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Early Childhood Evaluation and Policy Analysis: A Communicative Framework for the Next Decade

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Abstract

A major challenge for the next generation of students of human development is to help shape the paradigms by which we analyze and evaluate public policies for children and families. Advocates of building research and policy connections point to health care and stress experiences across home, school, and community as critical policy issues that expand the scope of contexts and outcomes studied. At a minimum, development researchers and practitioners will need to be well versed in available methods of inquiry; they will need to be "methodologically multilingual" when conducting evaluation and policy analysis, producing reports, and reporting their interpretations to consumer and policy audiences. This article suggests how traditional approaches to policy inquiry can be reconsidered in light of these research inquiry and communicative skills needed by all policy researchers. A fifteen year review of both policy and discourse processes research is presented to suggest ways to conduct policy studies within a communicative framework.

INTRODUCTION

Human development literature documents numerous attempts to stimulate debate, evaluation and recommendations concerning health and welfare policy and practice (Steele & Wallat 1997). Similar to other human service fields, it appears that policy dissemination is beginning to obtain a strong base in educational organizations and associations. The weekly newspaper Education Week has developed into "America's education's newspaper of

record." The 20 thousand plus member American Educational Research Association (AERA) has ensured that dozens of educational policy presentations will be included in the annual meeting by advancing educational policy research to division status. Additionally, AERA editors recently devoted two issues of its premier journal, *Educational Researcher*, to include illustrations of building research and policy connections and the annual program was organized around the theme "Talking Together in Educational Research and Practice." Following this theme, the presidential address focuses on the questions, "How can we, as educators, create communication among professional educators, researchers and other public vested in education?" and "How can we explicitly convey a spirit of inclusion and discussion with all those interested in education?" (AERA Annual Meeting 1996, p. 51). AERA Council members are also working on building a strong base by adopting a policy emphasis in the organization's strategic plan. These goals include devising mechanisms on communicating research in ways that influence policy and practice and engaging in specific activities to encourage research that is meaningful and relevant to practitioners and policymakers (AERA Council Minutes 1997, p.41).

Edward Lawlor (1996) suggests that "it is hard to imagine how this approach would not lead to a view of [policy] analyses as mere marketing" (p.114). The conception of policy analysis as "more communication" within and across "more communities" is a symptom of nadir of purpose and rationale and a warning sign of vulnerability, drift and low status (cf. p. 111- 112). It is not enough to say that policy analysts will gain power to make claims within policy arenas by publishing products that discuss research in simpler, more engaging terms. Such blanket statements do little to establish a connection to discipline premises regarding utilization of information or the dynamics of diffusion between sociocultural systems within contexts of tension (Wallat 1995). As Lawlor points out, to become a vital profession policy analysis must establish its connection to the intellectual traditions of the field and the "much larger movement in the social sciences to explore narrative and linguistic forms of social constructs" (p. 112).

The work presented here builds upon our initial identification of intellectual traditions in policy research on the relationship between language and policy (Wallat & Piazza 1991). We agree with Lawlor's analysis of what is needed to move beyond blanket statements about communication and dissemination. However, we disagree with his negative judgment that recent scholarship on discourses such as narratives represents a "shaky" contribution to policy research. To anticipate the conclusion, we agree with Lawlor's (and others) caution that if policy analysis is to become a vital profession it must create the capacity to lead its' members to perform their work in accord with the intellectual tradition of policy analysis as variable functions of communication, forms of persuasion , and modes of presentation (cf., Lasswell 1970; Wildavsky 1977). We disagree with his judgment that attempts to apply new knowledge in the disciplines of linguistics to analysis of achieving this endeavor are insubstantial. As Laswell (1970) has argued, the achievement of status and recognition of policy analysis as a profession in academic and public arenas depends upon critically examining its distinctive outlook. Such critical examination of policy analysis' distinctive problem orientation and social process (or contextuality) frame of reference requires continuous search for parallels between disciplines. As we have elaborated in other reports on types of discourse analysis, the disciplines of linguistics converge in emphasize on examining social contexts and social processes (e.g. Wallat & Piazza 1988, 1991).

The theme of language and policy relationships in this paper builds upon our earlier identification of intellectual traditions in policy research that have emphasized the need for policy scientists to pay attention to variable forms of communication and community in the production of final reports. We illustrate here the relationship between language and policy by considering communication functions and tasks undertaken before the production of final

policy reports. Given our professional interests in early childhood, we eventually narrowed a fifteen year set of examples of communication functions in policy analysis to early childhood policy studies. Our approach essentially follows Marshall and Rossman's (1989) advice to identify and name a process and construct and explore its attributes in a variety of functions. First, we decided to concentrate the review on illustrating the process of communicative functions as exemplified in AERA's policy journal called Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis (EEPA). Second, we identified a set of language in public life constructs from multiple discipline studies of forms of communication and community. The illustrations of variable communication functions in policy analysis traditions then serve to point to connections to knowledge on linguistic forms of social constructs. The fifteen year review may also serve to suggest connections that need to be made to expand the scope of early childhood contexts and outcomes to address critical human development policy issues.

SKILLS NEEDED BY POLICY RESEARCHERS

It has become commonplace to expect that students of human development need to be comfortable with the basic concepts and underlying assumptions of social sciences inquiry in order to judge the results of early intervention. However, developmental researchers have argued that professionals are increasingly obligated - by scientific considerations, by societal demographics, by professional societies, and by moral persuasion - to address how their fields of developmental study can draw more direct links between their work and policy questions (MacPhee, Kruentzer & Fritz 1994, p. 713).

Child and family policy experts also point out that expanded skills are necessary in order to help others decide which promises are reasonable for inclusion in public policy initiatives (cf. Datta 1983, p. 469). Datta (1982) predicts that just as methods used to disprove hypotheses drew "the best and the brightest" in the past, the use of approaches to explain what is tenable in development programs and policies research can attract a new generation of researchers who are "methodologically multilingual" (p. 144). As Lazar (1983) reminds us, the ground has been broken in evaluating the enduring effects and the practical economic implications of intervening in the contexts of children and families. At issue is how human development fields will face their diminishing ability to use classical analysis technologies in the light of social change and community sophistication. The scope of concern is reflected in expansion of development and policy agendas such as, (a) How and why some children and families fare better than others? (b) How and why a social structure, position, or system could or should affect the individual? (c) Who benefits from early childhood programs? (d) Are some interventions more successful with some individual and social group capabilities acquired in social life? and (e) Where should scarce resources be allocated? (cf. Huston, McLloyd & Coll 1994; Hymes 1974; 1979). The technical tasks of developmental researchers will be to outline what advances are possible to available evaluation and policy analysis approaches in order to satisfy the expectation that investigations can draw more direct links with policy questions (Huston, McLloyd & Coll 1994, p. 282). Their theoretical task will be to become familiar with evaluation and policy analysis topics and approaches that have been undertaken within anthropology, economic, social psychology and sociology perspectives (Susman-Stillman, Brown, Adam, Blair, Gaines, Gordon, White & Wynn 1996, p. 7).

