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Abstract: In this qualitative study, we examined teachers' language policy appropriation in the English-only state of Arizona. Specifically, we investigated teachers who received their professional placement and preparation through the Teach For America organization. We conducted the research in 2010 and 2011, a period when Arizona state language policy required that English learners be placed in English language development classrooms, separated from mainstream classrooms, to receive four hours of daily skill-based language instruction in language-specific content only, including grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, and conversation. Through analysis of interview data from seven current corps members and eight alumni teachers, we investigated whether and how professional preparation shaped teachers' identity and agency to implement prescriptive linguistic and instructional mandates in the classroom.
Keywords: alternative teacher certification; educational policy; English only movement; in-service teacher education

Formación docente y la apropiación del lenguaje político: una investigación cualitativa de docentes del programa *Teach for America* en Arizona.

Resumen: En este estudio cualitativo, se analizó la apropiación del lenguaje político del programa *Solamente en Inglés* en el estado de Arizona. Se investigaron especificamente los profesores que recibieron su formación profesional y la preparación a través de la organización *Teach For America*. Hemos llevado a cabo la investigación en 2010 y 2011, un período en que la política del Estado de Arizona requería que estudiantes que precisaban aprender inglés tomasen clases de desarrollo del lenguaje, separados de las clases regulares, recibiendo cuatro horas de instrucción diaria de inglés basados en habilidades de lenguaje, incluyendo gramática, vocabulario, lectura, escritura y conversación. A través del análisis de datos de entrevistas de siete miembros que se desempeñaban en *Teach for America* y ocho maestros que fueron alumnos de *TFA*, se investigó si y cómo preparación profesional dio forma a la identidad y sentido de agencia de los docentes para implementar un programa con mandatos prescriptivos de instrucción en el aula.
Palabras clave: certificación alternativa de maestros; política educativa; movimiento sólo Inglés. formación de docentes en servicio

Formação de professores e apropriação da linguagem política: um estudo qualitativo de professores do programa *Teach for America* no Arizona.

Resumo: Neste estudo qualitativo, examinamos a apropriação da linguagem política do programa idioma *Só em Inglês* no estado do Arizona. Investigamos especificamente os professores que receberam a sua formação e preparação através da organização *Teach For America*. Realizamos pesquisa em 2010 e 2011, período em que a política do Estado do Arizona exigia que os alunos que precisavam aprender inglês tivesem aulas de desenvolvimento, separadas das classes regulares, recebendo quatro horas de instrução em Inglês diariamente com base nas habilidades de linguagem, incluindo vocabulário, gramática, leitura, escrita e conversação. Através da análise de dados de entrevistas de sete membros que trabalharam na *Teach for America* e oito professores que foram alunos de *TFA*, investigamos como a formação profissional moldou a identidade e o sentido de agência dos professores para implementar um programa de instrução com mandatos prescritivos.
Palavras-chave: certificação professor alternativa, movimento de educação política apenas em Inglês, a formação em serviço de professores

Introduction

The face of classrooms and schools across the United States (U.S.) is rapidly changing. The student body in Kindergarten-through-12th grade (K-12) schools continues to become more linguistically diverse, as the number of English learners (ELs) rapidly increases in classrooms in all corners of the nation (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010). In the southwestern U.S. near the Mexican border, ELs make up 15% of the student population in Arizona K-12 schools, an increase of 48% in a decade (National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition). As the EL population grows, language policies that guide the medium-of-instruction in Arizona classrooms continue to become more restrictive. With English-only instruction since the passage of Proposition 203 in 2000, the originally designated and broadly defined approach of *Structured English Immersion* (SEI) has narrowed to a more rigid model, referred to as *English language development* (ELD; Arizona Department of Education [ADE], 2007). The ELD model requires ELs be placed in separate classrooms from

mainstream peers where they receive four hours of daily skill-based English instruction broken into strict time increments to cover five English-language-specific *content areas*, including reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, and conversation (ADE, 2008). Policy mandates aim to hold schools accountable with strict compliance expectations and consequences. These policy prescriptions provide a unique and challenging context for teachers' practice with ELs.

