this relationship between the mandated curriculum and this curriculum material and so tried to put it into action. The intent of the curriculum developer, based upon the Graded Course of Study, was to provide the teacher with the standardized form. A dilemma arose. At a minimum, the teacher as a user might have three choices: (a) use it as it is, (b) develop one's own worksheet, and (c) develop a modified worksheet based on the idea of the book. None of these is likely to be easy for the teacher to choose, from the perspective of the researcher. As Kelsey reflected, a lot of preparations should have been made before using that worksheet as it was (for choice a). Even more time and
effort might be necessary for developing one's own curriculum material to cover the requirement of the mandated curriculum (for b). Lastly, it might take less time and effort for the teacher to adapt the worksheet than to develop one's own material. But it might require more energy for the teacher to figure out how to modify worksheet than to develop one's own material (for c).

The point that the researcher makes here is that if all three choices are convergent with meeting the requirement of the mandated curriculum to the same degree, who is the final decision maker of the classroom curriculum? Clearly, all responsibilities are on the shoulder of the teacher in terms of the matter of choice. Because the subject being discussed is, however, about the use of a worksheet, the researcher may be making conclusions too soon. This is because making a curriculum decision may involve more complicated matters over value-laded selection processes in specific content areas than might be assumed.

Nonetheless, the other factor that Kelsey considered was that all of teachers at the grade level had made a decision to purchase the practice book as the implementation began. Once purchasing it, as she implied, most of the teachers may have had a feeling that they had to show proof of using it to the parents who were stakeholders. That is, because such accountability existed even before the teachers attempted to make a curriculum decision, use of the existing curriculum material might be a convenient, reasonable course of action for most of the teachers. In this aspect, high fidelity, or faithful use of the curriculum materials as originally intended, was taken for granted as the teachers moved the class through the predetermined format and process. Kelsey's use
of the worksheet fell into a kind of conscious and unconscious reaction, based on a feeling of accountability to the a priori implementation method. As was exemplified in Kelsey’s class, unless textbook-based teachers did a great deal of preparation, high fidelity implementation could be in inverse proportion to the fulfillment of the emerging interests and varying learning experiences of the students.

Her basic view of the manual was very positive, saying, “I think it is easy to understand it. It is easy to implement it in the classroom. I think it is good and I like it.” This position was fully understandable, as we commonly experience when we try to install an item by means of a manual. True, this teacher’s manual includes a lot of pages with boxes in which the curriculum developers suggest certain objectives and teaching steps written in simple direct language. Yet, a teaching activity is different from the task of installing an item, because a teacher faces many, or sometimes unpredictably responding, students. This could be a major reason why predetermined objectives could not be achieved or delivered within a set time period as expected originally.

The generic nature of the teacher’s manual may be taken for granted, guiding teachers by suggesting as many ideas basic to use of the textbook as possible, along with the assumption of the curriculum developer that such synoptic ideas and steps are just to be used as suggestions only. Yet, it is simultaneously truthful to say that the suggestion is the best way for certain objectives set by the curriculum developer to be logically achieved in terms of the effective learning of students. This assumption appears to be a common ground between Kelsey and the curriculum developer. For instance, under the real literature Max Found Two Sticks, the curriculum developer finds it useful for
students to mimic what Max does. What Max does is to make his own sounds and rhythms by practicing all day long and then telling those rhythmical sounds he made to his friends and parents.

Therefore, the major activity that the curriculum developer conceives to make the reading skills of students better is to ask students to "pretend to beat a drum each time they hear a certain word with a certain sound." This idea is at the outset shown as a number of related drumbeat activities such as the reading and responding section entitled *Building Background and Concepts - Prior Knowledge; Cueing Systems used by the Instructional Material of Chart/Transparency; Hands-on Activities, Integrated Curriculum; etc.* Most of the patterns of these activities are skills-based in that the teacher gives the students a stimulus and the students respond as a whole to the teacher. As observed in this Mini-Lesson, Kelsey very closely followed the procedure prescribed in the manual.

As it turned out, the instructional objective was fully achieved by having the students review the words with the /dr/ sound encountered in the reading textbook while the students were tapping together on their desks. Nonetheless, the researcher finds a missing aspect while observing her curriculum-in-use and interviewing her in terms of matters of implementation for this class. Three points are as follows. First, the structure of the class was teacher-led. Secondly, sounds and meanings were separated. Yet, when these two structural and functional aspects are embodied in the third point, that is to say that the students could simultaneously identify the words both with and without seeing the sound /dr/ written on the board, the impact of this sound discrimination activity might
be not as meaningful.

As Kelsey thought of her action and the intent of the curriculum developer, the major objective that she had on her mind was a way of assessing whether or not students were enabled to discriminate those words by being shown a kinesthetic evidence like ‘tapping.’ As the researcher analyzes, the missing aspect of this prescription is a loose relationship between the auditory and the kinesthetic activity when the meaning of each word is emphasized and directly related to the texts.

The rationale by which the curriculum developer considers this to be a kind of participatory learning activity is unlikely to be tied to the actual sense of how students meaningfully participate in learning reading. In a similar vein, Kelsey’s assumption was also seemingly too optimistic to the extent that some of students who misunderstood certain sounds could be quickly and instantly corrected by watching the others who rightly responded to the tapping. That is, although those who misunderstood certain sounds could quickly recognize what was wrong and thus follow the others in showing a right response, such a social context as a whole group was unlikely to provide those having wrong concepts of certain sounds with sufficient time to think. This consideration was not indicated and mentioned in the logic of the curriculum developer, even though the drumbeat-like activity was enough to get great attention from all of students.

It was so obvious for the researcher to see Kelsey’s growing competence in coping with the initial emotional and overwhelming experiences as the new school year began. She was experiencing how things were going more easily, compared to the previous year. As the researcher reflected, she was surely changing her pattern of curriculum-in-use,
along with the changing style of the lesson plan. Putting her own ideas together in her existing practice or fidelity-based textbook use was increasingly possible, just because she knew the very way in which the manual was used in operation, as exemplified in the class of the Rhyme.

Therefore, unlike her uncertain use of new curriculum materials in the first year, Kelsey made sense of the process of implementation in the second year as a chance to fully utilize what she came to know as trial-and-error. No more in-service training was necessary because she could recognize what worked and what did not. While developing the second-year's lesson plan by reviewing the same manual and the previous lesson plan, she acknowledged feeling comfortable with “slightly trying to go out” from the way in which she had made use of ideas in the manual as intended originally.

In closing, after understanding her life-world underlying the professional conditions in which she lived as a modest, diligent beginning teacher, the researcher had no intention the labeling her “a fidelity user or faithful textbook-based teacher” would have a negative connotation. In a sense, encountering this kind of school district-based implementation event, as a member of the Curriculum Committee and a classroom teacher, for the first time would be one of the toughest experiences for her entire teaching career. The shift from being a student teacher to being an actual teacher was a dramatic experience. Yet, there was a close relationship between the pre-service/graduate program and the school to which she belonged. As she defined earlier, the curriculum as document, i.e., the Graded Course of Study, was the one that she learned from universities and thus used in the professional world. From her biographical and, at the same time, the broad institutional
context, the fact that Kelsey was attempting to use new curriculum materials according to plan might be neither new nor surprising.

Perhaps, the researcher himself was internally struggling from withholding his prejudgment on “someone” as a fidelity user. As confessed earlier in this section, the researcher mentioned just one example of how her students’ diverse experiences and readiness might be unfitted to the standardized worksheet. Later, the researcher pointed out the surface impact of a technique-based implementation on the students as a result of following the logic of the curriculum developer out of context. However, as a growing professional, Kelsey’s theory of action must be tentative and changing, although it was powerful in teaching reading at this time and within this situation. In the future, influenced by meaningfully constructed social and professional interactions with other teachers who have different views and practical theories, her perspective on the curriculum would gradually enlarge and thus change over time. And, as she continues to make a commitment to become a good teacher by attending workshops out of school and applying what she learns to her practice, her view on implementation would change, according to her promise that “I need to get a little more experience before I decide to go out and do everything on my own.”

Carol’s Implementation Process

Theory of action.

Central to Carol’s theory of action is her basic orientation of the role of the teacher’s manual. As she repeatedly emphasized, she takes the position that as a teacher, “at least, I (Carol) can’t agree with certain aspects of the book.” And, she criticizes the
assumption that the teacher should generally do things according to the teacher’s manual, and that the educational researcher knew the needs of the students better. Accordingly, Carol’s rationale for creating her own curriculum and using it in her classroom is that she knows better than anyone else involved in curriculum implementation whether or not all of her students can make sense of certain knowledge and skills. Therefore, most of the criteria for using the new curriculum materials ought to be based on changing situations of how her students progress in learning to read, as opposed to the prescription of the teacher’s manual in which curriculum designs are fixed and teaching methods are largely unrealistic.

To a large extent, following this rationale, the implementation of new language arts curriculum is likely to be understood as a “continuity” of her previous curriculum and teaching practice. Like her prior classroom teaching, Carol is particularly concerned with making a difference in the achievements of both the lower and higher achieving students. In doing so, she constantly attempts to provide different tasks for those students, followed by individual-based assessments. Given this kind of heightened consciousness, teaching itself appears to be considered a broad, interests-based sketch through which all of students have fun or get to be “joyfully absorbed” in doing activities related to certain topics. Hence, curriculum-in-use is explicitly embedded in this larger sense of her educative aim of teaching - one that delivers basic elements of curriculum to all of the students in the first place and then adapts the curriculum to lower and higher students in varying contexts. In short, her teaching has been stable both before and during the implementation process.
Although her personal, professional definition on the role of the manual in this implementation process is mainly influenced by the overwhelming nature of the manual, her basic beliefs on the use of the textbooks are little different in terms of her underlying vision and role of who the good teacher is. In this aspect, Carol, as a less textbook-based teacher or a lower fidelity user, maintains her course of action by prioritizing individualized curriculum designs and activity-based teaching repertories. As she argues, the classroom teacher has to control “the selection” of what to teach, “the time” of when to teach, and “the organization” of how to review what was taught before. The following transcription reflects her view as to how the role of the manual is largely laid aside in her classroom practice and, at the same time, her theory of how the curriculum as a document would have to be shaped in order to enter the zone of teacher’s curriculum ownership.