PERSPECTIVE

It is no small task to become methodologically multilingual in order to consider

critical social issues in a broader framework. Datta (1982) reminds us that the conduct of, and completion of, multimethod studies involves a considerable range of purposes, sequences, and functions. Distinctions of potential significance which have helped awake the nation's conscience to situations of displacement, life on the margins, and blocked possibilities (Note 1), are dependent upon communicating within both academic and political arenas. For example, Popkewitz (1991) points out that it is shortsighted to believe that the right mix of availability of public funding for intervention research -- and a group of researchers practiced in multiple approaches driven by competing assumptions about classical models of the change process--will be able to have an enduring effect on social, health and educational policy.

Popkewitz reached this conclusion after examining reform efforts in the United States since the 1960s through an historical, philosophical and social theory framework. However, he also believes that drawing links between development research and policy questions might be able to have three long lasting contributions : (a) dissemination of the knowledge of disciplines along with the basis of these endeavors (i.e., making visible variable approaches of arguing, thinking, and "seeing" the world), (b) recognition that discipline knowledge produces a curious anomaly of explicitness and ambiguity (i.e., making visible the production of discipline knowledge as a "process that naturally involves ambiguity, tentativeness, and inventiveness as core dispositions" p. 140), and (c) advances in understanding of the functions of multiple inquiry approaches (i.e., making visible the link between policy research and policy proposals as social practices and social regulations of inquiry).

Popkewitz conceptualizes these three examples of long lasting contributions of development and policy research to demonstrate his concern with the need to expand support for development of social epistemology as a legitimate art of inquiry. As explained in his proposed options for considering the relation of researchers and social movements, social epistemology would consider the objects constituted as "the knowledge of policy" as a central focus. Within this focus, "the knowledge of policy" becomes a social practice amenable to inquiry; statements and words included in reports "are not just signs or signifiers that refer to fixed things, but are forms of social practice" (p.219). This conceptualization of the relationship between knowledge (epistemology) and power is intended as a means of making research practices such as evaluation and policy analysis accessible across multiple disciplines. As Wildavsky (1977) argues, "Analysis should be shown not defined" (p.10). Only through juxtaposition of available and manipulable problem solving means and resources can analysis be shown. "Who are we to say which field - law, sociology, social psychology, philosophy, history, anthropology, or whatever - might make the best contribution to policy analysis?" (p.12).

The next sections provide a starting point for venturing into the study of social practices of policy research. Overall, we address the possibility of alternative conceptions of policy research through presentation of a communicative framework for considering multiple approaches to evaluation and policy analysis. The nature and substance of approaches, considered as forms and functions of communication, include accountability, case study, discrepancy, ethnographic, experimental, expert opinion, illuminative, judicial, naturalistic, and responsive. The framework is based upon the assertion that what is--or will be--tenable is a constant in policy studies (Datta 1983). The idea that better knowledge produces better decisions is misleading. The types of skills and training needed to address critical policy issues require considering how a combination of policy approaches, or functions, may eventually lead to modest policy claims, contingent policy claims, or strong claims that warrant funds for continued investigation.

THE CHALLENGE

The question of what is tenable involves a number of issues. (Note 2) Current accountability rhetoric suggests that providing convincing evidence of the "enduring effects" of public policy initiatives must include development of conceptualizations of educational and other social development programs as a means of initiating a reinvestment spiral from limited initial capital. (Note 3) The widespread adoption and use of metaphors such as "enduring effects," "opportunities for success," and "practical economics" by legislators means that development professionals must communicate positive accountability indicators, indicators that go beyond the repertoire of terms heavily relied upon in the discourse of psychometric research. Evaluations must demonstrate how programs both provide for local resources management and human resources management, employing relevant strategies of cultural, political or religious revitalization (Easton 1989). To uncover and explain such post early development effects requires that development professionals be well versed in traditional and evolving approaches to evaluation and policy analysis. Easton (1989) refers to this job skill as paying increased attention to "the notion of integrating the educational field," that is, paying increased attention to the multiple approaches to inquiry that have developed in the social sciences to help relate education to the rest of the social system (p.438).

VIEWING RESEARCH APPROACHES AS DISCOURSE FUNCTIONS

Addressing the growing number of calls for "multimethod" evaluation and policy analyses (e.g., Green, Caracelli, & Graham 1989; Caracelli & Green 1993), does not have to start from scratch. Recent analysis of a decade of contributions to the communicative functions of policy analysis has highlighted convergence with several decades of advances in understanding the semantic and pragmatic aspects of communication and the multiple communicative resources individuals have at their disposal (Wallat 1984; 1991a). For example, the development of detailed procedures in descriptive linguistics since the 1960s has resulted in empirical explorations of multiple communicative resources which encompass notions of negotiation, accommodations, and pluralism.

Lakoff's (1990) formulations of language use as power and language resources as a composite of the three properties of form, function, and meaning, is especially valuable in two ways to policy analysis. First, such formulations about language resources provides a theoretical framework for acting on 25 years of advice by policy researchers to pay attention to language (e.g., Benveniste 1991; Smith 1992; Wallat & Piazza 1991). Second, advances in understanding the semantic and pragmatic aspects of oral and written communication are especially valuable in meeting the responsibilities of evaluators. At a minimum these responsibilities include awareness of particular applications of language in accomplishing everyday events, in accomplishing variable functions of the social sciences as academically institutionalized inquiry, and accomplishing variable functions of policy directed work in the contexts the researcher hopes to study (cf. Borich 1983). As Lakoff points out, "the trick for all of us is to grasp the generalizations, the larger picture. What is the connection between the form [function and meaning] of a communication and the power it provides its' user.... All language is political; and we all are, or had better become, politicians" (pp. ix, 2).

SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

The sections that follow deal largely with assertions about language resources by demonstrating the contributions of discourse process research to policy work. Section one sets the stage by presenting a 15 year compilation of policy analysis approaches in terms of their primary communicative functions. As elaborated upon in section two, the concept of functions of language is one of 9 key linguistic concepts that parallels the theoretical and practical interests of policy work. One purpose of the policy work compilation in Section one is to establish a connection to the intellectual traditions of the field and the movement in the social sciences to explore linguistic forms of social constructs. Demonstrating parallels between social practices and inquiry functions across disciplines is an untapped resource for individuals as they move towards the complex role of a full- scale policy scientist who is knowledgeable of the policy process and knowledgeable in the policy process (Lasswell 1970). An example of one scholar's move towards policy research points to the benefits found in becoming aware of types of discourse analysis available. Conquergood's (1991) work in international war zones and inner city Chicago led him to explore historically the disagreements that are part of the organization of social sciences' struggle with "deep epistemological, methodological, and ethical self-awareness" (p. 179). His identification and analysis of such parallels across the social sciences led to becoming reflective about the kinds of knowledge and their attendant discursive styles that get reconstituted and privileged in social science research propositions and research practices. "And, most importantly for critical theorists, what configuration of socio-political interest does a disciplines' scholarship serve" (p. 193).

