

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

MATRICULATION SERVICES REFORM AND LANGUAGE MINORITY
STUDENTS IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES

A Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the Doctor of Education Degree in Educational Leadership

by

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my parents, Theresa Mena and Fred Mena, and to my brother, Frederick Mena.

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Table of Contents

Copyright ii

Signature Page iii

Dedication iv

Acknowledgements v

Abstract ix

Chapter 1: Introduction 1

 Problem Statement 5

 Purpose and Significance of Study 6

 Research Questions 8

 Operational Definitions 8

 Theoretical Framework 9

 Overview of Methodology 11

 Limitations 12

 Delimitations 12

 Organization of the Dissertation 12

Chapter 2: Literature Review 14

 Introduction 14

 Educational Context and Student Population 14

 Majority/Minority Languages 17

 Status of English 18

 Matriculation Services 19

System-wide and Statewide Initiatives	30
Conceptual Framework.....	32
Summary.....	37
Chapter 3: Methodology	38
Research Design.....	38
Research Strategy.....	39
Methodological Heuristics	40
Research Setting.....	42
Site Selection and Access	42
Sample and Data Sources.....	43
Instruments and Procedures	44
Data Collection Procedures.....	45
Data Analysis	45
Roles of the Researcher	47
Summary.....	49
Chapter 4: Data Analysis	50
Collected Data Types	51
Data Groupings	55
Analysis and Findings.....	57
Section I. Document Review	62
Section II. Interview/Transcript Analysis and Document Analysis.....	82
Section III- Interview/Transcript Analysis/Document Analysis.....	94
Unifying Data Themes	102

Summary of Findings.....	105
Section I findings.....	106
Section II findings.....	106
Section III findings.....	107
Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions.....	109
Overview of the Study	109
Implications from Study Findings	116
Recommendations for Future Research	119
Concluding Statement.....	121
References.....	123
Appendix A—Research Announcement and Research Invitation.....	135
Appendix B— Informed Consent Form	136
Appendix C— Interview Protocol for Administrators.....	140
Interview Protocol for Community College Administrators	140
Appendix D— Interview Protocol for Faculty	144
Interview Protocol for Community College Faculty	144
Appendix E— Interview Protocol Staff.....	148
Interview Protocol for Community College Staff.....	148
Appendix F—List of Documents Analyzed	150

ABSTRACT

MATRICULATION SERVICES REFORM AND LANGUAGE-MINORITY STUDENTS IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES

by

Gregory Mena

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This dissertation study examined matriculation policy goals, current practices and reform efforts in a large community college in Southern California using a qualitative design and case study approach. This study employed the concept of language acquisition planning from the field of Language Policy and Planning (LPP). The study findings revealed three unifying themes: (a) that language minority issues were not central to any contemporary reform efforts, (b) that few changes were made to direct services for students despite reform efforts, and (c) that community colleges were operating under a developing framework for serving language minority students. The implications this study has for California community colleges serving language minority students are discussed. Study implications suggest an increased focus on *institutionally guided assessment* practices, a thorough review of campus assessment testing policies and the development of a new matriculation/curriculum framework to better serve the educational needs of language minority students.

Chapter 1: Introduction

California's K-16 public education system has a major challenge in addressing the needs of current and future language minority students. Language minority students are defined as "students from households where a language other than English is regularly spoken" (Rumberger, 2005, p. 1). In California, students who come from such households often face myriad challenges navigating the public education system at all levels and require specific support in order to be academically successful. The linguistic characteristics of students entering the California Community Colleges (CCC) system increasingly include language minority students.

Although there are "currently no statewide data available on the number of students in community colleges who speak home languages other than English" (Bunch, 2008, p. 2), some researchers have estimated that students from immigrant and language minority backgrounds collectively represent over 25% of the 2.5 million CCC student population (Woodlief, Thomas, & Orozco, 2003, as cited in Llosa & Bunch, 2011). The data from K-12 show a clear trend away from English-only students. This indicates that the CCC system needs to prepare for a steady change in student demographics. Between 1986-1987 and 2003-2004, the enrollment of language minority students in California's public schools increased 120%, or six times as fast as the 19% increase in enrollment of English-only students (Rumberger, 2005). Language minority students comprise nearly 40% of all K-12 students in California (Boroch et al., 2007). The majority (79%) of English learners speak Spanish (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010) with great register variation used across different social contexts Sánchez-Muñoz (2009). The top five languages used

by immigrants nationally are “Spanish, Vietnamese, Hmong, Chinese (Cantonese), and Korean” (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010, p. 8).

In terms of race and ethnicity, Latino and Asian student school enrollment is projected to increase through 2013-14, while Black and White student enrollment is projected to decrease during that same period (Rumberger, 2005). These racial, ethnic, and linguistic trends at the K-12 level have implications for long-term CCC system educational planning. One can reasonably infer that many of the language-minority students in the K-12 system will eventually be admitted and matriculated in California’s public higher education system—including the CCC system. The CCC system is very accessible and does not have a competitive admissions policy.

By law, the California Community Colleges are required to admit any California resident who graduated from high school, and may admit those who have not graduated but are over 18 years of age and can benefit from the instruction offered. The community colleges may also admit any nonresident possessing a high school diploma or the equivalent. (California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC), 2010, p. 9)

The liberal and open admissions policy only increases the importance of matriculation planning and services. Matriculation is an array of services that are carried out at the beginning of a student’s educational career. Matriculation is generally defined as “a process that brings a college and a student who enrolls for credit into an agreement for the purpose of realizing the student’s educational objectives through the college’s established program, policies, and requirements” (Seymour-Campbell Matriculation Act, as cited in Scott-Skillman & Halliday, 1991, p. 5). According to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) (2012a) the goals of matriculation are:

to ensure that all students complete their college courses, persist to the next academic term, and achieve their educational objectives through the assistance of the student-direct components of the matriculation process: admissions, orientation, assessment and testing, counseling, and student follow-up. (p. 1)

How do students, including language minority students, fare in the California community college system once they are admitted and matriculated in California's community college system? Recent research has provided disappointing evidence. Using the lens of racial/ethnic minorities, Moore and Shulock (2010a) studied more than a quarter of a million students who began their educational careers in 2003-2004 in the CCC system and found very low completion and transfer rates. They found that, 6 years after enrolling, 70% of degree-seeking students had not completed a certificate or degree, and had not transferred to a university (Moore & Shulock, 2010a). Interestingly, they did find variability in the success of minority students when they compared colleges of similar size and student demographics—which suggests that some colleges have found ways to be more effective (Moore & Shulock, 2010a).

However, when the same researchers focused on the largest community college district in the state, the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD), they did not find variability in completion rates across the nine campuses in that district. The outcomes for underrepresented minorities were “uniformly poor” (Moore & Shulock, 2010b). Aside from ascertaining long-term system-wide completion rates, Moore and Shulock (2010b) found “clearly identified patterns that, if followed, give students a better chance of completing their academic programs” (p. 8).

Moore and Shulock (2010a) found that students had a better chance of completing their academic programs if they (a) passed college-level English and mathematics within two years and (b) accumulated at least 20 credits in their first year. Only 31% of LACCD

students passed at least one college-level English course within two years (Moore & Shulock, 2010b). These findings underscore the importance of students gaining momentum through acquiring credits early in their academic careers as well as completing a college-level English course as soon as possible.

Complex curriculum sequences or “levels” that precede college-level English courses have been documented in the literature. Results from a system-wide survey (Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, 2008) revealed that over 54% of campuses reported having four or more course levels in English as a Second Language (ESL), about 29% of the colleges reported four or more levels of reading, and 23% of the colleges reported four or more levels of developmental writing classes. Having to take several subcollege level courses prior to college-level English was described by researchers as an unsuccessful pattern with consequences for student completion. The differences between following and not following successful patterns were described as extreme by Moore and Shulock (2012b). They found that only 42% of students who passed college-level English completed their academic programs within 2 years, and only 17% of students who did not pass college-level English within 2 years completed their academic programs (Moore & Shulock, 2012b).

Given the findings about successful Community College course-taking patterns (Moore & Shulock, 2012a) and the data on the number of levels of developmental and ESL courses prior to college-level English (Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, 2008), researchers have argued that the matriculation process is a high-stakes matter because “misplacement can have a profound negative impact” on student achievement (Bunch & Panayotova, 2008, p. 9). The results of the matriculation

process might result in a student either enrolling in a course developed for monolingual English speakers or enrolling in a sequence of courses that could significantly delay their progress in credit-bearing English courses and academic content (Bunch & Panayotova, 2008). The challenge for the community colleges is to develop a model for the education of language minority students which is responsive to language needs without sacrificing momentum in academic content areas.

Problem Statement

Bunch (2008) summarized it best by stating: “there is a striking lack of statewide information regarding language minority students in California community colleges and little agreement surrounding how to respond to their language development needs” (p. 2). There is a pressing need for analysis, expertise, and empirical research dedicated to understanding language minority student populations in the community college system in order to realign matriculation services to meet the needs of this heretofore neglected population.

Within the last 5 years, researchers have shed light on many of the weaknesses of current policies and practices related to matriculation services for language minority students. Researchers have found (a) a lack of data sharing and articulation between K-12 and the CCC systems (Bunch, 2008), (b) confusion and disagreement about classification terminology (Benesch, 2008; Bunch, Endris, Panayotova, Romero, & Llosa, 2011), (c) lack of agreement about what constitutes academic literacy/English (Bunch, 2009), (d) lack of consistent and comprehensive information available to students about the high stakes of testing, instructional options and placement practices (Bunch et al., 2011), (e) placement into an either/or academic program (ESL or English)

which may not meet the needs of all language minority students (Bunch & Panayotova, 2008), and (f) inconsistent operationalization of language proficiency among the most commonly used assessment instruments in the CCC system (Llosa & Bunch, 2011).

The current model of matriculation services (CCCCO, 2013) does not adequately serve the new linguistic diversity recently documented by researchers, and is in need of reform in order to promote student success and to improve completion rates. I propose that studying matriculation services in policy and in practice through empirical research will shed light on how to proceed with transformational change at the campus level, the district level and the system level.

Fortunately, the literature reflects a recent spate of studies focused on the language minority students in the CCC system. In addition to the recent attention to language minority student issues there have also been large-scale initiatives within the CCC system, which include professional development efforts to improve student success, and recently enacted legislation ostensibly developed to also increase student completion rates. Indeed, it is a dynamic research, administrative, and policy context, which will hopefully usher in much needed attention and reform. The review of the literature in chapter 2 includes a detailed description of the empirical research, statewide reform initiatives and legislation aimed at improving the success of language minority students.

Purpose and Significance of Study

The justification of this study lies in its attempt to describe current policy and practice related to language minority matriculation services, to develop a description of current matriculation services practices for language minority students, and to glean insight into the effectiveness of recent reform efforts and plans. Ultimately, the goal of

this study is to facilitate the development of an effective empirically-based future model of systemic reform for language minority students, an underserved population.

The purpose of this study is to learn how a linguistically diverse community college campus carries out matriculation services for language minority students—in policy and in practice. More specifically, this study will (a) document the policy context that envelopes the campus context, (b) describe how matriculation services for language minority students are carried out in the research setting, and (c) ascertain which components of matriculation services, if any, are undergoing change. This study will analyze policies, practices and reform efforts related to language minority students in a particular research setting as a pathway to insight for reform.

Understanding the policy context will shed light on the number, goals, and origins of codified policies/plans at the campus level and their relationship to district and state level policies. This will provide insight into how policies re-enforce or reshape the current model of providing matriculation services for language minority students. The study has significance in that understanding how services are actually carried out—either in harmony with or in contrast to codified policy/plans—will help community colleges evaluate each component of the matriculation process. In this study, the entire process from classification to identification, to assessment, and to-placement will be analyzed, and thus will provide a precursor for making informed decisions about reform.

Finally, it is anticipated that the process of describing the policies and practices in the research setting will shed light on the components of the process that are currently undergoing change. Therefore, it is essential to understand the effectiveness of recent professional initiatives, legislation, and research on systemic reform. Furthermore,

understanding which components of matriculation services are currently undergoing reform, might help reveal (a) which parts of model are most resistant to reform and (b) the nature of the alignment between each component in the array of matriculation services.

Research Questions

The literature on the language minority student population in the CCC system has documented the growth of the language minority student population and the challenges associated with improving completion rates. However, pathways for improvement are not as clear. To that end, the following research questions will be explored in this qualitative inquiry:

1. What are the goals of the codified policies and plans that shape matriculation services for language minority students in the research setting?
2. Within the research setting, how are matriculation services for language minority students carried out in practice?
3. Due to reform efforts in California Community Colleges, how are matriculation services for language minority students undergoing policy or practice changes in the research setting?

Operational Definitions

Throughout this dissertation, the term language minority students will be used to include all of the following classifications of students: international students, recent and/or older immigrants, and the so-called “generation 1.5” or US-educated Language Minority (USLM) students (Bunch et al., 2011). See the review of the literature in

chapter 2 of this dissertation for the challenges associated with developing an accurate and acceptable classification system.

For the purpose of this dissertation, matriculation services will include the classification, identification, assessment, and placement of language minority students in the community college context. Identification will include the process of matching students to an established de facto or de jure classification system. For example, Boroch et al. (2007) found that many community colleges in California used self-identification as the primary tool for identifying “ESL learners.” There is no official system of classification for language minority students in the CCC system as there is in the state’s K-12 schools (Bunch et al., 2011). Assessment will include the commonly described institutional processes including but not limited to test selection, establishment of cut scores, testing, and the use of non-tests to gather information about students for placement purposes. Lastly, placement will include the process of using test and non-test measures to make decisions about placement within the established curriculum. These understandings will be drawn upon throughout this study.

Theoretical Framework

The primary conceptual framework that informs this dissertation is the study of language acquisition planning within the field of Language Policy and Planning (LPP). LPP is the most commonly used acronym for the field although the following acronyms are found in the literature as well: Language Policy (LP) or Language Planning and Language Policy (LPLP). Acquisition planning is “teaching and other educational activities designed to increase the users or uses of a language” (Johnson & Ricento, 2013, p. 11). This study applies the concept to the education of language minority students in

the CCC system. This framework will allow for analysis of matriculation services as a collection of language acquisition processes carried out by campus stakeholders. It is proposed that CCC stakeholders engage in language acquisition planning by developing policy and practices for language minority students to learn English—the type of English necessary for the purpose of meeting educational goals. See Scarcella (2003) for a key paper on the nature of academic English, which includes discussion of competing views of academic literacy, or refer to Scarcella (2008) for a summary of terms related to academic English.

When viewed with this lens, all of the components of matriculation services (i.e., assessment and placement) play a role in the language acquisition planning by the institution (community college campus). A common notion from the field of LPP is that language policy functions in a complex ecological relationship among a wide range of linguistic and non-linguistic elements, variables, and factors (Spolsky, 2005). The LPP framework recognizes that language planning is not something simply imposed by governing bodies (Johnson & Ricento, 2013). The LPP framework combines the macro and the micro and offers a balance between policy power and interpretative agency (Johnson & Ricento, 2013). This framework allows for the discussion of many potential issues in the community college context that might affect reform efforts concerning the education of language minority students.

Spolsky, a veteran theorist in language and linguistics, has provided an economical way of thinking about language policy. He theorized that language policy is composed of (a) language practices, (b) language beliefs/ideology, and (c) the explicit policies/plans developed by management (Spolsky, 2005). Spolsky continued by stating

that language policy operates within any definable speech community of whatever size. Within the context of this study, the LPP framework will also be helpful in elucidating any differences between codified policy/plans and the language practices documented in a research setting with a defined speech community, i.e., a community college campus.

Overview of Methodology

In order to understand the subtleties of the how language minority students are served in the community college context, a qualitative case study informed by heuristics from the field of LPP will be used. This qualitative research approach will help uncover the emic view—the “insider's or native's perspective of reality” (Mathison, 2005), of community college personnel and help reveal the nuances of policies and practices that may not currently be explicit.

The data collection included two main data types: texts and interview transcripts. Codified policies and published planning documents were collected for analysis. Analyzing these texts shed light on the assumptions, expectations, and beliefs about language minority students and their needs. Research was conducted in a large community college located in Southern California. The research setting was characterized as having a large number of language minority students.

Interviews were conducted with nine community college personnel (including administrators, faculty, counselors, and staff) to learn about language practices and any changes to policy and/or practices. Conducting such interviews made visible how students are admitted, assessed, advised, and placed within the research setting. Analysis of documents, descriptions of current language practice as well as reforms will enable

discussion of the reform efforts that are taking place through a variety channels in the CCC system.

Limitations

The main limitation in using a case study approach is that the results may not be completely applicable to other community college campuses. Linguistic demographics vary greatly across the state of California; for example, some campuses may have more international students and little to no generation 1.5/US-LM students.

However, there will always be some common policy threads for campuses that have any number of language minority students since all campuses within the CCC system are subject to the same California laws and CCC system policies. Furthermore, this study will provide an exemplary research and interpretive model for other community colleges struggling to reform practices related to the identification, assessment and placement of language minority students.

Delimitations

The study was conducted on the campus of a large community college. The issues addressed in this study are similar to but also different from those faced by children enrolled in the K-12 school system. See Gándara and Hopkins (2010) for discussion of the challenges facing K-12 English learners nationally. Refer to Hakuta (2011) for a narrative that covers more than three decades of research activity on the elementary/secondary sector and details “the landscape of policy, politics, and the education of language minority students in the United States” (p. 1).

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter 2 of this dissertation will provide a review of relevant policy and empirical-based scholarly work that will be drawn upon in the study. The second chapter will describe in detail the challenges faced by the CCC personnel in classifying, identifying, assessing, and placing language minority students into the ESL and/or developmental curriculum sequences. The second chapter will also discuss relevant statewide reform initiatives and recently passed statewide legislation aimed at improving language minority students' success. Chapter 2 will also provide an explanation and justification for the choice of conceptual framework.

Chapter 3 will present a detailed explanation of the research methodology to be utilized in the study. In the chapter, the connections between the research questions and the particular research methodology will be made explicit. Moreover, the data collection process and data collection instruments to be used will be described. Chapter 4 will provide the findings of the dissertation as they relate to the research questions postulated. Chapter 5 will include a discussion, conclusions, and recommendations for future research and practices concerning the educational issues examined. In conducting this dissertation research, it is anticipated that this study will yield actionable and practical insights into improving policy and practices for language minority students.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

This dissertation will explore how matriculation services for language minority students are codified and practiced at the campus level in the CCC system. The review of the literature begins by setting the boundaries of the educational context and population of this study. The review of the research related to matriculation services at the California will be covered. This chapter will also briefly review major initiatives and legislation that might have had an effect on the policy and practices of CCC campuses. The chapter will conclude with the introduction of a conceptual framework that provides a lens for data collection, analysis and interpretation.

To summarize, this chapter will: (a) describe the educational context in which the data are collected; (b) review the recent scholarly work on matriculation services in the CCC system (organized into the subthemes of definition/classification, identification, assessment and placement); (c) summarize recent state-wide initiatives and legislation developed to improve student outcomes; and (d) introduce the Language Policy and Planning (LPP) conceptual framework guiding the methodology in chapter 3 of this dissertation.

Educational Context and Student Population

The educational context for this dissertation is the CCC system, and in particular, the administration of services for language minority students in the CCC system. This dissertation does not focus on K-12 language minority students or language minority students enrolled in the California State University (CSU), the University of California (UC), or private colleges within the state. Furthermore, the context for this study is one

part of California's three-tiered higher education system—the California Community College system.

The Regents of the UC and the State Board of Education developed the California Master Plan for Higher Education, which was passed in 1960 as the Donahoe Act (UC, Office of the President, 2011). At that time, the California Master Plan for Higher Education defined the respective missions of a three-tiered system. The California Community College (CCC) system was then given the following mission—separate and distinct from the CSU or UC—as specified in Title 5§ 66010.4:

(1) The California Community Colleges shall, as a primary mission, offer academic and vocational instruction at the lower division level for both younger and older students, including those persons returning to school. Public community colleges shall offer instruction through but not beyond the second year of college. These institutions may grant the associate in arts and the associate in science degree.

(2) In addition to the primary mission of academic and vocational instruction, the community colleges shall offer instruction and courses to achieve all of the following:

(A) The provision of remedial instruction for those in need of it and, in conjunction with the school districts, instruction in English as a second language, adult noncredit instruction, and support services which help students succeed at the postsecondary level are reaffirmed and supported as essential and important functions of the community colleges.

(B) The provision of adult noncredit education curricula in areas defined as being in the state's interest is an essential and important function of the community colleges.

(C) The provision of community services courses and programs is an authorized function of the community colleges so long as their provision is compatible with an institution's ability to meet its obligations in its primary missions.

(3) A primary mission of the California Community Colleges is to advance California's economic growth and global competitiveness through education, training, and services that contribute to continuous work force improvement.

(4) The community colleges may conduct to the extent that state funding is provided, institutional research concerning student learning and retention as is needed to facilitate their educational missions.