One sub-set of teachers working to implement these new demands enters Arizona classrooms through Teach For America (TFA), an alternative path to teaching certification program that recruits top college graduates from diverse degree programs to commit to two years of teaching in a low-income community (TFA, 2012a). Growing into a well-known educational enterprise in its two decades of existence, the non-profit organization annually places 5,000 new teachers in 46 regions across 36 states in the U.S. (TFA, 2012b). Openly acknowledging the flaws in the educational institution, TFA has a stated mission to close the achievement gap that exists along racial and socio-economic lines (TFA, 2012c). Because TFA intentionally places participants in regions with minority and low-income populations (TFA, 2012a) and the majority of ELs in the U.S. attend schools "in urban areas with high concentrations of minority and economically disadvantaged students" (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010, p. 10), TFA teachers frequently teach EL students (Glass, 2008). Conducted with current and former TFA teachers in the Phoenix region, this qualitative study explores TFA teachers' discourse on Arizona language policy, merging these two contemporary issues in educational policy, practice, and research: (a) TFA, a national organization that utilizes alternative certification to place teachers in low-income schools and (b) language policy that guides the instruction of ELs. In this study, we investigate how TFA teachers understand and operate in these diverse contexts, specifically with restrictive language policy guiding classroom practice with ELs, to inform broader teacher preparation in restrictive policy contexts.

Effective teachers are integral to student achievement (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2000); the need for well-prepared teachers intensifies with ELs (Gándara & Maxwell-Jolly, 2006) who need effective supports to learn English simultaneous to developing social, emotional, cultural, and academic knowledge and skills (Wrigley, 2000). Teachers in Arizona's ELD classrooms must be considered *highly qualified* per federal requirement, in addition to state requirement of 90 hours of coursework for SEI endorsement (ADE, 2008). When the approach began in 2008, TFA alumni were the only teachers with TFA affiliation who could serve as teachers of record in ELD classrooms, as new TFA teachers did not receive the mandatory SEI training during the five-week TFA Summer Institute prior to entering the classroom. Beginning in 2010, TFA required the completion of 45 hours of SEI training via an online course before Institute, leading to provisional endorsements and opening opportunities to teach in ELD classrooms.

In this study, we investigate the discourse of current TFA teachers (i.e., *corps members*), and former TFA teachers (i.e., *alumni*), to determine whether and how their preparation (i.e., initial and ongoing) affects how they carry out, or *appropriate* (Levinson & Sutton, 2001), language policy in the classroom, guided by these research questions: (a) How do teachers conceptualize their role in Arizona language policy? (b) How do teachers describe language policy implementation in their classrooms? (c) How do teachers utilize their TFA preparation to guide policy appropriation? In this paper, we share our findings related to language policy appropriation, specifically focused on teachers prepared by TFA in the Phoenix metropolitan area. We first review the literature and outline the framework that guides our research. After describing the qualitative methods to investigate samples of corps members and alumni, we share and discuss results on how teacher preparation, development, and agency impact language policy and practice. We close with implications for teacher preparation policy in this era of educational reform.

Arizona Language Policy and Teacher Preparation

The literature on language policy in the U.S. over the past 15 years focuses primarily on monolingual policy contexts, such as what has been adopted in California (i.e., Proposition 227, 1998), Arizona (i.e., Proposition 203, 2000), and Massachusetts (i.e., Question 2, 2002). Whereas much of the literature appeared in the initial years following the first educational English-only legislation in the U.S. in the state of California (see special issues of *Bilingual Research Journal,* 2000; *The Urban Review*, 2001), scholars have now shifted sights to Arizona, as the latest mandates make this state the most restrictive language policy setting in the nation (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010).

Since the original implementation of the prescriptive ELD mandates required by Arizona House Bill 2064 (e.g., four hours of daily skill-based English instruction) in the 2008-2009 school year, existing studies emphasize the programmatic issues related to policy implementation and resulting achievement of ELs (deJong, Arias, & Sánchez, 2010), including the (a) lack of research base (August, Goldenberg, & Rueda, 2010; Krashen, Rolstad, & MacSwan, 2007), (b) overemphasis on prescription (Iddings, Combs, & Moll, 2012), (c) segregation of ELs away from mainstream peers (Gándara & Orfield, 2010), (d) dearth of content-area instruction (Gándara & Orfield, 2010, Martinez-Wenzl, Pérez & Gándara, 2010; Ríos-Aguilar, González-Canche & Moll, 2010a), (e) heavy focus on skill-based grammar instruction (Combs, 2012), and (f) reliance on an invalid language test (Florez, 2010; García, Lawton, & deFigueiredo, 2010). In addition, researchers utilize standardized test data to demonstrate the lack of growth in EL achievement since the shift to ELD classroom instruction (García et al., 2010; Mahoney, MacSwan, Haladyna, & García, 2010). In a large-scale study of the implementation and organization of ELD mandates in five Arizona districts, Lillie and colleagues (2010) analyze instructional delivery and resources, describing issues related to student grouping, promotion, and graduation. In summary, recent literature on the educational context of Arizona demonstrates the problematic nature of the language policy and resulting effects on ELs.