* * * *

Carol: I started to pick and choose things that the majority of class was lacking in and ... the curriculum I needed to have covered. This was where freedom came into play or where my teaching and planning came in terms of what my kids needed to know. For instance, in October, they [curriculum developers] wanted us to teach ‘a cause and effect clause,’ like if this happened, then this would also happen. My kids didn’t learn many vocabulary in the beginning of school year. For instance, my kids didn’t know the word ‘blend.’ Why would I teach them about the cause and effect clause when they did not understand what the meaning of ‘blend’ was? They [curriculum
developers] probably wanted me to give some examples of cause and effect clause to my kids anyway. ... It didn’t make sense... That’s not what I wanted my kids to need to know [at that time]. ... It was just a way to look at your class, look at myself. ... The book didn’t think of the process of my class, so the book was just a tool, but that was it!

Researcher: Did it have to do with the problem of interpretation or communication with the book or the curriculum developers?

Carol: Well, even though I interpreted and understand what they were saying, they didn’t understand what I needed for my kids. ... So, I was able to use the information as a tool, but that wouldn’t necessarily be a tool that would fit my class. ... So I would like to teach something else they didn’t prescribe. ... Again, to be a good teacher is to consider what their kids’ needs are. ... It isn’t always theory-driven. My priority was what my kids needed to know or what I needed to teach for my kids.

* * * *

As shown above, Carol does not believe that the manual can be an absolute criterion on which she relies to teach certain knowledge and skills. Because of the inconsistency between the developer’s linearly organized plan and her curriculum priorities, what she uses to develop her lesson plan is always seen as “situational,” based on her judgment of what students need to know at a certain time. This position is even considered a kind of freedom that she must enjoy in order to make classroom teaching meaningful. This
confidence in herself as a good teacher, who makes curriculum decisions within context, is possibly from her prior experiences teaching the same grade over time. Being free herself from the Suggested Plan fixed in the manual allows her to focus on reducing the gap among self, students, and subject matter by means of the meaningful selection and rearrangement of content or experience. In this regard, her theory is twofold. First, she defines her role as a (good) teacher in terms of curriculum re-design from an integrative perspective between self and students. Secondly, to the extent that re-designed curriculum is independent of a right way of teaching as delivery, she credits new or prescription-free ideas with fitting into changing and unexpected situations of learning.

Taken together, her view on the textbook or the teacher’s manual as a tool is more than a symbolic representation. One generally believes and tends to easily celebrate the assumption that those curriculum materials are or should be a tool by which to provide the teacher with a guide or a direction. And at the same time, one also understands how difficult it is for the teacher to take this assumption as real. For instance, perhaps those who argue professional courtesy and credibility between the curriculum developer and the practitioner may cry out for a larger degree of accountability between the two parties. Just as the former rigorously serves the latter by providing theoretical and practical ideas in education, so the latter has an obligation to serve the former by using and applying those ideas in and to practice. But when both parties talk about the extent of use of those ideas as intended originally, the response may be ‘it depends.’

Nonetheless, such a compromise can not even be plausible for Carol’s theory of action. More often than not, prescribed ideas are combined with each other or modified in
somewhat radical ways in her classroom. Her theory is beyond the response of 'it depends.' The priority of what each of student needs in order to know how to read makes her “part of a curriculum developer of this reading series.” As she says, “I write the series … [and] I did a lot of my own things in-between, because it was not enough … for my students.” Curriculum re-design processes are constantly engaged with her theory of action to help her systematically build her own objectives for what, why, and how she does things. Once such objectives, distilled from what students need to know at the present time, are identified, she goes through the meaningful connection between curriculum and teaching-as-praxis in and out of context. In short, she is not so much worried about keeping the taken-for-granted norm regarding the limited view of what the teacher’s role is in the educational enterprise as she is in fulfilling the need of each student and the interests of the whole group within her classroom.

Implementation as a change process.

The reflection on Carol’s life-world involved many impressive events. Among them, the way she appeared to consider the “professional” being of the researcher in a broad sense would be one of the most striking experiences from the position of the researcher. When explaining why she came to a particular conclusion in dealing with matters of curriculum implementation, her critical comment stunned the researcher. For instance, her argument on the “impractical” nature of the manual was enough to make the researcher embarrassed. This was because Carol treated the researcher as if the researcher were a representative of the community of educational researchers or curriculum developers. By situating the self of the researcher in some of the discontinuities between
her life-world and the intent of the curriculum developer in terms of matters of implementation, the researcher speculates on three considerations in the remainder of this section.

First, it was clear that Carol was looking through the manual and actually using new curriculum materials. As exemplified in her actual teaching practice, she adopted, or mostly adapted, the intent of the curriculum developer, depending upon her judgment of whether or not suggested ideas in the manual were feasible and desirable. By comparing two ideas, i.e., the one used as intended originally and the other considerably adapted to her class, the researcher found that Carol tended to follow the manual only when those ideas were little related to an introduction of new skills or concepts. Of course, those ideas in the manual that were faithfully used were judged in terms of how closely they were related to a better understanding of stories in the reading textbook. Other than that, drawing on her mental reasoning, the implementation method was adaptively determined on her own.

In this regard, the problematic nature of the steps or procedures suggested by the curriculum developer was identified. The whole structure and organization of the manual involved the same pattern unit by unit, along with the similarity of the format and language of each implementation method within each unit. Furthermore, as analyzed in the earlier section of this chapter entitled New Curriculum Materials, the developer suggested that teachers use the teacher-led instruction for lower students and then utilize supplementary intervention programs based on varying assessment tools prescribed in the manual. Largely, this standardized style of the "new" manual was defined as less
meaningful for Carol who had taught for 7 years and developed her own know-how, although newly adopted textbooks were “truthfully” viewed as “new” in that she favored an inclusion of the real literature. Therefore, it was so natural to see Carol intentionally disregarding steps typically suggested in the manual at a time when she was introducing and reviewing new skills and concepts with the students.

However, her routine of teaching could also largely be seen as a type of teacher-led instruction unless students were given “sufficient” time to think aloud and “individual” ways of making sense of “how to do.” Among a few examples, there was a situation in which she introduced new vocabulary on her own. Her method was flexible and individual in that more opportunities for students’ participation were given and students’ improvisational ideas were more encouraged than prescribed in the manual. Yet, because some words were somehow too easy or difficult to demonstrate, the actual impact on the students of her implementation method and the curriculum developer’s might not be greatly different, even though the interaction between her and her students was highly active and creative.

Secondly, in justifying why she had to change or modify those ideas of the manual, she frequently wished the manual were “user-friendly.” Or, she did not hear about, and thus join, the visit for support provided by the textbook company. But, she frequently commented, “it would have been better if I had a training session” hosted by the textbook company. In reality, as a commercial product, the nature of the manual was seen as either user-friendly or not, depending on the positions of people. Further, although she did not have a chance to hear about the visit of a representative of the textbook company,
the researcher believed that even if she had joined a one-shot skill-based in-service training program, a significant impact on her theory of action would not have occurred.

This was a point where fidelity of implementation was initially impossible. True, she said, “the book doesn’t know my students.” It may also be true, from the curriculum developer’s point of view, that the manual was just a guide providing the teacher with an idea of “how to do,” thereby arguing that the teacher should extend theory to varying modes of practice. As she reflected, because students of this second year were so shy or too mature, she was very “cautiously re-learning or experimenting” with new ideas of different modes of teaching. In this regard, she took into account the reciprocal relationship between theory and practice.

Nonetheless, from the standpoint of the researcher, there was an aspect that Carol might have to consider in terms of the reciprocal relationship between theory and practice. In a sense, for instance, for introducing compound words, the procedure prescribed in the manual was not intriguing to her. The researcher agreed with her. As she regarded the sample words in the manual as too difficult or less meaningful in relation to life-experiences of students, a radical form of modification occurred. On the other hand, if following the intent of the curriculum developer, then students were asked to “re-read stories” of the textbook while learning what compound words looked like. Carol did not relate samples of her compound words to texts but instead emphasized a group activity where students cooperatively found a pair of words. Again, the sample words she used were relatively too easy and not related to texts, so that most groups of students easily figured them out; then the individual was asked to write a sentence by
using one of those words. In short, this example could be a consideration of how theory could be possibly embodied in practice, and vice versa, in terms of her future learning that might lead to a change of her teaching practice.

Finally, with regard to what it was like for her to change, Carol reflected, “change has to come from within. ... If I want to change, I have to see a problem or situation that is wrong. ... If it doesn't come from within, it will never work.” This was what the curriculum developer (or educational reformers) normally did not account for or at least neglected. Reasons why textbooks had to be replaced by new ones involved external conditions such as outdated materials and better preparation for the proficiency test. Enhancing teaching practice through teacher development was regarded as a means to achieve those ends. For Carol, to a large extent, this discontinuity between means and ends was neither “new” nor “paradoxical.” As long as students would have better chances to learn, such a discontinuity between policy and practice would be tolerated.

However, as noted before, an “actual” sense of what made her change possible was personal. Her personal perspective could be seen as either legitimate or problematic from the outsider’s perspective. For instance, the curriculum developer could not know whether or not most of her students were too shy or too mature, but could only assume that there were higher or lower students. Carol faced a changing moment, just because of this changing nature of the students within her classroom. Fidelity of implementation was occasionally observed due to her search for this kind of resolution. The fact that she learned from experience at this time might not be the same as the fact that she actually changed her prior perspective. To make her ongoing experience more accommodated and
thus more integrated than before, the curriculum developer should have considered the meaning of change as personal and allowed teachers to reflect more on the existing practice rather than simply suggesting theories or technical steps. For instance, the curriculum developer may present an array of possible courses of action particularly designed to provide experienced teachers with different ways of curriculum design and enactment leading to different processes and outcomes. Therefore, Carol, or, experienced teachers, can reflect on, and compare and contrast possible consequences per se in light of her experiential knowledge.

