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Immigration Policy Impasse as an Actor:
A Matter of Concern for Educators

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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

"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 2016 presidential campaign, election, and first year of Trump in office have highlighted disturbing divisiveness across the U.S., teachers notwithstanding. This article is situated among the fields of immigration policy and teacher education, and addresses how K-12 teachers regard access to education for immigrant-origin students. The article draws on the current political climate in the U.S. in addition to a larger empirical research

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study.   The study was conducted in school year 2015-16 with K-12 teachers who participated in a teacher professional development program through a public university in the U.S. Southeast, where anti-immigrant policies abound (de la Torre, A., 2012; Rodriguez, S. & Monreal, T., 2017; Shashahani, A. and Washington, C., 2013).   The program goal was to advance teachers' knowledge of working with culturally and linguistically diverse students through an add-on endorsement in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).   Using the material semiotic approach of actor-network theory (ANT), the inquiry explores how immigration policy impasse is taken up in one teacher professional development course with thirty-six teachers.   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.

The opening quotes above from teachers express different ideologies related to immigration policies and the role of educators, reflecting a sociopolitical impasse that plays out in K-12 education spheres.   In the current political climate, colliding ideologies are found in all kinds of settings and media, including social media and practitioner journals. 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).

In another instance of differing responses to the current political climate regarding immigrants, 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, a different school district in California organized a district-wide Teach-In, at which one of the organizers observed, "Our job as educators is to take whatever the community struggle is and teach about it" (Ehrenhalt, 2016).   The examples above demonstrate very different responses from educators related to education and immigration. What follows is an attempt to better understand the ideological underpinnings of how educators working with immigrant students and legislative policies regarding immigrants come together in processes of thinking and doing.

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.

Scholar-practitioners are called to respond in different ways to the impasse "messiness" that the 2016 presidential election has unearthed in the U.S.   Traversing multiple epistemologies *and* multiple ontologies creates a need for a different kind of research.   I propose responding through an exploration of moving between epistemological and ontological norms.   I argue that in addition to epistemological assumptions regarding how we make sense of the world and how we choose to study and represent the world, we must also consider our ontological assumptions regarding how different knowledges establish

what we view as reality, and how we account for multiple knowledges in research. First, I provide a background of the context, followed by a review of the literature. Next, I describe how the theoretical lens of actor-network theory (Latour, 2005) contributes a way to "predominantly think through materials" (Law, 2007). The methodology section follows and includes an auto-ethnographic account and a snapshot of data analysis. Then, a discussion of findings is offered. The article closes with final thoughts for the field of educational research in an era of political divisiveness.

Background

In 2014, estimates suggested that around 3.9 million children in K-12 schools were children of unauthorized parents, 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 K-12 schools are often members of mixed-status families, in which at least one parent is a citizen or resident, while the other is not. Regardless of their immigration status, under federal law, all children in the U.S. have the right to a K-12 education (Plyler v. Doe, 1982).

This research study took 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 took place in Georgia, one of the top ten states of English Language Learner (ELL) enrollment in U.S. public schools (2015 Migration Policy Institute). In fact, one school district was among 25 districts in the country with highest ELL enrollment in 2011-12 (Soto, Hooker, & Batalova, 2015). While large numbers of immigrant-origin students are educated in Georgia's K-12 schools, state educational policies in Georgia restrict immigrant students from higher education and charge prohibitive tuition rates. Other states in the U.S., however, welcome immigrant students and charge in-state tuition (Ali, D., 2017). This context demonstrates the complicated ideological terrain that teachers navigate in understanding the context of educating culturally and linguistically diverse students.

In addition, navigating immigration policies can be confusing when local, state, and national contexts conflict with one another. The Trump administration's 2017 executive orders on immigration have expanded categories of people targeted for deportation (U.S. National Security & Defense, 2017). At the time of writing, 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). To further illustrate policy confusion at the local level, federal Immigration and Customs Enforcements (ICE) contracts with some city police departments, while some police departments refuse to cooperate with ICE.

