IMMIGRATION POLICY IN ESOL TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: AN ACTOR-NETWORK THEORY LENS

by

TOBIE BASS

(Under the Direction of Linda A. Harklau)

ABSTRACT

This dissertation presents three articles on an ethnographic case study exploring what teachers do with immigration policy they learn about in professional development. In this case, the professional development involves in-service teachers participating in one three-course ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) federally funded endorsement program offered through a public university in the Southeast. Thirty-six practicing teachers participated in the program in a state and school district that have in recent years become fast-growing immigrant destinations. Informed by Latour (2005) and actor-network theory (ANT), the inquiry explores one course in which the author served as instructor, by unraveling and reassembling a network. In doing so, the ANT researcher embeds analysis into a narrative that attempts to follow the ways humans and non-humans are connected in the webs of activity.

Each of the three articles contributes a unique study of the ways an ANT lens can offer an opening-up of the contentious topic of educating immigrants in the U.S. today. The first article uses empirical data and evidence from local education contexts to question how scholars approach divisive topics and conceptualize research in ways that might help us better understand ideological gridlock. The second article traces immigration policy through one ESOL teacher
professional learning course, problematizing the ways epistemological and ontological notions are perpetuated in much social science research. Following Callon’s (1986) translation method, the third article traces associations among program stakeholders, immigration policy, and teacher-participants. Joining scholars including Nespor (1994), Law (2002), and Mol (2002), I aim for a non-reductionist approach that allows for not only multiple perspectives, but also multiple possible versions of the world.

INDEX WORDS: Immigrants, Education, Teacher Education, Actor-Network Theory, ESOL, TESOL, Immigration Policy
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by

TOBIE BASS

B.S., The University of Georgia, 1998

M.Ed., The University of Georgia, 2004

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by

TOBIE BASS

Major Professor: Linda Harklau

Committee: Melissa Freeman
Ruth Harman
Sheneka Williams

Electronic Version Approved:
Suzanne Barbour
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
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DEDICATION

For Cleo, and all children, whose love and curiosity make the world a better place.
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction and Literature Review

Statement of the Problem: Touchstone Study

Ten years ago, Spencer Salas produced a clearly written and concisely organized qualitative inquiry into the figured worlds of community college ESL teachers. As a part of his inquiry, he explored how ESL college teachers in the Southeast navigate institutional structures amidst U.S. nativist backlash to immigrant students. This dissertation project builds on the work of Salas (2007) by continuing to delve into teacher understandings of immigration policies and their roles as K-12 educators preparing students for an educational trajectory that is uncertain and surrounded by anti-immigrant policies and discourse.

Over the past ten years, dreams of higher education in the U.S. for immigrant students have taken various turns. Policies and sentiments on immigrant education at the local and state levels are somewhat at odds with national policy. While Supreme Court Case *Plyler v. Doe* (1982) ensures all children the right to attend K-12 public schools in the U.S. regardless of national origin, states have varying contexts of reception regarding immigrants. In addition, higher education opportunities vary widely around the country.

This study’s context, Georgia, is one of the top ten states for English Language Learner enrollment in U.S. public schools (Soto, A., Hooker, S. & J. Batalova, 2015). From 1998–2008, the number of English Learners (ELs) in Georgia schools increased by over 200% (Batalova, J. & McHugh, M., 2010). Across the state, 43.9% of students graduated in 2014 with limited English proficiency (U.S. DOE IES, 2015). Growth of the Black, Hispanic, and Asian population
in one metro-area superdistrict has surpassed any other county in the state, furthering the multilingual and multicultural aspects of the educational environment. “At the same time that the number of students of color, those who speak languages other than English, and those who live in poverty has increased, the nation’s teachers have become more monolithic, monocultural, and monolingual. For example, as of 2003, 90 percent of public school teachers were White, 6 percent were African American, and fewer than 5 percent were of other racial/ethnic backgrounds” (Nieto & Bode, 2012, p. 29).

As part of the “new Latino diaspora” (Wortham, Murillo, & Hamann, 2002), the communities where the study takes place are large, suburban districts with varying demographics among schools. The state overall has experienced a fast rate of immigration over the past twenty years. Considered a “new destination” state, immigration led to an increase of 348% between 1990 and 2000 (Wainer, A., 2004). In a 2012 Migration Policy Institute report, one school district in the state fell in the top 25 school districts in the U.S. serving English Language Learner (ELL) populations with 18,968 ELL students enrolled in the district, 11.7% ELLs out of all K-12 students in the district (Soto, Hooker, Batalova, 2015).

The Southeast continues to be a region where immigration thrives, as do restrictive, anti-immigrant policies. Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina uphold policies prohibiting undocumented students and those with Deferred Action (DACA) from attending certain, or all, institutions of higher education. While DACA created a temporary reprieve for many young immigrants in the Southeast in terms of working and driving, education beyond high school is still virtually unattainable at top state institutions, due to being charged international tuition fees. Salas (2007) argued for researchers to do a better job of discussing power. He called for
unearthing teachers’ activism “beyond the theoretical notions of power and discourse that we have become exceedingly fond of and exceedingly good at exposing” (p. 134).

The three articles in this dissertation project respond to that call through a lens that draws from actor-network theory (ANT). My study takes place in a New Latino Diaspora (Wortham, et al., 2002) state in the U.S. Southeast, where immigration over the past few decades has created a need for teachers to be trained in working with immigrant populations. ESOL teachers are often the first points of contact for immigrant students and families in academic settings. Yet, few studies have linked teachers and the effects of immigration policies. This ethnographic, ANT-informed case study explores immigration policy in ESOL teacher professional development. The project intends to contribute to social science research in the interdisciplinary fields of ESOL teacher professional development, immigrant education, and educational policy. The three articles explore this individually in unique ways, and together as a whole.

Literature Review

Few studies have linked classroom teachers and the effects of immigration policies. Drawing from “figured worlds” (Holland & Quinn, 1987) and the multiple and conflicting roles of teachers, Salas (2007) aptly paints a vivid picture of the labyrinth of teachers’ complicated understandings of “institutional definitions of what it means to be ready for college-level work, the politics of immigration, and the conundrums of their unfolding lives and those of their students” (p. 2). Likewise, Stevens (2011) advocates for an educator’s view that encapsulates a fuller picture than is afforded by policies and standards. In her dual case study of two immigrant high school students, Stevens used Bourdieu’s forms of capital to tease apart the “complications involved in achievement in society.” She asked, “How can we purposefully reorient ourselves to
the intent of education and the gaps between that intent and reality?” Stevens (2011) calls for educators to become sociologists “in their own backyards.”

In a 5-year ethnography, Gallo and Link (2016) explored teachers’ understandings of how their students responded to increased deportations. The authors argue for teacher preparation to include preparing educators to become “border crossers” themselves. Borrowing from Sepúlveda (2011), the context and background of classrooms serving culturally and linguistically diverse students require that teacher educators “rethink and reimagine what types of pedagogy and training are required for a twenty-first century marked by movement, displacement, and global inequality” (p. 568).

Fenwik and Edwards (2011) suggest ANT as a valuable way to examine educational research, especially because of the possibility of incorporating a wide range of stakeholders, negotiations, and multiple ontologies. These authors compiled a number of education studies drawing from ANT in a book, stating, “there is as yet little published ANT-related research that explicitly explores issues of identity, politics, inequities and exclusions…We believe ANT’s potential for analyzing the dynamics within questions of diversity and social justice is vast” (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. x). Situated among this continuum, my research inquiry aims to add to the growing educational research that employs ANT by studying the formation of a network in one ESOL teacher professional development course. In doing so, I hope to better understand how immigration policies are performing and being performed in ESOL teacher professional development.

**Theoretical Frame**

Latour (2005) describes actor-network theory (ANT) as originating with three documents and rising from a need for a new social theory capable of adjusting to the fields of science and
technology. ANT has found itself in various fields, including an emerging presence in education. Latour (2005) provides a “litmus test” for determining how to find one’s way in ANT literature. First, he insists that non-humans much be actors in the research, not symbolic representations nor participating in a causal account. The second test deals with how an author considers the social. There can be no hidden social force, and the social cannot be presented as a stable means of explaining affairs. The third “and more difficult” test relates to deconstruction, which ANT is not. According to Latour (2005), the notion of deconstruction is not what is to be achieved, but what is to be overcome. He aligns these concepts of ANT to Tarde (1969) and Garfinkel (1967), who “believed sociology could be a science accounting for how society is held together, instead of using society to explain something else or to help solve one of the political questions of the time” (Latour, 2005, p. 13).

Referred to by Law (1994) and Annemarie Mol (1999) as “ontological politics,” ANT explores how knowledge comes to be produced, looking at the resources that are mobilized to establish an object of knowledge. Mol’s questions about the kind of politics that might fit this ontological multiplicity charge us with furthering our work in understanding multiple realities—not plural, but multiple (Mol, 1999, p. 79).

This is particularly important to me now at the time of dissertation writing. Following the 2016 U.S. presidential election, political divisiveness is polarizing. I’ve had many conversations with people who, like me, find it difficult to understand how the population of the U.S. can see such disconnected, antithetical truths. The new president himself contributes to this conversation with statements about “alternative facts,” including sweeping denigrations and hateful accusations toward immigrants.
ANT offers one way out of dialectic impasse, one approach to “diagrammatical thinking” (Freeman, 2017). Diagrammatical thinking (Freeman, 2017) focuses on movement, on assemblages or networks composed of human and non-human actors. Instead of focusing on each actor, however, the focus is on relationships between actors, the way an assemblage fluctuates in its becoming. Shifting our thought processes away from dichotomies and toward diagrammatical thinking opens up a new way to look at educational policy and teacher professional development focused on the multi-faceted topic of educating immigrant students.

**Outline of Three Articles**

Law (2002) articulates six different possible introductions, six ways of telling what his book is about. He states that each of the themes recurs and interferes with one another throughout the book. In the case of my dissertation project, which involves an introduction, three separate articles, and a conclusion, I put forth three assertions. These three assertions in my work recur in no particular order, permeating the story I tell in the following pages.

First, I offer one version of why I chose to draw from an actor-network theory (ANT) lens and what this means to me. Second, by working through an empirical research study, I use concepts from ANT to explore its effectiveness as a theory/method as I seek to better understand how policy affecting the education of immigrants circulates in ESOL teacher professional development. Third, in the conclusion, I respond to critiques of ANT. I articulate my findings in relation to this work’s political responsibility and its limitations.

Article one draws heavily on the current context of the U.S. I address the research questions: How is the work of ESOL educators impacted by immigration policies? How can studying this divisive topic move scholarship forward? Through an unconventional style, the analysis juxtaposes multiple accounts of educators caught in policy roils surrounding the topic of
immigrants and education. Data sources include teacher responses during the course under study, an auto-ethnographic portrait, and a collection of recent news articles and media. Introducing concepts from actor-network theory (ANT), the article intends to prompt further conversation about how researchers in the social sciences approach divisive topics. I propose opening up contentious topics by first asking “How have I decided that this is a ‘matter of concern’?” I argue for scholars to respond to ideological gridlock through reworking epistemological and ontological norms.

Article Two responds by exploring what can be learned about immigration policy as an actor in ESOL teacher professional development, and reflects on ANT as an approach to this topic. Articulating the ways analysis began at the inception of ideas, analysis tools include vignettes, memos, mapping, and narrative as the courses network is drawn and redrawn in multiple ways. The second article traces a policy in Georgia, Policy 4.1.6, which prohibits certain immigrant students from applying to the top state universities. One research question guides Article Two: How is Policy 4.1.6 performing in the standards and curricula that guide K-12 public school teachers becoming endorsed to work with English learners?

Article three reports on the ANT-informed case study through the tracing of associations among program stakeholders, immigration policy, and teacher participants. Through translation method (Callon, 1986), the analysis is embedded into a narrative recounting the ways competing knowledge of immigration policy can develop in ESOL teacher learning. This article contributes interference (Law, 2002) in both how immigration policy circulates in ESOL teacher preparation and in promoting further discussion of ANT as a useful notion with which to work. One research question guides the analysis in this article, which draws from policy documents, interviews,
coursework, and memos: What human and non-human actors become assembled when K-12 teachers are presented with immigration policy in one ESOL professional development course?

The written account throughout the dissertation is designed to be fluid, so that each of the articles can be understood on its own and is transportable. That said, due to the relative unfamiliarity of diagrammatical approaches and of ANT concepts in research in education, I have constructed and organized the articles to progress from what I consider to be digestible explanations toward more challenging ones. I hope that this scaffolding works to support my own and others’ understandings of ANT, possibly even allowing a broader range of reader access. In this way, my work attempts a metacognitive account of stretching myself while attempting to disrupt “qualitative positivism” (Prasad & Prasad, 2002, p. 6). Latour (2005) writes that positivism is not wrong because it “forgets ‘human consciousness’ and decides to stick with ‘cold data’. It is wrong politically. It has reduced matters of concern to matters of fact too fast, without due process” (Latour, 2005, p. 256).

**Evolution of the Project**

In 2012, at the end of my first year in the doctoral program, I was offered a position as project assistant director of a professional development program funded by a five-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education Office of English Language Acquisition. The federal grant’s overall intention was to advance the professional learning of teachers working with English Learners (ELs) through a collaborative program between a large research university and several local school districts. Grant funds were earmarked for professional development with three cohorts of practicing teachers in one state with a large population of ELs. In this position as a graduate assistant, my responsibilities were administrative in nature, helping to get the program off the ground. Working alongside the program director and the program instructor, I learned
some of the ins and outs of an innovative collaboration between a large, bureaucratic university system, a federally funded grant, and local educational agencies. I also learned about variations in politics, positions, and professional development related to English Learners in school districts, and developed an emerging understanding of the curriculum and its delivery in the grant program.

The following year, I decided to return to K-12 teaching as ESOL teacher in the elementary school near my house. My doctoral program took a back burner the next year, while I reoriented myself to full-time teaching. The added bonus of walking to school with my daughter, a first grader then, helped me make sense of this unexpected but welcome, return to the classroom. Two years later, my position in the elementary school had been reduced to halftime. Meanwhile, the grant program was beginning its third, and last, cohort. In spring of 2015, the program director called to ask if I would be interested in substitute teaching the fall course, “Language and Culture in the Classroom.” As life so happens, the program instructor was newly pregnant and expecting to deliver at the beginning of the semester. I accepted, knowing that the bulk of the grant’s coursework was online and thus, manageable along with my half time ESOL position at the elementary school.

The program director reminded me that one of the overall goals of the grant was to “adapt and improve the ESOL endorsement curriculum for Georgia in-service educators.” In other words, while attending to the requirements of state standards and federal grant guidelines, I would be able to tailor the course drawing from my professional and academic praxis. This prospect was exciting!

As I began to look at potential changes, I realized that making one change in the curriculum would upset the whole apple cart, as all pieces were very much interconnected. Thus,
I decided to go back to the drawing board and redesign the entire course. I quickly realized that the two undergraduate courses I had taught face to face had given me a great jump-start, but a hybrid graduate course with practicing teachers was another thing altogether. I reached out to friends and colleagues who work in teacher education as well as online learning. I revisited the undergraduate syllabi I had created (which addressed the same national and state TESOL standards), and began to piece together not only a bibliography, but a system of online interactive discussion for individuals and for groups.