In closing, her wish that "all other stakeholders needed to be flexible," might not come about soon. As she pointed out, socially constructed norms among teachers as colleagues at her grade level might not get as great attention from administrators or parents as she was eager to have recognized. Besides the fact that "teachers learn from each other," a broad sense of social and professional learning could be accelerated by action research-based activities that appeared to be less emphasized at this grade level. As one of two experienced teachers at her grade level, she might have conducted a more focused inquiry into her classroom and helped other beginning teachers with many concerns associated with the implementation process. When continuing these bottom-up based professional activities either alone or in groups, the discontinuity between policy or theory and practice could be seen as "more" problematic and paradoxical, so that fidelity of implementation could be differently defined, personally understood, and widely diffused in other contexts.

An Evolutionary Implementation Process in the School
There is no specific plan designed to empower either the teacher’s curriculum work in each classroom or a collaborative agenda among the teachers at the each grade level. A change process in this school, by adopting new language arts curriculum materials in five years, is occurring within an existing system and ordinary classroom situations. In this section, the researcher reflects on some important aspects underlying the perception, or the intent, of Principal Smith, along with related themes in this school context.

First of all, Principal Smith has an open perspective on teachers’ work on curriculum and teaching. As noted earlier in this chapter, he expresses highly meaningful definitions of good education and the image of a good teacher. Related to this implementation process, likewise, he shows his little interest in leading the teachers in a certain single direction. The implementation objective that he envisions is somehow simple but persuasive. That is, as he experienced during the previous implementation processes in other subject areas, because any innovation can not be fully implemented in a short time, he would like to “be patient for a while” and see how things go through. Of course, if asked, he would be always ready to “try to help a teacher in trouble with implementation.” The only direction he makes is “be creative in using it. If you don’t pick a risk, you are never going to change. Without change, nothing is going to happen.” Therefore, the outcome of this implementation project from his viewpoint is improving curriculum and teaching practice of the school by means of the voluntary effort and/or the trial-and-error effort of the individual teacher. The following transcription reveals one of the perceived problems and his expectation for teachers surrounding this implementation process in his school:
Researcher: What is one of the major implementation problems in your school and how do you resolve it?

Principal: Anytime we adopt the textbooks, especially in the reading area, the major problem is that we have a lot of different teaching style; that is probably the biggest problem. How much or how little do teachers use the texts? Well, teachers are very independent individuals for their act of operating things in their room. In educating the 25 kids, they have specific strengths in themselves. Some teachers would like to use the textbooks entirely and do nothing else. Other teachers would like to use the textbooks as a tool, as one of the tools that they use in the room. I guess that the problem would be how much or how little is an appropriate amount use of textbooks. Back to my philosophy, I believe in giving them more individual freedom as long as they show me the result. At the end of the year, I look at their kids and the test and I don't care about the process as long as they show the result ...

Researcher: So you are giving freedom to teachers to use new textbooks but expecting a certain degree of outcome of students in the test.

Principal: If I try to push teachers in the direction that I want, I will get resistance, not a good result. Now if I give teachers a certain direction that I can guide them there and let them think of
their ideas ... I presume that we will get good results. If I just become a dictator, saying this is where you are going to go, teachers used to resist. So, I let teachers explore to find their own right path ... and we will get the result we want. So, it is best not to demand something, but to highly suggest, 'your test was not good in certain areas last year, you maybe try these things this year.'

Researcher: What do you mean by results or the tests?

Principal: We have school-made tests. We test every grade level, assuming which parts need to be covered by looking at the results of the 4th grade proficiency tests and trying to guess ... .

Researcher: So, what do you officially expect the teachers to do in their day-to-day classroom practices under this implementation process?

Principal: I expect them to use this reading series but let them decide how much. ... I expect them to use it in their daily teaching practices. I guess, however, I want them to be creative to use it a lot of different ways, even more so than what the textbook company wants them to do.

* * * *

During this conversation, the researcher learned what he himself was thinking or, more exactly, what he thought of this implementation process from his managerial perspective. The point that the researcher makes, however, is that there is a different perception between what he thinks of this implementation process as "the easiest one" and what two teachers of the study have been experiencing in classrooms. Indeed, his
basic belief that the teachers would decide how much to use the textbooks must have positively impacted the life-worlds of the two teachers to a similar degree. He assumes that the degree of usage by the teachers would be seen to vary and even would be seen as a natural phenomenon.

To some extent, though, the notion of implementation as a change process evaporates, because the two teachers have been substantially troubled in how to use textbooks in their daily teaching practices. The researcher is not convinced that such troubles are because of the lack of pressure that makes it possible for the two teachers to be free to use new curriculum materials on their own. As noted, however, the principal's expectation for the teachers to "be creative" in using new textbooks might not be an effective position in the broader context of the standardized test system. While his strong trust in the teachers' use of the trial-and-error-based implementation process is intended to encourage the teachers to solve the problems on their own, it appears to widen the perceived gap between the administrator and the teachers.

The implementation strategy that Mr. Smith chooses is not to replace the old practice with the new one all at once. Before and during the implementation process began, he must have known the overwhelming nature of new curriculum materials, along with the tendency of teachers regarding the use of textbooks in teaching practices. The bottom line that the principal expects the teachers to accomplish under the implementation process is improved results in the tests, regardless of the different degree of use of textbooks. In this regard, the timing of in-service training is seen as appropriate two and half months after implementation began, because teachers have actually
experienced what does and does not matter in their classrooms.

Meanwhile, the two teachers, and others teachers as well, tend to consider such a perspective of the administrator to be desirable and respectable, in the sense that, based on their existing curriculum and teaching practices, they are expected to try new ideas on their own. Facing daily problems of how exactly or faithfully to use new curriculum materials according to the manual, therefore, the responses of the two teachers in this study are not to blame the curriculum developers. In large part, the two teachers express a willingness to use and follow new ideas according to plan if seen as useful and reasonable; they seriously want to learn how to better use this new series from the textbook company. Unlike the optimistic approach of Mr. Smith to the correct timing of in-service training, some teachers like Kelsey wish they had earlier and more ongoing support than they have actually received over the last two years. In addition, other teachers, like Carol, did not even know about such a training session and/or might not consider such an extremely short time visit to be equal to training that used to be offered at the school district level. Under this school implementation policy, the two teachers believe that they are actually using this reading series as best as they can, and the principal estimates that “90% of our teachers are working on this series.”

As time went on, both teachers began to feel familiar with new curriculum materials and became more confident in using new ideas from the manual than ever before. In fact, Mr. Smith, himself, does not seem to anticipate a dramatic improvement in reading levels and student achievement in one year of implementation. Instead, based on his experience on the previous implementations of other subject matters, he optimistically anticipates the
critical point of school improvement will come in "the second year." As described in the section on social construction of reality at the grade level in this chapter, the two teachers and others are constantly exchanging information on this series. Yet, such informal social interactions among teachers at the regular grade meeting or elsewhere are unlikely to play as a large part in the planned implementation strategies as the principal expects them to be, since talks and discussions are little focused on maintaining a consistent problem solving-based process over time. It is helpful, nonetheless, for teachers to share their concerns with each other, to make it possible to resolve certain problems of implementation processes in each classroom. Broadly, it is likely that these kinds of informal efforts are viewed not so much as a socially constructed goal toward specifically increasing the student achievement but as a part of each teacher's biweekly or daily routines.

Lastly, Mr. Smith has support plans for helping the teachers solve problems in classrooms and in guiding the whole of the implementation process. As far as the researcher is concerned, he is the principal that can be described in the professional literature as a democratic, humanistic, and committed leader. Meanwhile, it might be so natural for him, as a principal of the K-3 grades, to take care of the fourth grade state proficient test at a distance. The language arts curriculum implementation is eventually expected to contribute to having all of his K-3 graders master basic knowledge and skills in reading for the better preparation for the fourth grade proficiency test. As he noted before, analyzing the fourth grade tests to figure out certain skills that should be taught in the first through third grade is part of his curriculum planning. Beginning in the second
year of implementation (1999-2000), Mr. Smith has launched another project while being continuously patient not to expect instant improvement in reading skills of students. Now, the researcher is going to close this section entitled *An evolutionary implementation process in the School* with pondering a possible dilemma between Mr. Smith’s overall view of implementation as a process of school curriculum change and his personal views of a good teacher.

One year before this implementation began, the overall large framework that Mr. Smith was working on with a district curriculum coordinator was as follows: (a) curriculum review and development, (b) adoption, (c) benchmarking, and (d) implementation. The notion of benchmarking has been one of many functional curriculum and evaluation systems spreading in public schools in several cities of Ohio due to its technical usefulness in seeing whether basic components of the intended curriculum are actually taught and learned in the “actualized” curriculum. Not surprisingly, his following comment documents why the benchmark project is necessary and how it is seen in relationship to the implementation process in terms of the role and work of teachers:

[However], there are some teachers who are almost too creative and so they get so cut off and then [miss] … some of skills that should be taught. That is why we are working on a benchmark project where all those exact skills and exact levels are pinpointed and tested.

As the researcher understood his statements regarding a good teacher, he would fully agree with the assumption that being a good teacher is *not necessarily* one who
produces outstanding test results at the end of the school year. He continues to emphasize the creativity of the teachers in using textbooks and developing varying implementation methods. The idea of benchmark as he explains it involves utilizing the opposite aspect of being a creative teacher as a whole. True, as he mentioned above, if a teacher is too creative, then there is a possibility for the teacher to neglect or miss certain basic skills in reading. The researcher is convinced that what he has on his mind has little to do with featuring negative judgments of those labeled “too creative teachers” who exist either imaginatively or actually in a school. Instead, it is likely that he just asks all of the teachers, no matter what teaching styles they have, to cover minimum basic skills in the first place. From his open perspective or trust-based managerial approach, Mr. Smith seemingly believes that this benchmark project would not be greatly harmful to those developing and using the curriculum in their own idiosyncratic ways.