Over time, the state of California added other responsibilities including “targeted workforce development” (EdSource, 2012, p. 1). The CCC system currently offers a wide array of programming including:

- Two-year associate degrees in a variety of fields and subjects.
- Transfer courses—which sometimes lead to an associate degree—that prepare students to transfer to bachelor's degree programs at four-year universities.
- Certificate programs in the arts, sciences, occupational, and technical fields prepare students for careers in graphic arts, nursing, bookkeeping, firefighting, auto mechanics, and computer technology, to name a few.
- Continuing education courses that offer adults opportunities to enrich their lives or change careers.
- Remedial (or basic skills) courses to support those who arrive unprepared for college-level work or simply need additional math and English skills for their jobs or personal lives.
- English language and citizenship exam–preparation courses that help immigrants integrate into society.
- Other programs allow students to earn college credit while still enrolled in high school. (EdSource, 2012a).

At the state-level, the CCC system is governed by “a 17-member Board of Governors” appointed by the Governor; the “Board of Governors sets policy for the CCC system as a whole” and “appoints the CCC chancellor, who manages the system with board approval” (EdSource, 2012a). There are over seventy districts that have locally elected boards (EdSource, 2012a). The district boards’ responsibilities include approving budgets, “establishing policies for planning and operations, approving courses and programs, establishing personnel policies, and hiring the district’s chief executive

officer” (EdSource, 2012a). The CCC carries out its missions on a grand scale; it enrolls more than 2.9 million students annually (California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, 2012a).

Majority/Minority Languages

The term “language minority” originated from the U.S. Census (Anstrom, 1996). The current study concerns language minority students in the CCC context and not language *majority* students. The Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA) defined a majority language as “a language spoken by the majority of people in a given regional or national context, for example, English in the U.S., Spanish in Spain, Japanese in Japan” and a minority language is defined as a “a language other than the one spoken by the majority of people in a given regional or national context, for example, Spanish in the U.S., Basque in Spain . . . ” (University of Minnesota, 2012, p.1). Minority refers to a quantitative aspect only.

The majority of people in California speak English, according to U.S. census data collected between 2006 to 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). For the purpose of this dissertation, a language minority student is defined as (a) a native speaker of the minority language in the context and (b) a community college student. Language minority students are those students *other than* monolingual native English speakers. When this study refers to language minority students it refers to the “prolonged contact of ethnic groups within a modern nation-state or policy” which usually results in the outcomes of language maintenance, bilingualism or language shift (Paulston & Heidemann, 2005, p. 294).

It should be noted that there are other perspectives from which to study language diversity in the community colleges. See critical language-policy (CLP) for an approach that “acknowledges that policies often create and sustain various forms of social inequity, and that policy makers usually promote the interests of dominant social groups” (Tollefson, 2005, p. 42). See Toffelson (2005) for a review of the key concepts from CLP which “seeks to uncover the explicit and implicit policies contributing to hegemony” (p. 48).

Status of English

English is the basic language of instruction of the California Community College system by law:

English shall be the basic language of instruction in all schools. The governing board of any school district, or community college district, and any private school may determine when and under what circumstances instruction may be given bilingually. It is the policy of the state to insure the mastery of English by all pupils in the schools; provided that bilingual instruction may be offered in those situations when such instruction is educationally advantageous to the pupils. (California Education Code, Section 30)

Additionally, Proposition 63 declared English the official language of California when it was passed by a margin of 73% to 27% in 1986 (Dyste, 1989). Finally, it is important to note that the definition of language minority students given here does not distinguish between immigrants, nonimmigrants, citizens, or noncitizens. Although these issues are intimately related to the subject matter of this dissertation, immigration and citizenship status are not specifically being studied as factors.

There is no official language in the United States of America. The “U.S. Constitution says nothing about language (though it asserts freedom of speech in the First Amendment)” (Spolsky, 2011, p. 1).

Matriculation Services

Matriculation services includes (a) terminology (b) classification, (c) identification, (d) assessment, (e) placement, and (f) counseling/student follow-up of language minority students in the community college context. Within this dissertation study, the focus of matriculation services was on terminology, classification, identification, and assessment in order to closely investigate students' first contact with matriculation services at the research site. Each of these concepts will be articulated in order to facilitate understanding regarding key elements being examined throughout this research. Each component of the process is important as well as the relationship or alignment between each component in the process.

Terminology.

Bunch et al. (2011) provided a useful breakdown of three different types of speakers of languages other than English: international students, recent and/or older immigrants, and generation 1.5/US-Educated Language minority students. Bunch et al. (2011) acknowledged that their groupings represented an oversimplification and that there was variation within these categories. However, these groupings provide a useful overview of the student populations that community colleges serve—even though they are not presented as an operational classification system.

International students. International community college students are characterized as (a) having received strong education in a home country, (b) having studied English as a foreign language in a formal classroom setting, (c) possibly having little experience with English in a naturalistic setting, (d) often knowing formal English

grammar rules, (e) generally performing well on tests of English grammar and usage, and (f) having strong academic skills (Bunch et al., 2011, p. 5)

Recent and/or older immigrants. Recent and/or older immigrants are characterized as having: (a) widely varying quality and levels of K-12 education in home countries, (b) limited formal study of English, (c) some experience with basic grammar, vocabulary and “survival” English, (d) a wide range of oral skills depending on length of time in the US and integration into English-speaking communities, and (e) a wide range of academic language and literacy skills in first languages depending on the quality of and level of education completed before immigrating to the U.S.

Generation 1.5/U.S.-educated Language Minority (USLM). The terms Generation 1.5 and “US-educated Language Minority” (USLM) students are used in the literature to describe the same student population. Use of the term generation 1.5 has been around for decades and has roots in sociology (Rumbaut & Imma, 1988). The term US-LM was recently developed to supplant the use of term generation 1.5.

Generation 1.5 students. They are “often the first in their families to attend high school and to pursue a college education, these ‘Generation 1.5’ students share characteristics of both first- and second-generation immigrants but do not completely fit the profile of either group” (Bunch & Panayotova, 2008, p. 7). The logic of this description is that in terms of generations, the terms “first generation” and “second generation” do not suffice. Generation 1.5 students, then, are somewhere in between the first and the second generation continuum.

In the following long quote from an oft-cited study of language minority students writing in a university setting (Harklau, Losey, & Siegal, 1999), the “generational” aspect of this term includes a sketch of linguistic and literacy traits:

Generation 1.5 students are U.S.-educated English language learners. There is great diversity among them in terms of their prior educational experience, native and English language proficiency, language dominance, and academic literacy. Some of these students immigrated to the United States while they were in elementary school; others arrived during high school. Still others were born in this country but grew up speaking a language other than English at home. They may see themselves as bilingual, but English may be the only language in which they have academic preparation or in which they can read and write. At the same time, these students may not feel that they have a full command of English, having grown up speaking another language at home or in their community. Equipped with social skills in English, generation 1.5 students often appear in conversation to be native English speakers. However, they are usually less skilled in the academic language associated with school achievement, especially in the area of writing. Academic writing requires familiarity with complex linguistic structures and rhetorical styles that are not typically used in everyday social interactions. One of the most common traits among generation 1.5 students is limited or no literacy in the first language. (p. 1)

Generation 1.5 students

have lost or are in the process of losing their home languages without having learned their writing systems or academic registers. Unlike international students, generation 1.5 students lack a basis of comparison in fully developed oral, written, or both systems of a first language. (Thonus, 2003, as cited in Harklau et al., 1999, p. 1)

The construct of Generation 1.5 students as a distinct group of students with their own educational needs appears to have gained acceptance in the high school and postsecondary literature. Refer to Roberge, Siegal, and Harklau (2009) for an example of a pedagogical issues for teachers of generation 1.5 students, see Forrest (2006) for example of a high school literacy program developed to meet the needs of generation 1.5 students, and finally consult Miele (2003) for a description of community college success program developed “in response to the members of Generation 1.5” (p. 1).

Although there is evidence in the literature that the construct of Generation 1.5 students has been embraced by researchers, faculty, and administrators, that does not mean that the term itself has been accepted without criticism. Bunch and Panayotova (2008) argued that “although the Generation 1.5 construct could theoretically be used to emphasize the strengths and resources that students from bilingual and bicultural backgrounds bring to the classroom, the term is instead often used to emphasize students’ linguistic deficits” (p. 10). Benesch (2008) conducted a critical discourse analysis of the scholarly literature on Generation 1.5 students. Benesch identified discourses of demographic, linguistic and academic “partiality” in her analysis, and concluded that the ideology of the scholarly literature reflects a “monolingual/monocultural” set of assumptions that has the effect of constructing generation 1.5 students as the “Other” (p. 294).

Because of the criticism of the term Generation 1.5, some leading researchers on language minority students in the community colleges have decided against using the term Generation 1.5 (Bunch et al., 2011).

U.S.-educated Language Minority students (USLM). Bunch et al. (2011) explained that

due to the tendency for the term Generation 1.5 to be used to highlight students’ linguistic deficits instead of resources and potential, we prefer to use *US-educated language minority students* (US-LM students) to describe students who were raised in homes where English was not the dominant language, who have attended US high schools, and whose English at the community college level is considered “suspect” by faculty, staff, or assessment measure. (p. 2)

I prefer the term US-LM students over the term generation 1.5, and therefore, will use it throughout the remainder of this dissertation. The US-LM definition only refers to students' educational history whereas Generation 1.5 references students' position in an historical acculturation process. US-LM references educational attainment and educational experience—which are more relevant to a students' matriculation process than generational status. Generation 1.5 issues will be further elaborated in chapter 5 of this dissertation study in order to address some of the solutions to critiques leveled by researchers.

Classification.

The uses of the above terms and definitions varies across California's community college districts and campuses because there is no official classification system as there is in the K-12 system (Bunch et al., 2011). The absence of a formal system is therefore replaced by de facto classification systems developed at each campus.

A related problem to the absence of a widely accepted classification system is the use of institutional labels as a means to classify students. Researchers of postsecondary language minority students have pointed out that the use of institutional labels is often conflated in the literature with the names for educational services, and that these labels can be stigmatizing for students (Oropeza, Varghese, & Kanno, 2010). For example, community college personnel may refer to students as "ESL students"—after the name of an academic program, "English as a Second Language"—rather than use a system of classification that is descriptive and does not reference an academic program. Other researchers have delved beyond institutional labels to uncover negative language attitudes

toward non-dominant languages such as Spanish in some contexts (Achugar and Pessoa, 2009; Wolford, and Carter, 2010).

Using critical race theory framework and using a qualitative approach, Oropeza et al. (2010) focused on the experiences of four linguistic minority students enrolled at a four-year university. They found that institutional “labels and categories influence not only how the students are viewed but also the specific services that are made available to them”(p. 229). In the case of the present study, this finding signals the need to uncover and to analyze the institutional labels (in policy or in practice) that are used to classify language minority students. The use of descriptors or institutional labels may affect matriculation services, and ultimately, student success.

There appears to be general disagreement about how to classify and define nonnative English speakers in the community college context; this suggests that such a system is currently undergoing a painful process of development. There is currently no scholarly consensus and no consensus in practice. The absence of an agreed-upon system of a descriptive and non-stigmatizing classification system of language minority students signals that matriculation services for language minority students have not been developed, as a whole, on a solid foundation.

Identification.

Identification is defined in this study as the process of matching students to an established de facto or de jure classification system. Since the community college system does not have a codified classification system for language minority students (Bunch, 2011), we look to recent empirical research for evidence of how students are matched to a de facto classification system.

When entering as new students, “one of the first questions that language minority students face upon engaging in the matriculation process is whether they should take the college’s regular English placement test or its ESL exam” (Bunch et al., 2011, p. 18). Bunch and Panayotova (2008) conducted interviews and completed a document analysis of assessment and placement materials published by sixteen community colleges in Northern California. They found that community colleges used student self-identification as the primary means of identification and that students were matched to an either-or classification system of “ESL” or “English.”

Bunch and Panayotova (2008) uncovered many different strategies used by students to self-identify as “ESL” or “English”. Some colleges asked students to self-identify based on their history of English usage, while other colleges asked students to use their understanding of the relative strengths of their first and second languages. Bunch and Panayotova (2008) cited a memorable example of one college that provided incoming students with a short quiz as a guide to self-identification:

One college asks a series of questions and directs students who answer “no” to at least two of them to take the ESL test:

1. Is English the first language you learned as a child?
2. Did you complete at least six years of education, including high school, in schools where ALL your subjects were taught in English?
3. Do you usually speak English with your friends and/or co-workers? (p. 21)

All of these approaches emphasized self-categorization into “ESL” or “English” as opposed to other evidence-based ways of identifying students. Bunch and Panayotova (2008) found that

none of the 16 colleges mentioned language designations students had been assigned in high school, scores on the CELDT, or any other K-12 assessment data

as information to be considered in recommending to students whether they should take the ESL or regular English test. (p. 22)

These findings shed light on the students' own decision-making in the identification process and on how decisions made by students alone or with minimal guidance might have long-lasting effects on their educational careers. The findings from this study suggested that there is likely to be wild variability across the CCC system as a whole, since they found variation in self-identification practices within their sample of 16 campuses out of 112 campuses in the system.

To summarize, the findings of Bunch and Panayotova (2008) highlighted the existence of a dichotomous ESL/English classification system, the reliance on student self-identification as a classification system, and the variation of self-identification practices used by a small sample of campuses within the system. When looked at as one part of an array of matriculation services—in addition to confusion about terminology and the lack of an agreed upon classification system—identification was just another weak link in the chain.

Assessment.

The definition of the word assessment has several meanings in the context of higher education. The meaning of assessment employed in this dissertation follows the usage of Hughes and Scott-Clayton (2011) in their working paper on developmental assessment; for the purposes of this study, it means “the assessment of incoming students for determining developmental or college-level placements” (p. 3). In a report prepared for the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and supported by an advisory board of leading researchers in the field, Llosa and Bunch (2011) focused on the most commonly used ESL and English placement tests used in California's community colleges. Llosa

and Bunch (2011) reviewed the *constructs* and *characteristics* of the placement exams in order to understand the construct validity and test authenticity, respectively. They studied whether or not the test scores provided meaningful interpretations and results relevant to the targeted language use in question.

In their analysis of the most commonly used ESL placement tests, Llosa and Bunch (2011) found that the Combined English Language Skills Assessment (CELSA), COMPASS ESL, and ACCUPLACER ESL all operationalized language proficiency differently, thereby privileging certain aspects of English language proficiency over others. In their analysis of the most common English placement tests, Llosa and Bunch (2011) found that the COMPASS, ACCUPLACER, and College Test for English Placement (CTEP) all operationalized grammar differently and tended to focus on “advanced grammar involving sentence structure, rhetorical skills and sentence logic” (p. 19). In comparing the ESL placement tests and the English placements tests to each other Llosa and Bunch (2011) summarized their findings as follows:

Broadly, the ESL and the English placement tests reflect different constructions of language proficiency. Although both the ESL and English batteries assess reading, grammar, and writing, only the ESL batteries assess listening. The ESL tests define language ability more discretely whereas the English tests measure more contextual uses of language. For the skills assessed in both batteries, the main difference lies in the range of language ability levels targeted by the items. (p. 22)

They concluded that placement tests, aside from their variability in constructs and characteristics, only measured a very narrow portion of students’ linguistic abilities (Llosa & Bunch, 2011). They critiqued the test companies for not providing descriptions of the intended target groups for tests or evidence that their tests were appropriate for targeted groups of students (Llosa and Bunch, 2011). In the end, given the problems of

inconsistent validity, authenticity and scope, they suggested that a series of courses or some other as yet developed solution might be preferable to assessment tests—especially for generation 1.5./USLM students whose linguistic characteristics have yet to be fully defined in the literature (Llosa & Bunch, 2011).

The findings from this study (Llosa & Bunch, 2011) indicated that there is still a strong need for a reformed and integrated matriculation services model which can bring consistency, validity, and authenticity to the CCC system. There is also a need for a matriculation services model that can account for all of the linguistic diversity of the student body.

Placement.

Placement is defined as the process of using test and non-test information to make decisions about placement within the established curriculum. Some of the major issues in matriculation services are the fairness of practices for placing students into the curriculum and the number of measures used to place students into the curriculum.

In 1986, the Seymour-Campbell Matriculation Act specifically addressed the needs of the community college system and the use of assessment instruments in the placement process:

(a) No district or college may use any assessment instrument for the purposes of this article without the authorization of the Board of Governors. The Board of Governors may adopt a list of authorized assessment instruments pursuant to the policies and procedures developed pursuant to this section and the intent of this article. The Board of Governors may waive this requirement as to any assessment instrument pending evaluation.

(b) The Board of Governors shall review all assessment instruments to ensure that they meet all of the following requirements:

(1) Assessment instruments shall be sensitive to cultural and language differences between students.

(2) Assessment instruments shall be used as an advisory tool to assist students in the selection of an educational program.

(3) Assessment instruments shall not be used to exclude students from admission to community colleges. (California Education Code, §78213 [a]-[c])

The wording that assured equality was specified in Title 5§78211:

(a) Ensure equal education opportunity for all Californians.

(b) Ensure that students receive the educational services necessary to optimize their opportunities for success.

(c) Provide students with the information to establish realistic educational goals, and ensure that the matriculation process does not exclude students from receiving appropriate educational services at community colleges.

In 1988 the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) filed a lawsuit, *Romero-Frias, et al. v. Mertes, et al.*, which contended that outdated assessments in the CCC system, used in lieu of full matriculation services, had the effect of tracking Latino students into required remedial coursework that prevented full participation in the transfer curriculum (Perry, Bahr, Rosin, & Woodward, 2010). After 3 years, the California Community Colleges settled with MALDEF and made a commitment to improve matriculation services through legislation. The CCC settlement response was summarized in the following way:

These included intended revisions to Title 5 regulations regarding the validation of prerequisites, assessment using multiple measures, and students' right to challenge a prerequisite. In its response, MALDEF noted its particular concern that no test be used "for any purpose other than advisory counseling unless the test is from the Chancellor's approved list of instruments and the test has been locally normed and validated." (Brown & Romero, 1991, cited in Perry et al., p. 7.)

This outcome has therefore shaped and still influences matriculation services in the CCC system. There is no mandated remedial placement after assessment, multiple

measures are required, and a student has the right to challenge prerequisites. However, although this is the legal obligation, the practice at the campus level varies largely due to lack of the resources necessary to fully implement a full array of matriculation services (Bunch & Panayotova, 2008)

System-wide and Statewide Initiatives

Barr and Schuetz (2008) argued that “learning how to accommodate the reality of underprepared students is a strategy that community colleges must embrace and explore at the institution level if there are to be any significant shifts in student outcomes” (p. 8). The CCC has implemented some large-scale efforts to improve matriculation services across the system. This study will attempt to find evidence of change as a result of these initiatives.

Basic Skills Initiative.

The Basic Skills Initiative (BSI) was a grant-funded initiative from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO), which began in 2006 as part of the strategic planning process (CCCCO, 2009a, 2009b). The goal of the BSI was to improve student access and success through allocating supplemental funding that would specifically address basic skills needs and providing professional development for faculty and staff in basic skills, and English as a Second Language (ESL) (CCCCO, 2009a, 2009b).

Basic skills are those foundation skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and English as a Second Language, as well as learning skills and study skills, that are necessary for students to succeed in college-level work (Boroch et al., 2007). According to the Research and Planning Group for the California Community Colleges (2005), more

than one of every three students in California Community Colleges enrolls in a basic skills class, and the proportion of students enrolling is ever-increasing . However, the one of the most important outcomes of the BSI related to research is the ongoing efforts to improve system-wide data reporting and collection with regard to basic skills. It will be interesting to find out how any such efforts have unfolded in the research context with respect to the components of matriculation services.

Student Success Task Force.

In January 2011, the

California Community Colleges Board of Governors embarked on a 12-month strategic planning process to improve student success. Pursuant to Senate Bill 1143 (Chapter 409, Statutes of 2010), the Board of Governors created the Student Success Task Force. The resulting 20-member Task Force was composed of a diverse group of community college leaders, faculty, students, researchers, staff, and external stakeholders. (CCCCO, 2012b, p. 9)

The Task Force defined student success using the following metrics: (a) percentage of community college students completing their educational goals, (b) percentage of community college students, (c) percentage or number earning a certificate or degree, transferring, or achieving transfer-readiness, (d) percentage or number of students transferring to a 4-year institution, and (e) number of degrees and certificates earned (CCCCO, 2012c).

Their final report made eight general recommendations for overall improvement of student success in the system, and two of those recommendations were transformed into statewide legislation—the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012. The Student Success Act, which supersedes the aforementioned Seymour-Campbell Matriculation Act of 1986, was signed into law during the summer of 2012 (Seymour-

Campbell Student Success Act, 2012). The earliest implementation for the bill would be March 2013 (CCCCO, 2012a).

There are several parts of this bill that would have a major impact on matriculation services for the entire CCC system; the bill

targets funding on core matriculation services and prioritizes the use of Student Success Act funds for the following: orientation services, common assessment and educational planning services upon enrollment, development of education plans leading to a program of study and guidance on course selection. [The Student Success Act of 2012] specifies that once the BOG adopts a system of common assessment, districts and colleges may use supplemental assessments or other measures for placement. As a condition of receipt of funds, requires districts to implement common assessment and student success scorecard, once these are established by the BOG. (CCCCO, 2012b, p. 1).

This bill has direct consequence for matriculation services for language minority students since there is potential to develop more consistency and reformed assessment measures.

Conceptual Framework

In addition to the separating language policy into types and approaches, Language Policy researchers have contributed other helpful concepts: language ecology, codified policy, language practices, and language beliefs/ideology.