The innovative model of this particular grant program involved professional learning circles that teachers formed themselves. This was based on a participant-centered design model created by Murry & Herrera (Murry & Herrera, 1999). A focus in this model is for teachers to share and build on each others thinking, and support one another in both learning and practice that goes along with the information presented. To this end, teachers were assigned to read and respond individually to each session’s materials, then meet in small groups to discuss and post a group response to assigned readings, videos, and materials presented in the course. In this case, I wanted to enhance the curriculum by adding a focus on local policies affecting immigrants and children of immigrants. As an advocate for immigrants’ rights to education and an ESOL teacher in public school, policy awareness has greatly increased my knowledge of how my own culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students, their families, and myself as an ESOL teacher are linked in a long-term trajectory of education.

As a doctoral student, the culminating requirement is an original research project that contributes something new and hopefully, valuable. While I began the story of the evolution of this project in the year 2012, the story could start long before that. It could start with my high school experiences tutoring in the nearly invisible ESOL classroom in the vocational-technical
wing where the nearly invisible newly arrived immigrants spent their days. It could start with the limbo that millions of immigrant children and families wade through in their attempt to make a better life in the U.S., or the ideology driving two scholars to assert “Immigrant flows are not initiated solely by the desires and dreams of people in other lands, but by the designs and interests of well-organized groups in the receiving countries, primarily employers” (Portes & Rumbaut, 2014, p. 389). It could even start with, as it does below, one ESOL professional development course through which an assemblage is drawn, an assemblage of thirty-six practicing teachers, an instructor, numerous stakeholders, and a policy prohibiting certain immigrant students from attending the best universities in the state.

References


CHAPTER 2

THE IMPASSE AS AN ACTOR: A MATTER OF CONCERN FOR EDUCATORS

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Abstract

This qualitative, ethnographic research inquiry intends to prompt further conversation about how scholar-practitioners in the social sciences approach divisive topics such as immigration policy in teacher education. In the U.S. Southeast, practicing K-12 teachers and the researcher-instructor participated in a federally funded English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) professional development program through a public university. The professional development program’s goal was to advance teachers’ knowledge of working with culturally and linguistically diverse students. Although the school district where the study took place has a high population of immigrant students, statewide policies prohibiting immigrant students from higher education was new information for many teacher-participants. Empirical data includes responses from public school teachers learning about restrictive educational policies that affect immigrant students as well as the researcher-instructor’s auto-ethnographic inquiry as a teacher-activist-scholar. Drawing from actor-network theory (Latour, 2005), this work contributes to conceptual and empirical studies in the nexus of education and policy impacting immigrants in the U.S., with an attempt to better understand ideological gridlock.

Keywords: Immigration Policy, ESOL Teachers, Teacher Professional Development, Actor-Network Theory
The Impasse as an Actor: A Matter of Concern for Educators

“As a K-12 teacher, I am angry, worried, and saddened that some of my students may be banned from certain universities...It makes me feel like I am letting them down when they may eventually get to a point that they are held back in their educational dreams due to their immigration status.” (Teacher A, 2015)

“I felt it was not appropriate for a political agenda to be pushed in an education course.” (Teacher B, 2015)

We need a new way to study moments when opposing ideologies are blocked at an impasse. The quotes above come from public school teachers who participated in a teacher professional development program at a public university in the U.S. Southeast. The program goal was to advance in-service teachers’ knowledge of working with culturally and linguistically diverse students. Both comments above are reactions to learning about restrictive state policies that prohibit undocumented students, including those with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), from attending highly ranked postsecondary institutions in this southeastern state. Although their school district has one of the highest populations of immigrants in the state and the policy had been enacted four years earlier, this was new information for many of the teachers in the cohort.

The 2016 presidential campaign and election highlighted a disturbing divisiveness in the U.S. The teachers above express different ideologies related to immigration policies and the role of educators. Each teacher’s “truth” reflects an impasse found in socio-political and K-12 educational spheres. Now, more than ever, these spheres are colliding, and educational anthropologists need to find ways to traverse multiple ontologies. Colliding ideologies are found in all kinds of settings and media. For example, one elementary school teacher in Florida posted on her Facebook page during A Day Without Immigrants, “Looks like less mouths to feed. Thanks, Donald Trump” (Teacher Reassigned, 2017). In contrast, a middle school teacher in
New Mexico responded to an Education Week survey after observing one student telling another that Trump would deport his father. The teacher stated, “I have never heard that before… it was a “slap in the face” (Will, 2017). A middle school teacher in California reported, “An administrator told female and minority students that fear was ‘silly’ and ‘ridiculous’” (Costello, 2016, p. 12). Meanwhile, another school district in California organized a district-wide Teach-In. One of the organizers observed, “Our job as educators is to take whatever the community struggle is and teach about it” (Ehrenhalt, 2016). These “truths” represent disparate ontologies of education and immigration.

Navigating immigration policies can be confusing when local, state, and national contexts conflict with one another. For example, the federal Immigration and Customs Enforcements (ICE) contracts with some local police departments but not others. Some state policies restrict immigrant students from higher education or charge prohibitive tuition rates. Other states welcome immigrant students and charge in-state tuition.

Additionally, four states, three hundred sixty-four counties, and thirty-nine cities have sanctuary policies in place attempting to reduce cooperation with federal immigration officers (Wells, 2017). Making good on campaign promises, the Trump administration has pursued stripping sanctuary locales of federal money, although as of this writing, a federal judge blocked this effort, the third of Trump’s immigration orders to be struck down in the first one hundred days of office (Yee, 2017). Teachers and students are caught directly in this conflicting roiling policy conflict. To illustrate, a recent CBS News article reported that when an ICE agent came to an elementary school in New York City looking for a fourth grader, the agent was “turned away” at the door, following policy Mayor Bill de Blasio announced in March (City Spokesman, 2017).
“We’re not allowing (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) agents in the building, because I think parents are so afraid right now, and are worried that an agent could literally come into a building and single out their child, we want them to know that can’t happen under this policy,” de Blasio said in March” (City spokesman, 2017).

“As a high school teacher, these restrictive policies make my job very difficult…Part of my job is to encourage students to do well in high school so that they can be accepted to well-respected universities and receive scholarships” (Teacher C, 2015)

The purpose of this paper is to prompt further conversation about how scholars approach divisive topics and conceptualize research in ways that might help us better understand ideological gridlock. As a scholar studying immigration policies in teacher professional development, I ask myself how to work through an ontological impasse, heeding Pascale’s warning, “Despite rich literature in research methodology, it is possible to learn, and to use, social research methods without ever considering their philosophical/theoretical foundations – which has profound implications for the production of knowledge” (2011, p. 2). First, I make a case for moving away from dichotomous approaches and toward diagrammatical thinking (Freeman, 2017). Freeman describes diagrammatical thinking as ways of thinking that move beyond explanations made up of familiar narratives, toward viewing change through assemblages of humans and nonhumans that ebb and flow in various arrays and produce something.

Two Narratives

“Make America Great Again” (Trump campaign slogan, 2016)

“The thought that some of my (immigrant) students may be banned from certain universities in (state) saddens me. Over the years, I have taught a lot of highly intelligent individuals who I know could make a positive change in the lives of others, and who work harder than many American students” (Teacher D, 2015)
At this discordant time following the 2016 presidential election, I engage in seeking to better understand the ideological underpinnings of legislative policies and educators who work with immigrant students. I propose responding through a reworking of epistemological and ontological norms. I argue that we need to rethink how we make sense of the world, how we choose to study and represent the world, what “facts” we establish, and how we account for those facts in research. After providing an account of my journey, I describe how this might be accomplished through the theoretical lens of actor-network theory (Latour, 2005). The latter part of the paper illustrates what studies informed by actor-network theory can look like in educational research, providing initial observations and discussion of my study. Finally, I close with implications for the field of teacher education in an era of political divisiveness.

**Context**

Teachers around the country, including myself, are scrambling to help immigrant students facing traumatizing fears and realities. “The context of having a parent, sibling, or relative without documentation, or being undocumented oneself, is a unique stressor that cannot solely be understood as generic stress or trauma… teachers, counselors, and other school personnel are often on the front line… and should be well-informed about the challenges that immigration status issues may present” (Edwards & Black, 2017). Recently, Teaching Tolerance, TESOL International, and Education Week have begun highlighting how the new administration’s immigration policies are affecting students and teachers in U.S. schools.

The topic of immigrant students and education in the U.S. continues to escalate with opposing “facts.” In his speech announcing his presidential candidacy, Donald Trump stated, “When Mexico sends its people, they’re not sending their best…They’re bringing drugs. They’re bringing crime. They’re rapists… I will immediately terminate President Obama’s illegal
executive order on immigration” (Time, June 16, 2015). Highlighting very different “facts” was the January 2017, New York Times Magazine titled, “The only way we can fight back is to excel,” detailing stories of undocumented college students from Georgia. “Indira has wanted to be a doctor for as long as she can remember…She was determined to go to college and medical school and fulfill her parents’ interrupted dream (Russakoff, 2017, p. 38).

In 2014, estimates suggested that around 3.9 million children in K-12 schools are children of unauthorized parents, with the majority (3.2 million) of these children being U.S. born (Edwards & Black, 2017). Approximately 2.5 million undocumented youth live in the U.S. (American Federation of Teachers, 2016). Children from immigrant families in U.S. K-12 schools are often members of mixed-status families, in which at least one parent is a citizen or resident and the other is not. Regardless of their immigration status, under federal law, all children in the U.S. have the right to an education (Plyler v. Doe, 1982).

Post-election fears plague immigrant communities. Among other actions, the Trump administration’s 2017 executive orders on immigration have expanded categories of people targeted for deportation. Stories from around the country report seeing resulting effects of negative discourse and draconian policy enactment. Immigrants’ fears and the public’s adverse reactions are seen in public schools, universities, medical centers, and businesses. For example, recent media has begun to highlight instances of student bullying related to citizenship status, parents being stopped and arrested while taking children to school, and families avoiding visits to doctors for medical treatment (Ford, 2017; Ike Swetlitz, 2017; Mitchell, 2017; Rein, 2017; Saul, 2017, Will, 2017). Teachers are not exempt from addressing or enacting immigration policies in the classroom. A recent Education Week survey found that K-12 teachers believe it is important (yet difficult) to talk about controversial issues (Will, 2017). Seventy-five percent of
the teachers reported it’s important to discuss immigration with students, yet only forty-four percent reported having training in discussing controversial issues in a civil manner with students, and most said they had received no guidance from administrators (Will, 2017).

*Teacher Demographics in my Research Context*

| “I was surprised at the amount of knowledge I DON’T have about immigration policy, particularly in light of the fact that I am a teacher in a public school” (Teacher E). | 81,507 = White teachers statewide in 2015 (Education Commission, 2014) |
| | 94,034 = English learners (ELs) statewide in 2013 (Soto, Hooker, Batalova, 2015) |
| | 0 = Required training for general classroom teachers to work with culturally and linguistically diverse students (Education Commission, 2014) |

My research study takes place in a New Latino Diaspora (Wortham, et al., 2002) state in the U.S. Southeast, where immigration over the past few decades has created a need for teachers to be trained in working with immigrant populations. The study takes place in one of the top ten states of English Language Learner (ELL) enrollment in U.S. public schools (2015 Migration Policy Institute). In fact, the school district where my study takes place was one of the 25 districts in the country with highest ELL enrollment in 2011–12. (Soto, Hooker, & Batalova, 2015).

How I Came to Actor-network Theory (ANT)

My experiences told me that the topic of immigration and education policy is not a “matter of fact” but a “matter of concern” (Latour, 2005). Some background here provides the reader with a clearer understanding of my positioning as instructor and researcher in the professional development course. I grew up in the state where I now conduct research. Thirty years ago, a group of immigrants, primarily Mexican, arrived to work, study, and live in the town
where I attended middle and high school. I became friends with recently arrived Mexican peers. As an impressionable teenager, their stories expanded my worldview and inspired me to begin thinking about flows of human migration and cultural geographies. I left undergraduate studies certified in teaching Spanish and (English for Speakers of Other Languages) ESOL, continuing today as a practitioner-scholar in the field.

Joining other teachers, professors, and community members, my activist work has helped build grassroots support groups (Freedom University and ULEAD) for and with undocumented students. The focus of these groups has been to empower and transition immigrant students toward higher education. My advocacy work has included searching for scholarships, assisting with admission essays, transporting students to college out of state, and more. As a researcher, I feel strongly about my willingness to live, learn, and practice in the complexities of tension

The following accounts detail my involvement in local and state affairs, illustrating my struggle to conceptualize a way to study this interdisciplinary topic that accounts for multiple ontologies and my own subjective position. In 2012, I testified at a State Senate Judiciary Committee meeting in opposition to a bill proposed to cut all post-secondary opportunities for undocumented students. I was astounded at how little I felt the state legislators listened. My feeling of futility was reiterated afterward by one sympathetic state senator’s personal comment, “They came into this room knowing how they would vote.” The impasse felt overwhelming.

My scholarship on the topic of undocumented students and education in the Southeast led me to present at the 2013 annual meeting of American Anthropological Association. Reflecting on my critical discourse analysis work, I was frustrated. I sought a theory that would offer me a way to analyze an issue that has repeatedly left me at ideological head-butting, where my findings will always stand in direct contrast to another’s.
Instructor as Actor

“I would not be here speaking to you today if it weren't for the decades of rich experiences that immigrant friends, students, and families have offered me… We all have immigrants to thank for a multitude of reasons, not the least of which includes demonstrating how to be better humans” (Bass, CIES panel presentation, March, 2017).

“I’m noticing that each time I think through a connection, I have to catch myself so that I’m NOT starting with Course Instructor. It’s like a brain reset button. I have to continually press to remind myself to start with Course Curriculum. I can clearly see the challenges ANT presents in mapping with nonhuman entities and in striving to maintain a more balanced field that includes all actors” (Bass, personal communication, September 24, 2016).

My levels of involvement as teacher, activist, and scholar have led me to problematize epistemological and ontological orientations. Moreover, because I was the instructor for the course in my current study, I needed a way to account for myself as an actor and attempt to decenter my voice. Trying out various methods/theories, I was unable to imagine encapsulating multiple layers of messiness of policy work without reducing it to something I’m uncomfortable with and without positing alternate “facts.” I sought ways to explore and account for multiple “truths.” My proximity to the topic does not change with actor-network theory (ANT), but the ontological shift offers a unique way to consider reflexivity, effects, and assumptions. Not unlike Edwards et al. (2009b), who turned to ANT from New Literacy Studies in search of a more complicated view, I, too, have found myself resisting simple distinctions. Law (1999) addressed this idea by explaining that it is not that there are no divisions, but that ANT analysts view the divisions as effects or outcomes, not as givens.

In addition, I struggled with how to approach such an interdisciplinary topic. As Nespor (2002) observed, we must “consider whether it is practically meaningful, let alone, politically effective, to section out things we call ‘educational issues’ from issues of housing, safety, tax policy, access to public spaces, mass transportation, a living wage, higher education and
admission policies, and so forth” (p. 377). While far-reaching in terms of subjects and disciplines, an ANT analysis purposefully focuses on the local, minute details. The point is not to find larger social patterns, but to trace the tiny associations and movements, assembling the messiness we often tend to explain or ignore in our presentations of the social world.