For instance, his thought is supported and exemplified in some detail by Carol, who is a less textbook-based and more creative teacher. In the coming year, the third year of implementation, the principal asks the second grade teachers to work with the benchmark project, which Carol calls *curriculum mapping*. Her explanation is succinct in that she specifically mentions a rubric of several dimensions such as test scores, accountability, and merits at the grade or institutional level. As a future direction to the implementation process of the third year in the school and classrooms, however, the benchmark project is intended to increase a high level of fidelity for the area of “curriculum or what is taught.” Yet, the assumption that an image of creative teacher has only to do with matters of teaching devoid of curriculum decision making in context can be problematic, because
the selection of content may intrinsically imply how to teach. Nonetheless, Carol's comment was positive:

Our scores are going through the process and now, we are reconstructing where we are mapping out everything we teach. We are going to work together, so that kids miss nothing. Everything that they need to have by the time when they leave our elementary in order to make them successful for the fourth grade. ... This doesn't necessarily mean we have to teach the same way. But we are responsible for teaching the same objectives or same concepts approximately at the same time. ... No matter how you teach, but you teach the same thing at the same time.

Over the last two years, the early implementation process of this small suburban K-3 school has been more dependent on the autonomy of the individual teachers and the grade meetings that were done informally than on the involvement and initiation of the administrator(s) at the school and the district level. A minimum level of in-service training or staff development associated with this implementation event was engaged in daily curriculum and teaching activities of teachers. Because of the overwhelming nature of new curriculum materials, the principal was letting the individual teacher decide the degree to which to use new textbooks. Overall, this kind of less fidelity-based implementation strategy of the principal has been naturally working in a comfortable climate of the school organization, as the teachers have been more familiar with and thus using the new reading series more in the second than the first year.

Meanwhile, the context has been shifting from a school change process toward the
high fidelity-based implementation. As one of the new technologies designed to
effectively control the implementation process, the benchmark project concomitant with
the adoption of new textbooks is part of the original school change plan. To discuss or
anticipate the impact of the new benchmark policy on the classrooms is beyond the scope
of this research. Further, the researcher intends no negative criticism relevant to the
implementation of the benchmark project. Rather, the researcher just points out the
changing curriculum implementation process of this school as related to the statewide
proficiency tests. In the third year of implementation, "the superintendent of this school
district wants the score higher," according to one of participants of this study. The
researcher raises a relevant question of how teachers are going to accomplish their
implementation praxis at the "same" grade level under the "same" curriculum objectives
at the "same" time.

A Reflection of the Researcher on Self and the Future

Overall, in analyzing the teacher's manual, I was critical of some aspects that
appeared to be too technical. This was because I believed that such a skill-based
prescriptive approach to curriculum would be inappropriate in terms of a complex of
teaching activities. Although the nature of the manual adopted in this school district was
typical or widely taken for granted, I disagreed with the position of the curriculum
developer that wittingly simplified "practice" and functionally presuming the existence of
the teacher as "a user." To be sure, I, as a researcher, have been unwittingly thinking of
the role and work of the teacher as a more complicated and value-laden process, which
challenged a linear or programmed-based change approach or "high fidelity" of
implementation. Because of this kind of my personal, professional orientation to curriculum/teaching and educational change, I seemed to, both consciously and unconsciously, hope that teachers in this study would be less likely to follow prescriptive ideas as intended originally and more likely to use their own creative ones in context.

In understanding two teachers' lived experiences, I believed that my prejudgment of this sort was "firmly" held, so that I could interpret what actually happened from their perspectives. On one hand, by situating my understanding between the particular meaning construction of each teacher and the intent of the curriculum developer, I, at the same time, attempted to point out some aspects that both sides might have missed or neglected. In doing so, I have been particularly observing myself moving from the present to the future and vice versa in terms of questions of "who am I and what makes this research meaningful for my future professional career?" Some tentative answers to these questions followed. To the extent to which the identity of the curriculum developer indicated my future career-to-be, this research provided me with a valuable lesson of what educational reformers should think about in terms of teachers' different concepts of curriculum and different uses of curriculum materials. Also, to the extent to which I would be in a position of a teacher educator-to-be, this research allowed me to critically reflect on the actually situated role of teachers in terms of the definition of curriculum and use of curriculum materials.

Taken together, my original position on practice did not change. Through this research, a complexity of practice was clearly identified, even more concretely than before. In the context of this research, what was significantly learned was the divergent
meaning-making processes of teachers, along with personal concepts of change in context, given the one manual. In cross-cultural context, this perspective is persuasive, even in countries where a nationally developed curriculum is implemented and thereby the role of teachers is just taken for granted as implementers. For instance, issues and matters of implementation have always existed even under the strict circumstance of the educational system like South Korea's, as the researcher learned. The history of curriculum change in Korea revealed that a couple of broad educational ideals have been implemented every five to ten years but varying concepts and significant questions related to curriculum implementation have been little developed and raised.

One critical thing that I learned from each teacher about the meaning of educational change was that an innovation could be always double-edged, pro and con, depending upon the individual teacher. Therefore, the curriculum developer out of context could not pave the way for a single prescription. Instead, more choices and varying learning opportunities for the teachers should be offered not only in the manual, but also in staff development or in-service training programs. I believe that the implementation process may or may not influence an increase of student achievement in a short period. Because of this, I did not directly ask each teacher of how student achievement increased over the course of two years. Teachers' lives and long term-based learning experiences were regarded as more important than the short-term effect of student achievement in the curriculum implementation process.

In conclusion, this research helped me create a clear future vision of who I am going to be in context. The meaning-making implementation study not only focused on
understanding an individual teacher’s life-world from both the insider’s and the outsider’s perspective, but also helped me critically reflect on each of those in theory or policy. Further, this research provided me with insight into the wisdom that without teacher change, educational change would not be possible. We know that all change is multidimensional and difficult. But, we do little know “where to start” to change a taken-for-granted relationship between theory and practice. No matter where we start, we know that a partial impact on practice may occur. The problem that we often miss, however, is our prejudgment that practice would change dramatically once policy or theory is developed and implemented. I learned from two teachers and the principal in this research that I would have to look basically at what “the forest” looks like and, more importantly, to understand carefully how “the trees” are different from each other. When taking the latter into account, I, as a future curriculum developer, would feel less regret when I encountered less fidelity of implementation.

Chapter Summary

The major research findings were presented as two stories of two participating teachers, including a descriptive interpretation of each teacher’s definition of curriculum implementation, curriculum-in-use, and reflection. In the section of each teacher’s reflection, three underlying themes or structures of experience were described. Then, personal, social, and professional interactions between two teachers, or among teachers at the grade level, were explored. Finally, after reflecting on two teachers’ theories of action, the researcher discussed the actual impact of new curriculum materials on their courses of action, followed by the school-based change project initiated by the principal.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter begins with a brief summary of the previous four chapters. Then, the most significant findings follow. Third, three broad themes that emerged from an analysis of the two case studies are discussed. These themes are: (a) the issue of fidelity, (b) teacher development in context, and (c) theories of curriculum implementation. Fourth, the researcher's reflection on these teachers' life-worlds is described. And finally, recommendations and further research and action for the pre-service and in-service education of teachers and school administrators are proposed.

Summary of the Study

This study was designed to describe and interpret the lived experiences of two teachers as they used new reading curriculum materials. The major research purpose was to provide an understanding of how two teachers "made sense" of curriculum change from their perspectives. In effect, it involved an analysis of how a so-called "ordinary" change process was shaped into reality. As discussed in chapter one, this research was not designed to assess the outcomes of a particular instructional approach to reading, but
rather, to understand how two teachers translated, based on their own lived experience, new curriculum materials into action in their classrooms. Consequently, the meaning-making processes of two teachers over the two years showed, both explicitly and implicitly, varying ways in which new curriculum reforms could have been constructed in daily classroom situations.

In chapter one, the underlying theoretical background and the research problem were presented. The underpinnings were first conceptualized in the light of empirical findings of the RAND study (1974-78). By amplifying a practical role of the classroom teacher facing an innovation, the RAND study suggested a mutually adapted interplay between theory and practice in order for the initial implementation outcomes to be better incorporated in different local situations. This interaction-based concept of the RAND study was seen as alternative, for it challenged the traditional view of a local educational change process, i.e., once a policy was developed at the top, it was believed that it would be directly implemented in the local situations as originally intended. Alternative approaches to teachers’ action or knowledge in classroom situations was further examined to develop ideas of how to make better sense of teachers’ role and work in the everyday curriculum and teaching context (e.g., Ben-Peretz, 1990; Clandinin & Connelly, 1992; Elbaz, 1983; McCutcheon, 1992). The conventional view of teaching and teachers’ work with curriculum was challenged. Its focus was primarily on context-free teaching skills and limited interpretations of curriculum materials. This alternative view of teaching and curriculum was centered on exploring meaningfully the individual teacher’s particular thoughts and actions in context, since it was argued that
understanding a classroom practice required a teacher's purposeful interpretation of why certain actions were taken.

In chapter two, the review of the literature included two major theoretical and practical perspectives surrounding related research on implementation: adaptive and fidelity-based. Such perspectives were split over the meaning of the implementation process. Differently, both took into account teacher behavior in relation to the original intent of the program developer. The observations of McLaughlin (1990) and Elbaz, (1983) influenced the point of view of this researcher. This view held that the teachers as users were constantly adapting theory or new ideas to their practices.

For instance, as Ben-Peretz (1990) explained, this aspect of teachers' adaptive curriculum use, teachers as professionals should interpret "the potential embodied in curriculum materials" (p. 57) in terms of their classroom situations. They should go beyond the given texts to construct a meaningful base for teaching practice. This image of teachers' creative engagement in curriculum was basically that of "a curriculum developer" (Clandinin & Connolly, 1992), who should prioritize the value of his or her practical knowledge in action and thus utilize it to fit his or her classroom practices. Specifically, teachers' rationales to re-develop the curriculum may vary. Their thinking processes both before and during teaching were viewed as complex, since they brought personal experiences, and unique concepts, images, and beliefs of the education process to their curriculum and teaching activities. Because of these teachers' theories of actions, teachers tended to conceive of the "given curriculum" as inappropriate to their own teaching repertories. They felt the necessity of redeveloping or creating a more realistic
classroom curriculum of their own (McCutcheon, 1995).