A common notion from the field of LPP is that language policy functions in a complex ecological relationship among a wide range of linguistic and non-linguistic elements, variables, and factors (Spolsky, 2005). The LPP framework recognizes that language planning is not something simply imposed by governing bodies but rather that it is negotiated by discourse and social processes (Hornberger & Johnson, 2007).

The guiding conceptual framework for this dissertation is drawn from the theoretical perspectives of Language Policy and Planning—also known interchangeably in the literature as simply Language Policy. The two terms will be used interchangeably

in this dissertation. Language policy is an inquiry situated in the field of Applied Linguistics; see Ricento (2005) for an introductory text and Tollefson (2002) for a volume dedicated to language policy issues in the context of education in particular.

Johnson and Ricento (2013) categorized the development of Language Planning and Policy (LPP) in three phases: (a) early phase, (b) intermediary phase of development during the 1970s and 1980s, and (c) the critical language policy phase (Johnson & Ricento, 2013). During the first phase of language policy, researchers explored *corpus planning*, activities related to the manipulation of the forms of language, and *status planning*, which focused on how a society could best allocate functions and/or uses for particular languages (Johnson & Ricento, 2013). Early LPP research was characterized by viewing corpus and status planning as ideologically neutral and by viewing language as abstracted from sociohistorical and ecological contexts (Ricento, 2000, as cited in Johnson & Ricento, 2013).

The intermediary state of development of Language Planning and Policy infused new developments: a shift away “from language planning being understood solely as something imposed by governing bodies to a broader focus on activity in multiple contexts and layers of language planning and policy” (Johnson & Ricento, 2013, p. 10). Researchers began to focus their attention on language planning in school settings (Johnson & Ricento, 2013, p. 10). The addition of *acquisition planning* to the study of language policy was meant to capture “language teaching and other educational activities designed to increase the users or uses of a language” (Johnson & Ricento, 2013, p. 11).

In addition to the shift away from top-down planning and the inclusion of language acquisition planning in educational settings, there was increased focus on the

sociopolitical nature of language planning and policy. Cooper (1989, as cited in Hornberger, 2005) framed it nicely in his question (emphasis in original): “What *actors* attempt to influence what kind of *behaviors* of which *people* for what *ends* under what *conditions* by what *means* through what decision-making process with effect?” (p. 24). This means that there may be a range of policy activity that takes place within any given research context. The faculty, staff, and administrators are the actors (agents) exercising specific behaviors for specific reasons through observable processes (means). With this framework in mind, faculty, staff, and administrators are viewed as impacting students’ academic lives by developing and reinforcing socially constructed policy for language minority students.

There are direct connections from this intermediary stage of LPP theory to the way this dissertation is conceptualized. California Community Colleges are described as engaging in *language acquisition planning* in order to increase the number of users of English (or Academic English) for the purposes of education. Hornberger (2005) defined language acquisition planning as “efforts to influence the allocation of users or the distribution of language/literacies, by means of creating or improving opportunity or incentive to learn them or both” (p. 28). The elements of matriculation services—classification, identification, assessment and placement—are conceptualized as the manifestation of language acquisition planning by the community college administration. Furthermore, the research questions in this dissertation study do not focus narrowly on top-down administration planning, but rather are intended to explore activity in “multiple contexts and layers of language planning and policy” (Johnson & Ricento, 2013, p. 5).

Ricento and Hornberger (1996) used the metaphor of the onion to represent the layers of policy that surround the educational practitioner. Following the metaphor, the inner layers of the policy onion are microlevel policies, such as classroom policies or academic department policies; the outer layers of the policy and planning onion are macrolevel policies such as national language policy or provisions developed as a result of Supreme Court rulings (Ricento & Hornberger, 1996).

Spolksy (2005) stated that language policy functions in a “complex ecological relationship among a wide range of linguistic and non-linguistic elements, variables, and factors.” (p. 2155). Similarly, this dissertation study will be exploring texts, legislation, initiatives, and the perspectives of a variety of community college personnel as layers within the research setting. Indeed, Hornberger and Johnson (2007) conceptualized language planning as activities that move upwards as well as downwards (Johnson & Ricento, 2013), and my inquiry will consider how faculty or staff, for example, can influence the shaping of language policy through their participation *in addition to* top-down mandates from the state or district level of the community college administrative structure. This framework allows for the discussion of many potential factors in the community college context that affect reform efforts concerning the education of language minority students.

Hornberger (2005) further divided *acquisition planning* in order to include the cultivation of foreign languages, literacy, and second languages. Community college personnel are further conceptualized in this study as making policy and plans for their language minority students that should help them acquire academic literacy in English.

The third phase of the development of language policy theory, or the “critical language policy” period, is largely characterized by a *historical-structural* approach which focuses on the social, ideological, historical, and discursive influences that give rise to language policies (Johnson & Ricento, 2013). Johnson and Ricento (2013) have argued that critical language policy strikes a balance between “between critical conceptualizations that focus on the power of language policy and ethnographic and other qualitative work that focuses on the power of language policy agents” (p. 10). In this dissertation, recent initiatives, such as the Student Success Initiative and the Basic Skills Initiative in the CCC system, will be taken into consideration as social and discursive forces that might affect language policy reform.

The final and current stage of language planning and policy theory development has ushered in some additional useful concepts: ideology and agency. Ideology refers to prevailing beliefs or attitudes that influence the knowledge of social groups (Gonzalez, 2001, as cited in López, 2012), and the nature of ideologies is theorized as being reproduced through social practices and discourse (López, 2012). Understanding how language beliefs and ideologies reinforce or challenge matriculation services (language acquisition planning) is essential for understanding how community college personnel attempt to meet the educational needs of language minority students.

Efforts will also be made to find evidence of agency among the community college personnel. Agency, in the study of language policy, is the idea that people in the research setting have the power to interpret and appropriate language policies from the bottom up (Johnson & Ricento, 2013). For example, it would be great to find out if there are any initiatives that have developed within an academic department—as opposed to

have originated from the highest office in the CCC system, the Chancellor's Office—that are having any effect on reform.

Spolsky (2005) theorized that language policy is composed of (a) language practices, (b) language beliefs/ideology, and (c) the explicit policies/plans developed by management. This dissertation will explore matriculation services as language practices, review any published explicit policies/plans used the community college context (codified policy) and look for evidence of change in the dynamic social context.

Summary

The research reviewed in this chapter explored the many components of matriculation services as well as the challenges that correspond to each component of matriculation—classification, identification, assessment and placement. This chapter also introduced legal and professional development activities that have affected and will possibly continue to affect the future of matriculation services in California's community colleges.

The last section of this chapter described the history and application of the Language Planning and Policy framework that will be used a lens for inquiry. The next chapter will describe the methodology to be employed in this dissertation.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Chapter 1 introduced the conceptual framework for this dissertation which includes the concepts of language policy ecology, language acquisition planning and language practices. Chapter 2 described the complex components of matriculation services and some initiatives which might affect reform. This chapter will describe the methodology that was used to make these processes visible in the research setting through empirical inquiry: (a) a qualitative design, (b) a case study strategy, and (c) guided by the heuristics from the ethnography of language policy.

Therefore, this chapter will: (a) introduce and justify the research design, (b) introduce and justify the research strategy, (c) describe and justify the use of heuristics from the ethnography of language policy, (d) describe the sample and data sources, (e) describe instruments, (f) data collection procedures, (g) explain the data analysis process, and (g) explain the relevant roles of the researcher.

Research Design

Creswell (2008) suggested that there were essentially three types of designs: qualitative, mixed methods, and quantitative; he conceptualized these as points along a continuum since studies tend to be either more quantitative or more qualitative—with mixed methods containing elements of both ends of the continuum in the middle. The research design of this dissertation is unambiguously qualitative. Qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to social or human problems (Creswell, 2008). Qualitative research design honors an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation (Creswell, 2008).

This design is appropriate for the proposed dissertation questions. What are the codified policies that shape matriculation services for language minority students in the research setting? Within the research setting, how are matriculation services for language minority students carried out in practice? Due to reform efforts in California community colleges, how are matriculation services for language minority students undergoing policy or practice changes in the research setting? The answers to these questions lie in the research setting where matriculation services are administered and carried out by community college personnel.

In contrast to a quantitative approach, which typically uses defined and measurable variables in order to conduct statistical analyses through deduction (Creswell, 2008), the qualitative design allowed me to focus on the meanings that community college personnel ascribed to the problem of matriculating a linguistically diverse study body. Statistics will not suffice in the search to understand how policy changes are made in the community colleges, nor can numbers alone shed light on the ostensible or real rationales for policy changes, origins of policy changes, or resistance to policy change in a dynamic shared governance context. Finding evidence of matriculation services reform due to recent initiatives or legislation is appropriately approached through an inductive style of generalizing from community college members' understanding of matriculation services for language minority students.

Research Strategy

Creswell (2008, p. 11) put forward five “strategies of inquiry”—models that provide specific direction for procedures—for the qualitative design: narrative research, phenomenology, ethnography, and grounded theory and case study. This dissertation

employed the *case study* strategy of inquiry. Glesne (2005) defined a case study as an intensive study of an individual, institution, organization, or some bounded group, place, or process over time. The bounded groups in this study are the administrators, faculty, and staff that are responsible for developing, administering, and maintaining matriculation services for language minority students on a community college campus.

This study attempted to develop a model of policies and practices based on an intensive study of one campus in order to gain insight into avenues and potential obstructions to matriculation services reform. Ultimately, the goal of this research is to help inform policy decision-making at the campus level in order to improve the success and completion rates for language minority students. The case study approach allowed the matriculation services, in policy and in practice, to be described in detail in one (appropriate) setting. By focusing on one location, I was able to develop a rich and detailed description of a campus embedded in district embedded in a statewide community college system.

It was anticipated that the administrative layers of the district and the CCC system as a whole, as well as other forces, would all be evident within the bounded system of one campus, and therefore justified in order to meet the goal of shedding light on systemic improvement. All campuses share some common dynamic administrative forces as well as possessing unique pressures. It is hoped that making the complex policy and practices visible helps provide a detailed example of comparison to other campuses in the region and the system.

Methodological Heuristics

This dissertation used a qualitative design, a case study strategy, and a set of methodological heuristics developed by Johnson (2009). This subsection describes the set of heuristics that inform the inductive and explorative nature of this study. Building upon the introduction of the “ethnography of language policy” by Hornberger and Johnson (2007), Johnson developed a set of heuristics, guiding methodological starting points used to guide inquiry for researchers conducting ethnographies of language policy.

The heuristics are as follows:

(1) agents, (2) goals, (3) processes, and (4) discourses which engender and perpetuate the policy, and (5) the dynamic social and historical contexts in which the policy exists. The agents include both the creators of the policy and those responsible for policy interpretation and appropriation. Goals refers to the intentions of the policy as stated in the policy text. The processes of interest include creation, interpretation, and appropriation. The discourse category is meant to capture the discourses within and without the policy; i.e. the discourses (whether explicit or implicit) within the language policy text, intertextual connections to other policies, and the discursive power of a particular policy . . . Finally, an ethnography of language policy is interested in the dynamic social, historical, and physical contexts in which language policies are created, interpreted, and appropriated. (Johnson, 2009, p. 144)

These heuristics are not intended to be exhaustive, static, or mutually exclusive (Johnson, 2009). Because the conceptual framework has framed the problem as one of language policy and planning—language *acquisition* planning in particular—these methodological heuristics provide a set of useful conceptual tools for data analysis. Certainly administrators or faculty members can be thought of as policy *agents*, for example. Policy making through faculty governance or top-down memorandum may reveal *processes* or historical *contexts*. An in-depth study of one community college campus as a case study might yield *discourses* unique to the research setting.

To be clear, this dissertation is not an ethnographic study nor is it impersonating one. See Watson-Gegeo (1988) for a review of the increase in the popularity of

ethnography and the decrease in “high-quality, scientific ethnographic work” in classroom ESL literature. This dissertation only employed the set of heuristics that falls within the conceptual framework of language planning and policy; it is not adopting a strategy of ethnography. These heuristics provide useful starting points for analyzing the meaning community college personnel ascribe to a social problem (qualitative design) (Creswell, 2008) within a bounded system over time (case study strategy) (Glesne, 2005).

Research Setting

This study was conducted at an urban community college in Southern California with a large language minority student population. The pseudonym for my research context will be Sage Community College (SCC). The pseudonym for the district of the SCC will be referred to as the Sage Community College District. The student body of SCC had the following characteristics two years prior to conducting this study: a total enrollment of over 25,000 students, a majority of students in the 20 to 24 age bracket, a majority (78%) of Hispanic ethnicity, and a majority (39.9%) of the student population declaring an intent to transfer to a 4-year university as a goal.

Site Selection and Access

In a paper addressing five misunderstandings about case-study research, Flyvbjerg (2006) put forth his own taxonomy of selection strategies for case studies which includes the “critical case” selection strategy for site selection. The critical case selection is used to achieve information that permits logical deductions of the type, “If this is valid for this case, then it applies to all cases” (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 230).

I argue that the research setting, Sage Community College, has a major challenge in providing a linguistically diverse student population that should be able to inform

decision-making at campuses with fewer language minority students. If matriculation services for language minority students can be understood and eventually improved at campuses with a large number of language minority students, for example, then campuses with smaller or growing language minority population should be able to glean some insight as well.

Sample and Data Sources

The research participants for this dissertation were administrators, faculty, and staff directly or indirectly involved with identifying, guiding, counseling, assessing, and advising language minority students. Personnel in the research setting were invited to participate in interviews using a snowball or network sampling method (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). In this method, a few participants who possess certain characteristics are selected, and they are asked to identify and refer others who are known to have the same or similar characteristics (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008).

I began with the lead administrator responsible for matriculation service on the campus of Sage Community College. From there, I interviewed other administrators, faculty members and one staff member. Some participants worked directly with students by screening new students including language minority students. Other participants worked with curriculum development, and others worked as counselors. This snowball sampling method allowed me learn about the different roles and responsibilities assigned to people in the research setting. Different participants were able to describe the different components of the matriculation process through their own experiences; they described the different roles of other community college personnel as they referred me to potential participants.

Instruments and Procedures

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the current model of providing matriculation services for language minority students from the perspective of community college personnel. I used three instruments to carry out this research: (a) a research invitation, (b) an informed consent form, and (c) an interview protocol. These will be described in turn.

Research Invitation.

Potential research participants were sent the research invitation; the invitation encouraged participation for individual interviews and group interviews. This instrument helped introduce me to the research setting. The research invitation stated the purpose of the study and specified the criterion for participants. The research invitation will include my contact information and the time frame for the data collection portion of the study. See Appendix A for this instrument.

Informed Consent Form.

Participants were asked to complete an Informed Consent Form that was reviewed and approved by the California State University, Northridge Research and Graduate Studies Office. Through this instrument, my participants learned that their participation was voluntary and that any identifying information about them was protected. See Appendix B for this instrument.

Interview Protocol.

Three interview protocols were developed. The purpose of this research was to understand how components of matriculation services are carried out in practice in the research setting. Eliciting individual responses from community college personnel was

critical to understanding how language minority students are served. See Appendix C, D and E for the interview protocols used in this study.

Data Collection Procedures

The data collection took place over a 6-week period beginning in April of 2013; I conducted approximately two interviews per week. All interviews were recorded digitally, using a USB microphone attached to a laptop computer. Additionally, I collected artifacts in the form of documents, handouts, CCC forms, maps and flyers from the research setting during that period. Lastly, I searched for and downloaded relevant texts (campus catalogs, meeting minutes, meeting agendas, and presentations) during the data collection period as well.

One of the limitations of my data collection was my ability to keep my biases in check and to allow my participants to focus on conveying their understandings of language minority issues. I mitigated the effects of researcher-bias about language policies by refraining on commenting on the responses from the participants. Qualitative researchers attempt to “objectively study the subjective states of their subjects” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 52). I kept a journal and discussed my opinions about the subject with trusted colleagues not involved with the study, so that I was able to develop a concerned interviewer perspective that was not affected.

Data Analysis

This purpose of this case study was to explore the current matriculation services policies and practice as well to uncover evidence of reform efforts. This section will discuss the procedures for (a) data management and (b) data analysis. Data management is defined as a systematic process of data collection, storage, and retrieval (Denzin &

Lincoln, 2007, p. 180). Data analysis is defined as data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Denzin & Lincoln, 2007, p. 180). The following paragraphs describe the data management and analysis plan.

The data for this study was composed of (a) texts and (b) interview transcripts. Examples of the texts are as follows: (a) publicly available downloadable texts (such as committee minutes or press releases), (b) screenshots of web pages as texts, (c) handouts from the research setting, and (d) handouts collected by study participants (such as intake forms or flyers). All texts not already in digital form were digitized using a scanner for analysis.

Interview transcripts were the result of one-on-one interviews with Sage Community College faculty, staff, and administrators. The first pass of the transcription process was completed by a paid student assistant under my supervision. The student assistant was given instructions on the format for transcriptions; the student assistant was required to destroy any copies of transcripts upon completion. The transcriptions completed by the student assistant were considered first drafts. As a second pass, I reviewed the transcripts while listening to the audio files and updated as necessary in preparation for analysis.

Once all of the interview transcripts and non-interview data (texts) were prepared for analysis, all of the text documents were loaded into Computer-Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) programs, Atlas.ti and QDA Miner. These advanced CAQDAS programs allowed me to code text, recode text, and create code hierarchies (Glesne, 2005)—functions that were essential to my analysis technique.

All of these data were analyzed using a thematic analysis technique. I focused on “searching through the data for themes and patterns” (Glesne, 2005, p. 187). The analysis continued until I identified major themes and subthemes. The analysis spanned several weeks. Specific quotations that correspond to each theme are included in chapter 4 of this dissertation. This analysis type of analysis was used for texts as well. Analysis brought to light the rich dynamics of the policy and practice of language acquisition planning in the research context.

Roles of the Researcher

It is critical to lay bare the hidden roles of the researcher because, in qualitative research, the researcher is a key instrument of data collection; he or she must focus on learning the meaning that that participants hold—not the meaning that the researcher brings to the setting (Creswell, 2008). Therefore, this section will discuss the researcher’s role, the researcher’s reflexivity in the research setting, and strategies for the mitigation of researcher effects.

I had multiple roles in the conduct of this research. My role as the researcher of this study was to be the sole principal investigator. I established access to the research location and conducted all of the data collection. I conducted the formal and informal interviews and took field notes in the community college setting.

There are other secondary roles that I had by nature of my current work in higher education. I am interested in working with the population in the study both as a former faculty member of developmental English and as an academic affairs administrator. After the completion of my dissertation I will be seeking employment in the community

college system working with language minority students. This role threatened my ability to be completely impartial.

Another role I have is that of an advocate for systemic reform in order to improve graduation rates for traditionally underserved student populations. My biases include my political beliefs about language policy, which may be in contrast to institutional policy norms in the research setting. The research context at Sage Community College (SCC) is overwhelmingly composed of Latino students with various degrees of generational connection to Latin America. I am familiar the political history of anti-immigrant legislation and popular sentiment in California, and I am sensitive to issues of institutional racism and institutional bias.

In addition to these biases as researcher, and advocate, my physical presence in the research setting results in researcher reflexivities. I am a Mexican-American, a Chicano, with brown skin. I am a conversational speaker of Spanish. Some Latino participants might connect with me as a group member or possibly as an outsider. They might have other personal litmus tests to gauge my status as someone with the experience with the issues that language minority students face.

With respect to the research setting, I have little first-hand knowledge of the culture that surrounds the Sage Community College campus. I have been interested in the persistence of language minority students and Latinos in particular over a decade. What I learn about the policies and practices at SCC might challenge my assumptions and expectations about how language minority students can be served best. In summary, my personal biography may influence the research process and the setting may influence me (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

In order to mitigate all of the researcher biases and reflexivities described above, I relied on member checks and consultation with colleague. When I had doubts about whether or not my biases might be leading me in a certain direction in my analysis, I consulted my dissertation committee members and colleagues in the field.

Summary

In summary, this chapter covered all of the major components of the study's research methodology. This study used a qualitative research design, a case study strategy, and a set of heuristics from the ethnography of language planning and policy as a guide. The research was described as the best approach to understanding how and why matriculation services are carried out within a critical case. The data collection, management, and analysis were described. The roles and reflexivities of the researcher were also acknowledged.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis

The previous three chapters of this dissertation presented the research problem, the scholarly context of the research topics, and the methodological framework for this study. The research problem, questions, and rationale were described in chapter 1. The theoretical framework guiding this study was synthesized in chapter 2. Recent scholarly literature addressing the specific issues of language minority students in the California community colleges provided the empirical foundation for this research. Chapter 3 explained the methodical approach utilized for this dissertation. Scholarly work in the field of Language Planning and Policy (LPP) provided the guiding theoretical perspective for this study.

This chapter (chapter 4) presents data collected using a qualitative case study design guided by the Language Planning and Policy (LPP) framework and the heuristics of the ethnography of language policy developed by Johnson (2009). The field of language planning and policy is a framework that has been developed in order to explain the processes and results of language planning. In the present case study, language acquisition planning by a very large public community college system was the focus of inquiry. The heuristics from the ethnography of language policy (Johnson, 2009) were used to help elucidate the connection between macrolevel policy development and microlevel implementation.