Section one illustrates some first steps that can be taken to address some of the scrutiny issues that need further reflection in the latest wave of attempts to recalibrate research with a focus on social practices (cf., Cohen & Garet 1975; Rein 1983; Schubert 1980). The section includes an introduction to ten classical evaluation and policy analysis approach categories; it outlines discourse concepts for building a communicative framework for considering these categories in the remainder of the article. This section one outline serves as a strategy to organize references to fifteen years of educational evaluation and policy analysis studies that used these approaches and present concepts from research on discourse processes as a new way to think about evaluation and policy analysis. The policy research reports that are included as illustrations of the communicative functions of policy analysis were selected based upon two criteria. First, the authors of the reports included statements which referenced how they intended to build upon one of ten most frequently reported approaches in the American Educational Research Association's (AERA) policy journal which has recently completed its first 15 years of publication (i.e., Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis). The second criteria for review and selection of 46 early childhood policy reports was that the authors included elaboration of the functions and procedures of the approach they used.

The discussion of projects included in the fifteen year compilation highlights a point of convergence across the concerns of evaluators and policy analysts, development and discourse processes researchers, and critical theorists: the need to reconsider how social sciences research approaches are capable of serving the social-communicative function of expanding the classical conceptual and methodological focus on institutions and organizational goals to include individuals and their beliefs, interactions, interpretations, and alternative reactions and responses. Having related early childhood research with intellectual traditions in educational policy work as well as sociolinguistic work, section two suggests ways of enhancing this relationship. It reintroduces the nine communicative framework concepts that may help child, family and community researchers include attention to discourse processes as they keep abreast of new policy work and/or participate in evaluation and policy projects. From a communicative perspective, the framework supplies a central

motif for considering how the next generation of analysts from multiple fields of developmental study can draw more direct links to policy issues by: (a) learning to define policy work as a social event that serves communicative functions, and (b) learning to become methodologically multilingual through the use of metacommunication tools throughout the research cycle.

The third section illustrates how a communicative framework may be maintained in future evaluation and policy work by presenting a sample of procedural details from the research approach reports compiled in section one. The procedural details are offered as examples of the nine language and policy concepts--or metacommunication tools--introduced in section two. Following sociolinguistic analysis aims, the purpose of using these concepts to scrutinize and design policy studies is to keep ourselves and others appreciative that "language is not just something that shapes our understanding of the world, but also a tool by which we can discuss and evaluate these same understandings" (Nielsen 1995, p.11). We introduce and explicate the concepts in this article as a strategy to help the next cadre of development and policy researchers develop an initial assessment of the conditions of possible communication in the design and conduct their policy studies. Once such conditions are identified, it will be possible to address the larger issue of what we do with our research material and how we represent human action and context (cf., Grimshaw 1987; Popkewitz 1991; Risemann 1993; Wallat 1991a; 1991b).

LINKING EARLY CHILDHOOD RESEARCH, EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION AND POLICY ANALYSIS, AND LANGUAGE WORK

Early childhood research has a long history in the United States. Recent reviews acknowledge over 60 years of efforts by organizations such as the Society for Research in Child Development to contribute to the development of policies that influence the lives of children and their families (e.g., Stevenson & Siegel 1984; Wallat and Steele, 1997). One indication of how educational researchers have included consideration of early childhood evaluation and policy analysis can be found in the content of reports published in the first fifteen years of the AERA journal which was established to professionalize the subject of evaluation and policy analysis.

Tables 1 and 2 demonstrate that locating multiple functions of early childhood evaluation and policy analysis approaches is not difficult. The educational evaluation and policy analysis approach categories listed in Table 1 represent a compilation of over 130 policy reports which have been published since 1979 in EEPA. Matching the sample of articles to the labels used to flag ten approaches used by contributors to EEPA was quite straightforward: the approach type was often included in the title of the article, and / or the researchers included statements in their EEPA articles to introduce these generally known labels of the functions served by these approaches (cf. Stake 1981).

Authors of the evaluation and policy studies used to compile the numerical chart in Table 1 are identified in Table 2 along with the topic studied. Again, these references are organized according to the particular approach category the authors used to flag their project findings or approach discussion. Table 2 also identifies the authors of 46 evaluation and policy articles concerned with early childhood. To minimize the arbitrary nature of most categories used in compilations or reviews of reports, we relied on the emphasis each author presented in their article to decide about inclusion of reports into the approach categories labeled accountability, case study, discrepancy, ethnographic, experimental, illuminative, judicial, naturalistic, and responsive. If the author(s) gave attention to more than one approach, the article is cited more than once.

TABLE 1

Functional Targets of Analysis of Ten Approaches Used in Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis (cf, Stake, 1981b)

1.1. Collection of policy reports highlighting the following 10 discourse functions:

accountability	to assure laws, policies, rules, contracts, are honored
case study	to concentrate on a single case and its complexity
discrepancy	to emphasize formal objectives and their contrasts and impact
ethnographic	to emphasize cultural relationships
experimental	to report "controlled" treatments that aim toward assessment
expert opinion	to organize information around providing feedback for decisionmaking
illuminative	to portray situations as readers themselves may see things
judicial	to optimize presentation of the cases for and against
naturalistic	to observe ordinary events in natural settings
responsive	to fix on meanings and concerns held by key constituencies

1.2 Total Number of Approach Discussions/Examples

Approach	Number of Discussions of Approaches	Number of Early Childhood Discussions Reviewed (1979-1994)
accountability:	17	10
case study:	17	12
discrepancy:	5	3
ethnographic:	8	1
experimental:	11	9
expert opinion:	2	2
illuminative:	5	1
judicial:	9	5
naturalistic:	8	2
responsive:	5	1
TOTAL	87	46

TABLE 2

2.1 Authors Cited in the Review and Topics Covered In Articles

Approach	Authors	Topic
accountability:		
	Barnes & Ginsburg, 1979	Title 1

USING A DISCOURSE FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION AND POLICY ANALYSIS

Discourse concepts can be used by evaluators and policy analysts to enhance their profession's accomplishment of three tasks: (a) considering what gets defined and who does the defining, (b) contributing to qualitative insights, and (c) articulating variable interpretations of policy contexts and outcomes (cf. Lakoff & Johnson 1980; Gumperz 1982; Cronbach 1975). Policy researchers may find that the concepts are useful in day to day work on a variety of projects. For example, as individuals involved in a particular project begin to work with each other, they begin constituting events in the formulation, design, and conduct of a policy study. While some may consider such events as simply routine, discourse research provides insight into the resources individuals rely upon to define the situation and establish their work within participant structures, as well as insights into the social and cognitive processes embedded in the enactment of routines.