**Actor-network Theory**

A growing number of scholars in the past decade have called for a “turn” in the field of education to address the “messiness” in social science research (Law 2007). From an educational policy perspective, Fenwick and Edwards (2010) suggest ANT as a valuable turn away from discourse fields where an epistemological view resounds. Joining Mol (1999) in “ontological politics,” this view advocates for educational research that accounts for multiple ontologies rather than multiple perspectives framed in a single ontology. Similarly, I propose that dichotomous traditions are not capable of moving us through ideological impasses.

Now, more than ever, scholar-practitioners need to respond in different ways to the impasse “messiness” that the 2016 presidential election has unearthed in the U.S. Latour (2005) cautioned against critical sociology, that it can never fail to be right. In other words, “While ideology critique tends to question matters of fact, it is itself usually positing an alternative matter of fact” (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 130). This way of thinking can be uncomfortable when we have been trained in analysis using dichotomies and categories.

In *Modes of Thinking for Qualitative Data Analysis*, Melissa Freeman (2017) charts various methodological approaches, emphasizing that “research is a political act, as we make conscious decisions about what to include, exclude, emphasize, and strive for” (p. 4). She explains that in choosing one form of analysis, a researcher is staking a claim to knowledge, which results in a particular “truth.” In a chapter on “Diagrammatical Thinking,” Freeman
suggests that Deleuze inspired a way out of this dialectic impasse. This way of thinking focuses on movement, on assemblages composed of human and non-human actors. Instead of focusing on each actor, however, the focus is on relationships between actors and the way an assemblage ebbs and flows in its becoming.

Actor-network theory (ANT) is one “diagrammatical” approach. Latour compared the term ‘network’ to Deleuze & Guattari’s use of ‘rhizome’, showing that the original intention of ‘network’ was to depict the work of transformation, not just transportation of information (Latour, 2005). He asserted that privileging humans over non-humans was limiting research in the social sciences. For example, I argue that an impasse is acting; it is a non-human entity that *is doing* something, along with an assemblage of other actors.

Two ANT concepts that are important in understanding this work are “social” and “fact.” In contrast to many social science views, the notion of social is problematized in ANT. Latour (2005) argued that the “social” is not something preexisting, but emerges through the tracing of new associations. Associations are constantly being made and remade, sometimes stabilizing for a short period, but always fragile and in constant flux.

Latour (2005) made distinctions between “sociologists of the social” and “sociologists of associations.” In my attempt to work as a sociologist of associations, I am unraveling one teacher professional development course, tracing human and nonhuman actors, and observing the links between them as well as threats looming to sever them. In my study, actors include immigration policies, ESOL professional development standards, curricula, teachers, instructor, and administrators. Rather than view each actor as an independent entity in the social realm, I am studying how the actors assemble and what effects occur in this manifestation.
Assemblage of “invisible” actors in the course

| NOT visible here in my online course are actors whose presence is often overlooked, but whose contributions to knowledge production are significant: pre-course surveys and post-course evaluations, legislation, curriculum development, students’ and their families’ understandings of education and their rights, and more. | Latour, “Give me one matter of concern and I will show you the whole earth and heaven that have to be gathered to hold it firmly in place” (Sanford, 2003). |

The concept of a “fact” also takes on new meaning in ANT. For Latour, matters of fact should be understood as matters of concern, looking at how “facts” take shape through associations. ANT explores how knowledge comes to be produced, looking at resources that are mobilized to establish an object of knowledge (Law 1994). Returning to the opening examples from teachers, we saw “facts” emerging from the study of immigration policies and undocumented students in higher education. For the first teacher, the facts created an emotional response in support of undocumented students. In contrast, the second teacher responded by calling the facts an inappropriate “political agenda.” Treating these examples as matters of fact creates an impasse, but treating them as matters of concern allows us to open them up in a different way.

ANT-informed Case Studies

Bartlett and Vavrus (2014) performed a multi-sited, ethnographic vertical case study of policy studies in education. They asked, “How can scholars trace the global circulation and production of educational policies and their impact on practice?” Bartlett and Vavrus (2014) contend that there has been limited methodological clarity in how to explore “complex assemblages of power that come to bear on policy formation and appropriation across multiple sites and scales” (131).
Gorur (2011) provides another example of ANT in educational research. Gorur followed the way PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) informed policy-makers and educational policy. Her ethnographic account used interviews, media releases, and policy documents to tell the story of how PISA unfolds, focusing on its fragility in the ways that human and non-human entities are arranged into assemblages of scientific fact, and arguing for “a suspension of the divide between ‘science’ and ‘politics’” (Gorur, 2011, p. 76). Gorur cited Latour’s (1999) question, ‘How do we pack the world into words?’ (p. 81). Her methodology engaged in this idea by tracing the paths that PISA scientists take to collect data, classify, and order the world into categories. “As the story of PISA unfolds, we see the hesitations and the provisionality of its knowledge gradually coalescing into ‘facts’” (Gorur, p. 78).

Using ANT to Study Immigration Policies and Teachers

In recent years, we have seen conflicting immigration policies across states and impasse in immigration reform at the federal level. In June 2012, President Obama’s Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) provided hope for young immigrants. Almost five years later, the Trump era has ushered in an accelerated fear and targeting of immigrants in the U.S. In this fast-changing policy context, “little is known about how educators understand the immigration practices shaping students’ lives or how this impacts their teaching” (Gallo & Link, 2015, p. 359).

My study has taken the approach of an ANT-informed two-year ethnographic case study whose starting point of reference is a university’s ESOL teacher professional development course. Situated among a growing number of research studies using ANT, the study has two purposes. First, I have aimed to better understand how immigration policies circulate in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) professional development work with thirty-six K-12
classroom teachers. Additionally, I have sought to better understand how an ANT-informed lens can contribute to educational research.

**A Quest for Method: Discussion**

Teachers in my study responded that their prior knowledge of immigration policies came from social media, television, radio news, courses in college, and personal experiences with students or friends. Several teachers responded with surprise and interest about the state university system’s policy to prohibit undocumented students from certain colleges and charge up to four times in-state tuition at other institutions. Others responded by pushing-back to learning about immigration policy in a teacher professional development program.

Immigration policies as actors are far-reaching and often voiceless in education. I found that most teachers in the cohort were unaware of the restrictive higher education policies affecting the students they teach. This demonstrates the power of “invisible” actors, such as immigration policies, whose voices are often not privileged in our social science world. Looking closely at associations between Policy 4.1.6 and teacher-participants produces complicated understandings of opposing facts. Studying the effects of relationships among human and non-human actors with ANT is one way to open up the complicated nature of clashing ideologies.

**Policies as Actors**

| 4.1.6 Admission of Persons Not Lawfully Present in the United States: A person who is not lawfully present in the United States shall not be eligible for admission to any University System institution which, for the two most recent academic years, did not admit all academically qualified applicants (except for cases in which applicants were rejected for non-academic reasons) (Board of Regents, 2010). | “I had no previous understandings regarding the policies...Hearing the stories and seeing the students that truly want a better education and a better way of life has enlightened me to this discrepancy in the law. I often wonder if this law is designed to keep some races above others” (Teacher F, 2015). |
From the early days of the Trump era, immigration policies have surfaced ten-fold in the education world. Yet, immigration policies existed during the Obama administration as well, and were acting on schools and families. Due to policy change enactment, heightened media attention, and an increase in damaging effects, immigration policies are rearing their heads, thus becoming quite visible.

A shift in visibility of immigration policies in educational contexts may be strengthening associations with other actors. One example is the uptick in recent articles aimed at educators in various publication outlets (AFT, 2016; Costello, 2016; Edwards & Black, 2017; Ehrenhalt, 2016; Mitchell, 2017; Russakoff, 2017). Articles disseminated to a wider audience extend and strengthen relationships between immigration policies and educators without the instructor association that connects them in my study.

This study contributes important understandings. First, immigration policies in teacher professional development have always been present and performing effects, together with a network of legislators who create policies, officers who impose them, teachers who may be unaware of them, and students who are devastated by them. One such aim of the research project was addressing such obscurities of data. Second, immigration policies are *doing* something in education. Studying associations among immigration policies and teacher professional development helps make visible how an impasse manifests into serious effects for immigrants and educators. Third, K-12 teachers and immigration policies are enacting something together, notwithstanding impasse. I assert that further study in this area is needed as practitioners and scholars continue to work amidst polarizing ideologies and denigrating policies.
Implications

Through initial observations and analysis, I have found ANT to be challenging yet advantageous. Actor-network theory offers a shift in focus toward associations among human and non-human actors. This has offered me a way to follow the circulation of immigration and education policies, allowing for a less-prescribed look at complex, colliding ideologies. I propose that studying these associations lays the groundwork for opening up important impasses in today’s political and social context.

As scholars and practitioners, we must continue to push our responses to policies and impasses that have serious consequences for immigrant students and families, for schools and communities. Actor-network theory is one way to open up possibilities for understanding an impasse and for ways to rethink what we consider valid scientific knowledge. In light of the ideological gridlock in the U.S. today, diagrammatical approaches may offer the field of critical thought and praxis a breadth with which to grow.

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CHAPTER 3

IMMIGRATION POLICY AND ESOL TEACHER EDUCATION: THE POTENTIAL OF ACTOR-NETWORK THEORY²

Abstract

This qualitative research inquiry contributes to the fields of teacher preparation and educational policy. Recent immigration to the New Latino Diaspora (Wortham, et al., 2002) of the U.S. Southeast has created a need for teacher professional development regarding immigrant populations. Meanwhile, states have enacted devastating laws and restrictive policies regarding immigrants. Here, I argue that actor-network theory (Latour, 2005) offers advantageous perspectives for studying issues associated with complex policies and multiple ideologies. Exploring one immigration policy in an English for Speakers of Other Languages professional development course, implications arise for teacher preparation in working with culturally and linguistically diverse students.

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Immigration Policy and ESOL Teacher Education: The Potential of Actor-Network Theory

This study takes place in a New Latino Diaspora (Wortham, et al., 2002) state in the U.S. Southeast, where immigration over the past few decades has created a need for teachers to be trained in working with immigrant populations. In 2011–2012, Georgia had one of the highest English Learner enrolments in U.S. public schools. (Soto, Hooker, Batalova, 2015). Meanwhile, recent state legislative sessions have yielded devastating laws for immigrants and restrictive policies regarding higher education.

At this discordant time when the Trump administration has promoted anti-immigrant discourse and policy, I seek to better understand the relationships between educational policies, teacher professional development, and educators who work with immigrant students. This qualitative research inquiry responds through an ethnographic, actor-network lens that suggests a reworking of epistemological and ontological norms. Joining scholars using an actor-network theory (Latour, 2005) approach (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010; Gorur, 2011; Bartlett & Vavrus, 2014; Buxton, et al. 2016), the project contributes to the fields of educational policy and teacher preparation.

Analysis in this project maps relationships in one ESOL professional development course among immigration policy, ESOL teacher education standards and curricula, the instructor-researcher, and thirty-six educator-participants. Through vignettes, memos, mapping, and narrative, I explore immigration policy as an actor in the production of ESOL teachers’ knowledge.

Most qualitative research in the social sciences privileges humans as having agency. However, agency an actor-network theory is viewed differently; there is a lack of division between human and non-human agency. Material-semiotic approaches like actor-network theory
(ANT) view reality, not through the ways individual actors enact agency, but through webs of relationships among human and non-human actors. Thus, the focus in this research study is on how actors come together as networks and manifest effects.

Specifically, this study addresses Policy 4.1.6, enacted in 2011 by the Georgia Board of Regents (BOR), the governing body of all public higher education institutions in the state. Effectively, through Policy 4.1.6, this governor-appointed board of 18 members determined that certain immigrant students should be excluded from higher education. The voice of Policy 4.1.6 is a non-human actor in this study. Following Callon (1986), we might ask, “Who speaks in the name of whom? Who represents whom?”

Asking these questions highlights the privileging of humans in traditional social science research. Three vignettes in this paper present the non-human voice of Policy 4.1.6, accompanying the context, data, analysis, and findings. Following examples in the work of Buxton, et al. (2017), these vignettes trace circulations and associations in teacher education while making visible the social as effect, rather than cause. In the following pages, the voice of the non-human actor, Policy 4.1.6, guides readers through the paper, presenting one version of how actors assembled, were disassembled, and reassembled in this research inquiry.

**Vignette #1 Policy 4.1.6**

*My name is Policy 4.1.6, and I am one of the policies that guide higher education admission in the state of Georgia. I was enacted in 2010 by the governing body of all state colleges and universities, the Board of Regents (BOR). My existence impacts immigrant students’ educational trajectories. In fact, I prohibit many immigrant students, undocumented students, as well as those with deferred action status (DACA), are prohibited from attending the top public universities in my state after they complete K-12 schooling.*
This research report below follows my voice as I circulate among national, state, district, and local networks made up of humans and non-humans involved in one ESOL professional development program. In order to explore how K-12 public school teachers are learning to work with English learners. Professional development programs allow for certified, practicing teachers to seek further knowledge of working with culturally and linguistically diverse students. This knowledge is offered in ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) programs through universities and school district professional development offices. This paper traces how the knowledge imparted to teachers was assembled in one ESOL professional development course for teachers, and how such knowledge comes to be. The course under study here is titled Language and Culture in the Classroom. It is one of three courses required for the ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) endorsement in my state. As a policy that affects large numbers of immigrant students’ educational trajectories, dreams, and opportunities, I want to know more about my potential influence on ESOL teacher education.

**Review of the Literature**

While immigration policies impact the daily lives of many immigrant families, including schoolchildren, the extent to which such policies are addressed in ESOL teacher education standards, curricula, and coursework is unclear. ESOL teachers are often the first points of contact for students and their families regarding not only academic work, but also schooling in the U.S. in general. Given the prolific numbers of immigrant students in the U.S. and the limited focus in general teacher education on working with culturally and linguistically diverse students, the work of ESOL professional development for all teachers is essential.

Education requirements for ESOL teachers, however, vary widely across states. For example, Reeves (2010) found that while every state in the U.S. offered some type of ESOL
teacher licensure, either an initial certification or an add-on endorsement, requirements varied even within a single state. Universities, colleges, and school districts develop their own certification programs, with program developers (or certification programs and program developers) interpreting state guidelines in disparate ways (Reeves, 2010). In an analysis of teacher preparation programs in the U.S. by state, Stevens (2008) found that very few states require teachers in working with English language learners.

Regardless of preparation, teachers remain key actors in the ways immigration policies are interpreted in the classroom. Immigration policies at the national, state, and local levels affect many aspects of immigrant students’ lives daily. From fear of deportation (Diaz-Strong, Luna-Duarte, Gomez, & Meiners, 2014; Dreby, 2010, 2012; Gallo & Link, 2016; Hamann & Reeves 2012; Suárez-Orozco, C., Yoshikawa, H., Teranishi, R., & Suárez-Orozco, M., 2011) to confusion about college access (Flores & Chapa, 2010; Gildersleeve & Hernandez, 2012; Kanno & Varghese, 2010; Rodriguez & Cruz, 2009), young people in many immigrant families struggle to understand the personal and professional consequences of immigration policies.