In exemplifying such adaptive processes of teachers in context, the phenomenological perspective of Aoki (1988) provided a theoretical base to go into situated actions or thoughts of the teachers -- namely, their lived experiences. This was critical because most of the literature on school change or improvement neglected the "what and how" teachers experienced while using an innovation in everyday classroom situations. Further, teachers' ongoing consciousness or experience involved in implementation was also little examined in terms of explicitly constructed personal views of curriculum. Their concrete lived experiences underlying their day-to-day interactions with the intent of the curriculum developer was virtually unexplored territory. Following phenomenology (Chamberlin, 1974), arguments dealing with curriculum implementation as an evolving process were cited (Majone & Wildavsky, 1978; Snyder, Bolin, & Zumbult, 1992). The literature that described how curriculum was shaped in teaching was reviewed and analyzed. This identified how teachers thought of what they did in action and of what was "real" (Throne, 1994). In effect, it probed their day-to-day lived experiences.

The methodology in chapter three reported the rationale and the procedures for data collection, analysis, and interpretation in a phenomenological study. Clearly, phenomenology as presented by van Manen (1990) was best fitted to explicitly "re-achieve" the essential structure of what teachers experienced in their daily life situations. Phenomenology for this study was empirical in that I, the researcher, described teachers' life-worlds or the world of lived experience by means of an interpretive, or hermeneutic,
This effort was impossible without a deep, reflexive engagement of the researcher in the teachers’ life-worlds where their meaning-making processes were constantly moving inside and outside of their thoughts and actions. As van Manen emphasizes, during the process of re/writing teachers’ ongoing experiences in text form, the researcher constructs a reflective question of what it was like from participants’ perspective. For these reasons, phenomenology was most appropriate to the research problem of this study because of its ability at describing the processes of teachers’ “meaning making” from their standpoint while using new curriculum materials.

Major narrative descriptions of this research were documented and analyzed in chapter four. From this phenomenological perspective, the stories of two teachers were reconstructed from field notes. The researcher shared teachers’ individual definitions of curriculum implementation, curriculum-in-use, and each teacher’s reflections. For the first teacher, Kelsey, the meaning of curriculum implementation was shaped by her conception of the process as an important opportunity to learn more about how to better teach. She followed the suggestions of the manual as closely as possible to expose students to new curriculum materials. In effect, Kelsey reflected on the implementation process as one of being true to the aims and procedures of the curriculum developer. The second teacher, Carol, defined curriculum implementation as a “mix” of her past and present experience. As a consequence, new curriculum materials were used selectively in a “back and forth” manner. She clearly shaped her experiences by her interpretation of the ongoing needs and interests of her students. Her curriculum implementation was, as she reflected, a combination of her experiential knowledge with her overall interpretation
of curriculum implementation methods. Meanwhile, this chapter also showed the school improvement effort by describing what the principal thought and acted over the ongoing implementation process. He played a minimal role in these case teachers by letting reform move along on its own. Obviously, however, he expected teachers to demonstrate certain "external results" that could prove their actual use of new curriculum materials.

The Most Significant Findings

The following are the four findings deemed most significant by this researcher. This researcher asserts that these findings are of critical importance to any curriculum implementation effort:

1. Different teachers have different underlying conceptions about curriculum and thus assign quite different meanings to the way in which curriculum is shaped in actual day-to-day teaching. On the surface, this finding might be viewed as "conventional wisdom." However, curriculum makers tend routinely to assume that all teachers have basically the same underlying concept of implementation -- namely, that their role is to use instructional procedures to move the authorized programs in a conventional linear approach. This is a "top down" approach that characterizes "teacher-proof" curricula. This research demonstrates that such a concept does not work in practice. From a phenomenological perspective, each teacher of the two studies lives in her own "professional lived in world." As a consequence, each of the two teachers demonstrated different conceptions of curriculum and, in turn, curriculum implementation. The change effort of the school district did not honor these two different worlds. Too, publishers of curriculum reform package failed to recognize the wide range of the perspectives teachers
have of the underlying nature of curriculum and its implementation.

2. Teachers in this study made a different sense of their role and work in the curriculum implementation process. Although both teachers were primarily concerned with meeting the needs of students to a similar degree, their approaches to the day-to-day implementation of the curriculum developers' intents and resources were quite different. For instance, in selecting everyday learning experiences, Kelsey began by "narrowing down" an array of specific goals and objectives suggested by the curriculum developer in terms of what students best needed to know at a specified time. Goals and objectives in her planning were similar to those of the curriculum materials and her teaching followed suit. As she felt more comfortable, with goals and objectives selected early in the implementation, and as she observed what did and did not work, her adaptation was occurring by putting the "real" needs and interests of students together. In contrast, for Carol, the students' needs and interests were consistently taken into account as the most important priority in selecting everyday learning experiences. Yet, as she was experiencing the complex nature of the students, e.g., sometimes less interest in engaging in social interaction, in the second year of implementation, she started to adapt her own experience-based implementation to also include a variety of the ideas suggested by the curriculum developer as well as her own resources.

3. A school without cooperatively-developed polices for implementing the use of curriculum materials (in this case, reading curriculum materials) leaves each teacher without clear directions for implementation and also places special leadership responsibility on the principal, especially with respect to inexperienced teachers.
4. Curriculum implementation leading to classroom change or improvement is a slower than typically expected process because of varied levels of teacher growth in practice and views of alternative methods.

Implications of Findings

Three major themes emerged and are discussed in this section. First, the researcher reflects on the meaning of the term fidelity in matters of implementation (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977). Given the finding of this research that two teachers took different courses of action in their classrooms, implications for the relationship between policy and practice are discussed. Second, the researcher brings issues surrounding teacher development to the discussion. In particular, teacher learning and change are highlighted, along with implications for a further consideration of different problem-solving strategies between the novice and the expert teacher. Finally, the researcher rethinks the field of curriculum in relation to contemporary theories of curriculum implementation (Reid, 1975) by drawing on phenomenological views of curriculum and implementation.

The Issue of Fidelity

The term fidelity is uniquely used in studies of educational implementation to identify and measure the extent to which teachers as users follow the original intent of the program developer (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977). In the educational policy making process, the courses of action of the educators tend to be prescribed either strictly without choice or optionally within simplified boundaries. It is often the case that efforts for changing the school curriculum are limited by existing state or local policies. In Ohio, these include an existing local Graded Courses of Study or a state curriculum requirement such as new
state standards. Consequently, the only option left for the decision making group in the school district is one of selecting new curriculum or instructional materials developed by textbook companies, which supposedly cover the state curriculum in general and the Graded Course of Study in particular.

This dissertation research clearly demonstrated that neither teacher thought deeply about her basic positions regarding a concept of curriculum and an ideal view of what might be called "good" teaching. Instead, both teachers began their reactions to implementation with being worried about how to get the vast new job done. In effect, they continued to engage in the implementation process in two different ways over the two years. As one of two teachers said, the starting point of this implementation as a change process was "our school district adopted new curriculum materials, we have to use them." Although previous curriculum materials were outdated and needed to be updated, one of the major institutional goals, i.e., "to increase test scores of students," was highly influential in determining what actually happened in these two classrooms and in the adoption of these new curricular materials. The basic implementation problem in this school was based on the expectation that both teachers clearly knew their individual accountability involving the use of this new reading series but did not know "the how." That is, change policy in this school relied primarily on teachers' faithful performance supposedly following the overall prescriptive implementation method inscribed by the outside curriculum makers, while both teachers did little to make sense of ways in which curriculum developers assumed they should do in day-to-day teaching practices.

The innovation in this school was abruptly face to face with the reality of classroom
practice in which two teachers did not have access to the underlying assumptions of curriculum and teaching. One of the teachers interpreted this change policy as a commonly encountered approach: "Do it on your own." Fullan (1991) and others (Hall & Hord, 1987; McLaughlin & Marsh, 1978) claim that twofold critical determinants of the successful implementation are clear goals for the necessity of change and ongoing support. The findings of this study make clear that even though clear goals were set up in this school district between administrators and teachers (e.g., to improve reading instruction by directly using new curriculum materials), teachers' courses of action could be dramatically different. Importantly, this wide difference between the two teachers was shaped by the "open" perspective of the principal. He stated, "I did not care too much about the degree of use of this innovation among teachers." His lesser emphasis on "pressure or control" of teacher behavior was replaced by enormous demands of the curriculum developers, the clear goals of this school implementation project meant for Carol and Kelsey to act according to plan. The change literature tends to miss this point of discontinuity at the institutional level between the end as the implementation goal and the means as fidelity use, in particular from teachers' diverse perspectives.

Support, the other aspect for the successful implementation process, was minimal in this school. The principal said that as a common strategy in the beginning of the implementation process, he purposefully had let teachers use the series on their own for a while, expecting teachers to experience all kinds of problems, concerns, and issues surrounding the use of new textbooks. There were, however, different perceptions on the part of the principal and the two teachers. Although the principal explained to the
researcher the merits of such a trial-and-error technique and that he intended to resolve more implementation problems at a later time, both teachers were eager to have such a support or problem solving program before they undertook the implementation. Because of the problem of communication and the unrealistic time schedule of the implementation process, one teacher did not hear about the short visit from representatives of the textbook company. The other teacher interpreted this support, a late visit by the representative from the textbook company, as the “broken promise” in a commercial or political context. In this respect, the change literature tends to emphasize the ideal of an ongoing support structure. Rarely does what actually happens in school practice -- namely the politics of textbook companies -- get fully described and evaluated.