This dissertation study specifically examined the connection between macrolevel policy and microlevel practices within the context of community college matriculation services in order to determine current and future implications for language minority students. This is significant because at this point in time there are no separate

matriculation services programs for non-native English speakers entering California's community colleges. Therefore, it becomes necessary to study the issue of general community college matriculation reform in search of changes that will affect language minority students in particular.

Through the examination of matriculation services—a key component of language acquisition planning in the community colleges—this research investigated reform initiatives being developed to provide non-native English speakers targeted services. In so doing, it explored the discursive means by which those initiatives were brought about in a community college context. Therefore, this research has shed light on the top-down mandates within the California community college system as well as local interpretation, implementation, and/or resistance in a particular community college context. In order to learn about the top-down processes as well as the emerging local practices, qualitative data were collected and analyzed.

Collected Data Types

The analytic approach employed in this study utilized two types of collected data: (a) documents and (b) interview transcripts. In the context of the LPP framework, documents or texts have been theorized to belong to policy discourse. The terms documents and texts will be used interchangeably throughout this chapter. Discourse is theorized as

a complex bundle of simultaneous and sequential interrelated linguistic acts, which manifest themselves within and across the social fields of action as thematically interrelated semiotic, oral, or written 'tokens', very often as 'texts' that belong to specific semiotic types that is, genres. (Wodak, 2005, p. 175)

There were at least two examples of “fields of actions” examined in this study. The examples were the policy-recommendation process completed by a statewide advisory committee and the law-making process taken up by the California legislature.

Texts have been defined as “products of linguistic actions” (Wodak, 2005, p. 175). For example, the discourse of the advisory process yielded texts in the genres of press releases and reports; the law-making process yielded legal analysis texts and draft bills. Each of these processes produced texts that were thematically related across the different fields of action, such as the theme of student success. More than a hundred texts across many fields of action and genres were collected in network fashion for this study. See Appendix F for a list of document titles reviewed. See Table 1 for examples of the different types of texts and how they were collected.

Table 1

List of Text Types, Text Acquisition Process and Text Examples

Text Type	Text Acquisition Process	Text Example
Downloaded Text	Available via the internet	Sage Community College General Catalog
Webpage Screenshot	Available via the internet using screen capture software	Sage Community College General Matriculation Homepage
Campus Artifact	Acquired from Participant	Student Educational Plan Form
Campus Artifact	Acquired by researcher on campus	Student Prerequisite or Corequisite Challenge Petition Form

Some texts, in the form of Portable Document Format (.pdf), were downloaded directly from the Sage Community College website because they were referenced by the

interview participants. Other texts captured were the contents of website pages themselves using web browser screen capture software. The screen shot software made a digital picture of the website contents as the students would view it online in a web browser. Some texts, or artifacts, were furnished by participants in the research setting; these texts were not available on the internet. Finally, artifacts including pamphlets and forms were collected by the researcher before, during, or after interviews in the research setting. Most texts were readily available for viewing and downloading remotely via the internet. Similar to network sampling or snowball sampling, documents were collected because texts were often referred to by other relevant texts, plans, and policies, etc.

The second data type, interview transcript data, was acquired by interviewing community college personnel on the campus of Sage Community College. Nine interviews were conducted in the field and recorded digitally. There were three teaching faculty members, three non-teaching faculty members, two administrators, and one staff member. The LPP framework puts forward that there are agents or actors at different layers of the policy onion that interpret, implement, and/or resist policy (Hornberger & Johnson, 2007). The people interviewed for this study were responsible through their job descriptions for carrying out matriculation services. Interview participants were invited based on their connections to the official chain of command, so to speak, for matriculation services. The digital recordings from one-on-one interviews were then used to develop interview transcripts. The interviews conducted were largely structured interviews; however, there were open-ended questions asked at the end of each interview.

Three interview protocols were developed. Refer to Appendix C for the interview protocol developed for faculty, refer to Appendix D for the interview protocol developed

for administrators, and see Appendix E for the interview protocol developed for staff. There were minor changes made among the different interview protocols in order to account for the different roles and responsibilities of the different participant types (faculty members, administrators, and staff members). See the following excerpt for examples of questions taken from the interview protocol developed for faculty:

Basic Information:

1. What is your current position here?
2. How long have you worked in this position?
3. How does your work relate to matriculation services?
4. How does your work specifically relate to matriculation services for students whose native language is not English?

Matriculation Processes:

1. Can you describe the process new students experience as they move through the matriculation process?
2. Can you describe the process a new student-- whose native language is not English—experiences as he/she moves through the matriculation process?
 - a. What are the differences in matriculation services for native English speakers and non-native English speakers?

This excerpt reflects an organization of questions by heading and a sequence of questions that paralleled the research questions posed in the first chapter. First, I asked participants about their roles and experience; second, I asked them about matriculation services policy and practices; and finally, I asked questions about reform efforts affecting matriculation policies and practices. Conducting interviews reflected the qualitative design of the study in that it sought to capture and to analyze the meanings that people in the setting ascribed to social phenomena (Creswell, 2009).

The present study was designed as a case study—an intensive study of an individual, institution, organization, or some bounded group, place, or process over time (Glesne, 2005). Therefore, the collection of text data and the transcription of individual interview data resulted in rich collection of data that needed to be systematically pared down for analysis. The next section will describe how the resulting collected data was further separated into data groupings for of analysis.

Data Groupings

The data collected—both text data and transcript data—were divided into data groupings in order to analyze each of the three research questions. The purpose of the first research question was to understand the policy goals expressed throughout the many layers of the language policy onion—through documents only. The first question was addressed through documents only because public documents were more likely to contain edited expressions of missions, values, and goals intended to represent a body or initiative for public consumption. In contrast, one-on-one interviews yield the perspectives of individuals in the case study context.

All of the documents collected for this study were systematically analyzed using codes for policy layers (e.g., national, state, district) and policy/plan goals (e.g., student success, economic growth). The documents that were coded as including a statement related to planning or policy goals were included in the smaller subset of documents for analysis of the first research question.

Because the actual practices carried out at the campus level are thought of as a result of interaction between macrolevel and microlevel policy processes, this inquiry began by focusing on the expressed goals of the influential administrative bodies at

various levels throughout the social policy space. To put it another way, in this dissertation study, the goals of the language planning efforts from the highest macrolevel all the way down to the microlevel were captured using publicly available documents first as a pathway to understanding local practices.

The purpose of this study was ultimately to understand how matriculation reform efforts have affected practices for language minority students. It was therefore critical to document how community college personnel carried out matriculation services in concert with or in conflict with published/codified goals. Participants were asked to describe in detail how students were advised and guided through each component of the matriculation process. Participants shared insight into the staffing needs, the paper processes, and the automated processes. The purpose of the second research question was to ascertain the actual practices in the community college research context being investigated as a basis for making inferences about policy reform—which was the purpose of the third and final research question.

The purpose of asking the third research question was to search for patterns of evidence reflecting recent, ongoing, or planned changes to matriculation policy and practice in the research setting. Based on a review of the documents alone, it was clear that many months of researching, meetings, and planning took place with a variety of goals, including most often the goal of improving the student success of community college students. The purpose of the searching out evidence of reform through individual interviews was to learn about the effect of the local, statewide, and national initiatives on the day-to-day operations by community college personnel.

Data analysis was organized based on the fitness of the data type to the research question. See Table 2 for a summary of the data analysis groupings used. The first research question sought to analyze the published goals of major policies and plans, and therefore public documents were used for analysis. The second and third research questions were analyzed using texts and interview transcripts to understand the experiences and practices of people on the campus of Sage Community College.

Table 2

Research Questions and Data Analysis Groupings

Research Question	Data Analysis Grouping
1. What are the goals of the codified policies and plans that shape matriculation services for language minority students in the research setting?	Texts
2. Within the research setting, how are matriculation services for language minority students carried out in practice?	Interview Transcripts and Texts
3. Due to reform efforts in California Community Colleges, how are matriculation services for language minority students undergoing policy or practice changes in the research setting?	Interview Transcripts and Texts

The purpose of the second and third research questions was to collect data from personnel who interact with students every day or who have direct influence over day-to-day implementation. The second and third research questions benefited from the use of both data types: texts and interview transcripts.

Analysis and Findings

The data analysis in this chapter draws upon related LPP research to uncover “interpretations, implementations, and perhaps resistance” to current and proposed policy (Hornberger & Johnson, 2007, p. 510). The analysis of documents as well as interview data was appropriate because

intertextual analyses of policy texts can capture the confluence of histories, attitudes, and ideologies that engender a language policy but, alone, cannot account for how the creation is interpreted and implemented in the various contextual layers through which a language policy must pass. (Hornberger & Johnson, 2007, p. 511)

What this means is that texts alone do not tell the full story, and neither does only interviewing people in the setting. Rather, the multi-layered analysis and triangulation of such data brings forth a clearer notion of the rich interplay between the two within a given policy context. Hornberger and Johnson (2007) argued that in addition to document review, “ethnographic data collection can illuminate local interpretation and implementation” (p. 511). To extend the metaphor, this approach attempts to slice the policy onion (Hornberger & Johnson, 2007) through the study of texts and the interpretation or implementation of those texts by agents in the context. The metaphor of the onion is presented as a central component of the approach to the LPP framework as originally proposed by Ricento and Hornberger (1996). See Figure 1 for a visualization of the policy onion as it was conceptualized for this study.

Figure 1. Visualization of the Policy Onion

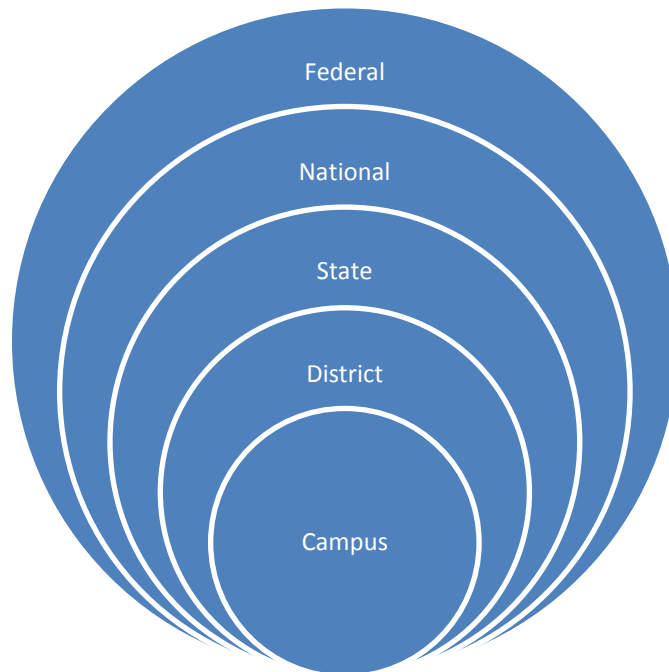


Figure 1. A visualization of the policy onion showing the various levels: federal, national, state, district, and campus.

Figure 1 provides a policy onion visualization where the macrolevel policy space is represented by the outer layers of the policy onion, which include the federal, national, and statewide policy-making activities. Within each of these layers there are actors, committees, or other bodies with the ability to influence the outcome of practices across the entire CCC system. The top-down influence on districts and campuses can be initiated at these macrolevels. For example, independent organizations with national influence, such as the Lumina Foundation or the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, can influence CCC programming. Federal programs such as comprehensive immigration reform can have a cascading effect on districts, campuses and academic departments. Administrators and staff in each layer in the policy onion can interpret, implement, or resist such macrolevel forces with different results for students at the microlevel; see

Johnson and Ricento (2013) for examples of empirical studies which found evidence of agentive roles, of bottom-up dynamics, in educational settings.

The inner layers of the policy onion represent the microlevel policy space. These layers include campus matriculation policy, departmental interpretation, and classroom implementation. At each layer in the onion there is a possibility for actors to exercise “bottom-up” responses in face of “top-down” policies. Hornberger and Johnson (2007) argued that although language policies set limits on boundaries on what is normal or allowed on campus, the power of the language policies resides with teacher and campus interpretations. In other words, the power is not exclusively in the policy; the power is in the local appropriation. Therefore, top-down policies are assumed to be constantly “negotiated throughout institutional levels” through discursive activity (Sutton & Levinson, 2001, as cited in Hornberger & Johnson, 2007, p. 510).

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings and analysis of the data collected for this dissertation study. The research setting for this qualitative case study is referred to as Sage Community College, which is a pseudonym, intended to provide anonymity to the location of the study research site. The district is referred to by the pseudonym Sage Community College District.

All of the data in this chapter was analyzed using two different qualitative analysis software tools, Atlas.ti and QDA Miner. Both of these software tools are described by methodologists as Computer-Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) programs (Glesne, 2005). Both of these programs have their strengths. Atlas.ti allowed for the coding of many different document types including digital scans of artifacts. QDA Miner allowed for rapid development of codes into code families.

Because of the volume of data, these software programs were essential to data management, which is defined as a systematic process of data collection, storage, and retrieval (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 180).

The data analysis software programs enabled several cycles of coding and grouping based on the conceptual framework and the research questions. For example, as a first pass, all text and transcript data were coded into separate families based on the following terms: *agents*, *goals*, *processes* and *discourses*; see chapter 3 for a description of terms adapted from Johnson (2009). The coding of the all of the data using the heuristics of the ethnography of language policy served as a useful starting point and led to the development of code families. The data was then further reduced through the development of subthemes within each category. For example, different *sub-goals* were developed beneath the family of *goals*. This type of analysis was carried out for each of data types: documents and interview/transcript data. However, for the first research question, coding and recoding was conducted using only document data. For the second and third research questions, connections were made across data types.

The resulting analysis derived from the dissertation data will be presented in three sections, which correspond to each of the three research questions posed in this study. The data analysis will be presented in the following order: Section I—Document Review of Policy Goals will address the first research question, Section II—Transcript and Document Analysis of Current Practices will address the second research question, and Section III—Transcript and Document Analysis of Reform Efforts will address the third research question.

The logic of this presentation order is that each section of analysis yielded insight into the policy and practice space in a different way, but more importantly each section paved the way for the subsequent section. Section I addressed the actors/agents and their language policy and planning goals. Section II described current practice using interview data with supporting documents from the research setting. In Section III, data analysis utilized interview data and texts from the research setting to highlight areas of policy reform.

Section I. Document Review

The first research question in this dissertation study addressed the need to document all of the macrolevel and microlevel actors active in the policy space and their respective goals for participating. This first analysis section begins with the investigation of macrolevel structures impacting policy and practice of matriculation services at the research site.

1. What are the goals of the codified policies and plans that shape matriculation services for language minority students in the research setting?

The purpose of the first research question was to gather the implicit and explicit goals of existing policy as well as developing policy. Therefore, 25 texts—a subset of all of the texts collected—were used to analyze the existing and proposed community college matriculation policy practices. See Appendix G for a list of documents analyzed for the first research question. The subset of documents was determined through a systematic coding of all documents for the presence of goal statements. In some cases, references to district and campus documents were intentionally withheld in order to protect the anonymity of the research location.

Analyzing these texts was central to understanding what shapes the community college language acquisition planning from the macrolevel down through the microlevel. The documents collected provided a view of the metaphorical “onion layers” of language policy affecting matriculation services for language minority students.

In order to understand the goals of the policies and plans that shaped matriculation services, the first task was to name the actors involved within the various layers of the policy onion. The continuation was to identify patterns in goals setting and to determine which layers were most active. It is clear from the document data analysis that there was interaction between the different actors within the various layers of the policy process and that this interaction impacted the practices of matriculation services. Take for example, the activity at the state level. This study revealed the layers of policy activity within the state layer. There were sub-layers within the layer of “state.” See Figure 2 for a visualization of the state-level actors of policy change as documented through text analysis.

Figure 2. Visualization of State-Level Policy Sub-layers

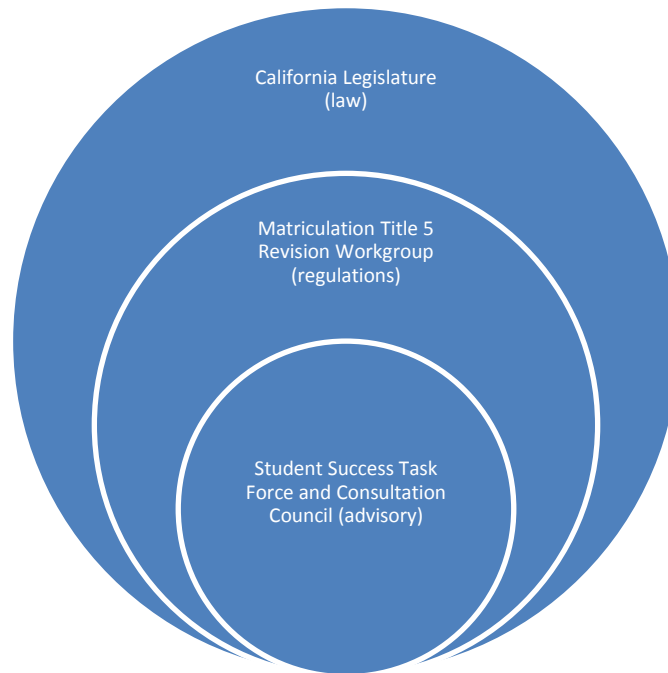


Figure 2. Visualization of some discovered state-level policy sub-layers, including legal, regulatory, and advisory levels.

Figure 2 represents the different actors—at the state level only—who made decisions about policy and law that affected over 2 million students attending 112 colleges in the CCC system. This figure is not intended to be exhaustive because there were other active bodies at the state level such as the Academic Senate for the California Community Colleges. This figure is intended to convey the complexity within layers of the policy onion. The Student Success Task Force was developed by the California Community Colleges Board of Governors in 2011. It was composed of 20 “members from diverse internal and external stakeholders groups” (CCCCO, 2012e). The Matriculation Title 5 Workgroup was composed of 16 members of the Chancellor’s Office Staff (CCCCO, 2013a). The Consultation Council is comprised of “eighteen

representatives of institutional groups such as trustees, executive officers, students, administrators, business officers, student services officers, and instructional officers, and representative organizations, such as faculty and staff unions and associations” (CCCCO, 2013b). The legislative process, in which bills are considered and laws are enacted, was carried out by 40 senators and 80 assembly members representing the people of the State of California (Legislative Council State of California, 2013). These bodies review and develop the merits of proposals in development.

Activity at the macrolevel can have a large impact on local practices such as counseling and the administration of assessment exams. With some actors, such as the Student Success Task Force, the role was to advise and to persuade other actors that reform should take place. In other cases, the role was to decide which suggestions warranted legislative action and/or a change in Title 5 education code. Again, these are examples of the interactions amongst actors that took place primarily at the state layer of the policy onion. This analysis has developed a model of who was actively affecting policy and their respective goals. Understanding the policymaking landscape can be helpful to the development of reform initiatives aimed at benefiting language minority students in the CCC system.

The next section of this dissertation chapter will describe each of the layers as empirically verified through texts. The following subsections address the (a) discovered policy layers and the (b) discovered policy goals. The descriptions of each layer and corresponding goals will follow in later subsections.

Policy layers.

Seven policy layers were uncovered through document review. The following layers were discovered through analysis of texts: (a) national, (b) regional-national, (c) statewide, (d) regional (intra-state), (e) district, (f) campus, and (g) department. One of the layers as mentioned in the previous section, the state-layer, contained three sublayers within it: a legislative layer, a regulatory layer, and an (ad hoc) advisory layer. See Table 3 for a list of layers, institutional entities, and actors across the policy onion.

Table 3

List of Actors as Evidenced through Texts Collected

Policy Layer	Institutional Entities	Actor(s)
National	Achieving the Dream Initiative	Foundation Administrators, Foundation Staff
Regional-national (Western)	Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges	Administrators, Faculty
Statewide	California Legislature, Student Success Task Force, and Board of Trustees of the California Community Colleges, Academic Senate for California Community Colleges	Legislators, Politicians, Legal Analysts, Administrators, Faculty
Regional (intrastate)	Regional Matriculation Advisory Committee	Administrators, Faculty
District	Office of the Chancellor of the Sunflower Community College District, The Sunflower Community College District Strategic Plan, District Matriculation Advisory Committee	Administrators, Faculty
Campus	Sage Community College Educational Master Plan, Matriculation Advisory Committee	Administrators, Faculty, Staff
Department	English Department, ESL Program	Administrators, Faculty

The discovered layers in these findings reflect the complexity of the California Community College (CCC) system. Undoubtedly this is not an exhaustive collection of people and bodies who influence matriculation services, but in itself, it does reflect a complex system of social and governmental processes. The CCC system is, in fact, the largest system of higher education in the country (CCCCO, 2013). By comparison, while individual private colleges do have accreditation and other administrative complexities at the campus level, private colleges, in general, do not have district, regional, and statewide administrative layers. The discovered layers reveal just how many actors have influence over millions of students enrolled across the state.

Another interesting document review finding was that, in contrast to the plight of language minority students at the elementary and secondary level, there was no federal influence found in the text analysis aside from President Obama's 2020 College Completion Goal (The White House, 2013). The discovered layers reflect a concentration of activity and influence at the state and district levels. In contrast to elementary education, the federal layer of policy was not very active in these community college findings with regard to language minority students.