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). Thus, educators and students are caught directly in these roiling policy conflicts. Last year, 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

announced by Mayor Bill de Blasio in March (City Spokesman, 2017). Teachers around the country, including myself, are scrambling to help immigrant students facing such 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, p. 1)

In particular, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teachers are often the first points of contact for immigrant students and families in academic settings. Recently, practitioner-aimed publications Teaching Tolerance, TESOL International, and Education Week, have highlighted how the Trump administration's immigration policies and rhetoric are affecting students and teachers in U.S. schools (AFT, 2016; Costello, 2016; Edwards & Black, 2017; Ehrenhalt, 2016; Mitchell, 2017; Russakoff, 2017). To date, however, few research studies have explored how immigration policies influence classroom teachers.

Literature Review

In recent years, the U.S. has experienced conflicting policies and impasse in immigration reform. In June 2012, President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) provided hope for young immigrants (U.S. Citizenship & Immigration, 2012). 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).

K-12 teachers who responded to an Education Week survey 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 44% 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).

Few studies have linked practicing 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." Stevens (2011, p. 138) 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."

Considering the ways immigrants are being criminalized in public spheres, further inquiry is needed to better understand the ways teachers build knowledge and view the

realities of immigration policy and education. "In other words, how teachers take up issues of undocumented status in classrooms could be productive or potentially alienating" (Dabach, 2015, p. 390). 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).

Studying social activities that are made up of complex policies and practices calls for theoretical and methodological approaches capable of moving between "messy objects and multiple reals" (Fenwick & Edwards, 2011, p. 709). I assert that studying the context of immigration and education requires researcher to:

> 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. (Nespor, 2002, p. 377)

Actor-network theory is one approach that offers flexibility in addressing multiple ontologies, while exploring how human and non-human actors assemble and what social effects are created from assemblages.

Conceptual Framework

While far-reaching in terms of subjects and disciplines, an actor-network theory analysis purposefully focuses on the local, minute details (Latour, 2005). 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. The topic of immigrants and education in the U.S. is one example of a messy reality, laden with ideological clashing and very different conceptions of what is real. For example, in a 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). Whether I deem this statement to be true or not, it clearly informs the knowledge base of many voters in the U.S.

An antithetical example builds different knowledge of immigrants and education. The January 2017 New York Times Magazine highlighted, "The only way we can fight back is to excel," detailing stories of undocumented college students from Georgia seeking higher education. "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). This example clearly portrays a very different reality from the one Trump declared above.

These examples illustrate disparate ontologies that inform the *knowing* and *doing* of educating immigrants in the U.S. Examples like these incite questions such as: How are Trump's comments and policy enactments and/or the examples from the NYT Magazine

story contributing to teachers' knowledge, and how is this knowledge playing out in classrooms with immigrant students? As a scholar studying immigration policies in teacher education, I have sought to find purchase on ways to work through an impasse when critical theories and stances with which I'm more familiar feel limiting in their flexibility to work within multiple realities. In line with this, Pascale (2011) warned, "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" (p. 2).

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). Latour (2005) asserted that privileging humans over non-humans was limiting research in the social sciences.

Two ANT concepts important to understanding this conceptual frame are "social" and "fact" (Latour, 2005). 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.

Additionally, the notion of a "fact" also takes on new meaning in ANT. For Latour (2005), matters of fact should be understood instead as matters of concern, looking at how knowledge takes shape through associations. Drawing on material semiotic approaches such as ANT, an inquiry can account for competing ontologies by exploring how knowledge comes to be produced and looking at resources that are mobilized to establish an object of knowledge (Law 1994).

One example of using ANT in educational research to explore knowledge production, follows the ways PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) informs policy-makers and educational policy (Gorur, 2011). Gorur's (2011) 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 engages 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).

In another example of an ANT study, Mulcahy (2011) explored teaching standards as first a research and policy strategy, and second, as a process of knowledge-making. Mulcahy's work (2011) illustrates Latour's notions of "social" and "fact" in that, "Standards do not simply describe pre-existing realities such as accomplished teachers; they actively produce them" (p. 96). Thus, in the space allowing for ontological variables, Mulcahy (2011) claims that there is analytical purchase to be gained in moving "in-between" divisions, rather than choosing one over another" (p. 97).