Unlike the expectation of the principal, the staff of the textbook company simply asked teachers to cover only a small amount of tested skills marked in the manual, out of an array of new teaching strategies and skills. The tested skills were all requirements of the state-mandated curriculum. Other than that, teachers were merely encouraged to use, or try, as many skills as possible. The observation of Ball and Cohen (1996) is useful for inferring the way this school’s change politics was largely shaped in classroom practice:

New adoptions in schools or districts are often accompanied by concern over the fidelity of implementation, which often leads to brief ‘training’ for teachers. Sometimes trainers are publishers’ representatives who are more versed in sales and promotion than instruction. Even when the professional development that accompanies new texts is thoughtful, it is seen as auxiliary support needed to ensure quality implementation, not as a site for
professional development. (pp. 7-8)

Along with her appreciation for attendance at this training session, Kelsey also confessed regret for this late “one-stop” visit. She mentioned that it might have been better for the textbook company to merely attach a piece somewhere to the teacher’s manual - one that simply indicated “hit this one only in this unit.” This study clearly implies that in ensuring high fidelity, the politics of the textbook company involves prioritizing the tested skills over other portions of the mandated curriculum. To some extent, “the ritual form” of a technical skills-based support program initiated by the textbook company was even seen as inappropriate for Kelsey. The in-service program (in this case, the one-stop visit for support by the textbook company) needs to encourage teachers to reflect on multiple concepts of fidelity of implementation, rather than merely demonstrating a standardized ritual form that teachers may feel wasted time and energy. In this regard, Noddings (1986) suggests that if teaching is to be improved, then teacher education programs need to encourage teachers more to feel responsible for caring for the individual needs of students than equip them with sets of reproducible skills and knowledge. As Porter (1989) also indirectly points out, teachers, who are in need of “standards for … the what of teaching,” would not be meaningfully persuaded in implementing an innovation unless otherwise “discretion is left to … [them] in organizing and delivering instruction” (p. 354).

In summary, there was a perceived gap between the administrator and two teachers in terms of good implementation, or high fidelity, in this school context. The change literature suggests that the process of implementation is largely developmental, so that
the administrators need to be patient in expecting high fidelity or a change of teacher behavior (Fullan, 1991). Although the administrator of this school was open and patient, the subjective worlds of two teachers became tangled in that not only was the manual or the intent of curriculum developers so demanding, but also there existed no specific training to prepare them for this implementation process. Despite the low level of pressure from the administrator, both teachers felt uncomfortable with the explicit relationship between the process of implementation and the consequence of the proficiency tests. The visit from the textbook company was both specific and directive, which tended to make textbooks-based teachers like Kelsey comfortable. But such a minimal support from the textbook company was not even delivered to some of teachers in this school. One of them, Carol, who emphasized less textbooks-based teaching or implementation, maintained her own route to a greater extent than Kelsey.

Consequently, in spite of the efforts of the administrator and the textbook company, the findings of this study imply that school’s policy development process and support system tend to be ineffectively communicated and practiced. Although the notion of accountability played an implicit role in the subjective worlds of the two teachers during the implementation process, the ultimate expectation of the school policy on the institutional goal of increasing student achievement was explicitly embodied in the consciousness of these two teachers.

Generally, as Fullan (1991) notes, “... often we find meaning only by trying something. Successful innovations and reforms are usually clear after they work, not in advance” (p. xi). This statement would be correct only when it is believed that
predetermined plans or policies above the classroom level are rationally expected to be implemented in a standardized way; and teachers as implementers would discover certain meanings as a result of following prescribed action plans by holding their individual thoughts. However, this study makes clear that although teachers seem vulnerable in their responses to policy or theory in itself, their thoughts in the daily classroom and social lives in a school context appear to be stable and more socially constructed by different responses to the specific intention of curriculum developers. For instance, to make a difference other than accountably using new curriculum materials, less textbooks-based teachers like Carol personally purchased and used reading-related guidelines and materials during the implementation process. This was to incorporate what she viewed as contemporary teaching methods into the new reading series being implemented. This additional, “bottom-up” effort by Carol was accepted by other teachers, including Kelsey at this grade level.

Expecting change to occur in terms of the original intent of the curriculum or program developer is a fallacy. Fidelity of implementation is determined more by “zones of enactment” in which the individual teacher perceives better ends and means in a particular situation than by the theoretical assumptions of the program designer (Spillane, 1999). The notion that action leads to thinking seems to be more promising in achieving a significant breakthrough of change in practice. The findings of this research, however, clearly demonstrate that the replacement of new ideas within teachers’ realm of existing practice is a process in which teachers’ personal theory of action (McCutcheon, 1988) determines whether or not theory is validated in resolving the complex needs of students.
The fundamental factor that causes poor fidelity is not to be found when we see teachers as "the problem" of change (Paris, 1993). But, when teachers are seen as the agents of change, more significant concepts of the real nature of fidelity of implementation can be examined. The RAND study (1974-78) finds that the reconstructed relationship between theory and practice needs to be redefined at the "classroom" level. The finding of this study shows a possibility of how practice can influence theory as long as the teachers feel competent in their beliefs about what makes good teaching and learning within their unique classroom situations.

**Teacher Development in Context**

As a beginning teacher, Kelsey is not much like one who is typically perceived as being "in trouble." She is relatively competent in translating curriculum into instructional goals and objectives and utilizing management and motivation skills during teaching. Nonetheless, it seems important to point out that teaching is more than what is learned in pre-service teacher education, as Kelsey has experienced over three years. Even advanced knowledge of subject matter in the graduate program is not too helpful for Kelsey in terms of overall curriculum decision making and everyday teaching activities. Generally, pre-service teachers are not given many opportunities to reflect on situations related to making curriculum decisions (Ayers, 1992). As Kelsey experienced, when insisting on keeping pre-active planning alive, the process of teaching turns out to be a relatively static process. Therefore, pre-service teachers need to have many opportunities to imagine how to choose their course of action from an array of varying alternatives.

To put the matter differently, in the light of the cognition-based teacher
developmental stage theory (Fuller, 1969), the concerns of Kelsey, as a beginning teacher, are mainly twofold: a question of survival and an emphasis on basics. The literature on teacher induction suggests that support is a necessary and even sufficient condition for those in these stages to move on to the last pedagogical concern of the impact on student learning (Huling-Austin, 1990). Yet, it is less likely for her to go beyond the present concerns as quickly as possible in actual experience. A finding of this study implies that these early two stages for the beginning teacher are neither separate ones nor do they develop in a linear manner. Instead, the survival concern of the beginning teacher, who is basically able to demonstrate relatively stable teaching, can be better supported in her future teaching activities from multiple perspectives that may simultaneously lead to varying rationales related more significantly to student learning.

Beginning teachers tend to approach teaching in a managerial way largely dictated by the culture of the professional community (Lortie, 1975). Much attention tends to be paid to skills, or theories, of instruction in traditional pre-service teacher education and controlling the class, particularly concerning discipline problems (Howey, 1996). However, less emphasis is placed on encouraging student teachers to think of varying ways of context-specific teaching methods in terms of alternative visions of how to define an "official" curriculum guide (Ben-Peretz, 1990). This is mainly because the curriculum guideline is viewed as including the best procedure to teach. This study shows the direct relationship between skills-based learning to teach and steps-based teaching methods in the conventional manual. This commonly shared technical approach to teaching between educational institutions and textbook companies prohibits the
beginning teacher from being flexible and open-ended. The paradoxical experience of Kelsey in this study implies that not only is the nature of the manual so prescriptive in guiding her what and how to do day-by-day, but also, it makes her feel safe in confirming the “right life” for a beginning teacher. Given this reality, teacher educators have to allow student teachers to reflect on the pros and cons of fidelity implementation in terms of professional learning and the lives of the actual teachers.

In order for a teacher to have expertise, knowledge of both content and teaching procedures is fundamental (Shulman, 1986; see also Shulman & Sykes, 1986). That is, expertise in teaching is identified when a teacher’s specific reasoning is performed in the way that uniquely connects content knowledge to pedagogy and thereby makes the subject being taught “comprehensible to others” (Shulman, 1986, p. 9). The major finding in a comparative study on novice and expert teachers (e.g., Berliner, 1986) indicates that having expertise in teaching is incomplete unless balanced with pedagogical knowledge. Further, expert teachers have more elaborated schema than novice teachers, ones that help process all information related to student learning before, during, and after teaching in a comprehensive and effective way (Westerman, 1991). The contribution of this research to current research on teaching is clear, because the context of implementation provides for another arena in how teachers develop or change their knowledge and skills in teaching. When a beginning teacher, for instance, faces subject matter to be implemented, use of meaningful decision-making skills is limited by at least two interrelated factors: the uncertainty of how to proceed and accountability. The in-service training program needs to encourage beginning teachers to critically interpret and thus
creatively use ideas in the manual in the spirit of experimenting with various ways involving pedagogical decision making skills in an actual context.

Carol, as an experienced teacher with 7 years of classroom experience, was not defined as an expert teacher in this study. The fact that teachers have years of teaching experience may be a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for the definition of an expert teacher (Berliner, 1986; see also Elbaz, 1991). As some researchers concerned with a holistic view of teaching argue, expert teachers are growing as they continuously reflect on concrete experiences in and out of action (Calderhead, 1987; Russell & Munby, 1992). That is, ways of professional development are more fully emphasized in terms of everyday teaching activities. This research suggests that experienced teachers may continue to use their own cognitive style of what and how to do things even in times of change or implementation. In this study, Carol assigns her own definition to new curriculum materials, freely adapting them to her classroom situations whenever necessary, supplements them with additional materials, and thereby balances established practice with fidelity of use. This pinpoints the fact that although the grand effect of implementation is unlikely for the experienced teacher, small-scaled effects are always possible as long as the experienced teacher encounters new ideas that “fit” with those imbedded in her existing point of view. That is to say, it is an evolving, constructive process.