LPP research is new in the community college sector—the present study is the only known study using the LPP framework to focus on language minority students in a community college context. However, there have been several studies on language minority students and the interplay between federal and state policy influences at the elementary school level. Researchers have shown how local interpretations of federal bilingual education policies were able to offset potentially restrictive federal policy

(Hornberger & Johnson, 2007) and how inconsistent federal policies have shaped education opportunities for elementary students in Texas and California (Gándara & Rumberger, 2009).

Now that the number of policy layers and the identities of the various actors have been described, the next subsection will catalog the espoused goals as revealed through the documents collected from each of these policy layers.

Policy Goals.

Policies and plans that affect campus-level implementation are carried out by many different bodies with different codified/published goals. The document review conducted in this dissertation study has uncovered a variety of non-overlapping goals across different actors' throughout the layers of the policy onion. The document review indicated that "authority was distributed" and "members of the organization were striving for very different outcomes and goals" (Kezar, 2001, p. 75). For example, some actors cited economic growth as an underlying purpose, while other actors focused on success for students of color. This finding also resonates with Kezar's (2001) description of organized anarchical decision-making in higher education. Kezar summarized it in this way: "although some activist trustees, state legislatures, and presidents are attempting to gain greater control over institutional policy, there is little evidence that these efforts have resulted in creating any less ambiguity in organizational decision making" (2001, p. 72).

In contrast to Kezar's analysis though, the LPP framework used in this analysis extended the description from internal and external groups to a more nuanced discussion about the role that specific actors played in the process and their position in the organized anarchy of the policy development space. Whereas Kezar (2001) described an attempt to

“gain control” by different entities, the LPP framework suggested that control can be distributed throughout the policy onion layers and that power can be exercised from the bottom-up and in opposition to efforts to control.

The following subsections will continue to provide examples of the implied or stated goals from document data analyzed in this study. They additionally provide interpretations of how these goals shape matriculation policy. Excerpts and interpretation for each layer in the language policy onion will be examined and presented from the macrolevel down to the microlevel.

National.

The methodological approach of this dissertation was to seek out documents that would triangulate evidence collected through interviews and artifacts in the research setting. No documents, other than The White House (2013) initiative mentioned above, furnished by participants or referenced from other texts signaled any a major language acquisition planning influence by federal efforts. One should not conclude that such evidence does not exist, but only that evidence was not uncovered using the methodology of this study. For the discussion of the limitation of this study concerning document analysis, see chapter 5.

Even though federal influence was not discovered, there was a national *nongovernmental* influence referenced by faculty, staff, and administrators within the Sage Community College context. Sage Community College has begun participating voluntarily in the Achieving the Dream Initiative through the leadership at the district level. Therefore, Sage Community College and other campuses in the district were participants in this national initiative, which was run by a nonprofit organization. The

Achieving the Dream Initiative had the Lumina Foundation as a founding investor (Achieving the Dream, 2013a). The following is an excerpt from Achieving the Dream (2013b) goal statement:

Success for more community college students, especially students of color and low-income students. Success is defined by the rates at which students: successfully complete remedial or developmental instruction and advance to credit-bearing courses; enroll in and successfully complete the initial college-level or gateway courses in subjects such as math and English; complete the courses they take with a grade of "C" or better; persistence from one term to the next; Attain a certificate or degree. (p. 1)

The approaches of the initiative are listed as follows: “This extraordinarily complex work is advanced through four carefully designed approaches: 1) guiding evidence-based institutional improvement, 2) influencing public policy, 3) generating knowledge, and 4) engaging the public” (Achieving the Dream, 2013c, p. 1).

The theory of action that emerges from the goals and strategies is that research-based decision-making can help students of color and low-income students improve. The goals emphasize that precollegiate and gateway courses taken in the first semesters are critical to student goal attainment. These program goals echo the research findings of Moore and Shulock (2010) who found that students had a better chance of completing their academic programs if they took college-level English and Math within 2 years and accumulated at least 20 credits in their first year.

Participation in Achieving the Dream shaped matriculation policy in the CCC and the research setting by emphasizing data in order to address the needs of students of color and low income students. Evidence of this message was corroborated by additional documents collected in the research setting. These supporting texts reflect the goals of Achieving the Dream. For example, there were several detailed and data-rich

presentations completed and distributed by Sage Community College institutional research staff under the banner of Achieving the Dream. These presentations, collected from participants in the research setting, focused on finding success patterns for students of color from their own office of institutional research. These documents were distributed at an Achieving the Dream Initiative meeting. There was a clear connection from the goals of this national initiative to texts analyzed at the campus level.

Regional-National Accreditation (Western).

The recommendations from the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) to Sage Community College include recommended improvements to its mission statement, institutional effectiveness, and academic program assessment. However, there were no specific recommendations given for matriculation services or for the improvement of services targeted for language minority students. Documents reflected that Sage Community College responded to the recommendations of the accreditation body. For the purposes of this study, the goals expressed by the accreditation body appeared to have little effect on shaping matriculation services on the Sage Community College campus.

State.

The active agents uncovered through the document review at the state level can be separated into the following sub-layers descriptions of (a) advisory, (b) legal, and (c) regulatory. For example, the Student Success Task Force recently offered recommendations (advisory), the California legislature developed what came to be SB 1456 (legal), and the Matriculation Title 5 Revision Workgroup developed actionable regulations (regulatory) in accordance with SB 1456. Findings from activity in this layer

reflected work toward (a) redefining matriculation and (b) developing a statewide assessment instrument for ESL. These planning activities occurred sequentially over the course of several years.

Redefining of Matriculation. The description of matriculation, prior to the current reform effort underway, was defined as follows, according to a matriculation handbook, a document hosted online by the CCCCCO (2011).

Matriculation is a process that enhances student access to the California Community Colleges (CCC) and supports students to be successful in their educational endeavors. The purpose of matriculation is to ensure that all students complete their college courses, persist to the next academic term, and achieve their educational objective(s) in a timely manner. Matriculation services are available to all students, unlike other specially funded categorical programs with eligibility requirements that target specific student groups. The matriculation process is intended to provide a comprehensive and integrated delivery of services for all students to increase retention and persistence and to provide students with a foundation to support their success in college. Matriculation provides and coordinates basic services, including admissions and orientation, general assessment, counseling and advisement, and follow-up assistance.

As of the fall of 2011, there were eight official components to matriculation services according, again, to the California Community Colleges Matriculation Program Handbook (CCCCCO, 2011):

Six of these provide direct services to students, and two improve institutional effectiveness and accountability by enhancing colleges' abilities to conduct evaluation, coordination, and training. These components include: (1) Admissions, (2) Assessment, (3) Orientation, (4) Counseling and Advising, (5) Student Follow-Up, (6) Coordination and Training, (7) Research and Evaluation, and (8) Prerequisites, Corerequisites and Advisories. The two primary goals of matriculation are enhanced student success and institutional effectiveness.

In this definition, we can see that competing needs are reflected in the stated goals for matriculation services: the needs of institutions and the needs of students. The institutions need data for accountability, and students need direct services for their success. Matriculation from the perspective of the actors at the state level is connected to

the need for consistent data reporting. However, the collection and reporting of data does not directly support or provide language minority students with services or increased attention at the campus level. However, it can be argued that better data will lead to better decision making about ongoing academic program improvement.

Proposed revisions reflect a renaming of “matriculation services” to “Student Success and Support Program” (California Community Colleges Board of Governors, 2013). There is a proposal to change the components of matriculation services to include: (a) orientation, (b) assessment and placement, (c) counseling, (d) advising, and (e) other education planning services (California Community Colleges Board of Governors, 2013). Notable in these changes is the proposed decoupling of “counseling” and “advising” into separate components. It was not immediately clear what advantage this would have for students. However, because of the increased emphasis on the development and deployment of Student Educational Plans, it has been proposed as a way, from the institutional perspective, to define counseling roles at the campus level as related to counseling faculty. It may be argued, for example, that counselors with faculty status are counselors and perform counseling, and that all community college personnel can function in the role of student advisors. Other documents reflected a prioritization for students to make “Student Education Plans”—and that data on students participating in the development of such plans should be documented by campus officials.

Another component of matriculation that is being redefined is the role of multiple measures. The codification of multiple measures was a proposed new addition to the Title 5 regulations changes (California Community Colleges Board of Governors, 2013):

“Multiple measures” refers to a policy that an assessment test alone cannot be used for course placement. Multiple measures are a required component of a

district's assessment system and refer to the use of more than one assessment measure in order to assess the student. Other measures that are not a test and may comprise multiple measures include, but are not limited to, interviews, holistic scoring processes, attitude surveys, vocational or career aptitude and interest inventories, high school or college transcripts, specialized certificates or licenses, education and employment histories, and military training and experience.

The inclusion of this new statement on matriculation services could usher in a new emphasis on using several tools to help learn more about language minority students and their academic needs through the examples of “measures” in the definition. This could signal the increased use of high school transcripts or attitude surveys, for example.

The overall effect of renaming and reorganizing the components of matriculation does not reflect a commitment to the needs of students themselves. Students might not make a meaningful difference between academic counseling and advising for example. Direct services to students are what matter to students. From an administrative perspective, the renaming and redefining of the components of matriculation services will require time and energy from CCC personnel; they will have to update all of their forms and documents to replace “matriculation” with “student success and support program.” Arguably this would have little effect on actual student success. The analysis of these plans reflect changes that would be carried out by the district and campus administrators and staff, but which will have little to no direct programmatic or pedagogical effects for language minority students. However, some of the proposed policies changes have the potential for opening up the transformation of matriculation services.

The expressed goals and language of the document analysis notably included a proposal to codify the use of multiple measures into Title 5 regulations. The inclusion of multiple measures in the proposed plans could lead to the exploration and development of *supplemental* diagnostic and assessment instruments to be used in the matriculation of

language minority students. New instruments could lead to better advisement and placement for students and for greater awareness of language diversity issues across the CCC system. The document review included evidence that such supplemental language experience instruments have already been developed and distributed through another statewide entity, the Basic Skills Initiative. Refer to the Basic Skills Handbook (CCCCO, 2009b) for examples of faculty-generated materials on Effective ESL practices.

To summarize, the renaming and reconstituting of matriculation services has the effect of shaping the outward institutional appearance of matriculation services programs and at the same time has the potential for opening up implementation space for innovation. Hornberger and Johnson (2007) found that language policy process can either open or restrict new ideological and implementation space. In this case, the codification of multiple measures could be interpreted locally as a move to invite ESL experts to create additional nonmandatory instruments, which would constitute a “measure” by the new regulatory definition.

Statewide Assessments for ESL. Document review of the goals expressed by the California Community Colleges Student Success Task revealed an objective to develop a statewide ESL assessment instrument. Developed and empowered by the California Community Colleges Board of Governors, the California Community Colleges Student Success Task Force (California Community Colleges Student Success Task Force, 2012) was charged with identifying best practices for student success. The following excerpt demonstrates that the focus of the task force was on finding scalable solutions:

Recommendations were chosen based on their ability to be actionable by state policymakers and college leaders and to make a significant impact on student success, as defined by the outcome and progression metrics adopted by the group.

The charge for this task force was to focus on developments that would be scalable and actionable through legislation. This goal rejects the notion of localization. The Student Success Initiative Final Report actually includes an argument against localization in assessment (California Community Colleges Student Success Task Force, 2012):

This local approach to assessment has created obstacles for students by causing significant variation across campuses, in some instances limiting portability of assessment results even within a single district. Other significant drawbacks include the high cost of assessment instruments purchased locally and inefficient test administration.

This argument against localization of assessment instruments, including ESL assessment, favors unified statewide data reporting over assessment instruments developed regionally or within districts. The interpretation of this emerging trend is supported by additional matriculation reform documents at the state level, which seek to develop common institutional report cards. Furthermore, documents show that the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the William and Flora Hewitt Foundation provided funding for a feasibility study for a centralized statewide assessment system. The emerging trend discovered is that matriculation services are being pushed away from localization and toward statewide uniformity.

This following excerpt from the California Community Colleges Matriculation Program Handbook (2011) highlights the tension between statewide and locally developed assessment instruments:

Q. Why can't the Chancellor's Office just tell us what test to use?

A. Each college has a singularly distinct student population and curriculum, and therefore needs the freedom and flexibility to assume the role of selecting its assessment instruments accordingly.

It remains to be seen how these conflicting views will be resolved when the final language of the regulations are put in place. Will there be restrictive policies or will there be opportunities for local or regional agencies across the 112-campus system? Section II of this analysis will include discussion of the resistance to statewide assessment capture through interview transcript data.

Regional-State.

There are 10 defined regions of the California Community College (CCC) system. All of the CCC districts and colleges are assigned into these regions. Based on the document review, the regional-state layer of the policy does not directly draft policies or plans regarding language minority students, nor does it leverage considerable influence on the matriculation services for these students. However, the regional-state layer actor was found to serve as a key communication link as a relay point between the state and district levels.

The key actor in this layer of policy as evidenced through documents was the regional matriculation committee. The regional Matriculation Advisory Committee (MAC) is composed of representatives from each of the campuses in the region. The purpose of the MAC as described in a CCC matriculation manual is:

Matriculation Advisory Committee (MAC) members, particularly the regional representatives, are instrumental in providing policy and programmatic advice to the Chancellor's Office and are an essential link between the Chancellor's Office and the community college regions. It is the responsibility of the regional and representatives to ensure that recommendations affecting policy and implementation of Matriculation components and processes are communicated to their local constituents in the colleges. MAC members are required to attend up to three MAC meetings a year (CCCCO, 2013e, p. 16)

The regional-state committee functions as the connector between the state and the district level committees; there was no evidence that new policies or new regulations were

developed at this layer in the analysis. Required attendance of three meetings per year also provides evidence of the level of activity that this policy body serves. This finding was supported by an excerpt from the District Governance Handbook: “Updates the committee on the latest news from the State Chancellor’s Office (via report from Region Representative).” Compared to the state layer, the regional-state layer does not function as a powerful legal, regulatory, or advisory actor, and there was no evidence that actors in this layer are a major source of influencing matriculation services for language minority students.

District.

Document review of district-level texts found that ESL was positioned as remedial by definition. The definition of remedial in the administrative regulations of the district office for Sage Community College contains the following excerpt:

“Remedial coursework” refers to courses having both a non degree-applicable and basic skills designation in the areas of reading, writing, computation, and English as a Second Language.

This shapes matriculation services for language minority students for Sage Community College, because it places ESL as remedial and separate from regular college coursework. This separation affects targeted *ESL components* of courses or *ESL components of English programs* which might be beneficial to US-educated Language Minority (USLM) students otherwise referred to as “generation 1.5”. This policy can be interpreted as having a potentially limiting effect on pedagogical innovation for students who are essentially bilingual, in the case of USLM students. This positioning of ESL as remedial might inhibit the development of non-remedial college-level ESL supplemental instruction or other programming that would be targeted to the needs of language

minority students. Such pedagogical experiments would benefit from not carrying the label of being remedial. Oropeza et al. (2010) found that various labels such as ESL and remedial served to highlight deficits for students in educational contexts.

Furthermore, ESL professional organizations have argued that ESL is not remedial. California Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (CATESOL) argued that “ESL instruction is often mistakenly viewed as remedial rather than as a legitimate discipline” (2000, p. 5). Ultimately, the perception of ESL as remedial or not likely affects student matriculation decisions because of stigma and faculty program development activity as well as unclear understanding of the discipline of ESL. The defining of ESL remains an unresolved conflict between the professional community and district definitions according to documents reviewed.

Campus.

Document review of campus goals have uncovered a focus not found in any other layers of the policy onion. The Sage Community College Educational Master Plan document expressed a focus on pedagogy. The following excerpt demonstrates a focus on localization through teaching methodology:

One of Sage Community College core goals is to increase student success and academic excellence through student centered instruction, student-centered support services, and dynamic technologies. Intrinsic in this goal is the need to utilize effective and promising pedagogy that target the needs of the underrepresented students that Sage Community College serves. While the college has made many efforts to increase the use of effective pedagogy, it has never established a systematic way of assessing the use and efficacy of these effective pedagogical strategies.

The Sage Community College Strategic Plan, another long-term planning document recently completed, contains several goals which shape matriculation services for all students including language minority students:

Goal 1: Sage Community College will increase awareness of the educational opportunities available and expand access to vocational, transfer, basic skills and lifelong learning programs among all populations in the service area, including those that have been traditionally underserved by institutions of higher education.

Goal 2: Sage Community College will place student learning at the center of all endeavors by creating a vibrant learning community that offers challenging, student-centered courses and programs taught in a variety of “state-of-the-art” modes and means of delivery. Engaged, professional faculty and staff, who expect the best from themselves and from their students, will work together to identify and eliminate barriers to student success and enhance critical thinking, student engagement, persistence, and goal attainment—including transfer to four-year institutions, job and career preparation and placement, basic skills improvement, and lifelong learning.

Goal 3: Sage Community College will foster a culture of planning and accountability by establishing clear strategic goals, assessing the effectiveness of efforts to meet these goals and reporting of results to internal constituencies, the District, the Board of Trustees and to the community on a regular basis. The college will provide high quality, reliable and relevant college data to use as a basis for informed program, department, division, and college-level decision-making. The college will improve administrative systems and customer service through the establishment of more streamlined procedures and through improved access to information.

These goals reflect a concern for meeting local needs, including those of students who have been traditionally underserved. These plans have shaped local matriculation services through faculty participation in this goal-setting process. The data generated by the campus-level strategic planning will also affect program decision-making. These goals reflect a commitment to fostering student success by removing barriers.

Another important goal-setting document that reflects matriculation services at the campus level is the matriculation report. Sage Community College files a matriculation report annually. The most recent Sage Community College matriculation plan included the following updated goals:

1. Utilize computerized information services to implement or support counseling/advising activities.

2. Support the continued research on Sage Community College's English, Math, English as a Second Language, and Chemistry assessment instruments.
3. To offer adequate matriculation services with appropriate staffing.

These goals reflect an increase in automation and continued work on assessment instruments. These goals view research on assessment instruments as an ongoing process and hint at finding ways to increase staff support. These goals shape matriculation services by allowing for continued optimization and improvement of assessment practices for all students, including ESL students.

To summarize, documents reviewed at the campus level reflect a concern with meeting the needs of a diverse population through pedagogy and ongoing improvement in assessment services. In contrast to the state layer, the campus layers reflected a care for localization and community understanding.

Department.

The curricular plans for language minority students as expressed through the texts from the department layer of the onion were found to be confusing. The relationship between ESL and English was not defined. There should be a relationship between the two in terms of curriculum and that should be communicated clearly. Another complication was that some parts of the curriculum were not required as part of the curricular sequence. The English department, which houses the ESL program, introduces prospective students to their curricular options in the following way:

Students who do not qualify for college level English courses have many options to improve their reading, vocabulary, grammar and writing skills. Reading 20, English 21, 26, and 28 are designed to prepare English-speaking students for English 101. Students who speak English as second language should take the ESL assessment to see if they place in levels 3, 4, 5, or 6. Students are advised to take ESL Reading and ESL Conversations classes to better prepare for college courses in English and other disciplines.

The curricular sequence provided lacks a clear progression through the ESL course or an explanation of how ESL students could progress to the English sequence. Some sequences are numbered in two digits and other numbers are in single digits. It was unclear why “Reading” was separated from “English.” The relationship between Reading, ESL, and English is unclear.

The curricular plan shapes expectations on campus for all students including language minority students. The curriculum should be more navigable; additional documents reviewed for this analysis support this finding. Curriculum maps are not clearly diagrammed for students. In particular, it was difficult to understand how an ESL student might move from the ESL curricular sequence over to the English curricular sequence. This would be important since it is the goal of many international students—and departments are aware of this.

The above findings from the department level of the policy onion end the data analysis related to the first research question. Each layer of the policy onion, from the national to the department level, has contributed to explication of the complexity of the policy and planning process. To conclude, Section I analyzed the published and codified goals from documents and across the layers of the policy onion. The next section will build on this policy backdrop and delve into the local practices carried out by community college personnel.

Section II. Interview/Transcript Analysis and Document Analysis

The second research question in this dissertation study addressed the current practice of matriculation services for language minority students in the research setting. In contrast to the document analysis completed for the first research question, the

findings for the second research question were derived from both interview transcript data and document/text data.

2. Within the research setting, how are matriculation services for language minority students carried out in practice?

In order to address the issue of the how matriculation services are carried out in practice and not solely “on paper” in the research setting, nine interviews were conducted on the campus of Sage Community College. The interviews were conducted on a one-on-one basis. The interviews were structured, but also allowed for open-ended responses. At the end of each interview, participants were asked to share copies of documents that reflected current practices or pending reform. The interviews were held on the campus of Sage Community College during work hours in the offices of the participants. See Table 4 for a list of participants and their work division.

Table 4

Table of Participants and Division

Participant	Division
1. Administrator	Student Services
2. Administrator (Chair)	Student Services
3. Administrator (Matriculation)	Student Services
4. Faculty (Counseling)	Student Services
5. Faculty (English)	Academic Affairs
6. Faculty (ESL)	Academic Affairs
7. Faculty (ESL Noncredit)	Workforce Education & Economic Development
8. Administrator (Institutional Research)	Academic Affairs
9. Staff (Academic Support Program)	Academic Affairs

Research invitations were sent to 12 members of the campus community asking for voluntary participation; 3 potential participants declined. The process of interviewing began with a high level administrator, at the Vice President level, and proceeded in snowball or network sampling fashion (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008) based on referrals from participants.