The nine concepts previously defined in Table 3 are used in discourse studies to identify and explain variation in functions, forms, and features of communication across home, community, business, school and other institutional settings. On a cautionary note, evaluators and policy analysts unfamiliar with sociolinguistics research may find that prior notions about language, social organization, or development interfere with their ability to understand these nine concepts. While public media and workshop brochures offer exhortations on a perceived decline of clear writing and speaking, discourse researchers provide representations of oral and written language in quite different terms. To capture the indefinite and precise features and resources of language, discourse researchers use descriptors such as inherent ambiguity (e.g., Crystal 1980); inherent indeterminacy (e.g., Dore and McDermott 1982); inherent variability (e.g., Hymes 1979); and inherent, inextricable links between the referential and social aspects of meaning in language (Erickson 1978). With these notions in mind, discourse researchers would tell an audience of policy researchers that even a hypothetical society of all standard language speakers and writers would show detectable variations in expectations about language fluency, expressiveness, and use of styles (cf. Becker 1988; Hymes 1979).

Individuals and social groups have constructed a variety of conventions to deal with the resource and constraint features of language. Such conventions are visible in individuals' and social groups' ideology and values regarding communication standards; what is considered "clear and precise" in one code may not be considered "clear and precise" in another's code of socialized correct conduct. Therefore, a key to understanding the organization of -- and social practices of -- oral and written discourse functions in a particular policy project is to learn how to become aware of the "rules" or conventions clients and audience have about the use of language. Hymes (1979) refers to this as undertaking observation of an organization of these means, roughly a "what" and a "how."

A key to the organization of language in a particular culture or period is restriction of free combination of "whats" and "hows," the things that must be said in certain ways, the ways that can be used only for certain things. The admissible relations comprise the admissible styles. In effect, the study of language is fundamentally a study of styles. (Hymes 1979, p. 8)

In other words, in order to begin to "see" the inherent characteristics of oral and written texts in operation, to "see" how situations, roles, and activities affect and shape ways of using language, we need to go beyond questions of rules of grammar, or rules of production, in the design of educational evaluation and policy analysis. Lasswell (1970)

anticipated this problem and advised policy researchers that their well established categories and neologisms in formulations of policy and society did not have to be dropped. "In the future [policy researchers] can re-edit [their] terms in ways that increase the interconvertability of jargon systems" (p.16). More recently the work of students of discourse systems have added further specifics to Lasswell's premises on thinking and talking about policy and society. What is required is awareness of the social meanings attached by individuals or groups to variations in oral and written styles and an awareness of individuals' or group attitudes or notions about language. The definitions in Table 3 are a beginning.

Functions of language. The question of how individuals communicate information and persuade others in actual situations is still far from being resolved. Some have observed that "it is not words which mean things but [individuals] who, by words, mean things; that a statement does not represent a fact but that [individuals], by a statement, mean facts" (DeMauro 1967, p. 2). Yet discourse researchers argue that finding answers to questions about how information and persuasion are used to create certain rhetorical effects and how they can be analyzed requires paying attention to how ordinary forms of communication are empty by themselves. "As in architecture, form is function, and is meaning as well" (Lakoff 1990, p. 27). They attempt to persuade human service professionals that it is possible to develop understanding of how day to day talk and writing is a composite of all these aspects. Lakoff (1990) recommends that we begin to think about what we read and hear from the vantage point of a schema/frame she refers to as a three-sided triangle. She uses the concept of schema/frame in terms of its usefulness as a metacommunication tool; the metaphor "three sided triangle" can guide our observations about how functions of language are a reflection of beliefs about speaking and writing in the policy contexts we are studying. For example, if we are conducting an "accountability" study, we need to become aware of the meanings that the contract monitors as well as intended informants and report audiences associate with the abstract concept "accountability." Lakoff's suggestion of focusing on a three-sided triangle is a reminder to ask ourselves, How are the forms of language related to the uses we and others make of them? (p. 6). Hymes' (1972) contends that such questions provide a primer for observing pluralism in day to day actions. People who know the same sounds, words, and syntax may not know [other individuals'] rules for interpreting [such sounds, words, and syntax] as requests or commands; [as signals] for the topics that can be introduced ...; [as signals] for taking turns and getting the floor; for making allusions; avoiding insults, showing respect and self-respect in choice of words, etc. (Hymes 1972, p. xxxviii). Mutual understanding depends as much upon common linguistic means, in the narrow sense, but also on being aware that reaching understanding involves negotiation about how those who want "more communication" reach agreement about ways of using and interpreting speech.

The point both Lakoff and Hymes make about linguistic means is that speakers and writers already have resources they can use to begin to analyze these facets of public discourses more precisely. Policy research critics such as Garnet and Cohen (1975), House (1979a), and Sadler (1985), argue that educational policy researchers might pay attention to the repertoire of choices speaking, listening, writing, and reading communication resources comprise. To date discourse researchers have illustrated how variation in form can begin to be thought about through considering a relatively few general categories of functions of language (i.e., getting things done; controlling the behavior of others; telling about oneself; using forms of personal expression and social interaction; finding out about things; communicating something for the information of others; and, relating to contexts of use as speaker, listener, writer, and reader) (cf. Wallat 1984, p. 24-25). Essentially, those who speak and write for public audiences are attempting to solve the problem of creating what

discourse researchers refer to as the 'textual' function, whereby [oral and written] language becomes text, is related to itself and to its context of use. Without the textual component of meaning, we should be unable to make any use of language at all. (Halliday 1973, p. 44)

Halliday's (1973) definition of functions of language in Table 3 is essentially a proposal to adopt a functional viewpoint and, thereby gain ideas about how "meaning is related both to the internal structure of language and to the social contexts in which language operates" (p.8). Functionally the choice of a word or phrase "may have one meaning, its repetition another and its location in structure yet another" (p. 109). More specifically, there is a professional development benefit which is derived from awareness of the functions and formats of special languages or codes across participant structures; it is an appreciation of the multiple resources which results from the variations possible in both oral and written discourse forms, and the resources we can use to meet the myriad demands made on participants' communicative competence (cf. Cazden 1986, p. 437).