Much attention has focused on proposed and actual changes to immigration laws at the national and state levels. A less studied, but perhaps vastly more important area of interest, is the effect immigration has on U.S. classrooms—where society’s response will determine the skills of the future U.S. workforce and the nation’s ability to remain competitive in a global economy (Migration Policy Institute, 2016).

Few studies have linked classroom teachers and the effects of immigration policies. Drawing from “figured worlds” (Holland & Quinn, 1987) and the multiple and conflicting roles of teachers, Salas (2007) aptly paints a vivid picture of the labyrinth of teachers’ complicated
understandings of “institutional definitions of what it means to be ready for college-level work, the politics of immigration, and the conundrums of their unfolding lives and those of their students” (p. 2). Likewise, Stevens (2011) advocates for an educator’s view that encapsulates a fuller picture of what happens in classrooms than is afforded by policies and standards. In her dual case study of two immigrant high school students, Stevens used Bourdieu’s forms of capital to tease apart the “complications involved in achievement in society.” Calling for educators to become sociologists “in their own backyards,” she asks, “How can we purposefully reorient ourselves to the intent of education and the gaps between that intent and reality?” (Stevens, 2011, p. 138).

In a five-year ethnography, Gallo and Link (2016) explored teachers’ understandings of how their students responded to increased deportations. The authors argue for teacher preparation to include preparing educators to become “border crossers” themselves. Borrowing from Sepúlveda (2011), they argue that the context and background of classrooms serving culturally and linguistically diverse students require that teacher educators “rethink and reimagine what types of pedagogy and training are required for a twenty-first century marked by movement, displacement, and global inequality” (p. 568). To better understand if and how immigration policy circulates in education, this paper traces Policy 4.1.6 through curriculum standards and other national, state, and district level policies that are germane to ESOL teacher education.

**Theoretical Frame**

This qualitative, ethnographic, case study falls under the broad theoretical framework of ANT-informed social science research in education and policy studies. The study intends to join the growing interest in educational research that attunes itself to how humans and non-humans
converging in webs of activity that make up everyday moments. This work requires a shift in thinking, away from the common notion that only humans have agency. Prior (2003) explained, “documents are never inert, but enter into projects as independent agents” (p. 91). This shift opens possibilities of considering the world through networks of action that are not limited to human influence. Indeed, actor-network theory encourages flattening out a moment across time and space, attending to the connections that hold things together in that moment.

ANT offers one way out of dialectic impasse, one approach to “diagrammatical thinking.” According to Freeman (2017), diagrammatical thinking focuses on movement, on assemblages or networks composed of human and non-human actors. Instead of focusing on each actor, however, the focus is on associations between actors, and the way an assemblage fluctuates in its becoming. Shifting our thought processes away from dichotomies and toward diagrammatical thinking (Freeman, 2017) offers a new way to look at educational policy and teacher professional development focused on the multi-faceted and contentious topic of educating immigrant students in the U.S.

In contrast to many social science views, the notion of social is problematized in ANT. Citing Tarde’s adamant position, Latour (2005) argued, “the social was not a special domain of reality but a principle of connections” (p. 13). Latour (2005) made clear distinctions between “sociologists of the social” and “sociologists of associations.” What ANT authors do, as sociologists of associations, is take up minute associations to unravel and reweave. Through such disassembling and reassembling, the ANT analyst, or sociologist of associations, pays close attention to associations between humans and nonhumans, forming webs of activity. Latour (2005) posited that ANT does not see the “social” as something preexisting, but as emerging
through the tracing of new associations. Associations are constantly being made and remade, sometimes stabilizing for a short period, but always fragile and in constant flux.

Fenwick and Edwards (2011) suggest ANT as a valuable way to examine educational research, especially because of the possibility of incorporating a wide range of stakeholders, negotiations, and multiple ontologies. According to Law (2004), the value of an ANT approach is that it offers a way to identify resources that are mobilized to establish an object of knowledge. In this research study, the object of knowledge is the composition of one ESOL-teacher professional development course, or what ESOL teachers need to know. By following the associations among Policy 4.1.6, teacher-participants, the instructor-researcher, and the multi-level standards and curricula that inform ESOL teacher education, the analysis intends to shed light on how this policy moves through, in, and around the professional development course.

Pascale warned about the possibility to learn and use social research methods “without ever considering their philosophical/theoretical foundations—which has profound implications for the production of knowledge” (2011, p. 2). Further, Latour (2005) cautioned against critical sociology, that it can never fail to be right. In other words, “While ideology critique tends to question matters of fact, it is itself usually positing an alternative matter of fact” (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 130). In line with Pascale and Latour above, this research inquiry explores how knowledge comes to be produced regarding the education of immigrant students, without focusing on dichotomies or critique.

**Methodological Choices**

**Context and Setting**

The ESOL teacher professional development program was funded by a five-year grant with Title III money from the U.S. Department of Education administered through a large
university in one southeastern state. Georgia has experienced one of the fastest growing immigrant populations in the country; from 1998–2008, the number of English Learners (ELs) in schools increased by over 200% (Batalova & McHugh, 2010). In a Migration Policy Institute report in school year 2011–2012, one school district in the state fell in the top 25 school districts in the U.S. serving English Language Learner populations with 18,968 EL students, 11.7% of all K-12 students in the district (Soto, Hooker, Batalova, 2015). This population of culturally and linguistically diverse students creates a need for ESOL-endorsed teachers across the state.

Meanwhile, recent state legislative sessions have enacted particularly devastating laws and policies for immigrants, in addition to other restrictive policies regarding higher education. In 2011, a controversial House Bill passed in Georgia, referred to as the “Arizona copycat law” (Hussain, 2011; Arrocha, 2012). It resulted in increased racial profiling by police and caused many farmers in the state to lose employees (Altschuler, 2011; Powell, 2012). In addition to legislation, the context is shaped by immigrant hate groups that rally publicly both in person and in the media, including anti-immigrant hate sites (Moser, 2004) and active lobbyists (King, D.A., 2009). In recent years, Georgia lawmakers have proposed multiple bills that would cut off all higher education access from undocumented immigrant students (GA H.B. 59, 2012; GA S.B. 458, 2012).

Over the past five years, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) has provided approximately 800,000 undocumented immigrant youth with a temporary two-year permit to work, drive, and live in the U.S. as “lawfully present” members (Passel & Lopez, 2012). During this time, however, few states, such as Georgia, do not recognize DACA when it comes to higher education admission and tuition (Johnson, 2015). In fact, while undocumented students have been recognized by this federal action since 2012, Georgia has prohibited these students from
attending the top institutions of higher education, and requiring international tuition rates at others, such as community colleges (Johnson, 2015).

Participants

Teacher-participants were part of a larger, five-year study that involved three different cohorts of in-service teachers spanning grades K-12 across four different counties in the state. This study focuses on thirty-six K-12 teachers working in various content areas and at various schools in one school district with a large population of immigrant students. Teachers volunteered to enter the program, earning a three-course ESOL endorsement upon completion and Masters’ level credits. The program was free for teachers. Georgia offers no salary raise for teachers completing the ESOL endorsement.

An online format guided the coursework. Course materials were read individually and discussed in face-to-face small groups determined by the participants. Online responses to materials were posted individually as well as following group discussions. This model of professional learning communities presupposes the value of colleagues’ interactions during exposure to course materials (Murry & Herrera, 1999). Communication with the instructor and work submission was primarily online, in addition to two required whole-group, face-to-face meetings at the beginning and end of the semester.

Methodology and Subjectivities

My involvement as a scholar studying immigration policies in teacher professional development as well as teacher, teacher educator, and activist, led me to problematize my orientation. I was at an ontological and epistemological impasse with other methods/theories and unable to imagine encapsulating multiple layers of the messiness of policy work without reducing to positing an alternate view with alternate “facts.”
Moreover, because I was the instructor for the course in my current study, I needed a way to account for myself as an actor and attempt to decenter my voice. Trying out various methods/theories, I sought ways to explore and account for multiple “truths.” My proximity to the topic does not change with actor-network theory (ANT), but the ontological shift offers a unique way to consider reflexivity, effects, and assumptions.

My experiences told me that the topic of immigration and education policy is not a “matter of fact” but a “matter of concern” (Latour, 2005). Latour (2005) made this distinction to emphasize that what we commonly call facts are actually precarious assemblages of human and non-human actors that hinge on their relationships to each other, thus fragile and breakable. Viewing immigration policy in teacher education as a “matter of concern” allows for moving beyond the polarizing dichotomies plaguing the U.S. today, with sides being taken due to conflicting “matters of fact.”

A self-portrait provides the reader with a clearer understanding of my positioning as instructor and researcher in the professional development course. I grew up in the state where I now conduct research. Thirty years ago, a group of immigrants, primarily Mexican, arrived to work, study, and live in the town where I attended middle and high school. I became friends with recently arrived Mexican peers. As a teenager, their stories expanded my worldview and inspired me to begin thinking about flows of human migration and cultural geographies. I left undergraduate studies certified in teaching Spanish and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages), continuing today as a practitioner-scholar in the field.

Edwards et al. (2009b) turned to ANT from New Literacy Studies in search of a more complicated view that resists simple distinctions. For example, a simple distinction in this work would be “legal” versus “illegal.” Law (1999) addressed this idea by explaining that it is not that
there are no divisions, but that ANT analysts view the divisions as effects or outcomes, not as
givens. The point is not to find larger social patterns, but to trace the tiny associations and
movements, assembling the messiness we often tend to explain away or ignore in our
presentations of the social world. In this paper, I walk through the analysis and observations I
have made while attending to the following research question:

   How is Policy 4.1.6 performing in the standards and curricula that guide K-12 public
   school teachers in Georgia becoming endorsed to work with English learners?

Data Collection

   This analysis responds to the question above by tracing a path of Policy 4.1.6 throughout
one ESOL teacher professional development course. Data collection began in summer, 2015.
Data collection included compiling standards and policies guiding course development, materials
chosen for the course syllabus, pre-course surveys of teacher understandings, online responses
and work submitted throughout the course, final course evaluations, and focus group discussions.
Additionally, representations of data and analysis include figures that create visual assemblages,
photographs of pinboard mapping (Law, 2002) and memos created by the researcher.

Analysis

   Analysis began at the inception of ideas at an indeterminate point in time. However, in
Analysis Part One, I study documents. This is not to pretend that humans can be excluded from
the course, or that the author-researcher has no agency. The purpose of beginning with
documents is twofold: to highlight the importance of non-humans as actors and to purposefully
explore a network without human actors. Then, Analysis Part Two expands the assemblage into a
broader network that includes human and non-human actors.
Analysis Part One

I struggled with how to approach an interdisciplinary topic that involves multiple levels of policy, practice, and praxis. With Nespor (2002), I “consider whether it is practically meaningful, let alone, politically effective, to section out things we call ‘educational issues’ from issues of housing, safety, tax policy, access to public spaces, mass transportation, a living wage, higher education and admission policies, and so forth” (p. 377). While far-reaching in terms of subjects and disciplines, an ANT analysis purposefully focuses on the local, minute details. The following analysis attempts to follow Policy 4.1.6 through the various documents and policies used to put this professional development course into being.

Table 1: Data Sources for RQ 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards from Teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)</th>
<th>Federal English Learner (EL) Policies guided by Office of Civil Rights (Lau v. Nichols, 1974; Plyler v. Doe, 1982)</th>
<th>Office of English Language Acquisition, National Professional Development (OELA, NPD)</th>
<th>U.S. DOE Title III, in the Elementary &amp; Secondary Education Act (ESEA)</th>
<th>University System Board of Regents (BOR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Requirements from State Professional Standards Commission (PSC)</td>
<td>School District Expectations for ESOL teacher professional development</td>
<td>Grant Program Goals</td>
<td>Previous Course Syllabi and Materials</td>
<td><em>Policy 4.1.6 is explicit.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Current Course Syllabus and Materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Policy 4.1.6 is explicit.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data sources in Table 1 informed and guided the expectations for planning the course under study. Table 1 shows standards, curricula, national, state, and local guidelines. These data sources were assembling, disassembling, and reassembling in various networks and other iterations of ESOL courses prior to my involvement as instructor. Each of the data sources in Table 1 provided one or more documents that contributed to the course network. In this phase of
analysis, Vignette #2, the voice of Board of Regents Policy 4.1.6, searches through the data for recognition or representation.

**Vignette #2 A Search for Policy 4.1.6**

I’m in the local and national news. I’ve caused heartbreak for many students and victory for anti-immigrant forces. I’m in conversations among students and presidents of universities (Baruchman, 2014). I’m even on the Colbert Report! On a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 being not at all knowledgeable and 7 being completely knowledgeable, teachers entering this course rated themselves at a mean of 2.6 in their knowledge of state immigration policies. Where am I in this program that trains teachers to work with immigrant students?

In Table 1, I am visible as the official University Board of Regents policy and was included in the current course syllabus and materials under study. I do not see myself in any of the other documents explicitly. However, I did find vague language in several documents that could accommodate me. What do these examples below mean?

The standards of the state and school district reflect the national TESOL standards in requiring that programs prepare candidates who “demonstrate knowledge of...educational public policy” and “demonstrate the ability to advocate for ELLs” (TESOL International). Additionally, the TESOL standards that guide programs authorized to ESOL teacher endorsement list, “Candidates design and deliver instruction that includes anti-bias materials and develop a classroom climate that purposefully addresses bias, stereotyping, and oppression” (TESOL International, 2010, p. 37). Further, one goal of this professional development program is to “improve the academic achievement of English learners.” High court cases and the Office of Civil Rights protect the education of English learners, and the teachers learn about those, including Lau v. Nichols, 1974 and Plyler v. Doe, 1982.
At first glance, it might appear that I am not performing much at all in the ESOL teacher professional development program described here. Yet, I am there, perhaps without a voice or a name, but somewhere beneath and between the lines.

Observations from Analysis Part One

The first observation from analysis of the table is that Policy 4.1.6 is articulated explicitly in only two out of the ten resources. Common sense points to the fact that Policy 4.1.6 is state-level, while several of the sources are federal. This being the case, finding potential for Policy 4.1.6 in the other resources, albeit vague, deserves to be questioned. For example, requiring that teachers advocate for students’ educational achievement provides teachers with a mission without specifying the mission itself. What does this mean? One might ask if this oblique language is purposeful? Perhaps such a loose association works to maintain distance, possibly even protect teachers who resist policies like 4.1.6 in the name of advocating for students. As course instructor, I thought of it the other way around, believing that it should be included in the curriculum to increase awareness. However, if 4.1.6 were included in more of the resources, it might have adverse effects and create stronger negative associations by giving teachers a policy as “fact” rather than “concern.”

This finding leaves vagueness up to the instructor, who has potentially less power than a policy intact in curriculum, resulting in potentially more power with which to work if the policy is not in the curriculum. In other words, perhaps because Policy 4.1.6 is not named explicitly in multiple resources, the loose links create a space in which it can be included (or not). This finding supports the work of educational researchers who promote ESOL teacher education to be contextual (Johnson, 2006; Reeves, 2010; Stevens, 2011).
A second observation draws on the limitations in Analysis Part One. First, looking strictly at documents gives one manifestation, but not a complete assemblage. However, it provides an interesting starting point and contrast to the ways humans are privileged in much social science research. Second, the table presents each text as if it were isolated instead of interdependent, as if the texts do not overlap or influence one another. Table 1 appears to focus on separations, not associations. Separately, Vignette #2 works as the analysis, a connecting voice. Figure 1.3 below reflects a more appropriate visual representation that reflects the interrelatedness of all the standards and policies once assembled.