What follows is a description of my intention to create a space for studying the messy realities of immigration policies and teacher education in the U.S., which has serious consequences for immigrant-origin students. My dissertation study (Bass, 2017) attended to the ways that immigration policies are active participants in the work of teachers' knowledge production. Drawing on an actor-network theory approach allows for a different way to consider this matter of concern, with the goal of pushing forward understandings of impasse in the interdisciplinary fields of immigration and education.

Methodological Choices

This article draws from a larger study conducted by the author as a dissertation project (Bass, 2017). The research study took on the lens of an ANT-informed two-year ethnographic case study whose starting point of reference was a university's ESOL teacher professional development program. Situated among a growing number of research studies using ANT, the study had two purposes. First, the study 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. Second, it sought to better understand how an ANT-informed lens could contribute to educational research. Two research questions guide this article: How is the work of ESOL educators impacted by immigration policies? How can studying this divisive topic with actor-network theory move scholarship forward?

Furthering the notion of what constitutes the "social" in ANT, Latour (2005) made distinctions between "sociologists of the social" and "sociologists of associations." In my attempt to work as a sociologist of associations, I unraveled one teacher professional development course, traced human and nonhuman actors, and observed the links between them as well as threats looming to sever them. Actors included 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 studied the assemblage and what effects were produced in this manifestation.

As course instructor, the analysis needed to account for my own understandings of the education of immigrants. To this end, the first subsection below offers a metacognitive account of stretching myself while attempting to disrupt "qualitative positivism" (Prasad & Prasad, 2002, p. 6). My purpose falls in line with Latour's (2005) idea 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). What follows is an auto-ethnographic portrait that attends to *due process* by shedding light on the ways one actor carries a host of experiences and relationships to other assemblages. In other words, knowledge production draws from multiple reals.

How I Came to Actor Network Theory (ANT): An Auto-Ethnographic Portrait

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). A bit of background here provides the reader with a clearer understanding of my positioning as instructor and researcher in the professional development course studied. 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 Athens) 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 activities such as mentoring immigrant students, searching for scholarships, assisting with admission essays, and transporting students to college out of state. 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.

At the 2013 annual meeting of American Anthropological Association, I presented scholarship drawing from critical discourse analysis (Bass, 2013) on the topic of undocumented students and education in the Southeast. 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 led me to ideological head-butting, where my findings will always stand in direct contrast to another's. In fact, 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.

Thus, 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 theories/methods, I was unable to imagine encapsulating multiple layers of messiness of policy work without reducing it to something I'm uncomfortable with or without imposing my own truth-telling. I sought ways to explore and account for multiple realities My proximity to the topic does not change with actor network theory (ANT), but the ontological shift offers a unique way to

Author-Researcher

This course examines the many ways in which school educators may build capacities for cultural and linguistic diversity in the classroom. Special emphasis is placed on mutually accommodative professional practices with culturally and linguistically diverse [CLD] students and families in the following areas: foundations of culture and language; critical reflection on practice; maximizing the assets that CLD students and families bring to learning; school and classroom ecology; curriculum conscientiousness; the differentiation of instruction for cultural and linguistic diversity; and a framework for advocacy in practice.

Policy 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) (GA Board of Regents, 2010).

Teacher-Participants

The instructor should be less subjective. Often, I felt like I was being talked down to because I had opposing opinions or different understanding. (Teacher C)

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 D)