Language per se is ambiguous. Discourse researchers have presented some interesting examples of miscommunication that can be traced to the ambiguity of language. Of particular interest to readers interested in further considering Popkewitz' conclusion about the conditions necessary for long lasting contributions that linking development and policy research can make to academic disciplines (see Perspective section above), are studies that build upon the definition of "ambiguous" in Table 3. For example, a study at the Center for the Study of Writing (University of California, Berkeley) illustrated how educational policy analysts can create opportunities to analyze a large number of different reform policies aimed at inducing change by targeting major components of the instructional methods that are at the core of schooling (i.e., assignments, tests, grades, distribution criteria). Fillore and O'Connor (1986) combined knowledge gained from decades of policy research on schools as social systems and cultural systems resistant to change, with decades of language research discussions on how prevailing instructional assessment frameworks can be approached in terms of calls for socially responsible testing and assessment in a culturally pluralistic society. They demonstrated language ambiguity by illustrating the various ways students justify their choices for answers on reading and writing tests. Following Chafe's (1977), Florio's and Shultz' (1979) investigations of production and comprehension from the conceptual vantage point of language per se is ambiguous, Filmore and O'Conner's direction for policy studies of instructional assessment pointed out that there are differences in how individuals choose to make summarizing statements about the same topics. Among the choices identified to date are: (a) begin by summarizing an event and then giving details, or (b) build up details and then present the summary at the end (Filmore and O'Conner 1986). These discourse forms--or arrangements of sentences--are just another way of demonstrating and illustrating Freedle's (1980) compilation of findings across ethnographic studies of language use: first, that language forms are necessarily incomplete in specifying the full intentions of writers and speakers and so individuals choose schemas to help guide their selection for an answer; and, second, that language per se is ambiguous and so to comprehend an oral and written text individuals must necessarily initiate some interpretative frames to fill in needed information.

In other words, the concept of language per se is ambiguous is a schema/frame that is useful as a metacommunication tool for answering what must the next generation of policy analysts consider ... what can they strive to do in order to: (a) realize that what is not said is as important as what is said, (b) recognize the importance of ambiguity for creating choices or options, and (c) recognize the evolving nature of meaning, perhaps by considering Lakoff's image of a three-sided triangle.

Interpretative frames. The Table 3 glossary defines interpretative frames visible in and across functions of language. The definition is presented along with two questions to

guide discovery of what is visible in and across functions of language that will be encountered in the social contexts policy researchers target for data gathering. The demonstrate that the concept of interpretative frames can be effectively used to develop inquiry statements for studying communication and change across the time frame of educational evaluation and policy analysis projects (cf. Freedle 1980; Hymes 1979; Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz 1982). This goal, of course, sounds quite ambitious. However, identifying and using language and policy concepts in research essentially involves making explicit the discourse resources we all have. For example, the chances of becoming explicitly aware of the idea of interpretative frame (and linking this concept to professional actions) seems particularly optimistic given the fact that educational policy researchers have had experience in using this language resource. One observation in research utilization literature is that different consequences can be anticipated from an author's use of academic, bureaucratic, or legal features of language (cf. Wallat & Piazza 1991). For many, these implicit understandings of the construction of meaning, and meaning in context, undergird their choice of specific discourse devices to persuade, inform, proclaim, or develop an argument. In other words, the conventions used to help make intent and meaning connections in the audiences' mind essentially adds up to constructing an interpretative frame.

This brief illustration of interpretative frame shows that intelligibility, or dealing with ambiguity, is not contingent upon finding an illusive set of "perfectly clear words" to connect intent and meaning. Rather the constraints and contingencies individuals take into account in constructing an interactive frame are the resources used to help disambiguate the authors' or speakers' intent (cf. Gumperz 1982a, 1982b; Wallat & Piazza 1991; Grimshaw 1987).

Schema/frames. Discourse theory and research address the consequences of background and other interactive experiences apparent during particular institutional routines in educational, health, and social services. Notions of knowledge structure and interpretation have been the object of study for a long time, and recent formulations of the concepts of frame and schema try to capture cognitive and socio-cultural dimensions of variations in and across contexts. For example, a recent attempt to answer how can we study comprehensive services for children and families built on the definition of schema/frames presented in Table 3. The idea of static schemas as personal understandings, relationships, values, goals, and interests held by individuals (in this case professionals and parents schemas about education and health, and what an educational and medical service should or can do to deal with educational or health matters) was combined with the idea of interpretative frames to investigate the ways in which activities conducted and actions taken in a comprehensive services identified and dealt with ambiguity and a mosaic of schemas (cf. Tannen & Wallat 1993).

Participant structure. There are several possible ways to arrange silence or articulation of multiple schemas and interpretative frames within the basic framework of verbal and nonverbal communication use in public life, including attempts to plan and deliver comprehensive services. Philips (1993) refers to these arrangements as "participant structure." These structural arrangements of discourse may fall into many different categories. In one type of participant structure one individual may address the entire group, or the talk may flow as if first - come - first - served reporting turns were being taken. Other participant structure arrangements include attention focused on one-to-one encounters between individuals, or attention focused on specific materials.

Studies of participant structures have identified an extensive set of context cues and strategies individuals use to constitute participant structures. At the same time such studies point to the use of a variety of meanings or interpretations for these context cues by both the

researchers conducting the study and those participating in the project. Understandings of variant features of language use have led to new descriptions of the most common ways people verbally or nonverbally acknowledge and incorporate, or fail to incorporate or ratify, speakers utterances in and across participant structures (cf. Wallat 1984). Identifying and considering these cues and strategies can provide understandings of the links between the enactment of a particular policy and the participant structures in use during a project.

Construction of social norms. Giving recognition to identifying and considering the social and cognitive processes related to presenting information and group problem solving across participant structures centers on recognition of individuals as interpreters of their world(s) and as sources of influence on others. Based on this conceptualization, and in light of research on participant structures, the concept of construction of social and cognitive norms as process is proposed in discourse studies to contrast the view of norms as a discrete set of rules inculcated into passive participants (Wallat & Green 1982). As the definition in Table 3 points out, individuals must negotiate a complex system of arbitrary norms and rules within the forms of communication in today's social institutions. Norms and rules are arbitrary in the sense that definitions of the meanings of social situations, and situations in which not all rules and expectations are clearly stated, are evolving. Research analysis of social groups have added to the growing appreciation of norms of discourse as rules which can be modified, checked, suspended, terminated, and recommenced. These variable "correctness" rules for written discourse can be added to our understanding of variable "correctness" rules about speech: when to speak, how to speak (i.e., what gestures, movements, intonation, stress, and pitch features should be used), how to get a turn, how to digress from a topic appropriately, and to whom messages should be addressed. In order to establish and maintain social interaction, the participants must have agreed upon signals for beginning and ending a single social occasion. Therefore, the problem facing those concerned with identifying variable social norms or sociolinguistic rules for knowing when to speak is to capture the elements of a group's system of signaling coordination conventions including not only verbal statements but the participant's gestures in relation to objects or other persons in the environment (cf. Wallat & Green 1982, p. 101, 118).