**Figure 1.3: The Voice of Policy 4.1.6 in Documents**

In the figure, non-human actors such as documents *act* independently, *act together* in networks, and are *acted upon*. Prior (2003) offers an approachable way to think about the function that documents (as well as objects and humans) participate as actors in a network of activities. Following this line of thinking, this analysis has attempted to decenter the human and
approach a web of activities with the notion that things (such as documents), influence and structure humans as effectively as humans influence the things.

**Analysis Part Two**

In ANT, the “social” is not pre-existing; the ANT researcher is making the social. Every action is a fragile, momentary association of actors. With each momentary association, power is redistributed. “From an ANT perspective, researchers can only grasp an understanding of the social through observing the momentary convergence of a multiplicity of actors” (Buxton et al, 2016, p. 13). Thus, an ANT researcher creates and performs ontology, a sociologist of associations rather than a sociologist of the social (Latour, 2005). In other words, as we make choices about what counts as knowledge and how knowledge is created, we are drawing on ontological and epistemological issues (Pascale, 2011).

The analysis culminating here has been in motion for over two years. Beginning in 2015 at the inception of ideas, analysis is ongoing and simultaneous with data collection. Understanding educational research benefits through an ANT analysis is one of my research goals. Below are examples of the process my analyses took in addressing research question two between September 2016 and September 2017. I address the research question: What can be learned about immigration policy as an actor from studying the formation of an actor-network in one ESOL teacher education course?

**Pinboard Mapping with Yarn**

This example shows my attempt to slow the process of mapping, ontologically configuring this manifestation of a network. A story could start anywhere. Law (2002) reminds us, “Matters grow from the middle, and from many places. But one also has to start somewhere”
The researcher’s decision about where to start is a clear methodological choice that directly relates to knowledge production.

**Figure 2.3: Pinboard Mapping with Yarn**

During early data analysis, I put Course Curriculum at the center as the “token or focal actor” and attempted to trace a path from Course Curriculum outward in the construction of a “coursenetwork” (Gaskell & Hepburn, 1998). While taking notes on my thinking, I performed a physical mapping with corkboard, pins, sharpie, post-its, yarn, and scissors.

Today I am revisiting my notes from last week and beginning to physically “map” the actors using the materials noted above. I’m noticing that each time I think through a connection, I have to catch myself so that I’m NOT starting with Course Instructor. It’s like a brain reset button I have to continually press to remind myself to start with Course
Curriculum. I can more clearly see the challenges ANT presents in mapping with
nonhuman entities and in striving to maintain a more balanced field that includes all
actors. TB mapping notes 9/24/16

Actor-network theory attempts to “pluralize what it means to speak of agency” (Sayes,
2013, p. 141). This view shifts power from a force of human agency to an operation of
arrangements, or networks, of human and non-human actors together. Similar to Foucault’s
(1991), “power-knowledge,” we can begin to see how facts about the world are generated
through the arrangements of actors. What and who is included and excluded shapes the
production of knowledge and operations of power. As networks assemble and act, knowledge is
created and power is exercised.

The mapping exercise led me to three initial observations (see also, Bass, 2016):

1. The manifestation of this network is fragile in some places, highlighting the
   precariousness of assemblages holding together.

2. The mapping reveals connections that appear to be more stable and connections
   that appear to be less stable. The least stable link appears to be between
   immigration policy and teacher education. The most stable links appear to be
   between course curriculum, standards, and instructor.

3. ANT researchers (Gorur, 2011) talk about facts being built from these precarious
   assemblages. This requires us to look at precariousness of facts as well.

One might argue, “Where is the evidence? It seems to be hidden in the mapping. What
evidence do you have that allows you to connect things in this map?” I contend that in a coding
process, we should ask the same questions. However, because qualitative analysis is dominated
by methodologies and epistemologies that support coding of data, such questions about evidence are rarely asked and go unexplained in research reports.

The analysis phase above, yarn mapping, provokes a discussion of boundaries and boundary making. Pascale (2011) reminds us that while all research requires limits, how scholars envision limits is a political process as well as a research process. However, according to Pascale (2011), scholars are most often held accountable only for the knowledge produced within their narrowly defined frame. This is how research reproduces and perpetuates dominant cultural ideologies. I struggled with the boundary concept, with where and how to make connections in the data. If I had started with instructor, or with the teachers, the mapping of the network would invariably be presented differently. By starting with the Course, relationships among humans and non-humans were traced so that links and gaps in the assemblage were illuminated.

**Findings**

This study has demonstrated ANT’s capability to consider ontological openings as a useful approach to better understanding polarizing views such as those regarding the education of immigrants in the U.S. The two analyses above reflect one manifestation of an assemblage of actors in an ESOL teacher professional learning course. I have approached the “messiness” in social science research with an ANT lens while attempting to better understand associations between immigration policy and ESOL teacher preparation. Instead of looking to the data to find immigration policies, I decided to *be an immigration policy* and circulate through the data. The voice of Policy 4.1.6. traces a path that is circuitous, not linear, and not bound in causal relationships. Methods here do not produce neat charts or tables. On the contrary, the evidence is represented in the effects of the network.
Following this, the “findings” of my analysis are interspersed throughout the manuscript in vignettes, memos, mappings, and narrative. However, to bring things together in a digestible and meaningful way, I return to the research question with a review of observations, implications, reflections on ANT, and a final vignette:

How is Policy 4.1.6 performing in the standards and curricula that guide K-12 public school teachers in Georgia becoming endorsed to work with English learners?

In Analysis One involving strictly texts, Policy 4.1.6 was expressed explicitly in two of the ten actors influencing course development. Thus, the policy was found to be very loosely associated to the other eight actors. One observation highlighted the possibility that these loose associations may serve as a protective measure for educators responding to such policies, especially given the tides of change in politics. However, Policy 4.1.6 circulated through all the standards and policies in the application level of local practice— that of educating immigrant students to be contributing members of society.

In Analysis Two, the mapping highlighted further associations among actors, including humans. The least stable link appears to be between immigration policies and teacher education. The most stable links appear to be between course curriculum, standards, and instructor. As seen in Analysis One, policies like 4.1.6 are impacting immigrant students’ educational trajectories, but may not be voiced explicitly in ESOL teacher education. Thus, there is room for ideological interpretation, which can be seen in the quotes below from two different teacher-participants in the course evaluation:

“As a K-12 teacher, I am angry, worried, and saddened that some of my students may be banned from certain universities...It makes me feel like I am letting them down when they may eventually get to a point that they are held back in their educational dreams due to their immigration status.” (Teacher A, 2015)
“I felt it was not appropriate for a political agenda to be pushed in an education course.”
(Teacher B, 2015)

In the assemblage studied here, Policy 4.1.6 was linked to standards and curriculum through the instructor. In another instantiation of this course with a different instructor, while the policy would still be looming, the links between immigration policy to curriculum and standards may not be made. Knowledge regarding Policy 4.1.6 emerging from a different course network might turn out otherwise, even contrasting.

Studying immigration policy as an actor in this network allowed me to observe that voiced or not, immigration policies such as 4.1.6 do contribute to the production of knowledge in ESOL teacher education. This study allowed me to see significant gaps in the associations among actors; specifically, gaps between Policy 4.1.6 and the production of knowledge involved in ESL teacher education. The study offers one way to reorient ourselves “to the intent of education and the gaps between that intent and reality” (Stevens, 2011). I further Stevens by asking: What intended or unintended consequences do such gaps incur in teacher-student interactions? More work is to be done. For example, at the time of writing, the Trump administration has repealed DACA. How might this be contributing to the production of knowledge in teacher education across the U.S.?

Implications

The specific teacher education course under study took place in 2015, before the 2016 U.S. election. This is notable because immigration policies have since become more visible and contentious due to rhetoric of the Trump administration. Over the past two years, the federal context has shifted toward anti-immigrant sentiment, problematizing the work of teachers who work with immigrant students and reinforcing the importance of this research.
Indeed, in the wake of the recent U.S. election, the Trump administration has incited heightened fear in immigrant communities with threats of increased deportations, a U.S.-Mexico wall, and incitements of racial antagonism. In the same week as Trump’s January 25 executive order on interior enforcement (Executive Order No. 13726, 2017), the TESOL International Association issued a letter urging support for English language learners, educators and DACA (Aronson, 2017). Education Week published, “As Trump Weighs Fate of Immigrant Students, Schools Ponder Their Roles” (Mitchell, & Vara-Orta, 2017). A Harvard Graduate School of Education research story concurred, “Our country is polarized: How is that showing up in your school?” (Shafer, 2017).

On his blog in January 2017, an immigration lawyer in Atlanta posted nine things you should know if you are an immigrant. One reads, “Have a plan in place. Decide who picks the kids up from school…In the last few weeks, we have heard of parents being picked up at school bus stops and at work and home while the kids are in school” (Kuck, 2017). In a separate article, I compile numerous published accounts of educators caught between their roles of advocating for immigrant students and understanding immigration policies (Bass, 2017).

President Obama issued the executive order Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) in summer of 2012. However, at the time of writing, the Trump administration recently announced DACA’s termination, causing immigrant families more fear and anxiety. “Students will enter your school with life-altering possibilities weighing on their minds. Their fates rely on community leaders, from Congress to the classroom” (Collins, 2017). Viewing educators’ understandings as effects of networks that are precarious has serious implications for teacher education.
Reflections on ANT

ANT inquiries trace relationships and study the effects. A growing number of scholars have called for a “turn” in the field of education to “messiness” in social science research, reflecting the unknowable messiness of the world. Law (2002) calls this the “uncomfortable lack of completion with the absence of redemption” (p. 193). As I have attempted to demonstrate in this paper, Actor-network Theory (ANT) offers one way to approach this messiness.

In a recent special issue of the Modern Language Journal (2015), editors explain a move away from the socio-historical ontology and its systemic orientation for studying what and how participants are thinking during activities like language teaching and learning study. According to the editors, this type of ontology presents challenges since the “features of activity being studied are themselves dynamic and interactive” (Burns, Freeman, & Edwards, p. 588).

Exploring studies that use ANT with educational policy, Fenwick & Edwards (2010) also demonstrate a turn in educational policy “away from discourse and discursive fields where diverse meanings and conflicting ways of knowing are at play—an epistemological view—to a question of multiple ontologies” (p. 143). By addressing the fragility of an assemblage in one ESOL teacher professional development course that involves immigration policy, this research project has also explored relations between ontology and epistemology. Law (2002) observes that a focus on epistemology conceals the “possibility that an ontology is being created or performed” (p. 35).

In this politically polarizing time in the U.S., the incorporation of “multiple ontologies” (Law, 2002; Mol, 2002) has important implications for education research overall, and specifically for how teachers are prepared to work with culturally and linguistically diverse students. Despite the number of actors that perform as gatekeepers, such as standards and federal
government investment in professional development for teachers, knowledge regarding immigration policies has the potential to differ greatly among various ESOL teacher-professional development courses. This research inquiry intends to add to the continuum of educational research using material-semiotic approaches and to provoke further scholarship regarding immigration policy and teacher education.

Vignette #3: Final Thoughts from 4.1.6

The purpose of this paper was to learn more about how I am performing in ESOL teacher education and specifically, what can be learned from studying one assemblage of a teacher professional learning course. The researcher chose to explore my relationship to other actors in this network by employing actor-network theory. In line with this theory, there is no grand narrative or conclusion to be pronounced. There is, however, an attempt to open ways for thinking about immigration policy knowledge and teacher education.

In addition, this research project has attempted to problematize epistemological and ontological assumptions, moving forward doing research in policy and education that accounts for multiple ontologies. In doing this, my voice has attuned itself as a spokesperson, contributing to this snapshot of a convergence of actors. The analysis of this network presents one way to explore how knowledge comes to be, by considering the agency of human and non-human actors together in fragile networks of activity. By following me through the assemblage performed here, the reader has experienced one version of reassembling the social (Latour, 2005).

References


Georgia House Bill 59 (2012).

Georgia Senate Bill 458 (2012).


CHAPTER 4

TRANSLATION: ESOL TEACHERS ASSEMBLING WITH IMMIGRATION POLICY

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3 Bass, Tobie. To be submitted to Qualitative Inquiry.
Abstract

This paper reports on an ethnographic case study informed by actor-network theory that explores how immigration policies are performing in one ESOL teacher professional development program. Thirty-six practicing teachers participated in the program, funded by a five-year grant from the U.S. federal Office of English Language Acquisition and administered through a public university in one southeastern state. Using Callon’s (1986) translation method, the analysis traces associations among program stakeholders, immigration policy, and teacher-participants in one course. This work embeds analysis in a narrative that attempts to follow the ways the actors are connected in a web of activity, in this case the course network. Joining other ANT-oriented scholars including Nespor (1994), Law (2002), Mol (2002), and Latour (2005), my goal is to provide for a non-reductionist approach that allows for not only multiple perspectives, but also multiple possible versions of the world.

Author’s Note

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Translation: ESOL Teachers Assembling with Immigration Policy

This paper reports on an ethnographic case study that explores what teachers do with immigration policy they learn about in professional development. In-service teachers participated in a three-course professional development program to become endorsed in ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages). The program was funded with a five-year national professional development grant from the U.S. Office of English Language Acquisition and administered through a public university in the Southeast. Thirty-six practicing teachers participated in the program in a state and school district that has in recent years become a fast-growing immigrant destination state.

Informed by Latour (2005) and actor-network theory (ANT), this inquiry explores an immigration policy in one course by unraveling and reassembling a network of actors. By tracing the path of this policy, the ANT researcher embeds analysis into a narrative that attempts to follow the ways humans and non-humans are connected in webs of activity. Modeled after Callon’s (1986) translation method, this analysis traces associations among program stakeholders, immigration policy, and teacher-participants. As the Trump administration has ushered in an era of accelerated fear and targeting of immigrants in the U.S., I engage in seeking to better understand the ideological underpinnings of legislative policies and educators who work with immigrant students. Aiming for a non-reductionist approach, the research project draws on ANT-oriented scholars including Nespor (1994), Law (2002), Mol (2002), and Latour (2005) in allowing for multiple perspectives as well as multiple possible versions of the world.
Review of the Literature

ESOL Teacher Education

We might not think about teachers as having consequential roles in immigration policy; however, they work daily with lots of undocumented and mixed status families. When working with immigrant students and interacting with immigrant families, teachers must make sense of micro and macro immigration policies. An estimated 5.5 million children in the U.S. have at least one parent who is undocumented; 4.5 million of these children were born here, making them U.S. citizens (Passel & Cohn, 2011). Thus, an estimated 9 million people are living in “mixed-status” families that contain at least one child and one unauthorized adult (Taylor, P.; Lopez, M.H.; Passel, J. & Motel, S. (2011). “In other words, how teachers take up issues of undocumented status in classrooms could be productive or potentially alienating” (Dabach, 2015, p. 390).