The vice president-level administrator offered a campus-wide view of student needs and patterns. The matriculation services coordinator was obviously a key administrator for this study. The matriculation service coordinator was interviewed about each part of matriculation services. Two counselors were interviewed to learn about how students were advised during the matriculation process; this usually takes place after a

student takes an assessment test. The faculty-administrators from the Department of English and the ESL Program were interviewed to learn about the role of curriculum development and the work of developing assessment cut-off scores. The faculty-administrator for the Non-credit English program was interviewed to understand the relationship between all of the programs available to incoming students (English, ESL and Noncredit ESL). A staff member from the Learning Resource Center was interviewed as a way to get a non-faculty perspective on the matriculation process from a unit that provides direct services to students, such as tutoring. Finally, the institutional research director's perspective was critical in gaining insight into data patterns related to matriculation services.

Once all nine interviews were completed, the interviews were transcribed. Faculty and staff names were redacted. Pseudonyms were substituted for the participants' names. The pseudonym of Sage Community College was substituted for the actual name of the community college under study.

See Appendix C for the research protocols developed for administrators, see Appendix D for the interview protocol developed for faculty members, and see Appendix E for the interview protocol developed for staff members. All participants were interviewed with similarly constructed research protocols. All participants were asked about: (a) their campus work roles, (b) the use of terminology used to classify language minority students, (c) processes for identifying and assessing new students, (d) processes for counseling and placement, (e) reform efforts affecting matriculation services, and (f) furnishing relevant documents for analysis.

Generally, descriptions of current practices were given by participants as responses to specific questions about current practices. However, in some cases, issues of *future* practices and reform emerged during the discussion of *current* practices. The responses about current practices were analyzed for the second research question; responses concerning the *reform* of matriculation services will be addressed in section III of this chapter.

The findings for the second research question will be presented in the order they appeared in the interview protocol process: (a) terminology/classification, (b) identification, (c) assessment, and (d) placement/counseling. Each of these sections will contain illustrative excerpts from the interview transcripts. The interviewer, me, will be denoted by “interviewer,” and the interviewee will be denoted by an interviewee category. The following interview categories will be used: “administrator,” “faculty-administrator,” “counselor,” or “staff.” Although counseling personnel are faculty members in the campus context, the term counselor will be used to highlight their role in the matriculation process.

Terminology and classification.

No uniform or agreed upon set of terms was found in the research setting to describe the language diversity of the student population at Sage Community College. There was very little mention of so-called “generation 1.5” students either in interviews or in documents. When language minority students were talked about, they were often described in an “either/or” way: ESL/ENL or native/nonnative speaker.

The following excerpt illustrates the lack of an established taxonomy for language minority students in the research setting.

Interviewer: In your office what formal terms are to refer to students whose primary language is not English?

Administrator: Honestly it doesn't come up much in terms of identifying students. Most of the time where we are using terms like ESL we are referring to curriculum or placement levels. So I would say for the most part when we are describing students we are describing a characteristic based on the curriculum. So, you know these are ESL students by the testing. Most of the time though if we were to be writing a description we usually use nonnative speaker or sometimes English language learner, depending on what we are writing.

This sample exchange reflects what other researchers learned about the administration of matriculation services for language minority students in the community college context. Bunch et al. (2011) found that there was no official system of classification for language minority students in the CCC system compared to the state's K-12 schools. This issue is raised because addressing the needs of students who vary in terms of language ability and academic skills, and providing the services they need, is presumably more difficult if there is confusion among staff about how to talk about students and their abilities. The finding is that, in absence of an established taxonomy or set of guiding descriptors, campus personnel used a variety of terms. Many participants talked about students in an either/or way as in the following excerpt.

Interviewer: In the district or on campus what formal terms are used to refer to students whose primarily language is not English?

Counselor: I can only think of it in terms of the assessment. There are two of them, the native speakers and the non-native speakers. And students self-select which assessment they want to take. That's the only distinction I can think of.

This response corroborates the pattern of the established dichotomy. Bunch and Panayotova (2008) found the same either/or pattern in their study of 16 community colleges in central California and the San Francisco Bay Area. One interpretation is that the established curriculum has not kept pace with the changing linguistic demographics.

Although research has documented a more complicated picture of language use and academic abilities, with the identification of USLMs for example, the community college structures still reflect an ESL or English curriculum and assessment structure. Students are categorized as either English or ESL.

Identification.

From the perspective of the administration, students need to be identified through different assessment and diagnostic techniques in order to guide them to the academic programs and resources that meet their needs. A critical point in the matriculation process is the necessity for students to choose between taking two assessment instruments: the “ESL” and “ENL.” In practice, some students take *both* assessment tests. Analysis of interview responses and artifacts in the research show that Sage Community College provides support for students in deciding which assessment test to take. The decision of which test to take is not entirely up to the student alone despite being described as a “self-selection” process. Participants’ responses reflected a practice of *institutionally guided assessment* that takes place with (a) a paper booklet with sample test questions and (b) an intake/screening experience.

Students are given a paper booklet titled “Sage Community College Assessment Sample Test Questions” when they arrive at the matriculation office. The booklet contains the following explanation under the heading of “assessment components and preparation”:

Each student will choose among two English exams: English as a Native Language and English as a Second Language (ESL). Each test is untimed and is designed for placement into English or ESL English courses. Students may be referred to take additional assessments.

Students are often expected to complete the sample questions and then return to the assessment office. Participants commented that they wanted to avoid having students being “cold tested”—that is, taking an assessment before getting warmed up with sample questions. In the following excerpt a matriculation administrator describes the intake experience component of the *institutionally guided assessment*.

Interviewer: Can you describe the process that a new student experiences as they move through the matriculation process?

Administrator: Most of them are non-exempt, meaning they have to go through some process, through the matriculation, so the next step then in assessment [process] is they are given sample test questions. Or, they are directed to get the sample test questions coming in and get them, whichever works, and then they have to come in and take the assessment test. It's not a scheduled test. It's just a lab entry. They just come in when the lab is open for them to take the test. . . . So then the students come in and we have them fill out more paperwork to find out if they did the application because you know we've got to screen them, and then we ask them well did you go through the sample test questions cause we want them to prepare a little bit.

This excerpt was evidence that the *institutionally guided assessment* was an organized process. There was evidence of defined rules for exempt and non-exempt students as well as set procedures for all students. Students were expected to review sample questions after a first visit, to complete forms, and to confirm to the matriculation staff that they had taken sample questions. This process of guided self-selection is likely to have been developed out of a student-centered perspective because several participants expressed concern over students not performing well because of “testing cold.”

The *institutionally guided assessment* process appeared to have been developed to make sure students were aware of the potential consequences for underperforming on the assessment exam. Sage Community College personnel were helping students become aware of the content of assessment exams through sample questions and presumably the

high stakes nature of the assessment exam as well. Students were made aware of the fact that assessment exam results were final; they were not allowed to immediately retest.

This finding will be discussed in the next subsection.

Assessment.

Data analysis revealed another element of matriculation that contributed to the high stakes nature of the assessment process. Students at Sage Community College must wait a year before re-taking an assessment test. Many participants did not know the origin of this policy, and they offered varied explanations. The rule, from the Sage Community College General Catalog was as follows:

Students will not be allowed to retest within one calendar-year from test date. Assessment placement results must indicate assessment was completed within the last two years at Sage Community College or any other California Community College in order to be accepted.

This policy has increased the importance of students doing well on their assessment exams on their first attempt. Students are not allowed to retake the assessment test during the first year as a student. Bunch and Panayotova (2008) found that “misplacement can have a profound negative impact” (p. 9) on student community college achievement. Students get “one shot” at it. The *institutionally guided assessment* process was apparently designed to let students know that doing well is critical to getting off to a good start.

Because students are not allowed to retake the assessment exam under this one-year policy, their only other option is to take a challenge exam. According to participants’ explanations, the challenge exam could be considered as a workaround developed by the department. At the department level, students are allowed to use a challenge petition process to get a new placement rather than to wait a year to retest.

Moore and Shulock (2010) have established that completion of college-level English early in a college career increases the chances of students completing academic programs. It is no surprise that students who place low on the assessment exam often use the challenge petition process to move up higher in the course sequence. Interestingly, participants were not confident in identifying the origin of the “one-year” policy as a district policy or a campus policy. However, there was agreement across some participants that one of the rationales for the policy was because of cost.

Administrator: It’s very expensive to test students. Not including the staffing, the hardware, the time, the space, just the tests themselves can sometimes range around \$7.00 per student, which doesn’t sound like a lot but when you figure that we test over ten thousand students a year, it can really add up and that is just for the English or ESL side.

This finding was surprising given that the assessment exam is computerized. It was not immediately clear to this researcher why individual offerings of a test would incur fees as opposed to fees incurred through a different software agreement. A computerized test removes the need to have printed exams and writing utensils. A closer look at the challenge exam process reveals the costs of paperwork and faculty review:

Interviewer: Can you describe an example of one student who challenged their placement?

Faculty-Administrator: Again ESL students or international students in general, if they have limited time on their visa, they are anxious to make as much progress as possible. So that person would go and get the challenge petition from admissions, bring it back, it’s approved. They do an essay. They have fifty minutes to do an essay to demonstrate that they would be okay at that next level. That essay is read by three ESL instructors and either approved or not approved for going up.

The challenge process was found to be related to the one-year time limit policy. This excerpt reflects the sense of urgency that some students have. From the student perspective it would seem unreasonable to have to wait a year to be able to take an

assessment again, especially if the results could seriously hinder your changes for timely program completion.

The challenge process involves staff and faculty time as well. The challenge petition form is straightforward. Students check the box on the form with the following description:

I have completed a Sage Community College assessment and wish to appeal the placement level. (Scores must be attached). Submit to appropriate department.

This form is widely available for students to find. Processing such paper forms also comes at an administrative cost, just as reviewing exams comes at the cost of faculty time. Ultimately, rethinking this policy begins with understanding the official origin and rationale for the policy.

Resistance to proposed statewide assessment.

Although there was no consistent evidence of resistance against the one-year limit on taking an assessment exam, there was evidence of resistance to the proposed statewide common assessment instruments for ESL.

Interviewer: What have you heard about having a common assessment instrument?

Faculty-Administrator: The one that's supposedly being developed by the state? Yeah, people are really against that from the beginning from what I heard locally. I don't know. I think there is some rationale for having a little more consistency across offerings but I'm not sure where people stand. Probably most people are still kind of against any imposed assessment, but assessment is an issue.

In this excerpt, the faculty-administrator hints at opposition to the top-down nature of the proposed change as well as emphasizing that assessment is an area in need of attention.

This is an example of what Hornberger and Johnson (2007) referred to as resistance from individuals who work in the field to proposed/enacted policies from the macrolayers of

the policy onion. Time will tell how this proposed effort will play out at the state level given the resistance found at the campus level.

Placement/Counseling.

Placement into courses was consistently described as done by results of the assessment instruments. There was little discussion of the use of “multiple measures” to assess students at Sage Community College. Placement into the established curriculum is done by the scores a student receives on the assessment exam. That was consistently the reply.

Interviewer: How do all first year students get placed into courses?

Faculty-Administrator: Through assessment—it’s very simple.

Interviewer: Alright. How do non-native speakers get placed into courses?

Faculty-Administrator: Through assessment.

Because the results of the assessment exams are very important to a student’s first-year experience, it is important to uncover empirical evidence of the use of multiple measures in the community colleges. The lack of evidence of multiple measures has been found by other researchers. Bunch and Panatoyova (2008) found in their study that, despite the codified requirements for multiple measures, “placement tests seem to dominate policy discussions surrounding assessment in the chancellor’s guidelines, college Web sites, and our conversations with college personnel” (p. 17). As mentioned in Section I, the goals of state-level matriculation reform include modifying Title 5 regulations to include the definition and to communicate the importance of multiple measures. Despite empirical evidence that indicates the importance of the use of multiple measures, the theme of multiple measures persists in codified documents.

The following section of data analysis, Section III, will focus on matriculation reform efforts.

Section III- Interview/Transcript Analysis/Document Analysis

The third research question in this dissertation sought to uncover the policy and practice changes as a result of recent reform efforts.

3. Due to reform efforts in California Community Colleges, how are matriculation services for language minority students undergoing policy or practice changes in the research setting?

The findings for the third research question were derived from interview transcript data and document/text data as in the second research question. All participants were asked about reform efforts and ongoing changes to matriculation reform in the second half of their interviews. The answers to these questions underwent a coding and recoding process in order to reveal emerging patterns of reform.

The documents collected included artifacts such as emails from statewide email lists forwarded from participants, student educational plan handouts collected from the research setting, and student data reports furnished by participants. All artifacts that were not received as digitized documents were scanned and imported into the qualitative analysis software for coding.

The purpose of the third research question was to find out which components of matriculation services were undergoing reform and to connect those changes, if possible, to the reform efforts documented through data collection. Matriculation services have been defined in this dissertation to include (a) terminology, (b) classification, (c) identification, (d) assessment, and (e) placement students.

Data show that reform has largely taken place in the assessment and placement components of matriculation. The analysis of data has revealed two major sources of reform external to the campus: the Student Success Act of 2012 (SB1456) and the Achieving the Dream Initiative. There was evidence of ongoing reform on campus not tied to these two, external to the campus initiatives; the source of those reforms was attributed to the campus administration. The following subsections will describe the evidence of reform from the (a) Student Success Act of 2012 (SB1456), (b) the Achieving the Dream Initiative, and (c) campus reform.

Student Success Act of 2012.

The two most significant changes to matriculation practices empirically identified on the campus of Sage Community College came as a result of the Student Success Act of 2012, hereafter referred to as SB 1456. The first reform finding is the introduction of pre-enrollment services, which are connected to the campus' funding model:

As required by SB 1456, the proposed credit funding formula includes the following elements: Establishes a 40/60 split for the allocation of funds based on headcount enrollment and services provided.

These new regulations will require community college counselors to conduct Abbreviated Student Educational Plans (SEP) and to document the students that they serve as a part of a new funding model. See Figure 3 for digital image of the proposed funding model and note that three double-asterisked tasks of “Initial Orientation, Initial Assessment, and Abbreviated SEP”:

Figure 3. Proposed Funding Model Based in Part on Services Provided

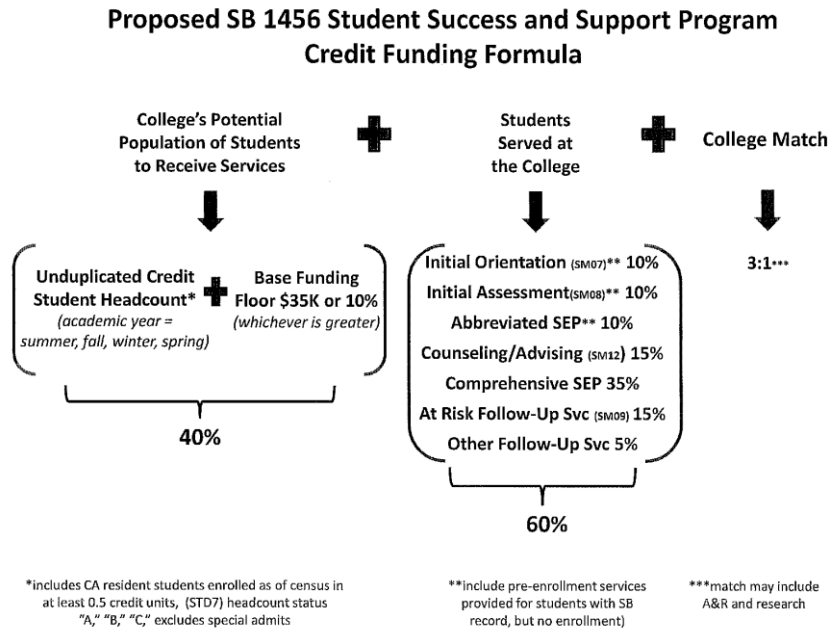


Figure 3. This is a proposed funding model based in part on the services provided (CCCCO, 2013f).

Counselors at Sage Community College were found to have started developing ways to meet these proposed new requirements. Prior to this proposed change in the practice and funding model, students would normally develop an educational plan earlier, at the time of registration or after registration in the first semester. The following excerpt is an example of a change in counseling practices:

Interviewer: Tell me about that.

Counselor: Because of the new bill, Senate Bill 1456, where the students are going to have to do the application, orientation, abbreviated SEP before they can get their registration date. So now we are trying to incorporate having that abbreviated student [educational] plan within the orientation right after the hour orientation is given, and then we'll give them general information, but on a form that they can follow. It's the same information we've been giving, but on a piece of paper now in order for them to say and it goes over the English, the math, general education patterns that they might be following for AA or transfer.

This response reflected a change in practice, but it also confirmed that counseling activities needed to be documented on paper forms. See Figure 4 for an image of a Student Educational Plan, an artifact collected in the research setting.

Figure 4. Sage Community College Student Educational Plan Form

Name: _____ Student ID# _____ Date: _____
Last First MI

Major: _____ Transfer to: _____ Catalog Year: _____

<input type="checkbox"/> Plan A	<input type="checkbox"/> CSU GE	COMP	IP	UNITS
<input type="checkbox"/> Plan B	<input type="checkbox"/> IGETC			
<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER				

Educational Objective: Certificate AA/AS Degree Transfer **Placement:**
 Other College(s) attended: No Yes **Eng.** _____ **Math:** _____

Referrals: Career Ctr. Child Dev. Ctr. DSPS Enrollment Ctr. Fin Aid
 Int'l Students Learning Ctr. EOPS Univ. Center Other: _____

<input type="checkbox"/> FALL <input type="checkbox"/> SPRING		UNITS	<input type="checkbox"/> FALL <input type="checkbox"/> SPRING		UNITS	<input type="checkbox"/> FALL <input type="checkbox"/> SPRING		UNITS
<input type="checkbox"/> WINTER <input type="checkbox"/> SUMMER			<input type="checkbox"/> WINTER <input type="checkbox"/> SUMMER			<input type="checkbox"/> WINTER <input type="checkbox"/> SUMMER		
20 _____			20 _____			20 _____		
TOTAL			TOTAL			TOTAL		

Major Req./Electives		COMP	IP	UNITS
TOTAL				

Notes: _____

Figure 4. Sample of a Sage Community College Student Educational Plan Form.

The Student Educational Plan form is a duplicate form in which the content from the top copy is transferred through to the copy below through the pressure of writing. The yellow copy is for the student; the white copy is for the file. From the student perspective, this creates a new opportunity to plan. It is interesting to note the absence of ESL on the planning form. Participants repeatedly mentioned the existence of ESL and ENL placement. Through these forms, students will have an opportunity to plan before registration and then again, in theory, during the first semester. This change in practice

related to the *draft proposal* has a direct effect on students—it increases the number of potential educational planning experiences during the first year of a student’s career.

Achieving the Dream Initiative.

By many accounts, the Achieving the Dream Initiative has been very successful in creating a data-conscious and inquiry-driven approach to making progress toward student success. In the following excerpt an administrator explains the effect of thinking as a data driven institution:

Administrator: Let’s say you receive some data and it shows a student success gap. OK, only 50% of our students are passing [a particular] ESL course. The immediate, like model, that faculty work with is “OK, let’s fix that.” Let’s come up with some models to fix the fact that only 50% of people [are passing]. What they never stop to ask is why are only 50% [are passing], so they just to move to solutions without actually investigating problem. So the one thing I would say the Achieving the Dream did really well was to focus on what [faculty name] used to refer to as the why-data. Forget about the what-data. We’ve been looking at the what for a long time. We all know what the problems are, but what we seldom have time to do is to really investigate why the problems exist. And that is where the qualitative data, focus groups and the student videos really came in because people had been what-ed to death but nobody had ever talked about why. And so when you start to see the why data the curriculum realignment became an easier sell.

Using data to help solve problems was a common theme in the description of the effect of Achieving the Dream on matriculation practices. Faculty talked about the importance using data to guide decisions about cut-off scores. Administrators talked about the importance of data in terms of planning for different student populations. Participants attributed this new practice to the Achieving the Dream activities, which included on-campus conferences, off-campus conferences, and on-site meetings with Achieving the Dream staff members. The finding of increased emphasis on developing a research capacity is interesting given that community colleges have not been historically designated as research institutions. The Master Plan for Higher Education designated the

University of California system as a research institution (UC, Office of the President, 2011).

Campus reform.

Data analysis found that the campus leadership's decision to move several program offices together into the same physical building has increased cooperation and the potential for continued cooperation among campus personnel.

Interviewer: There was also a discussion in both non-credit and in ESL looking forward to the new building and looking forward to sharing resources being on similar floors. How did that come about?

Administrator: Well, for one thing, I'd like to say we did some good planning in terms of who would be in what building and for the most part that's true. Although there is some mismatch in some of the buildings, for instance, that building in particular is going to have English non-credit. It's going to have the learning center, the writing lab, the reading lab, the non-credit lab and then it's going to have speech and ethnic studies.

Because of the many challenges facing the matriculation of language minority students, having all of the program facilities and faculty physically in the same building will have a potential long-term effect on faculty collaboration as well as helping students with diverse needs find resources in the same area of campus. The decision by campus leadership to bring commonly accessed services for students physically together was consistently praised by research participants. In the following excerpt, a counselor explained why keeping certain offices close to each physically on campus was important for the efficiency of delivering student services.