Context of Immigrant Education in GA

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).
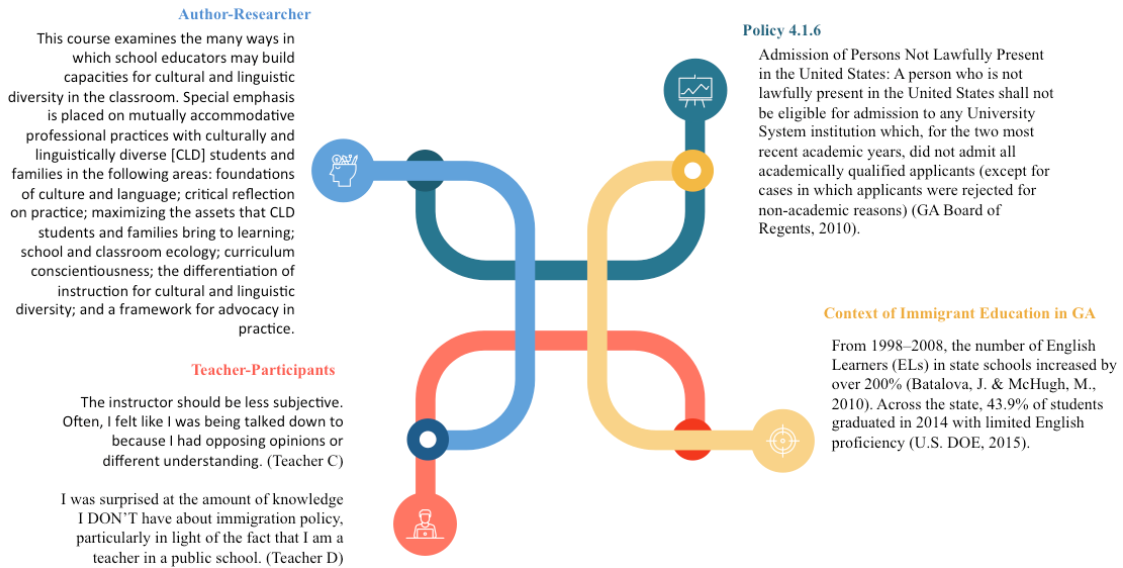
Figure 1: A Snapshot of Multiple Ontologies Informing One Course

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.

Data Analysis

As one topic in the first course of the ESOL endorsement program under study, teacher-participants learned about restrictive state policies that continue to prohibit undocumented students, including those with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), from attending highly ranked postsecondary institutions in the state of Georgia. As part of the larger study, data collection included teachers' responses in online discussions and assignments, focus groups, and on course surveys and evaluations. Focus groups were facilitated by an outside evaluation team, and took place during the two semesters following the course under study. Pre-course survey and post-course evaluation data were collected as well. All of these artifacts were woven into a larger case study that included articulating the ways analysis begins at the inception of ideas, and employed vignettes, memos, mapping, and narrative as the course network was drawn and redrawn in multiple ways.

A second part of the analysis is included in this report. This involved weaving together narratives from teacher-participants, state policy language, and current, contextual data in teacher education regarding immigration policy. The collage format in Figure 1 is not intended to provide a static picture. It offers a snapshot of one manifestation of multiple ways of knowing that circulated and fluctuated throughout knowledge-building in the course under study. Rather than focus on the separate parts or understandings, a material-semiotic approach looks at how actors assemble and what effects are created in the process.

Ultimately, many more assemblages flowed in and out as the course's moving parts assembled and reassembled. Figure 1 offers only a partial glimpse of some of the actors involved in knowledge creation in the course. The connecting tubes represent possible pathways that information might assemble, although in real time, the assemblage is constantly fluctuating. This snapshot illustrates how multiple ontologies informed the knowledge-building in the course. A discussion of findings is below.

Discussion of Findings

Drawing on ANT, I argue that studying the effects of associations among human and non-human actors offers educational researchers an important turn toward considering multiple ontologies. This lens offers a unique way to open up the complicated nature of clashing ideologies. 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 including immigration policies. A brief explanation of the four actors displayed in Figure 1 above follows. Policy 4.1.6 (Board of Regents Policy Manual) prohibits immigrant students in the state of Georgia, even those with DACA, from attending the top universities in the state. According to then Chancellor Hank Huckaby of the GA Board of Regents, the governor-appointed board that governs state universities, this policy assures that no undocumented students in the state receive the public benefit of in-state tuition at postsecondary schools (University System of Georgia, 2012). I should note that Huckaby made this statement in response to legislators' multiple attempts to prohibit undocumented students and Daca-mented students from all access to public higher education in the state. Another part of the snapshot in Figure 1 shows the context of the significant numbers of immigrant students in the state. A third actor represented in the figure is teacher-participants, with two teachers' disparate voices displayed. The fourth actor displayed in Figure 1 is the course description from the syllabus of the course under study.