Requirements for teacher preparation regarding culturally and linguistically diverse students vary across the U.S. Reeves (2010) found that in school year 2007–2008, every state in the U.S. offered some type of ESOL teacher licensure, either an initial certification or an add-on endorsement. Universities, colleges, and school districts develop their own certification programs, with program developers interpreting state guidelines in disparate ways (Reeves, 2010). This creates widely varying certification requirements across states and even within a single state.

The work of Stevens (2008) documents a need for teachers to become ESOL-certified, and provides a breakdown of which states require pre-service teachers to take coursework in multicultural education. Practicing teachers who work with culturally and linguistically diverse groups of students can seek ESOL endorsement through a range of professional development...
opportunities, including online, face-to-face, and hybrid programs. Reeves (2010) and Johnson (2006) argue for ESOL teacher education to fit who the teachers are and who the students are, with equitable and contextual learning opportunities. “At the same time that the number of students of color, those who speak languages other than English, and those who live in poverty has increased, the nation’s teachers have become more monolithic, monocultural, and monolingual. For example, as of 2003, 90 percent of public school teachers were White, 6 percent were African American, and fewer than 5 percent were of other racial/ethnic backgrounds” (Nieto & Bode, 2012, p. 29).

One underdeveloped topic in ESOL coursework that impacts the daily lives of immigrant students is immigration policy. While immigration policies may surface in ESOL course readings, it is often in the form of citing broad statistics and policies, historic immigration cases such as Plyler v. Doe and Lau v. Nichols, and introducing historical and ideological understandings of terms related to immigration, such as assimilation, acculturation, and accommodation. For example, in an article reviewing teacher preparation literature from 1980–2001 looking at how immigrant students and their teachers are described, Goodwin (2002) found that immigration policy was not listed as a key issue for educators.

In recent years, however, the U.S. has seen and continues to see conflicting immigration policies across states, impasses in immigration reform at the federal level, President Obama’s Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), Trump’s increased deportations and travel bans, and more visible immigrant protests in the news nationwide. In this confusing and fast-changing policy context, “little is known about how educators understand the immigration practices shaping students’ lives or how this impacts their teaching” (Gallo & Link, 2015, p. 359). The work of Gallo & Link (2015), as well as Dabach (2015), contributes to the nascent
scholarship calling attention to the need for educators to be knowledgeable in immigration policies that affect their students.

**Actor-network Theory in Education and Policy Research**

I contend that Actor-Network Theory (ANT) offers an advantageous way to study issues that are rife with the movement of complex policies and multiple ideologies, such as immigrants and education. Likewise, from an educational policy perspective, Fenwick and Edwards (2010) address the issue of a “turn” away from discourse fields where an epistemological view resounds, and toward the question of “multiple ontologies.” Fenwick & Edwards (2011) assert that using ANT in educational research opens up “important questions about the complexity of communication – and especially about what to do” (p. 107).

The intellectual origins of ANT help to envision possibilities for its use in education and policy research. The work of ethnomethodologists such as Garfinkel (1967) believed sociology to be a science of how the social holds together, not ways that sociologists could use society to explain or solve social or political problems. In turn, the term ‘actor’ in Actor-Network Theory represents a source of uncertainty regarding the origin of an action. By considering actors as both human and non-human, ANT displaces our common notions of agency. “To view things as either the products of human design or as brute tools controlled through human action alone is to underestimate the power and contribution of things themselves in enacting events” (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 6).

Latour (2005) compares the term ‘network’ in actor-network theory to Deleuze & Guattari’s use of ‘rhizome’, (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988) illustrating the intention of ‘network’ to be a transformation, not just transportation of information. Further, ANT-as-theory offers an epistemological and ontological perspective that views the social in unassuming and unstable
ways. ANT-as-method offers a way to incorporate but not reduce the messiness, what Law (1999) refers to as:

the real chance to make differences lies elsewhere. It lies in the irreducible. In the oxymoronic. In the topologically discontinuous. In that which is heterogeneous. It lies in a modest willingness to live, to know, and to practise in the complexities of tension (Law, 1999, p. 12).

Seeking to practice in the complexities of tension, Nespor (1997, 2002) articulated the concept of network study in educational research. “I want to explore the contrary notion that the key to understanding education isn’t to be found in what happens in classrooms or schools but in the relations that bind them to networks of practice extending beyond” (Nespor, 1997, p. xiii).

Nespor (2002) used an ANT approach to examine curriculum reform in the state of Virginia, arguing against analyzing “reforms” as distinct from “contexts.” In an ANT approach, the analyst asks, “how and in what forms people, representations, and artifacts move, how they are combined, where they get accumulated, and what happens when they are hooked up with other networks already in motion” (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 376).

In a second example, Gaskell and Hepburn (1998) traced the path of a physics course as it constructed a network and was “simultaneously transformed by the developing network” (p. 65). The authors engaged in identifying links between actors both inside and outside of educational institutions. “By focusing on the course as a token circulating and simultaneously defining and being defined by a network, and seeing the outcome as a coursesnetwork, it is possible to understand the construction of different outcomes” (Gaskell & Hepburn, 1998, p. 74).

In a third example of ANT in educational research, Gorur (2011) explains her multi-pronged dissatisfaction with several traditional methodologies, instead proposing ‘policy doing’.
She declared that while some models may provide complex understandings, they do not explain relations between and among actors. Asking, “‘What work does policy?’…makes room to explore the many sites, processes, practices, and actors that might be involved in policy being ‘done’. It leaves open the question of how agency is mobilized” (Gorur, 2011, p. 614). These and other research inquiries that draw on ANT are built on a concept of associations.

The touchstone for my study is a highly influential early ANT analysis that delved into issues of researcher, fishermen, scallops, and the scientific community. Callon (1986) writes that the objective was to “examine the progressive development of new social relationships through the constitution of a “scientific knowledge” that occurred during the 1970’s” (p. 67). In his analysis, Callon takes the reader through a process he calls translation, during which the author identifies actors and imparts the negotiations between and among them. The emphasis consistently pays attention to symmetry among actors and to the transformations of the unpredictable relationships among the researchers, the fishermen, and the scallops.

ANT scholars assert that human and non-human actors must be studied together in networks, and that too often, representations of the world omit the importance of non-human actors in research. In fact, Callon (1986) asserted that translation process is successful if “only voices speaking in unison will be heard” (p. 81). At the same time, ANT analysis “permits an explanation of how a few obtain the right to represent the many silent actors of the social and natural worlds they have mobilized” (Callon, 1986, p. 82). Using Callon’s (1986a, 1986b, 1991) phases describing the process of translation, I perform a descriptive analysis below that keeps in mind Porsander’s questions: “Which actors are created through this process? How did these particular actors emerge? Why are they connected to each other? How was the network created?” (Porsander, 2005, p. 19).
Theoretical Framework

*A significant aspect of scientific activity is rendering some interpretations more plausible than others (Latour & Woolgar, 1986, p. 36).*

In order to understand how activity is connected to learning and knowledge, Nespor (1994) proposed that we have to deal with *both* the people and things in our immediate environment *and* those spatially and temporally removed from us but nonetheless, present in some way. Latour’s definition of knowledge includes something that cannot be described by itself, “but only by considering a whole cycle of accumulation…how to be familiar with things, people and events, which are distant” (Latour, 1987, p. 220). Nespor continues this idea by referring to learning as “changes in the spatial and temporal organization of the distributed actors/networks that we’re always part of” (1994, p. 11). Considering knowledge in this way, actor-network theory offers a way to look at learning that happens in one course as a network of actors both far and near, manifested in a complex assemblage of relationships.

The term “diagrammatical thinking” (Freeman, 2017) offers one way to conceptualize researching an activity or event. Instead of approaching activities or events as stable and fixed in time, diagrammatical thinking focuses on movement, on assemblages or networks composed of human and non-human actors. Instead of focusing on each actor, however, the focus is on relationships between actors, the way an assemblage fluctuates in its becoming. Shifting our thought processes away from dichotomies and toward diagrammatical thinking (Freeman, 2017) opens up a new way to look at educational policy and teacher professional development while focusing on the contentious topic of educating immigrant students.

Law (2002) explores the idea that, like human subjects made up of evolving, multi-faceted identities, objects are also multiple, assemblages. Prior (2003) describes this dynamic further: “the birth and life of documents rests on the foundation of a collective rather than
individual action” (Prior, 2003, p. 10). In fact, Callon’s (1986) third principle states that observers must abandon distinctions between Society (human) and Nature (non-human), as this boundary is the result of analysis, not a point of departure. Using the term “fractional coherence,” Law (2002) suggests that Euro-American culture does not yet have the language for attending to both “drawing things together” and “the decentering of the object.” Scholars caught between choosing one or the other are not prone to thinking about the possibility of both/and. Law’s (2002) work takes on the form of a rhizomatic network through which effects can be seen as interferences. This research study attempts to render a plausible interpretation of knowledge-becoming (Freeman, 2017) as an activity in one ESOL teacher professional development course where immigration policy was a focus.

**Methodological Framework**

This article studies a course network through Callon’s (1986) four phases of translation: problematization, interessement, enrolment, and mobilization. Translation is one way to do analysis in ANT; it involves embedding the coding into a narrative, performing a theoretical difficulty. “From the moment one accepts that both social and natural sciences are equally uncertain, ambiguous, and disputable, it is no longer possible to have them playing different roles in the analysis” (Callon, 1986, p. 3). Callon (1986) described translation as a process before it is a result, and that moments as described in a report are never as distinct as they may appear to the reader.

As Callon (1986) did, we will accompany actors along some parts of this journey during four moments, which are not necessarily sequential in real-time, and may overlap in order to comprise the story of events. Along the way, we will see the “simultaneous production of knowledge and construction of a network of relationships in which social and natural entities
mutually control who they are and what they want…These moments constitute the different phases of a general process called translation, during which the identity of actors, the possibility of interaction and the margins of manoeuvre are negotiated and delimited” (Callon, 1986, p. 6).

Translation is the coming together of things (human and non-human), and the changing that happens as things come together, acting upon each other to form links. Actors are defined by these links. To illustrate, Fenwick and Edwards (2010) provide an example of a playground, describing the playground as an assemblage, or a network of things that have become connected in a particular way. Also, the playground is “an actor itself that can produce fears, policies, pedagogies, forms of play and resistances to them” (p. 8). In this way, an actor is part of a network and a network also acts. Each thing does not act by itself, but is also acted upon by other entities, so that all actors are defined by their relationships.

**Setting and Context**

This study’s context, Georgia, is one of the top ten states of English Language Learner enrollment in U.S. public schools (Soto, A., Hooker, S. & J. Batalova, 2015). From 1998–2008, the number of English Learners (ELs) in state schools increased by over 200% (Batalova, J. & McHugh, M., 2010). Across the state, 43.9% of students graduated in 2014 with limited English proficiency (U.S. DOE, 2015). Growth of the Black, Hispanic, and Asian population in one metro-area superdistrict has surpassed any other county in the state, furthering the multilingual and multicultural aspects of the educational environment.

The current study examines the first of three courses required by the state for teachers to become ESOL endorsed. The course title is “Language and Culture in the Classroom.” Standards listed on the course syllabus are drawn from the international organization TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), and mirrored in the state-approved standards. As a
starting point for the syllabus as an actor, the standards provide accountability to state accreditation. Additionally, the syllabus offers a comprehensive list of materials, projects, and processes, conduits through which proficient demonstration of reaching the standards is made possible.

This particular course is unique in that the professor offered the researcher-author an opportunity to revise the course curriculum. My lived experiences as an immigrant rights activist and a teacher taught me that simple distinctions such as “legal” and “illegal” or “documented” and “undocumented” are not sufficient. If not for any other reason, then for the Supreme Court ruling that these labels do not apply to students in U.S. public K-12 schools, all of whom are constitutionally granted the right to a free education. Thus, at the inception of these ideas, my analysis claims that, “a priori distinctions began to be too constraining of the messiness in the data arising from the project” (Edwards, Ivanic, and Mannion, 2009b, p. 49).

**Analysis**

Translation as analysis is one way to respond to the research question: What human and non-human actors become assembled when K-12 teachers are presented with immigration policy in one ESOL professional development course? Working through Callon’s (1986) translation method, I retrace a manifestation of a network of actors that converged in an ESOL teacher professional learning course. In line with actor-network theory and translation method, the work attempts to join social science research that moves toward multiplicity of knowing and acceptance of incompleteness, attempting “intervention, a performance of fractional ways of knowing” (Law, 2002, p. 5). This raises empirical questions about how different ways of knowing coordinate.
“Matters grow from the middle, and from many places. But one also has to start somewhere” (Law, 2002, p. 1). This story could start here:

- Instructor: My experiences told me that the topic of immigration and education policy is not “matter of fact” but a “matter of concern” (Latour).
- The Course: The topics include how local immigration policy that affects immigrant students’ educational trajectories in this state.
- The State Board of Education: More teachers are now certified to work with CLD students in our state.

Or the story could start here:

- The Federal Government Office of English Language Acquisition: We are funding programs around the U.S. to certify more teachers in ESOL.
- Teacher Professional Development Literature: Best practice professional development for teachers considers the local context in which teachers are working.
- Immigration Policy: Effects of both federal and local immigration policies have devastating effects on immigrant populations of students around the country.

The text boxes above illustrate two different entry points to analysis made up of different combinations of actors, along a continuum of time and place rather than a fixed point. Each entry point (as well as other possible combinations of actors) would invariably produce different knowledge made up of different assemblages of actors. The purpose of introducing these possibilities is twofold: to illustrate the precariousness of how knowledge is made and to show how different versions of the world can be constructed regarding one moment. In relation to the research question guiding this article, the experiences of teachers learning and doing immigration policy in an ESOL education course cannot be represented in one narrative produced by a researcher. This begs the question of the purpose and what can be learned from the project.
Many important issues in the social sciences, such as the nature of agency, subjectivity, and experience, can only be solved by conceptual analysis, not empirical research...Experience does not consist of discrete moments, like frames in a film. Experience is a complex, multidimensional web in which all moments are related to others (Pascale, 2011, p. 153).

Furthering this idea is that knowing is not a singular activity, the possibility that there are different and valid knowledges (Law, 2002). In this way, we begin to see that, like subjects and objects, knowing is also decentered. Comparing singular narratives to pinboards (cork boards holding images and notes with pushpins), Law (2002) presents a rationale for “pinboard” logic to be treated as a methodology, making it possible “to know about features of the world that deny themselves when everything is drawn together into a single story” (p. 198).