Studies of implementation are largely conducted using an a priori theory in which teachers’ daily lives are investigated in terms of the predetermined instrument aimed at measuring the actual degree of what is supposed to happen at a certain place and time.
(Goldsmith, 1997; James & Hall, 1981). Yet, some interpretations of these quantitative studies tend to be unwittingly exaggerated or may be incorrect in reflecting what is going on in schools and classrooms. For instance, Marsh (1987) interpreted the lower degree of fidelity use of an innovation to be “a psychological attitude of most teachers at the elementary school [being studied] as having no desire to get beyond a basic level of implementation” (p. 485). Without referring to specific contexts in which real teachers make sense of an innovation from insiders’ perspectives, teachers’ tendency for less fidelity of implementation can’t be generalized. That is, Marsh presupposed the entity of an innovation as given and investigated teachers’ roles and practices. As this study of the experienced teacher implies, the cause of not having a goal of getting beyond a basic level of implementation is caused by the problematic nature of innovations that are not “fitted” to many of classroom teachers’ sense-making processes. Therefore, researchers using the predetermined instrument or the CBAM need to look at both the program developers and the users from a perspective of what takes place phenomenologically.

The experienced teacher easily observes curriculum developers of textbooks as dictating “what” and “how” to do without helping her take diverse phenomena into consideration. As Carol experienced, when not allowed to meaningfully consider her pedagogical and practical beliefs, or values, within her own classroom context, she lost her interest in using any new ideas. Conducting a qualitative multiple case study of effective reading teachers, Wharton-McDonald, Pressley, and Hampston (1998) identified meaningful reading instruction as consisting of “a cluster of practices and beliefs” (p. 122), where teachers used more than one repertory of what and how to teach.
to read. This study of the experienced teacher confirms such a finding and goes well beyond. That is, meaningful reading practices are to be accelerated when the core of a change initiative is more teacher-centered than prescription-based.

Experienced teachers want the freedom to be flexible given prescription-based programs, so they call for educational communities to be more tolerant of a variety of teachers’ professional curriculum implementation and teaching (Paris, 1993). In this regard, the finding of this study is convergent with what Spillane (1999) refers to as “zones of enactment” where “reform initiatives are encountered by the world of practitioners” (p. 144) and thereby can only be implemented “in and through teachers’ existing knowledge and beliefs” (p. 169). More experienced teachers can be seen as the problem of change when they appear not to respond as intended originally but to use instead their experiential knowledge. As Carol said, teachers also learn from other colleagues in varying social settings and continuously make efforts to improve the status quo by use of their existing capacities. Given the notion of social aspects interacting with the personal zone of enactment, the case of Carol in this study suggests that experienced teachers want to be recognized for their flexible course of action from above and recognized for their socially constructed norms from the family of local stakeholders.

Most teachers are not actually using new textbooks as originally intended by the developers of such. This fact has long been known (RAND study, 1974-78). In accounting for this gap between what is supposed to happen and what actually happens, some researchers have argued that the word ‘implementation’ is not sufficient to explain and describe what and how actual teachers are thinking and thus doing in actual contexts
As Kelly's construct theory (1955) implied long ago, human beings develop a worldview on our own, look through it, and interpret things around us from it. In education, for instance, even volunteer experimental teachers follow their own understanding structure in the circumstance of a specially designed school where curriculum and teaching experts are providing ongoing feedback (Bussis, Chittenden, & Amarel, 1976).

This study clearly shows that the impact of new curriculum materials is markedly different from one teacher to the next in influencing what teachers actually experience in classrooms. Specifically, given the manual, not only did two teachers perceive differently the actual impacts of the innovation on their practices, but they also behaved differently in favor of their own personal beliefs, or values, on the role of the teacher to help students read better. Therefore, without taking into consideration different meanings that different teachers assign to their present and future professional growth concepts, a single focus-based teacher development, or teachers' in-service learning by the manual, is not an established component of curriculum implementation.

Theories of Curriculum Implementation

This research was not designed to be a conventional study of implementation. Typically, many researchers tend to develop a conceptual framework over the-taken-for-granted meaning of implementation and then explore a slice of practitioners' perceptions and behaviors. In contrast, this researcher began by questioning such a conventional meaning of implementation and aimed to understand how teachers “make sense" of what they do from their own perspectives. Too often, the field of curriculum implementation
has been narrowly conceived of as a concept of staff development, in which teachers as users are “informed” of the new features of the reform curriculum by the curriculum developers. Teachers, then, are narrowly trained to acquire skills and techniques necessary for implementing the curriculum as a product.

This research sheds light on significant implications drawing from three views of implementation: (a) fidelity use, (b) Aoki’s (1983) analytical concept of situational praxis regarding a classroom teacher’s thought and action, and (c) Majone and Wildavsky’s (1978) descriptive meaning of implementation. What follows is a basic assumption of each view and what this study revealed concerning them.

First, the concept of fidelity use supports a linear view of implementation. Because the distinctive roles of the developer and the user are clearly defined, the implementation process is assumed to “go through” without any problem when the developer provides the user with specified guidelines. The innovative program is developed and implemented based on models of “idealized” practice, wherein standardized steps or the focus of implementation are explicatively presented and the user’s context are generally identified. Therefore, a high level of fidelity use is projected as a warranted outcome when the user accepts the necessity of the change of his or her practice and thus follows the original intent of the developer.

This fidelity-based implementation view has been under attack (Ben-Peretz, 1990; Paris, 1993; see also Snyder, Bolin, & Zumwalt, 1992), since not only does it neglect the different needs of the users and but it seldom takes existing knowledge bases of the users into account. Nonetheless, the finding of this study shows that the logic of fidelity use is
at work in the case of Kelsey. This implementation phenomenon is likely better explained by understanding her life-world than by merely attributing it to the technical merit of the well-designed curriculum materials in and of themselves. As a beginning teacher, Kelsey’s adherence to high fidelity of implementation was temporal and contingent, as she was gradually able to learn about herself acknowledging the value of her own emerging pedagogical knowledge.

Secondly, Aoki’s analytical concept of situational praxis in the implementation process is based on disagreement with a blinded distinction between theory and practice that is imposed by the scientific rationality unwittingly forced into the classroom context. When forced to follow sets of implementation tasks prescribed by developers out of context, Aoki claims that a teacher tends easily to give up developing his or her personal, professional knowledge in favor of the technical management process associated with control of the classroom. In contrast, when implementation tasks allow teachers to use situation-oriented knowledge among self, curriculum, and students, Aoki asserts, teachers tend to make teaching better as they become action-based learners. Aoki argues that when praxis as action is reflectively encouraged in each classroom situation, knowledge “arise[s] ... from intentional engagement with and experience of lived reality” (p. 26).

In this research, Carol’s personal theory of action was largely characterized by Aoki’s reference to situational praxis. She knew that the implementation task had in/directly to do with holding her accountable to use new curriculum materials as much as possible toward the improvement of test scores. Notwithstanding, she created room for a better condition for teaching and learning, “on her own,” by challenging the
impracticality of models of idealized practice that were supposed to be implemented in her classroom. Drawing on her ongoing reflections of many years of teaching experience, she actively attempted to “make sense” of the changing needs of students. One example was her pre-planning process wherein she put self, students, and curriculum together, rather than relying heavily on sequential organizations of content in the manual. Her experience of lived reality in action was revealed in her reflective question of how to help students think better, work collaboratively in groups, and become independent learners.

And finally, Majone and Wildavsky’s (1978) descriptive meaning of implementation as evolutionary is referred to as a change process that is “subject to an infinite variety of contingencies … [within] worlds of possible practical applications” (p. 103). In their view of implementation, change is not a linear process, but a nonlinear ongoing process. This is to say that as practitioners make use of innovative ideas over time, they deem to face unexpected problems that need to be resolved in a continuous adoption of the new, evolving know-how, which is “a craft, not a science” (p. 103). In short, Majone and Wildavsky contend that because practically evolved questions are viewed as contextual, not predetermined, practitioners have to either add their own skills and knowledge to the rules of change or build new skills and knowledge on their own.

From the phenomenological point of view, the actual use of new curriculum materials were evolving at different rates as both participants in this study were “making sense” of what was critical in their life-worlds over time. For Kelsey, her feelings of success at mastering what was included in the manual allowed her to reflect on what she already knew about teaching reading other than the knowledge and skills acquired in her
previous years of teaching. While still following the logical order in the use of textbooks and practice books as originally intended, even in the second year of implementation, she wanted to try some new pedagogical tactics that had never been attempted before to see how differently things worked. In a different vein, Carol's evolving problems were seemingly more dramatic as she experienced a light, but continuing, failure of her own teaching repertoire in her second year of implementation. In a large measure, this was due to the unpredictably different natures of her new students, who were mostly shy or reluctant to participate in group activities. The problem solving strategy she developed was closely connected to the relationship between reading and writing. This resulted in her move to give students more seatwork than before in hopes of balancing her proactive teaching activities.

In another vein, the school's social context, i.e., the regular grade meeting, added to this view of implementation as evolutionary. Given a lack of a support system in the school, most teachers in this grade level overwhelmingly experienced uncertainty pertaining to the use of the total curriculum materials package. These teachers, including the two participants under study, shared and exchanged their ideas and experiences with each other, which in/directly influenced the direction of the implementation process in everyday practices in each classroom. With regard to the selection of reading and grammar practice books in the second year of implementation, a conflict occurred at this 2nd grade level. The decision was up in air for a long time. These 2nd grade teachers were negotiating their values or beliefs about reading instruction with one another. In short, the implementation process at this grade level proceeded under the circumstance of socially
constructed realities between and among teachers through informal talks and discussions.

This study generates insight into the field of contemporary curriculum theory and research on classroom change. By undergirding this study with van Manen's (1990) descriptive and interpretive phenomenology, this research on implementation helps us see how deeply teachers experience self, situations in classrooms, change initiatives in school, and broad educational systems through the directly encountered text-based intents of the curriculum developer. To borrow a point of view of van Manen, "research and theorizing are often seen to be interchangeable concepts for that process of reflecting on lived experiences" (p. 20).