This study contributes important understandings, including addressing obscurities of data. First, immigration policies in teacher professional development have always been present and performing effects, together with networks of legislators who create policies, officers who impose them, teachers who may be unaware of them, and students who are devastated by them. In the course under study, I found that information regarding state immigration policy was new to many of the teachers, although their school district has one of the highest populations of immigrants in the state and the policy had been enacted four years earlier. Teachers in the 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 that the state university system's policy prohibited undocumented students from certain colleges and charge up to four times in-state tuition at other institutions. Other responses from teachers ranged from frustration with the policies to a desire to advocate on behalf of students. However, some teachers responded by pushing-back to learning about immigration policy in a teacher professional development program.

Secondly, finding that some teachers pushed back against learning about immigration policy in a teacher education course further illustrates that 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. Returning to the opening examples from teachers A and B, we saw two different understandings that framed the article's case for exploring multiple ontologies. For Teacher A, studying immigration policies created an emotional response in support of undocumented students. In contrast, Teacher B responded by calling this information an inappropriate "political agenda" in a teacher professional development course. Similarly, Figure 1 provides a statement from Teacher C, "The instructor should be less subjective. Often, I felt like I was being talked down to because I had opposing opinions or different understanding." Meanwhile, Teacher D wrote, "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."

Treating these examples as matters of fact does not move us past ideological gridlock. Nor does it serve to better understand the teachers' ontological stances. However, using an ANT lens, treating the various responses as matters of concern allows us to open them up in a different way, and allows for the impasse to act. Moreover, immigration policies as actors are far-reaching yet often voiceless. Finding that most teachers in the cohort were unaware of the restrictive higher education policies affecting their students demonstrates the power of non-human "invisible" actors, such as immigration policies, whose voices are often not privileged in our social science world.

Third, K-12 teachers and immigration policies are enacting something together, impasse notwithstanding. This article reports on looking closely at associations among immigration policy and teacher-participants with the purpose of complicating our understandings of how related knowledge is produced in teacher education. During the Trump era, immigration policies have vehemently surfaced in the education world. Yet, immigration policies existed during previous administrations as well, and were acting then 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.

Perhaps this shift in visibility of immigration policies in educational contexts may be strengthening associations with other actors, as seen in the case presented here. Possibly, as in the case of this article, this visibility will nudge researchers to continue to problematize understandings of ideological gridlock. A final observation 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). While these publications fall under an umbrella of advocacy for immigrant students, there are potentially as many threatening articles that were not collected here. Further study in this area is needed as practitioners, scholars, and immigrant students continue to work amidst polarizing ideologies and denigrating policies.

Final Thoughts

Through initial observations and analysis, I have found ANT to be challenging yet advantageous. Analysis does not lend itself to neat boxes of findings or simple descriptions. However, in my aim to better understand conflicting ideologies, I have found it necessary to complicate the field of activity. Material semiotic approaches such as actor-network theory offer one way to do this. Shifting toward the study of assemblages of human and non-human actors builds capacity for new ways to understand ideological

gridlock. 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. My work pushes forward the notion that studying assemblages in this way lays the groundwork for opening up important impasses in today's contentious socio-political and educational contexts.

The research study reported above engaged actor-network theory as a way to approach an impasse, account for multiple ontologies, and rethink knowledge production. As scholars and practitioners working in the fields of immigration and education, we must continue to probe our understandings of and responses to immigration impasse in teacher education, as it has serious consequences for immigrant-origin youth. The nature of this work carries cross-disciplinary implications for studying complex, discordant social, political, and educational issues. In the context of ideological gridlock in the U.S. today, further study and consideration of immigration policy impasse *as an actor* may offer the field of critical thought and praxis a breadth with which to grow.

Acknowledgements

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