In this analysis, the translation analysis focuses on three actors:

- Program stakeholders
- Policy 4.1.6
- Teacher-Participants

Problematization “or how to become indispensable”

Building on the work of Gaskell & Hepburn (1998), the initial phase of analysis for the purposes of this paper begins by examining the negotiation of the framing of a problem. As a starting point in the current study, this negotiation begins with actions by program stakeholders to advance ESOL professional development for teachers, actions by teacher-participants to participate in an ESOL endorsement program, and actions by Policy 4.1.6 to prohibit particular students from certain colleges. These actions create associations between the actors: program stakeholders, Policy 4.1.6, and teacher-participants. “When reassembling the social, the context
becomes visible because you’re making the context” (conversation with S. Sarangi, Copenhagen, Nov. 2016). As Callon (1986) modeled, an interdefinition of the actors is below:

   a) Program stakeholders: These are people whose work interests relate to providing teachers with current, research-based knowledge of working with culturally and linguistically diverse learners in U.S. schools. The stakeholders in this group range from teacher-educators, school district administrators, and a university professor, to state and federal administrators.

   b) Policy 4.1.6: Admission of Persons Not Lawfully Present in the United States (Last Modified on October 29, 2010)

      A person who is not lawfully present in the United States shall not be eligible for admission to any University System institution which, for the two most recent academic years, did not admit all academically qualified applicants (except for cases in which applicants were rejected for non-academic reasons).

   c) Teacher-Participants: They are practicing teachers at multiple public schools in one state in the U.S South, working in Kindergarten through 12th grade. They have different experiences and motivations; teach a variety of content objectives and work in various schools in one district. The school district is diverse, with students from many countries who speak a variety of languages. Sixty-six percent of the teachers self-identified as White. Thirty-two percent identified as African-American, and two percent identified as Asian-Pacific Islander. Eighty-one percent of the teachers in the cohort have not lived outside of the U.S., and seventy percent have not taught outside of this state. The teachers volunteered to participate in this university-run program with the understanding that it is free of charge, that upon completing the program successfully they will be qualified to apply for the state ESOL endorsement, and that they will receive a $200 stipend upon completing each course.
**How To Become Indispensable**

The future of this course network relies on each of the actors moving forward with their goals. This is what Callon (1986) calls the “obligatory passage point.” Alliances must be formed, as the actors cannot achieve their disparate goals alone. All networks are dynamic, with obstacles threatening the goals of each actor, and likewise threatening the formation of the network. It is possible that any of the actors could take a turn away from the goal of assembling, thus changing the assemblage such that a different construct of “knowledge” is ultimately made.

**Stakeholders**

The course under study evolved as part of an agreement between a university professor in the department of TESOL & World Language Education at a large Research I university and U.S. Department of Education. The partnership involved providing ESOL professional development to practicing teachers, increasing the number of ESOL-endorsed teachers in one southeastern state. In 2012, the professional development program was funded with federal grant money from the Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA), a part of Title III.

Once awarded the grant, the professor embarked on a five-year trajectory by establishing this new endorsement program through the university. In collaboration with another large university’s Center for Intercultural & Multilingual Advocacy (CIMA), this new endorsement program drew from CIMA curriculum. Since 1999, CIMA curriculum has been used to provide ESOL professional development to thousands of educators in over six states. The professor aimed to conduct research on the project. Contact was established with school district coordinators in multiple counties, who authorized recruitment of teachers to participate in the program.
State Department of Education (DOE) intentions regarding the education of English learners were expressed primarily around interpreting policy and funding. Narrative from an interview with a DOE administrator provided the overall goals of the DOE in helping to clarify compliance with Federal Title I and Title III policy, the Office of Civil Rights, and providing local school districts seeking training and guidance on policy related to ESOL programs.

One local education agency (LEA) district administrator where the endorsement program took place spoke to her objectives for the school district in an interview. The focus was on teaching, learning, and supporting students. These goals included the long-term interest of society through educating young people.

As the instructor-researcher for the course under study, my goals included working as a teacher-educator to contribute my own knowledge as an ESOL teacher and revising the curriculum to include policy related to immigrant students. In addition, I hoped to collect data for my dissertation project and contribute to the field of teacher education for CLD students and policy regarding education of immigrants. Along with the other stakeholders, I hoped to realize these goals through a successful course.

Table 2 below highlights how each of the stakeholders converged in this assemblage in various ways with the overall goal of promoting ESOL professional development to in-service teachers who work with immigrant students. While this goal may seem singular, one purpose of translation analysis is to show how one seemingly simple object, for example a singular goal shared by stakeholders, is actually made up of many disparate goals that are taken up or ignored as actors negotiate their interests.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Goal 1</th>
<th>Goal 2</th>
<th>Goal 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal OELA</td>
<td>Provide national leadership by informing policy decisions</td>
<td>Administer discretionary grant programs to prepare professionals for teaching and supporting English Learners (ELs)</td>
<td>Invest in research/evaluation studies that have practical applications for preparing ELs to meet college and career learning standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State DOE Administrator</td>
<td>We have one consortium that is statewide…we have a little bit of control over their funds…we want to offer them as many inexpensive supports as we can.</td>
<td>Training for new ESOL program directors across the state</td>
<td>It’s local control, right? But we wanted to put something out there for them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Professor</td>
<td>Adapt and improve the ESOL endorsement curriculum for in-service educators</td>
<td>Increase the number of ESOL-endorsed teachers in the state</td>
<td>Improve the academic achievement of ELs in the state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEA Administrator</td>
<td>Long-term best interest is to help these (immigrant) kids advance as much as possible and contribute to society.</td>
<td>The main thing has got to be teaching and learning.</td>
<td>Use the system that’s here to help kids to move up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor Goals</td>
<td>Provide teachers with current, valuable information that reflects the standards for teaching CLD students</td>
<td>Collect research for my dissertation project that contributes to academic literature on ESOL teacher education and policy</td>
<td>Revise the course curriculum to include a focus on local immigration Policy 4.1.6.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As we see in the table, the stakeholder-actors are not working toward the same goals.

Indeed, the act of putting these actors together and naming them stakeholders is a common “shortcut” that Latour contested in his ANT rationale. The term “stakeholders” does not effectively represent any one narrative. At any given moment, the assemblage of “stakeholders” here could unravel, so there must be something holding them together. Negotiations led to each of the stakeholders converging, the first phase of translation called problematization.
The goals of the other two actors, Policy 4.1.6 and Teacher-Participants, are presented next. Each of these actors is not diversified here in the way I presented the goals of the stakeholders above. However, it is important to remember that simply by naming the actors Policy 4.1.6 and Teacher-Participants, a shortcut has been made. For the sake of moving through the analysis, I provide a succinct boundary for these actors by drawing from their sources.

**Policy 4.1.6**

Policy 4.1.6 bars students lacking legal status from attending any of its schools that did not admit all academically qualified applicants for the two most recent academic years. (University System Chancellor) Davis said, “The Board of Regents, adopted its restrictive admissions policy in 2010 as part of a “political compromise.” That compromise, Davis said, was meant to dissuade the state Legislature from banning students without legal status from all of the state’s colleges and universities.” (Redmon, J., 2016).

**Teacher-Participants**

Two focus group reports (fall and spring) prepared by an external evaluation team provide the goals of teacher-participants. Teacher answers below respond to the questions: Why did you sign up for this program? What did you hope to get out of it?

Many of these participants chose to enroll to become better teachers for EL students who were already in their classrooms and the greater numbers they knew were coming in the future. They wanted strategies that would help them guide their students to greater academic success.

At this juncture at we can see how knowledge begins to be tenuously constructed as none of the actors above works in isolation. The idea of a linear path of “dispensing” knowledge from expert to teachers is an oversimplified trope. Pulling apart the coursennetwork and reconstructing it in this analysis, the course is a token. “The path of the token is a product of the number and
strength of the links that are established between it and a diverse group of other actors” Gaskell & Hepburn, 1998, p. 66).

Callon (1986) described that actors in the problematization phase come together through an obligatory passage point. In his seminal case of the scallops of St. Brieuc Bay, the obligatory passage point consisted of learning how the scallops anchor themselves and how this knowledge would benefit the various actors. In my case, the obligatory passage point is the formation of a newly revised ESOL endorsement course with the goal of providing ESOL endorsement to practicing teachers in a district with a high population of immigrant students.

Had any one of the actors taken a different path, the entire formation would have turned out differently, and the knowledge constructed therein would be altered. In Latour’s words, “Give me one matter of concern and I will show you the whole earth and heaven that have to be gathered to hold it firmly in place,” (Sanford, J., 2003). It is in this way that translation analysis slows down to highlight how one manifestation is made up of many moments, moments that could have been taken up differently and moved toward an entirely different manifestation. Each of the actors above has multiple potential paths, as does the assemblage of actors itself, and all are contingent on one another in the formation of the “coursenetwork”, a term I borrow from Gaskell & Hepburn. The figure below shows the negotiation of the framing of a problem, each of the actors with different goals and obstacles.
Figure 1.4: Obligatory Passage Point and Disparate Actor Goals (modeled after Callon’s 1986 figure 2)

Interessement “or how the allies are locked into place”

“Good scientific practice is about ensuring that the chain of translations is reversible, and about maintaining retraceability” (Gorur, p. 89, 2010).

“Interessement is the group of actions by which an entity (here the instructor-researcher) attempts to impose and stabilize the identity of the other actors it defines through its
problematization. Different devices are used to implement these actions” (Callon, 1986, p. 8). In the current study, the ESOL Endorsement Program served as the interessement device. Through the ESOL endorsement program, the teachers, the course materials, and the stakeholders (including instructor) came together as actors in a “triangle of interessement” (Callon, 1986, p. 9). When actors join other actors through their interests, each of the actors’ identities shifts toward linking them with the others. In turn, this attempts to interrupt competing associations, constructing a system of alliances.

In this case, the stakeholders, the teachers, and Policy 4.1.6 joined forces in the ESOL endorsement program with the common goal of advancing teachers’ knowledge of working with CLD students. By defining this unified goal, each of the actors becomes implicated in the goals of the others, strengthening links among them while weakening associations with other entities.

Teachers seeking ESOL endorsement in the state have several choices of programs. Why would teachers choose this program over others? This program was free for teachers, funded by a national professional development grant from the federal government. In addition, upon successful completion of each course, teachers received a two hundred dollar stipend as well as three graduate credits from the university. The program was advertised online and with flyers, as teachers were recruited to participate by the project coordinator and professor.

This ESOL endorsement program format was different from others in the state in that teacher-participants formed collaborative teams (professional learning communities) that met weekly to work through coursework. The curriculum was advertised to be “designed specifically for in-service educators” with courses that “emphasize classroom application of the principles for effective English learner instruction.”
Focusing on Policy 4.1.6 was a risk on the part of the instructor-researcher. The grant money was tied to endorsing a set number of teachers in each cohort. Thus, the instructor-researcher was aware of treading lightly around political issues so as not to contribute to attrition. The reflection in text box below narrates my thoughts:

As I began to look at changes, I realized that making one change in the curriculum would upset the whole apple cart, as all pieces were very much interconnected. Thus, I decided to go back to the drawing board and redesign the entire course. I quickly realized that the two undergraduate courses I had taught face to face had given me a great jump-start, but an online course with practicing teachers was another thing altogether. I reached out to friends and colleagues who work in teacher education as well as online learning. I revisited the undergraduate syllabi I had created, and began to piece together not only a bibliography, but a system of online interactive response topics for individuals and for groups. The innovative model of this particular grant program involved professional learning circles that teachers formed themselves. The teacher groups met weekly to discuss and respond as a group to assigned readings, videos, and knowledge presented in the course. The intention is for teachers to share and build on colleagues’ thinking, and support each other in both learning and practice that goes along with the information presented. In this case, I wanted to enhance the curriculum by adding a focus on local policies affecting immigrants and children of immigrants. As an ESOL teacher myself, being aware of the policy issues many students might be facing has greatly increased my knowledge of how myself and my classroom of CLD students fits into a long-term trajectory of education. TB notes, 2016

Enrolment “or how to define and coordinate the roles”

Callon (1986) illustrated that no matter how seductive the interessement device, enrolment is not always successful. “Enrolment does not imply, nor does it exclude, pre-established roles…To describe enrolment is thus to describe the group of multilateral negotiations, trials of strength and tricks that accompany the interessements and enable them to succeed” (Callon, 1986, p. 10). Actors can be enrolled in networks in different ways.

In the case of the instructor, initial negotiation involved appealing to three goals; an offer to teach the course, the opportunity to revise the syllabus, and the chance to bring immigration
policies to the attention of educators. To negotiate bringing immigration policies into the course meant first negotiating among the current syllabus, the state and national standards and policies, goals of the grant, goals of the school district, professor approval, and threats posed by potential conflicts of interest. Potential conflicts were multi-pronged. The following examples show how enrollment negotiations involved many forces acting on the instructor, stakeholders, immigration Policy 4.1.6, and the teacher-participants.

First, to negotiate with the policies was also to negotiate with the threats. For policies themselves, negotiations are far-reaching, but often voiceless. Most teachers were previously unaware of how restricting higher education policies may be affecting the students they teach. This illustrates the power of invisible actors such as immigration policies, whose voices are not privileged in our social science world. In order to enroll successfully, Policy 4.1.6 needed to sufficiently support goals, learning objectives and standards as set by the federal funding source, the state, and school district.

Second, the political environment created an opportunity for teacher-participants to think critically about opposing ideologies regarding the education of immigrants as well as the long-term purposes of their work in a diverse district. However, it also created a space for differing political opinions on the matter among teacher-participants and instructor. The instructor is an immigrant rights advocate and purposefully included Policy 4.1.6 in the course, albeit with both pro and con materials. The instructor provided final course grades to the teacher-participants, who received graduate-level course credit and finally, an official state endorsement on their teaching certificates. In fact, the university institution itself is implicated in the teaching of state immigration policies, as it is one of the universities in which certain immigrant students are restricted from attending as per Policy 4.1.6. Meanwhile, local legislators had been pushing to
further restrict immigrants’ rights in the state, and local news followed the contentious issue.

Figure 4 presents voices of stakeholders, teacher-participants, and policy enforcers, reflecting the multidimensional threats to enrolment of Policy 4.1.6 and other actors (threats could cause an actor to fall off the conveyor belt instead of loop back around). I chose a conveyor belt to show movement of the network. The forces of stakeholders, policy, and teacher-participants are constantly performing on one another as well as the network itself:
Figure 2: Enrolment of Policy 4.1.6 in the course

Enrolment of Policy 4.1.6 in the course
A third threat involved time. In each of the stakeholder interviews, the issue of time regarding ESOL program expectations came up, painting a picture of time constraints as a problem. The professor stated, “In 1996, the endorsement was actually specified as the three courses that you see in our program today… But what's happened is that even though the standards for teacher professional development and training in TESOL have changed significantly over the years… Yet here we are, exactly the same three courses… But there's a lot of states that have really made that training much more rigorous… so (the state) I think has really taken the route of providing the largest number of teachers with the least amount of training.”

The district administrator expanded on this, “You can barely get people to do three courses. People would not do more. People say: "three courses? three? And no pay raise?" …?" I think again this is the classic case of how policymakers have set up a situation where -- people are not valuing teachers' time… We have so few (ESOL) teachers coming through actual degree programs… the most robust training that is provided is three courses, so this is such a minimal standard.”

Moreover, the previous instructor echoed the thoughts of the professor and district administrator. In an interview, I asked if given the chance to reverse time, if she would make changes, adding local policy to the curriculum for the previous cohorts. “I don’t know that I would have (made changes to the previous curriculum regarding immigration policy). It is really challenging trying to get the teachers to digest all we throw at them in three courses, so, unfortunately, we end up having to scratch the surface of a lot of things, immigration policy notwithstanding.”