Enactment of routines. One routine interpretation task that flows from attempts to construct social norms through changes in policy is the placement of children, youth, and adults in a host of human service programs (Szanton 1995). The way in which such everyday decisions are reached (or how information regarding these decisions is distributed in institutional settings), cannot be described simply by adding a few more factors to a comprehensive services model or to a model of social operation. Mehan's (1984) explication of the concept of enactment of routines defined in Table 3 suggests several possibilities for advancing our knowledge of an organization's functions in relation to changes in policy. The use of this concept in educational policy studies could help us consider how policy can be understood less as a set of "acts," "choices," and searches for "reasons" and "motives" and more as end results or consequences of variation in functions of language, interpretative frames and participants structures. Such study can stem from two interests. The first interest, as introduced above, is conceptual; to redefine production of policy reports as both an analytical and political opportunity for identifying certain social practices as symbolic of frames, participant structures and language functions that can signal to policy researchers possible interpretations held by individuals about policy objectives, choices and consequences. The second interest, also implied above, is practical. The next generation of policy researchers can be the benefactors of advances in understanding the advances in understanding the benefits and constraints of variations in our ideologies about language use as evident in the enactment of routines. The science of linguistics has been tied to investigating ideology through its concern with discovering and describing units of linguistic

form; structures or patterns in which such forms are defined and situated; and the roles or functions that these units or forms serve in these structures (Fillmore 1985). The idea of a place for discussion about forms and functions is generally referred to as practical knowledge or metacommunication. The concept of enactment of routines, in combination with other concepts included in Table 3, fills in some of the detail of Popkewitz's (1991) and Conquergood's (1991) argument of the need to develop social epistemology as a legitimate art of inquiry, and Bailey's (1979) admonishment that educational policy researchers have simply got to learn something about rhetoric and style.

Style shifts. One basis for understanding participant structures and enactment of routines is semantics: How do people communicate and interpret meaning in everyday action and conversation? Each person's decisions about which communication strategies to apply across different situations results in her/his characteristic style (e.g., That style, then, is made up of a range on the continuum: the particular degree of camaraderie or deference in response to the situation, the people participating, the subject at hand, and so on). "Each person's notion of what strategy is appropriate to apply is influenced by a combination of family background and other interactive experience" (Tannen 1984, p. 14).

In terms of written discourse, we can arrive at new qualitative insights and new notions about our own and our colleagues' extensive communicative competence through the consideration of multiple definitions of style found in the literature, and the multiple approaches which have been created for understanding patterns established in a spoken or written text and the functions of the text.

Communicative competence. Studies of communicative competence have helped to widen the lens of both theory and research on what components of communication resources (besides grammatical diversity, stylistic resources and options, and interpretative processes) are essential in everyday life. It is generally accepted empirically, for example, that outsiders who enter a new demographic or professional scene have to ask "What's happening here?" and may have to adapt or shift linguistic codes in order for their policy project to be considered appropriate. Gumperz (1982a; 1982b) has discussed the theoretical and practical aspects of entry and access as "establishing a successfully negotiated frame of reference." He illustrates this concept through reports of what is going on across multiple bureaucratic, business, and judicial contexts. In each of these policy study related investigations, the researchers efforts at locating the overall institutional frame of reference began with time and effort spent on reaching agreement with informants on what activity both parties believed was being enacted. As Gumperz points out, outsiders who enter a new demographic or professional scene have generally learned a new code at the level of lexicon, and this knowledge will be sufficient for the instrumental contacts that fill up much of their project working day. But situations of persuasion, involving the ability to explain, describe, or narrate, are often difficult to manage. Here breakdowns tend to lead to mutual stereotyping and pejorative evaluations. To be sure not all problems of inter [group] contact are communicative in nature. Economic factors, differences in goals and aspirations, as well as other historical and cultural factors may be at issue. (Gumperz 1982c, p. 331)

But there is reason to suspect that a significant number of communication breakdowns may be due to the failure to establish a successfully negotiated frame of interpretation. This neglect of variation in individual and social styles has been identified in studies of: participant structure differences across contexts (e.g., Green 1983; Cazden 1986); interactive frames and knowledge structure schemas across contexts (e.g., Tannen & Wallat 1993); and characteristics of dozens of visible information cues (or what sociolinguists refer to as contextualization cues), that have been illuminated in a range of communicative contexts (cf., Wallat 1984). According to studies of language in public life designed and conducted by Professor John Gumperz (1982a; 1982b), breakdowns can be traced to a lack

of time and effort spent by the researchers and informants on reaching agreement on what activity is being enacted and how it is conducted.

Distinctions among such activities as chatting, discussing, and lecturing exist in all cultures, but each culture has its own constraints not only on content but also on the ways in which particular activities are carried out and signaled. Even within a culture, what one person would identify as 'lecturing' another might interpret as 'chatting with one's child.'... Since speech activities are realized in action and since their identification is a function of ethnic and communicative background, special problems arise in modern society where people have widely varying communicative and cultural backgrounds. How can we be certain that our interpretation of what activity is being signaled is the same as the activity that the interlocutor has in mind, if our communicative backgrounds are not identical? (Gumperz 1982a, p. 166-167)

SECTION TWO SUMMARY

The illustrative definitions included in Table 3 provide an overview of basic concepts researchers have identified, defined, and used in applying sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, conversational analysis and ethnography of communication methods in studies of educational issues (e.g., Briggs 1986; Erickson 1975; Gumperz and Cook-Gumperz 1982; Gumperz & Hymes 1972; Mishler 1986). More importantly, perhaps, Table 3 illustrates social constructs that provide a rationale and framework for investigating how oral and written discourses actually work across institutional settings. This set of key concepts may also begin to help those interested in educational policy issues become sensitive to observing, rather than taking for granted, communicative actions throughout a project. They are offered not for the sake of detailed analysis of oral and written phenomena in the sites and activities encompassed by a project, but because they may shed light upon the perennial problem of accounting for the variety of ways in which oral and written communicative behavior is organized in interaction in different situations.

The final section provides an elaboration of the idea that researchers and policy makers often have different "definitions of a situation." Using the concepts presented in Table 3 we discuss the particular functions served by two approaches to early childhood education and policy analysis. The choice of these two approaches was based on the data presented in Table 1, that is to consider two approaches which appeared the most often in EEPA during the fifteen year review period reported in here.

USING A COMMUNICATIVE FRAMEWORK: AN APPLICATION ACROSS TWO EXAMPLES OF POLICY REPORT FUNCTIONS

Throughout the first fifteen years of EEPA's publication, contributors have suggested a need to develop a conceptual framework that takes into account variations in perspectives and meanings held by clients and audience. (cf. Bolland & Bolland 1984; Borich 1983; Felter 1986; Hayman, Rayder, Stenner & Madley 1979; Hood 1985; House 1979a, 1979b; Kelly 1980; Kenny 1982; Lynch 1983; Maxwell 1984; Page 1979; Sadler 1985; Shapiro 1985; Stake 1981; Stufflebeam & Webster 1980; Williams 1986; Wortman 1982). We turn now to showing how the communication concepts discussed can be specifically applied to the various policy approaches identified in EEPA. We use two examples, accountability and case study.