Administrator: So now that most of our students are in one building, it's helped to collaborate with our other departments, meeting-wise, seeing people. We can walk the student over ourselves to financial [aid] and connect with someone if there is an issue with them, can you help them right now? Instead of sending them, a student might not go to the financial aid office if they have a ten-minute walk—you know if we are not able to take them directly. It was an issue with orientations as well, losing appoint times because we had to walk across campus

to do an orientation somewhere else. So we learned from that, hold them closer to our office, yet students weren't coming out to us for those orientations because it was so far away. Counseling appointments were always filled no matter where we were but that travel time, five, ten-minute walk across campus impacted, getting to an orientation on time, we lose an appointment. Getting back to your appointment, you might lose another appointment slot so you are talking ten to twenty appointments per week, lost because of our location, time.

Moving core matriculation services offices physically near each created a benefit for students. They received services more quickly under the guidance of counseling faculty. From the perspective of efficiency, many counseling appointments would be lost because of the time it took for counselors to conduct orientation sessions. With the proposed emphasis on increasing the delivery of Student Education Plans, the efficiency of counselors is very important. Structuring the physical resources of the community college campus can affect the number of students receiving services. Although there was evidence that the arrangement of physical and human resources was for the purposes of collaboration on common student issues, there were also comments from participants that signaled a lack of particular focus on language minority student issues.

In the following excerpt, an administrator discussed the lack of focus on ESL in issues in the recent past:

Interviewer: Is there anything else that you think would be helpful to share in terms of understanding the current policies context?

Administrator: I would think that it would be useful to mention when you look at the policies that have been developed at the state level the rather absence of non-native speakers as a group. I mean like I said they mention ESL in terms of the curriculum and the placement but in the student success initiative there is nothing really focused on non-native speakers, which given the demographic of our state I would see as a gap in our recommendations. One which I probably didn't recognize until I was talking with you, but you see similar things when the state laws come down is that. There has really been less of a focus on ESL.

This commentary from the institutional research administrator conveyed that although the student population data warranted the attention, non-native speakers and ESL students were not prioritized in any recent top-down initiatives by the state. As researchers have pointed out, however, the majority of language minority students, referred to as English Learners (EL) in the K-12 system, used to be centered in places such as the southwest (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010, p. 9). The “most rapid growth in English learners is now occurring in some of the southern states—Georgia, Alabama, Arkansas and Tennessee” (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010, p. 10). Addressing language minority student issues here in California on a grand scale could provide a model to other regions in the country.

The Sage Community College administration and faculty should be credited for giving specific attention to language minority issues at the local level in planning documents. Milestones for ESL student success were made a part of their strategic planning efforts. Sage Community College added the percentage of ESL students moving into native language speaking courses within 3 years as one of their data benchmarks.

In addition to offering insight into institutional priorities, data analysis uncovered faculty-driven initiatives. Faculty members at the department level discussed several fledgling programs that could be considered examples of faculty-generated “bottom-up” plans. Faculty mentioned plans to (a) pair ESL with academic content and (b) rewrite curriculum to reflect a “bridge” from the Non-Credit ESL course sequence to the English course sequence. The following excerpt was an example of campus level reform initiated by faculty.

Faculty-Administrator: We are looking at starting to pair our ESL classes with content classes on campus. Other campuses are ahead of us like [*Name of*

Community College] has done that for many semesters already. We are just starting to.

It was common for faculty and administrators to comment on how developments at their colleges either fell behind or led other campuses within the district. Some campuses were perceived as being ahead of others in terms of meeting the needs of language minority students. In general, evidence of such campus level reform was weak, partly due to the resources and effort documented through large-scale programs such as the Student Success Act and the Achieving the Dream Initiative. Faculty expressed a need for support and for expertise to help carry out their planned changes.

The reporting of findings from campus reform efforts concludes Section III of the third chapter. The next and final section of the chapter will present unifying themes across the findings and also provide a summary of the findings from all research questions.

Unifying Data Themes

Three unifying themes emerged across the data types and research questions:

1. Language minority student issues were not central to any ongoing major reform efforts.
2. Direct services to students during the matriculation process changed very little despite many ongoing reform efforts.
3. Community college personnel need a new framework to address language minority students.

These unifying themes will be explained in the following subsections.

Language Minority Issues not a Priority in Reform.

One of the unifying data themes is that language minority students are not prioritized as a major component of contemporary reform efforts. Despite an increasing population in students from language minority backgrounds, there does not seem to be an increased direct emphasis upon this population in terms of matriculation practices. This absence was evident in both the document reviews and interviews conducted in this study. The planning and policy documents collected, reviewed, and systematically analyzed indicated a lack of direct emphasis on language minority student issues. While these documents did indicate general goals in reform efforts in relation to students' race, socioeconomic status, and students of color in addressing matriculation issues, they did not specifically address issues associated with language minority students.

Race, socioeconomic status, students of color, and traditionally underserved students were addressed across the layers of the policy onion. Race and socioeconomic status were used in initiative rhetoric and administrative publications as opposed to expressions of language diversity, bilingualism, or multilingualism. For example, in eschewing localization in favor of statewide assessment, policy makers did not address the needs of language minority students, which vary geographically. Participants in this study articulated the absence of this focus.

Matriculation Services Largely Unchanged.

The second unifying theme is that despite several multi-year initiatives across several layers of the language policy onion, there have been very few changes made to any *direct services* that students receive during the matriculation process. State law has incentivized student behavior and has increased data reporting requirements. The CCC system has proposed renaming and reconstituting matriculation services. The California

Legislature will require new data reporting requirements. However, none of these changes have affected the matriculation services that students will receive. Priority registration will affect students after the matriculation process. Proposed changes and speculation about proposed regulations have encouraged staff to rethink the deployment of Student Educational Plans.

There were no major changes to the matriculation process uncovered in this study. Most of the changes were minor. In the words of one of the participants: “We’ve been doing that all this time. It’s just that our tracking of it. Our documentation of it is going to be the challenging part.” The results of much of reform efforts for matriculation services have been to increase the data collection requirements for staff who have signaled through planning documents that they are struggling to provide services, given their current resources.

Transformational reform in student matriculation services has yet to occur within the community college context examined. Reform efforts have impacted administrative functioning related to student matriculation services but have yet to be implemented at the actual student matriculation experience level. There has been an increase in activity regarding the documentation of reform efforts, but not in the implementation of such reform efforts in ways that affect student services. The few changes made to matriculation services were not being made in concert with other areas of matriculation services or within the curriculum.

New Framework Needed to Address Language Minority Issues.

The third and final unifying theme is that faculty and administrators were without the resources needed to bolster reform for the language diversity in the community.

Community college personnel lacked a consistent taxonomy and well-defined relationships between ESL/English curriculum models. In reference to taxonomy, there was a lack of agreed upon nomenclature for discussion of language minority students. For example, some study participants used an ESL ENL distinction, while others referred to language minority students as “generation 1.5,” and still others categorized language minority students as English Learners (ELs) and international students.

New faculty members were described as well versed in current theory while veteran teachers were not. There was a call by participants for exemplary models of ESL programs at the community college level. For example, faculty members were working on defining how the ESL and English curriculum overlap and on building a curricular “bridge” from noncredit ESL to English. Lack of agreement in the field about second language acquisition might be contributing to the problem (Abedi, 2008). Abedi pointed out that behavioral, innatist, cognitive, and social interactive theorists do not agree on fundamental second language acquisition issues. The participants seemed to be without a strong unifying framework, a framework that included a set of agreed upon nomenclature and curricular models. Such a matriculation/curriculum framework will be needed to develop improved programming and revised curriculum in the spirit of meeting the needs of language minority students.

Summary of Findings

This purpose of this chapter was to present all of the data analysis findings and to answer the research questions posed in chapter 1. Two modes of analysis were employed. In Section I, a document review was conducted. Sections II and III employed

an analysis composed of interview transcripts a document review. The following subsections will summarize the findings.

Section I findings.

There were many avenues for reform and influence found through the exploration of documents in Section I. Evidence of top-down power was concentrated at the state level in the form of ad hoc committees, administrative positions, and legislators. Evidence of bottom-up agency was located at the department level with faculty interdepartmental and intradepartmental efforts. Increasing student success is a large-scale problem because of the size of the CCC system. Evidence of statewide problem-solving as opposed to a regional approach was found. Participation was complex and anarchical. There were several different actors unmasked in the policy process such as the influential Consultation Council.

Espoused goals alluded to the race and socio-economic status of students; however, non-English heritage languages or language minority students were not explicitly acknowledged across the macrolevels of policy-making. Macrolevel policymaking reflected a trend against local ESL assessment and toward uniform statewide ESL assessment. Proposed policy changes at the state level created the potential for innovation in curriculum and administrative responses geared toward language minority students.

Section II findings.

Findings from Section II uncovered local matriculation practices. At the campus level, separate assessment and curricula pathways for ESL and ENL were maintained without a clear description of the relationship between “English” in the ESL context and

“English” in the ENL context. The curricular pathway for taking ESL and then moving on to English was not clear either. Campus personnel struggled with planning and addressing language minority students’ needs without having an agreed-upon set of definitions and concepts.

The de facto processes developed to support student decision making by language minority students, or the institutionally guided assessment, might or might not have been helpful for students’ first year success. The quality of pre-assessment advisement for language minority students was a shared concern by community college personnel; everyone was aware of the high stakes. Faculty and administrators dedicated several semesters to adjusting cut-off scores for the ESL assessment instrument. Faculty and administrators varied in their explanations of the one-year retesting policy for assessment.

Section III findings.

Findings from Section III uncovered reform activity from the national, statewide, and campus levels. Students will potentially have an increased opportunity for planning their first year as community college students because of the increased importance of student educational plans. Administrators and counselors were found to be planning for funding models that explicitly factor in the matriculation services provided to students. Faculty members were at the beginning stages of exploring new ideas to foster student success. Faculty and administrators credited participating in the Achieving the Dream Initiatives for developing a new focus on data-driven decision-making on campus. Campus reform efforts were credited with making it easier for faculty and staff to collaborate across departments and student services. Despite discussion of several

curricular innovation and matriculation services reform, very few components of matriculation were undergoing reform due to formal statewide or national initiatives.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions

The present study set out to explore matriculation services reform and its effect, if any, on language minority students. The purpose of this research was to support the development of systemwide reform efforts that prioritize language minority student issues. This qualitative case study examined matriculation policy goals, current practices, and reform efforts in a large community college in Southern California. This final dissertation chapter will provide an (a) overview of the study including limitations, (b) considerations for policy, (c) considerations for practice, (d) consideration for reform, (e) recommendations for future research, and (f) final conclusions.

Overview of the Study

The future student body of California's community colleges, the nation's largest higher education system, is projected to be composed of an increasing number of nonnative English speakers (Rumberger, 2005), often referred to as language minority students. Language minority students have been described by various institutional labels, including English as a Second Language (ESL), US-educated Language Minorities (USLM) (Bunch et al., 2011), and international students. A review of the literature has uncovered that until recently the language minority population has been understudied in the community college context. The purpose of this study was to contribute to the empirical body of research and to contribute to the development of new educational models that support language minority student success.

Specifically, this study (a) documented the policy context that encapsulated one community college campus which served as a case study, (b) described how matriculation services for language minority students were carried out in a community

college setting, and (c) documented the components of matriculation services undergoing reform in the community college setting.

The specific research questions developed to guide the inquiry were:

1. *What are the goals of the codified policies and plans that shape matriculation services for language minority students in the research setting?*
2. *Within the research setting, how are matriculation services for language minority students carried out in practice?*
3. *Due to reform efforts in California Community Colleges, how are matriculation services for language minority students undergoing policy or practice changes in the research setting?*

The research questions were developed using the conceptual framework of language acquisition planning from the field of Language Policy and Planning. The overarching metaphor used to frame this study was the metaphor of the language policy onion (Hornberger & Johnson, 2007; Ricento & Hornberger, 1996). The macrolevel institutional layers of national and state governance were conceptualized as the outer layers of the onion. The microinstitutional layers, such as the campus and the department layers, were conceptualized as the inner layers of the onion. The student was conceptualized as at the heart of it all.

This study was defined as a qualitative case study informed by the heuristics of the ethnography of language policy (Johnson, 2009). The data collected were texts representing policy discourse and transcripts from nine one-on-one interviews representing the perspective of individuals in the research setting. The data was managed and analyzed with the help of Computer-Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software

(CAQDAS). With the help of the heuristics of the ethnography of language policy (Johnson, 2009), the data were reduced to themes and subthemes in order to yield research findings.

There were several findings for the three research questions posed. The language policy onion was found to be complex; at least seven layers of actively involved committees and organizations contributing to language acquisition policy were uncovered. There were several different goals uncovered across the policy onion including emphases on administrative strategy, institutional accountability, and student success. The policy discourses from the state level emphasized scalable uniform solutions as opposed to regional or local approaches to assessment. Documents at the district level showed a discrepancy between how professional organizations viewed ESL (nonremedial) and how districts viewed ESL (remedial). Documents collected at the microlevel reflected a concern for understanding local needs and making pedagogical improvements. Policy goals across layers of the policy onion were found to be competing and varied.

The findings from examining the practice of matriculation services revealed an *institutionally guided assessment* process. The de facto process of *institutionally guided assessment* included providing native language staff support where possible, screening students with intake forms, and encouraging students to take sample assessment questions prior to taking an official assessment test. The practice of offering students a chance to contest assessment results through a challenge process was found to be related to a campus retest policy. Students were required to wait a year before retesting. In a review of 55 community colleges, Bunch (2010) found that waiting periods for taking an

assessment exam varied from 24 hours to 3 years. Other researchers (Venezia, Bracco, & Nodine, 2010) who have studied the perspectives of community college students found that students “were uninformed and unprepared for the content and format” and “unaware of the stakes” (p. 9).

The findings in terms of policy reform showed that the Student Success Initiative and the Achieving the Dream Initiative were the most influential reform efforts in the research setting. A new funding model arising from the Student Success Initiative spurred reform in the counseling component of matriculation. Community college personnel were in the process of developing new practices for documenting their work and for carrying out additional student educational plans. The Achieving the Dream Initiative was consistently credited with developing a research culture within the research setting. There was a consistent presence of student data and data interpretation in the research setting connected to the Achieving the Dream Initiative activities. Campus reform efforts were found to be supportive of collaboration and a student-centered approach. Campus administrators and faculty planned to move key departments physically closer to each other in order to help students get access to critical services and to improve collaboration between key matriculation and curriculum entities on campus.

There were three unifying data themes. First, this study found that language minority issues were not central to any contemporary reform efforts despite the linguistic demographics of the state. This theme emerged through the review of the goals of several committees, initiatives and reform efforts. Many other categories appeared in the data as acceptable reference points for reform except for the needs of the bilingual, multilingual, and linguistically diverse needs of the community college population.

Improving student success was addressed through the lens of race, socioeconomic status, and students of color. Only at the campus level was there acknowledgement through strategic planning that the transition from ESL to English should be a data benchmark. One of Bunch's (2010) concluding implications was that community colleges should "educate faculty, counselors, staff, administrators, and policymaker about the nature of bilingualism and the needs of language minority students" (p. 42).

Second, this study found that, despite several ongoing reform efforts, there have only been a few changes made to direct services for language minority students. The only major evidence of changes to matriculation services as a result of ongoing reform efforts was the development of additional student education plans by the counseling staff. This approach was captured as a top-down proposal from the state as part of a revised funding model. The proposed funding model called for an increase in student educational planning and an increase in documentation of counseling activity as a component of the funding formula. There were no reported changes to the ways students were identified or how they were assessed as a result of reform initiatives. From the perspective of students, the community college has not undergone any major reform. From the perspective of administrators, there have been many behind-the-scenes data collection changes or superficial changes. For example, "matriculation" process was renamed the "Student Success and Support Program," and the individual components of matriculation were redefined.

Finally, this study found that community college personnel lacked an agreed-upon nomenclature for language minority students and an established curriculum framework for addressing the needs of language minority students. There were several terms that

people used to refer to students who were not native English speakers. Language minority students were referred as “generation 1.5,” English Learners (ELs) and/or international students. These findings reflect an inconsistent model of language minority students on campus. Researchers have found that some labels, such as generation 1.5, tended to cast students in a negative light (Benesch, 2008).

In addition to a lack of consensus on how to talk about language minority students, there was also uncertainty about the relationship between ESL and English. In documents aimed at students, the pathway from ESL through the English curriculum was not made clear to students. On the contrary, the curriculum was complicated and included some “optional” course modules. Bunch found that across several community college in California, there were different relationships between ESL and English including some with “little formal or informal collaboration,” and some with “common curricular goals at each ESL and English level” (Bunch, 2010).

These unifying themes outlined here as well as in chapter 4 were based on the findings from systematic data analysis of texts and interview data. However, these findings and unifying themes should be considered in light of some limitations of the study.

Limitations.

This study provides insight to a snapshot in time regarding the policy reform cycle in the CCC system; reform can take several years to result in implementation. Had it been conducted a year later, for example, this study’s findings might look quite different.

With that said, it is important to discuss some of the limitations of the study conducted. In this study, there were two specific limitations that should be acknowledged. The first limitation of the study comes from the fact that this study was conducted as a case study analysis. The second limitation was that in conducting a case study analysis much of the data collected for the study was through a document review. While both of these limitations were addressed throughout this study, there are still inherent factors that should be accepted with both of these.

Case Study Limitations.

One limitation of the case study approach is that the findings may not be applicable to other community college settings. The needs of local communities vary greatly across the state and the findings described in chapter 4 may not apply to other regions in the state. However, the case was selected as a “critical case” so that administrators and faculty serving communities with fewer language minority students should also be able to benefit from the study’s findings (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 230). Indeed, there are lessons to be learned from the findings of this study, particularly in the area of reform efforts, that can be applied to other educational challenges facing contemporary community colleges. The finding of an increased data-driven mindset from participation in the Achieving the Dream Initiative can be applied to student success in general and not specifically to just language minority students.

Document Review Limitations.

Although documents can be easy to retrieve online and provide valuable insight into policy discourse, there are some disadvantages to conducting a document review. Document data “may be inapplicable, disorganized, unavailable, or out of date, could be

biased because of selective survival of information, and information may be incomplete or inaccurate” (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2009, p. 2). Although it may be the case that several critical documents were overlooked or unavailable during the data collection process, the documents collected and furnished by participants provided a wealth of important insight into the state of language acquisition planning in the community college context.

Implications from Study Findings

There were several implications borne out of this study’s findings. The implications will explained in terms of considerations for policy, considerations for practice and considerations for reform.

Considerations for Policy.

One of the interesting findings in terms of policy was the one-year waiting period for retaking an assessment exam. Students in the case study were found to only be allowed to take an assessment exam once a year by policy. This policy had a variety of interpretations by research participants; community college personnel expressed varied rationales for such a policy. Campus leaders should focus attention on these waiting period policies on campus and across the district. The rationale for such a policy should be subject to review by appropriate department and campus level committees.

It is understandable that over-assessment is a concern, but not allowing students to retake an assessment exam within a year does seem restrictive, especially if subsequent placements might result in better placements. Testing capacity was not discussed as an issue; however, the cost of assessment was specifically mentioned. The challenge exam practice documented in this study also had administrative and faculty costs. The

implication is that college campuses should consider the effects of low placement on administrative and faculty resources as a whole as compared to the costs of re-assessment. Assessment testing contracts should also be an issue of scrutiny. If the rationale for having a one year waiting period is in fact driven by high per-test assessment fees and not a student-centered or research-based rationale, then more cost-effective assessment tools should be explored.

Considerations for Practice.

One of the major findings of this study was the *institutionally guided assessment* practices. These *institutionally guided assessment* practices included screening instruments, recommendations for completing sample questions prior to assessment, and recommendations assessment exam strategies. An example of an assessment exam strategy was the practice of advising students on what order the assessment exams should be taken. For example, some counselors discussed strategies for advising students on the *order* in which they should take the ESL and English assessment tests since it was possible for students to take both. These *institutionally guided assessment* practices should also be subject to review on each campus and across the district. These practices could be reviewed, supported by an evidence-based rationale, and turned into best practices for other campuses. This approach might lead to the development of new approaches and innovations.

Increased use of technology might play a role in the development of new institutionally guided assessment practices. For example, it was found that students were given sample questions on paper pamphlets. If the sample questions were given online, then practice exam data could be captured. This approach could lead to the development

of “boot camps and course modules” for incoming students as some have advocated (Venezia et al, 2010). Students clearly need support during this critical time, and community college should explore how they advise students at each stage in the process.

Considerations for Reform.

The findings from this study point to a need for a new framework for addressing the needs of language minority students. There were signs of conflict between the district and the academic professionals with regard to the status of ESL as “remedial.” There was evidence that noncredit ESL and English faculty had been working on the extent of curriculum overlap as well as developing a bridge between ESL and English curriculum pathways. Faculty mentioned some reform efforts, such as incorporating academic literacy and pairing ESL with content instruction, but none of these efforts seemed to be sustained or gaining momentum in the research setting. Some of the ESL curriculum was defined as not required while some components of the curriculum were deemed required. There were calls for exemplary ESL models and confusion about appropriate terminology for language minority students.