As detailed above, there were constant potential dangers to the enrolment of immigration policies in the course. Threats ranged from potentially being interpreted as taking an
inappropriate political stance to highlighting a policy that prohibits undocumented students from attending the university offering the program right under its nose. “The list goes on. A veritable battle is being fought” (Callon, 1986, p. 11).

The interessement section above showed how the course began to assemble resulting from multilateral negotiations in which the actors’ identities were determined and tested. Despite looming obstacles, Policy 4.1.6 appears to have been connected to standards, flying under the radar of threats, and taken up as relevant knowledge by the majority of teacher-participants. On a course evaluation, ninety-five percent of the teachers reported that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “I am more aware of how state immigration issues may affect my students.” Otherwise known as successfully enrolled.

Mobilization “are the spokesmen representative?”

“To speak for others is to first silence those in whose name we speak” (Callon, 1986, p. 14).

Callon (1986) described mobilization as rendering entities mobile which were not so beforehand, assembling disparate actors for whom a spokesperson articulates. Here, the teacher-participants, stakeholders, and Policy 4.1.6 are represented by the instructor-researcher, who speaks and acts in their name. In doing so, I have displaced each of the actors and mobilized them to participate in my dissertation. “The initial problematization defined a series of negotiable hypotheses on identity, relationships, and goals of the different actors…Now at the end of the four moments described, a constraining network of relationships has been built” (p. 15).

This analysis demonstrates how populations of teachers and stakeholders as well as a policy and its chain of consequences came to be represented by one researcher and transported into active support of knowledge-making. Through compilations of narrative from interviews, focus groups, course responses, survey and evaluation results, and these transportable pages of
writing, I have assembled the social and natural reality and made myself a spokesperson. However, these relationships and the resulting facts established can be contested at any moment. “Translation becomes treason” (Callon, 1986, p. 15).

**Observations**

“To translate is to displace…it is to establish oneself as a spokesperson” (Callon, 1986, p. 19).

The methodological choices in this paper illustrate the sensitivities with which I have committed said treason. Teacher-participants, stakeholders, and Policy 4.1.6 were assembled, taken apart, and reassembled in one manifestation above. In an attempt to maintain retraceability, I followed Callon’s (1986) four moments of translation: problematization, interessement, enrolment, and mobilization. I attended to human and non-human actors alongside one another, what Callon (1986) calls symmetry. Also, I addressed the issue of representation of voices and how a few obtain the right to represent many. By working through each moment, I charted the way a coursennetwork was a process before it was a result, calling into focus the uncountable negotiations that made the result, the discourse of certainty, possible.

Law (2004) described the focus in ANT as one of “looking down” at the particular, not looking up at the general or abstract. This is significant when we consider the masses of research-based knowledge that provide general, or abstract conclusions about the world, without attempting to answer questions such as “Who speaks for whom?” By studying the ways human and non-human actors assemble, we are studying how certain entities take control of others. In translation analysis, power relationships “means describing the way in which actors are defined, associated, and simultaneously obliged to remain faithful to their alliances” (Callon, 1986, p. 19). The contributions of translation analysis and ANT offer a way to study multiple actors and multidimensional moments of conflict without ascribing grand narratives or critical judgments.
Messiness in social science research means allowing society to be uncertain and knowledge to be disputable. However, in the final pages below, I address the implications of this departure in the context of the study.

**Implications**

The question guiding this inquiry asked what human and non-human actors become assembled when K-12 teachers are presented with immigration policy in one ESOL professional development course. With impetus from my own experience as an ESOL teacher and an advocate for immigrants, I revised session seven of the course to include Policy 4.1.6 among other current policies, as well as rationales from various standpoints. The videos presented multiple sides of contentious issues surrounding immigrants in the U.S. today, from President Obama’s 2012 speech announcing Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), to a 2014 League of the South video showing demonstrators with signs reading, “Immigration Hurts Southern Workers” and from the speech of an undocumented high school student protesting the university ban, to a local news interview with an anti-immigrant activist who opposes higher education opportunities for undocumented students.

While the teachers overwhelmingly reported in the course evaluation that they had increased understandings of how immigration policies might affect their students, very few participants in the focus groups said they had opportunities to apply what they had learned about immigration policy at work. Three disparate experiences are shown in Table 3 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: What Teachers Are Doing with Immigration Policy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Without an understanding of this situation, I would not have known how to best help her get her schooling through this difficult time.” Teacher A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“It did [help] a little. I had a student who wants a work permit and can’t get one because of his illegal status, but for me it’s [moot] as from the legislative standpoint [there] is nothing I can do to help or change the process that’s for the politicians to work out. I gave up a long time ago fighting battles I have no control over.” Teacher B</td>
</tr>
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“This new information definitely makes me want to be more vocal about changing educational policies in Georgia... As a high school teacher, these restrictive policies make my job very difficult. I teach at a school with a high percentage of first and second-generation immigrants, meaning that many of my students are operating under the mentality that college in the United States is not an option for them. Part of my job is to encourage students to do well in high school so that they can be accepted to well-respected universities and receive scholarships.” Teacher C

In what Harklau (2003) terms a “first move,” in ESOL teacher education, teacher-learners commonly explore how our own cultural identities and beliefs are shaped by attitudes and values, many invisible. In my study, as well as in Reeves & Harklau (2003), the teacher learners progressed in this area. The “second move,” however, is a different story. It involves moving from deconstructing our own identities into the power dimension of cultural and linguistic differences, processing concepts of equity and privilege associated with representation. Harklau (2003) found that even after teacher learners had paid lip service all semester, teachers greeted the second move with “bewilderment and frustration,” leaving her to ask: “Can I trust that their own understandings of representational practices will evolve and become more nuanced and critical over time?”

In my study, the “second move” involved applying critical thinking to very real policies that affect many students in the school system where the study takes place. After viewing the videos in professional learning groups, teachers were assigned to make a list of language used in the videos, compare their lists, and discuss their opinions as educators who work with immigrant students. I also provided teachers with a tuition equity map showing the inconsistent policies across states in the U.S. regarding higher education for immigrant students.

In follow-up focus groups, teachers complained about session seven videos, which were perceived to be opinion pieces rather than factual in nature. Had I provided the teachers with research-based reports of evidence citing statistics, charts, and tables that “proved” one side or
another, would the teachers have perceived the information differently? Instead, and knowing that I was treading contentious political waters, I presented them with various “truths” and asked them to work their way through, deciding for themselves what was factual. In the spirit of knowledge as enactment, I wanted to inspire the teachers to work together as critical thinkers who, presented with conflicting facts, were charged with developing their own knowledge in their professional learning communities. This is in line with Fenwick & Edwards’ (2010) argument that “education could be about experimenting and intervening rather than simply (re)presenting the facts” (p. 35).

I have focused the account here on assembling, disassembling, and reassembling the coursennetwork through translation analysis (Callon, 1986). Through this work, I have attempted to create a bit of interference. If the ANT-ish view of knowledge production has served its purpose in the paper and I have created new openings for understanding how immigration policy circulates in ESOL teacher professional learning, my goal of furthering the conversation has been met. While I cannot make conclusions about the effects of teachers doing immigration policy, my hope is that the teachers will continue to problematize the ways they are doing policy, as they act on policy and policy acts on them through the networks of which they are part and parcel.

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CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

This dissertation project has presented a story. It is a story told by one scholar-practitioner-activist who has stubbornly and sincerely dedicated herself to better understandings of immigration policy, ESOL teacher professional development, actor-network theory, and transversal paths among, around, and between. Through the particular ways I have chosen to do this, my hope is that the work contributes to Freeman’s (2017) description of diagrammatical thinking as that which “seeks ways out of familiar systems of meaning, disrupts hierarchies between human and nonhuman agencies, and rethinks language and concepts as agential forces” (p. 10).

The empirical and conceptual inquiry above has explored the assembling of human and non-human actors in one manifestation of an ESOL teacher professional development course. At the time of writing, immigration policies have surfaced ten-fold in the education world, as educators scramble to make sense of President Trump’s recent policy changes regarding refugees and immigrant detention and deportation (Costello, 2016).

Due to policy change enactment, heightened media attention, and an increase in damaging affects, policies are rearing their heads, thus becoming quite visible. In terms of associations, this shift in visibility of immigration policies in educational contexts could be strengthening associations with other actors. For example, since the beginning of the Trump campaign, large organizations such as TESOL International, Education Week, Teaching Tolerance, and the American Federation of Teachers are publishing articles that describe how
educators can support immigrant students and families (TESOL, 2016; Mitchell, 2017; Weingarten, 2016; Costello, 2016). These articles are being read and disseminated by a wide audience of educators. In other media sources such as the New Yorker (Blitzer, 2017) and New York Times Magazine (Russakof, 2017) the plight of undocumented students has been published to wider audiences. To be sure, the uptick in media publications highlighting the education of immigrants has reached many more people than this dissertation ever will. One might wonder why I didn’t pursue an “easier” dissertation path. I might have published in news media over the past several years, potentially influencing more immediate change regarding issues I care strongly about. Below I address limitations of my work and illustrate with examples from my research project.

**Limitations**

In essence, I believe that with privilege comes responsibility. In light of this statement, I need to acknowledge here one form of privilege I have had and continue to have that allows me to seek higher education at the institution of my choice, as well as conduct a research inquiry without feeling threatened by many limitations in theory or in practice. Following the opening statement to this paragraph, it follows that my privilege not only allows me to devote myself to this work, but also requires a sincere commitment on my part. I am heavily implicated in the research in multiple ways. Yes, I hope to get something out of this: a doctoral degree. And yes, I am committed to affecting change toward more just, accessible education for immigrant students. I continue to problematize this idea in both my personal and professional life, including the question of where and how they intersect.

Not unlike the way my own position might be critiqued, ANT has been critiqued for “simply playing from a privileged position.” Law (2002) responds that it *is politically*
responsible and necessary for researchers to buck the research tradition of producing dominant narratives and move instead toward the “logic of the pinboard” if we want to understand political inequalities instead of “colluding with them by performing them again in their splendid singularity” (p. 200). In the introduction, I described a possible starting point for this story when I was in high school. This is later fleshed out in auto-ethnographic portraits describing how I came to actor-network theory. There, and throughout the pages above, I have attended to my subjectivities, not the least of which called for decentering myself in the work and acting politically.

Partly inside, partly outside, we are at least partially connected with our objects of study. And if we seek to criticize then it also becomes important to reflect on the character of that involvement. We need to ask whether, and if so how, we share in what we do not like with those whom we do not like. And whether, and if so how, they share some of our most valued ways of being (Law, 2002, p. 7).

My choices in dealing with the dilemma of reconciling privilege and responsibility include an honest attempt to understand how people around me, people I love and care about, can believe very different truths about immigrants and education.

ANT has also been critiqued for extending politics everywhere and for being indifferent to inequalities and power struggles (Latour, 2005; Nespor, 1994). In the work above, I have not put defined boundaries around politics, and I have not explicitly “proven” anything regarding inequality or power struggle. In fact, I have resisted the temptation to do both. Instead of insisting on political correctness or one overarching system of power, I have attended to an action network inside which “formats, structures, globalization, and totalities circulate in tiny
conduits, and where for each of their applications, they need to rely on masses of hidden potentialities” (Latour, 2005, p. 252).

Fenwick & Edwards (2010) describe ANT as one way of “intervening in or interrupting education rather than simply a different way of representing education” (p. 5). To this end, I have conducted research through an ANT lens. I have attempted to build understandings of knowledge production and competing knowledges, approaching a topic that polarizes people today in the U.S., including teachers. The work in this dissertation attends to this impasse as an actor, and I have attempted to open up and analyze the impasse in a new way. My experiences living and working in this impasse led me away from critical analysis involving overarching systems of oppression and grand narratives of explanation. Has this resulted in a dissertation project that ignores social justice or evades my ESOL-educator responsibility of advancing the educational opportunities of immigrant students? I hope not, but I continue to ask.

Other critiques of ANT involve the lack of attention to what is fundamentally human, or different from that of non-humans (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010). ANT researchers argue that agency is seen in ANT to be related to the heterogeneity of actors among networked relations. It is not that humans do not have agency, but that human agency is always connected to a web of other actors in fluid, ever-shifting networks. Without looking at how human and non-human actors associate and disassociate, we may be missing out on potential understandings. Relating this to teachers, Fenwick & Edwards (2010) respond that “it no longer makes sense to focus educational reform upon (re)training the individual teacher and her practices alone. Instead, researchers can attempt to disentangle the network(s) of connections and other relations that together produce particular effects in classroom activity” (p. 22).
In my study, teacher-participants’ knowledge of immigration policy came into contact with coursework, social media, and friends, as well as in interactions with former and current students, colleagues in their small professional learning groups, Policy 4.1.6, the instructor, and curriculum materials. I hope this study has contributed new understandings of how power and agency are distributed in networks of ESOL teacher education. Networks are always changing and moving; they are not stable, fixed points. There is always more work to be done. I point to gatekeeping exams and the testing regime as actors missing in my study. Perhaps further studies will flesh this out, including the dilemma testing poses alongside the ANT argument that education can be about “experimenting and intervening rather than simply (re)presenting facts” (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 35).

Implications

Pascale (2011) discusses two overarching tasks of social science research: formalization and interpretation. She explains the first, formalization, as requiring empirical evidence. To this, Pascale (2011) raises questions about how “researchers examine evidence in local contexts as if they are unproblematic and naturally occurring” (p. 18) The second task, interpretation, she describes as the way researchers explain the significance of evidence. The two tasks are linked and carry important implications for research overall. The ways researchers attend to the production of knowledge and possible ways of examining evidence are concurrent with the numbers of possible interpretations. “Yet rendering some explanations of evidence more, or less, plausible than others is always a political project—although it is a political project that is often masked by scientific discourse” (Pascale, 2011, p. 18).

Drawing on actor-network theory, this research project attempts to speak to Pascale’s two overarching tasks. The formalization of empirical evidence is certainly messy, problematic, and
subjective. However, I argue that most empirical evidence is, and that we need to open up this way of thinking in order to move past some of our diehard, Western, positivist-leaning assumptions that are “masked by scientific discourse.” Regarding the second task, interpretation, I turn to Law (2002), whose work pushes for moving away from narratives of singularity toward the idea of multiplicity. “It raises the prospect that there are different and valid knowledges that can neither be reconciled nor dismissed, and suggests that knowing is or might properly be, a process that is also decentered, distributed, but also partially connected. The logic of juxtaposition renders it inappropriate, even impossible, to draw things together in singularity” (Law, 2002, p. 197).

I leave this dissertation project with these questions. Where has the work here landed in terms of better understanding how immigration policies circulate in ESOL teacher professional development? How do our current Western (singular ontological) understandings of how to conceptualize and perform social science research limit us in better understanding issues of conflict, truths blocked at an impasse? Has the notion of value for social science research to move toward multiplicity and incompleteness been accepted? As part of multiple networks itself, the dissertation project cannot and should not answer these questions fully, but strives to be translated over and over again in hopes of contributing to new ways of conceptualizing political relevance in social science research. In Latour’s (2005) words, “Politics is too serious a thing to be left in the hands of the few who seem allowed by birthright to decide what it should consist of” (p. 253). My hope lies in the notion that this work will continue to move, to modify and be modified, and to participate, edging forward how we imagine our ways of knowing.

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