Descriptions of ACCOUNTABILITY projects range from cost- benefit studies for

monitoring the use of funds (Kean & Scanlon 1979; House 1979b; Warfield 1994); to projects aimed at meeting technical requirements such as computing percentages and setting cutoff scores (Nations 1982; Smith 1982); to developing systems for keeping records of attendance, expenditures, and test scores in order to disseminate evaluation results, identify exemplary programs, or find the simplest way to meet state and federal requirements (Barnes & Ginsburg 1979; David 1981; Dougherty 1979; Nations 1982; vanderPloeg 1982); to projects concerned with providing constituents with an accurate accounting of results (Stufflebeam & Webster 1980), or a demonstration of "the responsiveness and the political responsibility of public school institutions" (Cohen, 1979 p.59). Additional indicators that accountability is an evolving social invention in evaluation approaches include its role in justifying action(s) or serving as the *raison d'etre* for protracted negotiation at Congressional and agency levels (Benveniste 1985; Cross 1979; House 1979b; Stonehill and Grover 1983).

When asked why this burgeoning of educational evaluation has occurred since 1970, Gorwin and Green (1980) answered that the phenomenon arose and developed itself out of a process of extended legislative authority that required something called an evaluation. In contrast (i.e., in an academic rather than a political interpretive frame), Stufflebeam and Webster (1980), answered the same question by suggesting that the extension of evaluation into accountability studies was the result of the pioneering efforts of Lessinger in his 1970 book *Every Kid A Winner: Accountability in Education*.

Development and policy research readers have the opportunity to make up their own minds as to whether the developments in accountability functions are due to specific legislative acts or specific academic accomplishments, or whether they result from countless face-to-face encounters involving evaluation at Congressional, Federal agency, State agency, and local levels. At least eight policy researchers who report on accountability developments in early childhood provide close up views of how accountability provisions are created and modified across these levels. Each provides a unique contextual interpretation of what actually goes on across policy arenas (Barnes and Ginsberg 1979; Cross 1979; House 1979a; Marshall, Mitchell & Wirt 1986; Sacken & Medina 1990; Slavin & Madden 1991; Stonehill and Grover 1983; vanderPloeg 1982; Wells & Peterson 1992; Wirt, Mitchell & Marshall 1988). Overall, when reading the discussion of procedures in accountability articles in volumes one through sixteen, one discovers new understandings of the many facets of communicative processes that enhance or diminish compliance and the impact of law. As Kaufman (1984) has noted, those who are attempting to deal with questions of law must contend with all the drama, confusion, failure, and achievement that constitutes interpreting the meaning and purposes of a particular statute.

Several concepts from communication theory and research may be particularly useful for educational researchers in dealing with the paradox of law - that law never is, but is always about to be realized when embodied in a judgment. The concept of INTERPRETATIVE FRAMES is particularly useful since its purpose is to help explain variations in participants' judgments in the interpretation of discourses. This concept also helps focus such accountability research tasks as how to deal with multiple interpretation processes that individuals may use to frame their understanding of the relation of law to action. Not only would it be possible to consider new indicators of policy terms such as "impact", but the adoption of an analytical stance that includes interpretative frame and STYLE OPTIONS/ SHIFTS would help researchers account for the language related tasks all accountability projects now only implicitly are able to include in project cost estimates: (a) constructing an understanding of the contours and contexts in which a legal point arose, (b) constructing an understanding of the complex interplay of language and intent, and (c) constructing an understanding of the complex strands of thought that individuals use in relation to law in action (cf. Wallat 1987).

Concepts such as FRAMES/SCHEMA could add a discourse perspective starting point to educational evaluation accountability approaches to determining whether particular policies were in fact accomplishing specific objectives of a law. For example, mandates for collaboration have been included in policy since the mid-1980's. The contribution of a communicative framework to determining the consequences of collaboration on the forms of communication which take place between providers, and between providers and clients, has been demonstrated. Research that includes the concepts of "frames" to refer to the anthropological/sociological notion of interactive frames of interpretation, and "schema" to refer to the psychological/artificial intelligence notion of knowledge schemas, have been included in the design of studies of family and child development centers (Tannen & Wallat 1993). Findings from such studies suggest that overlapping, competing, and possibly conflicting frames are inherent in the structure of parent/professional interaction in particular and communication in general. These are forces at work that can at times create problems in the best of all possible educational, health, or social worlds.

Perhaps the clearest example of how educational policy study discourse functions have been created, modified, expanded, or transformed during the past fifteen years is the variety of meanings of the term accountability legislation. In 1980, Kirst and Jung pointed out that one largely overlooked issue in policy research is knowing "how to extract knowledge from the information we already have" (p. 31). In their example of how attention can be focused in policy work, knowledge is equated with a survey of the language of policy documents, including relevant statutes and subsequent amendments, original regulations and subsequent modifications, audit checklists on compliance reports, legislature hearings, and public documents that detail key sequences of events. Such documentary analysis provides a means of developing a manageable data scope for tracing changes in a legal framework over time. Some of the reasons why accountability evaluation enables tracing changes in initial legislation and affiliated legal documents, or enables detecting shifts in objectives and priorities, are simply due to the FUNCTIONS OF legal language; legal writers attempts to deal with the AMBIGUOUS nature of language, and the CONSTRUCTION OF NORMS for the STYLE of judicial discourse. As Kirst and Jung point out, statutes often are formulated with deliberately obfuscated language to broaden political support for legislation:

Winning coalitions are often held together by the adhesive of ambiguous language which successfully masks unresolved differences among competing interest groups and legislators. Statutes are as heavily laced with symbolic rhetoric as they are replete with allocative formulae and regulatory prescriptions.... Therefore, in order to detect shifts in objectives and priorities, it is also necessary to closely analyze those documents which, in essence, operationalize the symbolic import characteristics of most statutes. These include regulations, mandatory and explanatory criteria, guidelines, technical assistance packages, audit check lists, application forms, evaluation mechanisms, and complaint resolution processes. (Kirst & Jung 1980,p.29)

Development and policy researchers who need to analyze legal documents are reminded that the functions served by legal style features (use of archaic words, infusion of ordinary words such as "real property" with specific legal meaning, use of embedded clauses) require one to shift gears in the frame of reference or schema they use in reading. The function of legal language is "to allow one expert to register information for scrutiny by another" in contrast to the function of other texts one may read (such as plans for an organized activity for children and their families) (Crystal & Davy 1969, p 193).

CASE STUDY projects reported in EEPA also provide clear examples of how an

approach is affected by new creations, modifications, expansions and transformations of the meanings of its functions. Researchers such as Bissell (1979), Monti (1979), Mercurio (1979), Kirst and Jung (1980), Porter (1983), and Mazzoni and Clugston (1987), have formulated arguments regarding the usefulness of identifying how variable strategies of administration enable a new policy to be introduced into a school district's routines while change is avoided; how field study techniques used in case studies could provide a sense of expanding dimensions of citizen involvement mandated in a variety of compensatory education programs; how case studies can be useful for identifying the language of state-wide reform efforts and policy enactment variables and mapping relations among these variables; and, how use of an interactionist perspective in doing case studies would result in documentation of different interpretations of an education innovation rather than reporting one "correct" interpretation or description.