In short, the academic and matriculation model seemed to be underdeveloped. The implication is that ESL and English faculty need support and expertise to develop a unifying new framework, which could lead to curriculum and matriculation reform. Perhaps the uncertainty about nomenclature and curriculum models found in the research setting reflects the developments of the field of applied linguistics. See Weideman’s (2007) discussion of no less than six successive traditions in applied linguistics. It appears that until the curricular relationships between ESL and English yield a more

student-friendly curricular pathway to student success, there will be uncertainty with how to proceed with matriculation services reform—including assessment and placement.

Given the fact that language demographics vary by region, perhaps the actors in the regional layer should play a larger role in setting the reform priorities that are specifically aimed at language minority students. The regional committees could be empowered to collect data and set new policy directions regionally throughout the state. Regional committees could be empowered to focus on regional language diversity trends in order to persuade state agents to prioritize the needs of language minority students.

Since there were steady calls for expertise in the area of ESL and academic English in the research setting, perhaps the CCC system should attempt to concentrate the available expertise and deliver it through an online system. The development of a massively open online course (MOOC) might be a vehicle for curriculum and matriculation services reform compared to traditional methods of attending conferences. As a sign of innovation and experimentation in this area, one of the largest providers of MOOCs recently began providing free online professional-development for K-12 education (Cavanaugh, 2013). Bringing together ESL expertise across the system and possibly across the country might increase awareness about the complexities and challenges inherent in educating students with diverse language backgrounds such as language minority students in college settings. See di Gennaro (2009) for groundbreaking quantitative work on the differences and similarities between generation 1.5 students and international students' writing abilities. The CCC system as a whole will benefit by supporting the dissemination of best practices.

Recommendations for Future Research

There are several areas of recommendations for future research. The first area of recommended future research is exploring the roles that influential ESL faculty members are currently playing in local, district, and statewide reform efforts. The second area of recommended future research is exploring assessment instruments to be used as a supplement to standardized tests.

ESL Faculty Roles.

It would be helpful to understand how individual ESL faculty members have participated in recent reform efforts and to understand how such active reformers conceptualize language minority students and ESL. Because of the ongoing efforts to develop a statewide ESL exam, it would be critical to understanding the guiding conceptualizations of language proficiency used to develop such an exam. The mechanism for developing a statewide ESL assessment exam was still unfolding at the time this research was conducted.

There are several key questions to ask. Which conceptualizations of language proficiency will be entertained for the development of a statewide exam? Which faculty members or researchers are central to the development of a statewide assessment exam? How can individual faculty members be encouraged to participate regionally? What roles can professional organizations play? How do newly trained and newly hired faculty members conceptualize language minority students in the community college? These line of inquiry would likely yield insight into active reformers in the CCC.

Research-based Supplementary Language Assessment Instruments.

Another area of research that is sorely needed regards the role that supplementary language inventories can play during the matriculation process. What data, provided

from students at the beginning of a student's career, can actually help the matriculation process? There were examples of such questionnaires developed through reform efforts in this study, but they were not supported by empirical research. Researchers have already uncovered questionnaires that seem to be grounded on misunderstandings of second language acquisition (Bunch & Panatoya, 2008), so there needs to be more research from linguists, applied linguists, ESL theorists and practitioners about what students can provide that would help institutions meet their needs.

Concluding Statement

This research was founded on the assertion that current practices do not adequately serve the new linguistic diversity recently documented in the demographics and the literature, and that there is a pressing need of reform in order to promote student success for language minority students. The findings of this study underscore the complexities of the problems as well as the urgency. Clearly, there is much work to be done in order to develop systemic reform that prioritizes language minority students and which will yield significantly improved student success results.

Reform efforts are being developed through a variety of channels for a variety of purposes. Forces for data collection and institutional accountability are driving some matriculation services reform. National reform efforts have played an important role in expanding the research capacity of community colleges. Campus matriculation officers are exploring ways to meet to the CCC system's data requirements and at the same time provide a coherent experience for students.

The curriculum component of matriculation, the sequence of courses that students are placed into after assessment, needs the most attention. ESL and English faculty need

support in developing more navigable and effective curricular pathways. The academic discipline of ESL and its relationship to English is still in flux, as evidenced by the ongoing curricular problem-solving activity found in this case study and the anomaly of “generation 1.5” students in the literature. Without serious resources dedicated to reform and education about language minority student issues, transformative reform is likely to be stymied. Assessment exams, multiple measures, and counseling all depend on students being placed into an appropriate curriculum with a clear roadmap for the acquisition of academic English skills necessary to meet the demands of all community college courses.

There are at least broad categories of language minority students discussed in the literature—“recently-arrived immigrants and older adults, international students, and Longer-term residents who have done some or much schooling in U.S.” (Bunch, 2010, p. 5)—and yet the dated model of “ESL or English” from decades ago has remained. Recent research focused on the language minority student population will hopefully serve as an impetus for rethinking academic English literacy instruction beginning with curriculum redesign. The challenge for community college administrators and faculty will be to manage the alignment of ongoing efforts through shared governance into a coherent and supportive experience for language minority students.

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Appendix A—Research Announcement and Research Invitation

Dear Community College Personnel,

My name is Gregory Mena, and I am doctoral student studying how community colleges are meeting the needs of language minority students. I will be seeking out participants for 30-minute interviews for my dissertation research during the Spring of 2013. The purpose of research is to examine the policies and practices related to the education of language minority students—students other than nonnative English speakers. All participation is voluntary and there will be no compensation for participation.

If you would like to participate or if you have questions about the study, then please contact by phone at (818) 677-2969 or email at greg.mena@csun.edu.

Sincerely,

Gregory Mena

Appendix B— Informed Consent Form

California State University, Northridge

CONSENT TO ACT AS A HUMAN RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

A Qualitative Inquiry into Matriculation Services for Language Minority Students in the Community College

You are being asked to participate in a research study. Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Please read the information below and ask questions about anything that you do not understand before deciding if you want to participate. A researcher listed below will be available to answer your questions.

Researcher:

Gregory Mena, M.Ed.

Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

(818) 677-2969

greg.mena@csun.edu

Faculty Advisor:

John Reveles, Ph.D.

18111 Nordhoff Street

Northridge, CA 91330-8265

(818) 677-7409

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PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of this research study is to explore matriculation services for language minority students in the community college. This research study is part of my dissertation. The goal of this study is to improve the identification, assessment and placement of language minority students in the community college setting.

SUBJECTS

Inclusion Requirements

You are eligible to participate in this study if you are at least 18 years of age or older and you are community college administrator faculty or staff member involved in the matriculation services of language minority students.

Time Commitment

This study will involve approximately 30 minutes of your time.

PROCEDURES

The following procedures will occur:

- Participate in a 30-minute interview session
- Recommend another person who might also be able to address relevant research questions in this study

RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

The possible risks and/or discomforts associated with the procedures described in this study include: feeling uncomfortable or uneasy about answering questions concerning language, language use and attitudes toward language minority students.

This study involves no more than minimal risk. There are no known harms or discomforts associated with this study beyond those encountered in normal daily life.

BENEFITS

You may not benefit personally from your participation in this study. However, this evaluation addresses the needs of language minority students who are growing part of community college student population regionally and nationally. Thus, the findings of this study will contribute to improving the overall retention and persistence of language minority students.

ALTERNATIVES TO PARTICIPATION

The only alternative to participation in this study is not to participate.

COMPENSATION, COSTS AND REIMBURSEMENT

Compensation for Participation

You will not be paid for your participation in this research study

WITHDRAWAL OR TERMINATION FROM THE STUDY AND CONSEQUENCES

You are free to withdraw from this study at any time. **If you decide to withdraw from this study you should notify the research team immediately.**

CONFIDENTIALITY

Subject Identifiable Data

- All identifiable information that will be collected about you will be removed at the end of data collection.
- All identifiable information that will be collected about you will be removed and replaced with a code. A list linking the code and your identifiable information will be kept separate from the research data.

Data Storage

All research data will be stored on a laptop computer that is password protected.

Data Access

The researcher and faculty advisor named on the first page of this form will have access to your study records. Any information derived from this research project that personally identifies you will not be voluntarily released or disclosed without your separate consent, except as specifically required by law. Publications and/or presentations that result from this study will not include identifiable information about you.

Data Retention

The researcher intends to keep the research data for approximately three years and then it will be destroyed.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS

If you have any comments, concerns, or questions regarding the conduct of this research please contact the research team listed on the first page of this form.

If you have concerns or complaints about the research study, research team, or questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact Research and Sponsored Projects, 18111 Nordhoff Street, California State University, Northridge, Northridge, CA 91330-8232, or phone 818-677-2901.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

You should not sign this form unless you have read it and been given a copy of it to keep. **Participation in this study is voluntary.** You may refuse to answer any question or discontinue your involvement at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you might otherwise be entitled. Your decision will not affect your relationship with California State University, Northridge. Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this consent form and have had a chance to ask any questions that you have about the study.

I agree to participate in the study.

Participant Signature _____
Date

Printed Name of Participant

Researcher Signature _____
Date

Printed Name of Researcher

Appendix C— Interview Protocol for Administrators

Interview Protocol for Community College Administrators

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. I really appreciate you sharing your time and your insight on the issues of matriculation services. The results of this interview will be used to explore the dissertation topic of matriculation services for students whose native language is not English.

This conversation is strictly confidential and care will be taken to exclude all names and identifying characteristics from the data. I would like your permission to record our conversation digitally so that I can more accurately reflect your thoughts and experiences. During the interview, we will talk about your experiences with language minority students.

Before we begin, I would like to give you the opportunity to read and sign the consent form.

We are now about to begin the interview. It should take approximately thirty minutes for this recorded interview.

First I would like to ask about your roles on campus and your work experience.

Basic Information

1. What is your current position here?
2. How long have you worked in this position?
3. How does your work relate to matriculation services?
4. How does your work specifically relate to matriculation services for students whose native language is not English?

The next set of questions will be related to matriculation services.

Matriculation Processes

1. Can you describe the process new students experience as they move through the matriculation process?
2. Can you describe the process a new student-- whose native language is not English—experiences as he/she moves through the matriculation process?
 - a. What are the differences in matriculation services for native English speakers and non-native English speakers?

The next set of questions will be related to the classification of non-native English speakers.

Classification

1. In the District or on campus, what formal terms are used to refer to students whose primary language is not English?
 - a. Give example if necessary.
2. In the District or on campus, have there been any changes to the formal terms used to refer to students whose primary language is not English?

The next set of questions will be related to the identification of non-native English speakers.

Identification

1. How do new students, students whose native language is not English, know which assessment tests to take?
2. Have there been any changes recently in the way students are identified?

The next set of questions will be related to the assessment of students whose primary language is not English.

Assessment Processes

1. Which assessment tests do you use for students whose primary language is not English?
 - a. How were the assessment tests selected?
2. Have there been any changes recently in the way students are given assessment tests?
 - a. How did the changes come about?
3. Have there been any changes to cutoff scores for the assessment tests?
4. Are there any new assessment tests being explored?
 - a. If so, why?

The next set of questions will be related to the placement of students whose native language is not English.

Placement Processes

1. How do all first-year students get placed into courses?
2. How do non-native English speakers get placed into courses?
3. Have there been any changes to placement processes for students whose native language is not English?

The next set of questions will be related to recent reform efforts.

Reform Initiatives

1. Can you name and describe any district initiatives that have recently affected matriculation services for non-native speakers of English?
2. How has the passing of the Student Success Act of 2012 affected matriculation services policy on your campus?
3. How has the passing of the Student Success Act of 2012 affected matriculation services practices on your campus?
4. Can you describe any other initiatives that have affected the policy or practice of matriculation services?

Thank you very much for your responses to the questions and for taking the time to share your knowledge of matriculation services. As part of data collection, I am also looking for relevant policy and planning documents.

Request for Documents

1. Can you direct me to any planning documents or policies that you consider critical to the current administration of matriculation services?
2. Can you direct me to any planning documents or policies that will shape the future of administration of matriculation services?

Final Open-ended Questions

1. Please share anything else that you think might be helpful in understanding the current policy context.

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2. Please share anything else you think will be helpful in understanding future policy changes related to matriculation services for students whose native language is not English.

Appendix D— Interview Protocol for Faculty

Interview Protocol for Community College Faculty

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. I really appreciate you sharing your time and your insight on the issues of matriculation services. The results of this interview will be used to explore the dissertation topic of matriculation services for students whose native language is not English.

This conversation is strictly confidential and care will be taken to exclude all names and identifying characteristics from the data. I would like your permission to record our conversation digitally so that I can more accurately reflect your thoughts and experiences. During the interview, we will talk about your experiences with language minority students.

Before we begin, I would like to give you the opportunity to read and sign the consent form.

We are now about to begin the interview. It should take approximately thirty minutes for this recorded interview.

First I would like to ask about your roles on campus and your work experience.

Basic Information

1. What is your current position here?
2. How long have you worked in this position?
3. How does your work relate to matriculation services?
4. How does your work specifically relate to matriculation services for students whose native language is not English?

The next set of questions will be related to matriculation services.

Matriculation Processes

1. Can you describe the process new students experience as they move through the matriculation process?
2. Can you describe the process a new student-- whose native language is not English—experiences as he/she moves through the matriculation process?

- a. What are the differences in matriculation services for native English speakers and non-native English speakers?

The next set of questions will be related to the classification of non-native English speakers.

Classification

1. In your department, what formal terms are used to refer to students whose primary language is not English?
 - a. Give example if necessary.
2. In your department, have there been any changes to the formal terms used to refer to students whose primary language is not English?

The next set of questions will be related to the identification of non-native English speakers.

Identification

1. How do new students, students whose native language is not English, know which assessment tests to take?
2. Have there been any changes recently in the way students are identified?

The next set of questions will be related to the assessment of students whose primary language is not English.

Assessment Processes

1. Which assessment tests do you use for students whose primary language is not English?
 - a. How were the assessment tests selected?
2. Have there been any changes recently in the way students are given assessment tests?
 - a. How did the changes come about?
3. Have there been any changes to cutoff scores for the assessment tests?
 - a. If so, how were the faculty involved in the process of reviewing cutoff scores?
4. Are there any new assessment tests being explored?
 - a. If so, why?

The next set of questions will be related to the placement of students whose native language is not English.

Placement Processes

1. How do all first-year students get placed into courses?
2. How do non-native English speakers get placed into courses?
3. Have there been any changes to placement processes for students whose native language is not English?
4. How are the faculty involved with the placement process for non-native English speakers?

The next set of questions will be related to recent reform efforts.

Reform Initiatives

1. Can you name and describe any district initiatives that have recently affected matriculation services for non-native speakers of English?
2. How has the passing of the Student Success Act of 2012 affected matriculation services *policy* on your campus?
3. How has the passing of the Student Success Act of 2012 affected matriculation services *practices* on your campus?
4. Can you describe any other statewide initiatives that have affected the policy or practice of matriculation services?
5. How are you or faculty in your department involved with matriculation reform initiatives?

Thank you very much for your responses to the questions and for taking the time to share your knowledge of matriculation services. As part of data collection, I am also looking for relevant policy and planning documents.

Request for Documents

1. Can you direct me to any department or committee planning documents that you consider critical to the current administration of matriculation services?
2. Can you direct me to any department or committee planning documents that will shape the future of administration of matriculation services?

Final Open-ended Questions

1. Please share anything else that you think might be helpful in understanding the current policy context.
2. Please share anything else you think will be helpful in understanding future policy changes related to matriculation services for students whose native language is not English.

Appendix E— Interview Protocol Staff

Interview Protocol for Community College Staff

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. As we discussed, conducting this interview is part of my dissertation. The results of this interview will be used to explore the dissertation topic of matriculation services for language minority students.

Before we begin, I would like to give you the opportunity to read and sign the consent form.

This conversation is strictly confidential and care will be taken to exclude all names and identifying characteristics from the data. I would like your permission to record our conversation digitally so that I can more accurately reflect your thoughts and experiences. During the interview, we will talk about your experiences with language minority students. We are now about to begin the interview. It should take approximately forty to fifty minutes for this recorded interview.

Demographic Questions

5. What is your position here at Sage College?
6. How long have you worked in this position?
7. Have you worked with students whose native language is not English?

Classification Processes

3. Can you describe the process a new student—whose primary language was not English—experience as they begin the matriculation process?
4. What terms do staff members commonly used to refer to students whose primary language is not English?
5. Are there any formal categories or systems of naming students that the campus uses?

6. Have there been any changes recently in the way students are talked about—in terms or labels that people use?

Identification Processes and Change

3. How do new students whose primary language is not English know which placement tests to take?
4. Have there been any changes recently in the way students are identified?

Assessment Processes and Change

5. Which placement tests do you use?
6. Which placement tests do you use for non-native speakers of English?
7. Have there been any changes recently in the way students are assessed?
8. Are there any new tests being explored?
9. Have there been any changes to cutoff scores for the tests?

Placement Processes and Change

4. How do students get placed into courses?
5. How do nonnative speakers get placed into courses?
6. Have there been any changes to placement processes for students?

Document Collection

1. Do you have any documents-- guides, plans or policies -- for matriculation services that you can provide?

Appendix F—List of Documents Titles Analyzed

Important Steps to jump your college life at Sage Community College
Student Resources
Sage Community College District Governance and Functions Handbook
Sage Community College District Planning Committee Survey Report 2010
Sage Community College District 2010 District Governance Assessment Report
Sage Community College General Catalog 2011-2013
Sage Community College General Catalog Update 2013
Sage Community College Self Study 2009
Administrative Coordinating Committees
Board of Trustees Planning and Student Success Committee
Sage Community College Progress Report
Sage Community College Substantive Change Proposal
How to Apply and Register
Sage Community College: College Profile and Data Book 2011-2012
Sage Community College Matriculation Brochure
Sage Community College Technology Master Plan
Sage Community College Educational Master Plan
California Community Colleges Matriculation Handbook
Press Release: Gov. Brown Signs Student Success Act of 2012 into Law,
California Community Colleges System Strategic Plan
Matriculation Programs
Matriculation Title 5 Revision Workgroup
California Community Colleges Management Information System Data Element
Dictionary
Overview of Senate Bill 1456 Amendments
Senate Bill 1456 Student Success Act of 2012
Student Success Act of 2012 (SB 1456) Overview & Implementation Plan
Proposed SB 1456 Student Success and Support Program Credit Funding Formula
Proposed SB 1456 Student Success and Support Program Credit Funding Formula
Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges Proposed Revisions to the
Title 5 Regulations: Student Success and Support Programs
Student Success and Support Program (SB 1456): Proposed Revisions to Title 5
Regulations for the Student Success and Support Program and Proposed Funding
Formula
Draft Principles and Considerations for Terms in the Seymour-Campbell Student Success
Act of 2012
2013 CCC Strategic Plan
Consultation Council Meeting Summary April 2013
Proposed Regulations for the Student Success and Support Program Available for
Review (Email)
Sage Community College Matriculation Assessment Annual Update Plan 2013
District Student Success Initiative Meeting Agenda May 2012
District Student Success Initiative Meeting Agenda May 2012
Sage Community College District Student Success Initiative

Achieving the Dream Sage Community College
District Student Success Initiative Meeting Notes November 2012
District Strategic Planning Committee Charge
District Vision Plan Document
Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Success in California Community Colleges
Student Success Task Force Final Report
Student Success Task Force Final Report Summary
Sage Community College District Governance and Functions Handbook
Sage Community College District Strategic Planning Initiative
Achieving the Dream Measures
Accountability Reporting for the Community Colleges (ARCC) Measures
Developing Objectives for Sage Community College District Plan
Sage Community College Internal Scan
Sage Community College Internal Scan Highlights Presentation
Sage Community College External Scan
Sage Community College External Scan Report
Sage Community College Strategic Plan Presentation
Sage Community College Strategic Plan Critical Issues
Sage Community College Strategic Plan Focus Group Questions
Sage Community College Strategic Plan Timeline
Sage Community College District Vision Report
Sage Community College Academic Senate Minutes September 2011
Sage Community College Standing Committee List
Sage Community College Faculty Handbook
Share Governance Academic Senate
Sage Community College District Academic Senate Meeting April 2012
Sage Community College District Academic Senate Meeting February 2012
Faculty Senate bylaws
Data: Enrollment by Home Language
Board of Trustees Bylaws: Student Matriculation
Board of Trustees Bylaws: Guidance
Board of Trustees Bylaws: Admissions, Guidance, and Records
Board of Trustees Bylaws: Mission of the Sage Community College District
Board of Trustees Bylaws: Functions of the Campuses in the Sage Community College District
Board of Trustees Bylaws: Definition of a Community College
Board of Trustees Bylaws: The District
Board of Trustees Bylaws: Duties of the Board of Trustees
Exceptions to Remedial Course Limits
Curriculum Development and Approval: Standards and Procedures
Sage Community College Matriculation Website
Sage Community College Spring Student Survey
Sage Community College District English Language Ability 2000 Census
Achieving the Dream: Goal
Achieving the Dream: The Solution
Achieving the Dream: About

Matriculation Advisory Committee June 2011
California Community Colleges Regional Committees
District Matriculation Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes February 2011
California Senate Floor Analyses
Sage Community College Data Report
Basic Skills Initiative: Professional Development Effective ESL Practices