To elaborate and support van Manen's (1990) position and that of this study, when curriculum theory is detached from empirical research, the meaning of implementation can't be concrete in terms of a real sense of what is happening in a particular context. By the same token, when curriculum research is not based on theory, a solid historicity of the curriculum field can't be maintained and extended. By situating the process of implementation within lived teacher experience and relying on historical contexts of the curriculum field, this study merged curriculum research with theorizing efforts to evolve understandings of how a curriculum is actually transacted and/or transformed into teachers' thinking and action.

Since Reid's (1976) promising, but tentative, proposal for theories of curriculum implementation in the often unexplored domain of the relationship between theory and practice has suggested, curriculum research and theorizing efforts have come to what
might be viewed as a beginning stage of a conceptual framework first shown in the work of Snyder, Bolin, and Zumwalt (1992). As Reid concluded, if “curriculum theory must be built through teaching students,” (p. 256) then the definition of curriculum employed in this implementation study in itself is convergent with teachers’ theories of action constructed experientially over time. This study clearly confirms Reid’s assumption that curriculum design postulated at the above level can never “inhabit a different universe from curriculum implementation” (p. 251). And further, the finding of this study adds to his assumption that understanding the process of curriculum implementation can only be made by understanding unique sets of personally and professionally oriented beliefs, or values, of “situated” teachers (Hatch, 1998; Odden, 1991; Porter, 1989) on an ever changing continuum from the past through the present to the future.

Concluding Remarks:

The Researcher’s Reflection on These Teachers’ Life-Worlds

In this section, these teachers’ life-worlds are presented. They are depicted from the perspective of the researcher, who for two years phenomenologically inhabited these worlds. In effect, these teachers’ life-worlds identified the critical aspects of their lived experiences.

Mrs. Kelsey Backer

1. Kelsey was a typical beginning teacher who was trying to learn various complex aspects of the teaching profession. For instance, her vision of professional socialization was evolving while searching for “What it meant to become an experienced teacher who might be independent of curriculum as ‘document’?” This question dominated the way in
which she made curriculum decisions. This is to say, she followed a conventional, unexamined, view of both curriculum and curriculum implementation.

2. Kelsey's perceived and practical problems associated with matters of implementation came, in part, from her reliance on prescriptive teaching models. To a large extent, of course, her tendency is a product that has been taken for the standard work of the teacher in education. It clearly, however, was not appropriate to meet larger professional needs of her role as a mature teacher. Her account of what best worked for student learning in her classroom was one of guaranteeing that the "right things" were covered in "right times" and in an authorized manner.

3. Kelsey's pre-planning was predominant in her teaching practice. The possibility for encountering situated, or enacted curriculum, was therefore less likely to occur. The role of the teacher finally became one of seeking balance between the outside authority of the curriculum maker and the critical perceived needs of the students. When pre-planning is viewed as more important than inter-active, the emerging needs of students can't be taken into account.

Mrs. Carol Seinberg

1. Carol's professional outlook can be best described as "progressive." The knowledge base on which she stood was, at the same time, realistic. This is, to say, she knew what worked. Given her articulated view of curriculum in context, Carol's own change plans and actions were highly plausible. She conceived of curriculum materials as "teaching tools." She used ideas of the curriculum developer both flexibly and adaptively. In effect, her approach to situation-oriented curriculum making and implementation gave
rise to a broader array of choices applicable to her actual day-to-day teaching. The critical decision she made was directly related to her interpretation of her students’ needs as she perceived them as well as to the order of the curriculum materials themselves.

2. Central to Carol’s rules and principles of curriculum practice was her experiential knowledge of the way in which students learned better. Her curriculum decisions following needs of students created a context in which students participated, cognitively and socially, in the process of problem solving.

3. A concept of curriculum theory was clearly observed -- namely, that the work of a teacher could be sustained meaningfully without relying largely on behavioral objectives. This proved to be the cases, both in daily and weekly processes of pre-active and inter-active planning. Both planning processes were clearly a continuous integration of plan and action. Like all of other teachers, she was, of course, concerned about test results of students. However, the researcher was convinced that a teacher’s concrete belief and professional values made it possible to develop a meaningful in-situ curriculum. Such an approach demanded much more energy and time than the behavioral objectives-based curriculum. For Carol, this large investment was what a professional teacher should aspire to.

4. To a large extent, given Carol’s ongoing concept of the implementation process, her classroom teaching practice was stable, or little changing over time, for she had found a way of curriculum implementation which best met her philosophical and practical views. Although her creative, experience-based, implementation of curriculum worked well in terms of her theory of action, and student learning, she may not have been fully
Recommendations for Further Research and Action

Based on the findings of this research, certain recommendations emerge. Chief among these are the following six listed here.

1. Further qualitative research should be conducted in classroom settings to examine further the findings of this study. It would be appropriate to check results at a number of different grade levels and in different social-economic settings. Such research is needed to add to the current inadequate theory base of curriculum implementation.

2. Both pre- and in-service teacher education programs should include a component that gives both inexperienced and experienced teachers direct experience in working on curriculum implementation exercises. This might be accomplished by the extensive use of actual case studies in their professional courses.

3. School administrators at each grade level of school should have in-service training in how best to involve teachers in a curriculum implementation process. Their present role in such an effort remains widely unstudied and inconsistent, so research in this area is also needed.

4. Publishers of curriculum materials should share in the responsibility of encouraging teachers to become active participants in curriculum reform efforts using their materials. Their experiences in this realm should then be built into further revisions of the materials. In the best of all situations, publishers might well join with teachers, at the outset, as partners in the development of materials.

5. Curriculum developers should recognize the need for more flexible resource
6. Curriculum theorists at the university level should project their curriculum reform efforts in ways that attend to the lived experience of teachers who will be involved. Such efforts might well continue to draw upon phenomenological research and keep in view the findings of this exploratory study.
1. Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title III, Innovative Projects; ESEA Title VII, Bilingual Projects; Vocational Education Act, Part D; Right-to-Read Programs.

2. There were initially two models, CBAM (Concerns-based Adoption Model) (Hall, Wallace, & Dossett, 1973) and LoU (Levels of Use) (Hall & Loucks, 1977) to make diagnose the feelings and actions of individual teachers as they get involved in implementing an innovation. Later, IC (Innovation Configuration) (Hall & Loucks, 1981) was designed to help individual teachers, alone or in group, assess a gap between intended use and their operation use.

3. In fact, they opened this position to all other psychological and philosophical views on active human minds. Each person invents knowledge of reality “continually open to reinterpretation of meaning (p. 14).

4. She did not know the visit of the representative from the textbook company. In the beginning of the research, I also thought this way. Later, however, I figured out there was one single-short visit from the textbook company.

5. Perhaps, this example that the researcher reflected on was one that made Kelsey surprised and feel uncomfortable. Indeed, she was when asked to comment. The researcher fully explained that such a comment had nothing to do with an intention used
to evaluate her teaching performance. And I believed that she understood the intent of the researcher.

6. Formally designed and utilized in-service training was not provided at this school district level. Instead, the staff dispatched from the textbook company visited for 1 and half-hours - a visit that happened two and half months after this implementation was launched. But it was scheduled after school and optional. Not many teachers, including principal Smith and Carol, joined in that training session.
APPENDIX

OPEN-ENDED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The following interview questions was constructed by putting all of the open-ended questions asked, both formally and informally, together over the year. Based on the broad open-ended questions, most of specific and important questions emerged while interviewing with participants.

Background and Experience

1. Would you tell me about your family and yourself?
   a. What made you a teacher?
   b. Tell me your majors and life at your undergraduate and graduate school?
   c. Do you have mentors at the university and/or schools?

2. How many years have you taught, including the current year?
   a. What grade levels have you taught?
   b. What was it like your prior teaching experience?
   c. Tell me about this school district and school?
   d. What is the general atmosphere of your school and classroom life?
   e. What about community and population of this school?
Curriculum Change and Adoption Process

3. When did you first hear about the language arts curriculum change project?
   a. Who served for the committee?
   b. What was the process of changing the grade course of study?

4. What happened to your school district in selecting new curriculum materials?
   a. Would you tell me about the background of the adoption process?
   b. What was the problem to select new reading series?
   c. What was your point of view?
   c. In what way was the decision made?
   d. Were there other complaints about the decision of the adoption?
   e. Do you know how much it cost?

Staff Development and Overall Curriculum Implementation Strategy

5. Did your school provide you with any in-service before implementation?

6. Did your school have implementation of any other subject matter in recent years?
   a. What were the progress of implementation and outcomes of students?
   b. Have you heard about any comments from your principal and administrators in relation to the current implementation strategy?

Actual Curriculum Implementation Process in Classrooms

7. What was your first impression when receiving the whole set of curriculum materials?
   a. In particular, what was the teacher manual like?
   b. What responses were your grade level teachers like?
c. What was the implementation plan at your grade level?

8. If there was any specific guideline belonging to these curriculum materials from the textbook company, if so, what was it like?

9. What was your initial strategy to use the teacher manual?
   a. In terms of planning, could you tell me about your daily and weekly plan?
   b. What was it like over time?
   c. If you had any question about specific content while planning, what did you do?
   d. What was the general impact of the manual on your teaching practice?
   e. Given the manual, what does your professional learning look like?

10. With regarding to the characteristic of reading instruction, whole language or phonics, in what way did you use the teacher manual?
    a. How did you use your theoretical knowledge at the university level?
    b. To what extent did your prior experience influence the debate over language instruction in your daily classroom situation?
    c. What was students’ learning on language like in your classroom?

11. What were the textbook and other aids like?
    a. In what way were your students mostly excited about these textbooks?
    b. Overall, how did you incorporate ideas from the manual into your teaching?

12. What do you mean by curriculum from your perspective?

13. What do you mean by implementation from your perspective?
14. What does it look like teacher learning or professional development under the process of implementation this year?

15. How do you make sense of the changing process of your classroom teaching and learning practice?
REFERENCES


Brophy, J., & Good, T. L. (1986). Teacher behavior and student achievement. In M.


Howey, K. (1996). Designing coherent and effective teacher education programs. In J. Sikula, T. J. Buttery, & E. Guyton (Eds.), Handbook of research on teacher education


Publications.


Publishing Company.


317