Other researchers who have written about case study have tried to detail some common communicative elements in data collection procedures (e.g., primarily interview based), some common problems to expect in any attempt to achieve a comparative analysis of situations or sites (Alkin and Daillak 1979; Sadler 1985), some general format/style categories to use in writing up case studies (Barnette 1983) and some possibilities for how a case study evaluation of evaluations conducted over a ten or thirteen year period could pull together alternative views and identify new indicators of impact without the cost of collecting new data (St. Pierre 1982; Kirst and Jung 1980).

A central issue of the case study is what it means to describe a process. It is almost a platitude to say that the meaning of a process depends upon its context, or whatever factors or curriculum content in the learning environment the research directs attention to. Researchers concerned with understanding variability across sites and cases all agree that determining processes, or what is meant at any one point in time, depends upon finding empirical methods capable of determining the extent to which underlying knowledge and behavioral norms are shared (cf. Gumperz 1982a). Their experiences with discourse analysis methodologies suggest that "all participants must be able to fit individual contributions into some overall theme roughly corresponding to a culturally identifiable activity, or a combination of these, and agree on relevant behavioral norms" (Gumperz 1982a, p. 163). This idea, or the concepts of PARTICIPANT STRUCTURE, CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIAL NORMS, and ENACTMENT OF ROUTINES seems particularly useful for helping focus case study researchers on the value of drawing on comparative data on the ordinary parts of a school's work day: on what school personnel do, how much they do, and how they produce forms of social organization and thereby construct such recognizable characteristics as not solving a problem, marking something as problematic, or bringing to public notice what everyone knew anyway. In other words, with adoption of a communicative framework, case study policy researchers can contribute to understandings of what adopting an educational schema/frame actually means as an observable, interactional feature of daily public life (cf. Anderson, Hughes, and Sharrock 1987).

These researchers' work suggests that an individual enacting a case study discourse function essentially follows a communicative policy-analysis model by focusing detailed attention on a limited number of policy questions that have salience across locations and settings. Among the questions early childhood evaluators and policy researchers have addressed are : How does the community and staff react to and/or perceive a policy such as the California reforms which focused on elementary mathematics? (Ball 1990; Cohen 1990; Peterson 1990). Case studies of the California attempt to create substantial change in instruction to foster deeper understanding of mathematics and to improve students' capacity to reason mathematically revealed the complexity of teachers interpretative frames on mathematics learning. They also exposed the tangled influences of policy and the difficulties

inherent in communicating the California Mathematics Curriculum Framework policy.

SECTION THREE SUMMARY

Those who attempt to practice using concepts such as FUNCTIONS OF LANGUAGE, LANGUAGE PER SE IS AMBIGUOUS, INTERPRETATIVE FRAMES, SCHEMA/ FRAMES, PARTICIPANT STRUCTURES, CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIAL NORMS, ENACTMENT OF ROUTINES, STYLE OPTIONS/ SHIFTS will find that the case studies of the California reforms as well as recent case studies of Title 1/Chapter One (C. de Baca, Rinaldi, Billig, & Kinneson 1991; Winfield 1991) lend themselves to thinking about the multiple examples of the language resources individuals use in public life. Use of these concepts may also bring to mind the value of new evaluation and policy analysis which addresses questions such as: What sort of preparations can be made in a school under legal mandate? What does the policy look like in practice across multiple interactions? What type of curriculum is in use, and what, if any, changes can be made in it? What type of policy do parents and teachers really want? How much time are they willing to give to deal with consequences which can be traced to the use of everyday language?

As demonstrated in the accountability and case study studies published in the first fifteen years of publication of one educational evaluation and policy studies journal, multiple references to communication activities are made within these approaches. The illustration of language and policy concepts in the review of the discourse function of accountability and case study evaluation and policy analysis suggest that development and policy researchers can act on advice to learn more about participation processes; participants' points of view and definitions of situation; and ambiguous features of language in policy documents, in evolving social structures, and in different value perspectives (cf. Cousins and Earl 1992). In effect these evaluation and policy research concerns, and the set of concepts included in the communicative framework presented, describe a venue that can be undertaken through further consideration of the relationship between language and policy by a new generation of "methodologically multilingual" professions.

FINAL THOUGHTS FOR PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER: THE CASE FOR LINKING DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY RESEARCH

As illustrated in propositions such as "a reinvestment cycle," the issues at stake in child and family policy go well beyond understanding established technical criteria for defining the kind of academic information which can be provided and the cognitive features measured (cf. Oakes 1989). To persuade the U.S. public that infancy, preschool, early education and other services for children and families are effective, professionals have been called upon since the early 1980's to expand their research into the complexities of linking development and public policy issues (Datta 1983, p. 144).

The point of this article has been that the major challenge for the next generation of development and policy researchers is to be well versed in the social-communicative functions served by available approaches in educational evaluation and policy analysis, methodologically multilingual in using the forms of multiple approaches with consumer and policy audiences, and capable of articulating variable interpretations of educational outcomes.

To help set solutions to this challenge, this article suggested how studies of language and policy can help policy researchers do two things: (a) consider evaluation and policy analysis approaches as social inventions that serve a range of communicative functions, and

(b) consider the link between child and family development research and policy analysis and discourse literature through use of a set of communicative concepts that provide the foundation for meeting the demand for a participatory policy discourse, including insiders accounts of events, objects and actions.

End Notes

1. See Conquergood (1991) for review of contributions to explicating these concepts which are included in "boundary" perspectives across studies .
2. Many attempts have been made to classify research questions into propositions defined as the varieties of linkage between determinants and results, e.g., ZETTERBERG, H.L. (1965) *On theory and verification in sociology*. (Totowa, NJ: The Bedminster Press), or, following Aristotle, as classes of predicates that might be formed about educational research and educational policy research in particular (e.g., DILLON, J. T. (1984) "The classification of research questions". *Review of Educational Research*, 54 (3), pp. 327 - 361; SMITH, N. L. & MUKHERJEE, P. (1994) "Classifying research questions addresses in evaluation studies". *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 16 (2), pp. 223 - 230). For examples of propositions within a language perspective see : SILVERMAN, D. & TORODE, B. (1980) *The material word: Some theories of language and its limits*. (Boston : Routledge & Kegan Paul); GOODENOUGH, W. H. (1990) "Evolution of the human capacity for beliefs". *American Anthropologist*, 92 (3), pp. 597 - 612.
3. Identification of benefits such as increases in school success, employability, and self-esteem; returns of \$4.75 in lowering costs of special education for \$1.00 investment in preschool; decreases in the \$3000 cost of repeating a grade; and savings of \$1560 per disabled pupil because of early education intervention, have been associated with Congressional members endorsement of programs designed for children from birth through the first few years of elementary school as "Opportunities for Success" (Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families 1985, Washington, D.C.).

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