Whereas much of the research on monolingual language policy focuses on programmatic issues and resulting effects on students' linguistic and academic achievement, the role of the teacher in language policy is relatively absent (deJong et al., 2010). Grounded in theoretical literature on the dynamic nature of policy, this pertinent area of research involves teachers' language policy appropriation in Arizona schools. Trends in the existing literature, comprised primarily from research conducted post-Proposition 227 in California, include teacher characteristics that shape how monolingual language policy plays out in the classroom, including bilingualism (Alamillo & Viramontes, 2000; Valdéz, 2001), language and political ideology (Stritikus & García, 2000), and personal history with language and culture (Stritikus, 2002; Varghese, 2008; Varghese & Stritikus, 2005). Teachers' appropriation varies based on schools' characteristics and approaches to policy implementation (Stritikus, 2002; Stritikus & García, 2000). Additionally, teachers' entries into the field of education play a significant role in policy appropriation (Stritikus & García, 2000; Varghese & Stritikus, 2005), with a specific focus on entrance via bilingual teacher preparation: Teachers who make a conscious decision to seek out bilingual certification tend to value and protect bilingualism.

With the latest changes to Arizona language policy, a handful of scholars explore the role of teachers and teacher preparation in the ELD model. Using survey data to examine the impact of restrictive language policy on teacher education, two studies (Arias, 2012; deJong et al., 2010) find that the minimum requirement that all teachers hold the SEI endorsement, achieved through completion of state-approved courses consisting of prescribed topics and time allocations, leads to decreased knowledge and skills specific to teaching ELs: "The expertise needed to effectively teach ELs is both devalued and diminished in Arizona … as a result of restrictive English-only policies" (deJong et al., 2010, p. 132). Also based on survey data of Arizona teachers, Hopkins (2012) similarly

documents that ESL and bilingual certified teachers report more consistent and extensive use of effective instructional practices than teachers with SEI endorsements. Recognizing the central role that teachers play in EL students' education, Ríos-Aguilar, González-Canche, and Moll (2010b) survey over 800 Arizona teachers to discern perceptions of instructional mandates, policy efficacy, and teacher preparation related to the ELD language policy shifts. Although respondents express concerns about various mandates (e.g., segregation of students), statewide language policies shape teachers' perceptions of ELs, such as the perceived educational opportunities afforded to ELs through the ELD approach (e.g., promotion). Overall, the extant literature demonstrates that Arizona's SEI endorsement does not adequately prepare teachers to implement effective classroom practices with ELs or to negotiate the prescriptive demands of the English-only language policy.

As deJong and colleagues (2010) assert, the role and preparation of teachers in restrictive language policy contexts is largely left out of the literature that primarily focuses on programmatic issues or resulting student achievement; however, an understanding of the preparation of teachers who carry out the policy into practice is pertinent. Our study investigates teachers' roles in the language policy process and contributes to the existing literature through the distinctive sample of alternatively certified teachers arriving in Arizona classrooms through TFA placement and preparation. Additionally, our qualitative analysis of interview data allows for the detailed investigation of teachers' discourse related to language policy appropriation. Relative to the related literature on Arizona teachers, teacher preparation, and language policy (Arias, 2012; deJong et al., 2010; Hopkins, 2012; Ríos-Aguilar et al., 2010b), which utilizes primarily quantitative analysis of survey data, our study employs a unique approach to the data on teachers in ELD classrooms.

This line of research originates from the first author's dissertation study (Heineke, 2009), in which the discourse of one particular ELD teacher, a TFA alumnus, stood out from the other participants in her critical evaluation, negotiation, and rejection of language policy mandates. After further investigation of the TFA organizational discourse and alumni teachers' talk about Arizona language policy (Heineke & Cameron, 2011), we widen the lens in this study to include the pertinent sample of current corps members, who only recently are eligible for ELD classroom placement in their first and second years of teaching. By expanding the sample to include both TFA corps members and alumni, we investigate the appropriation of Arizona language policy through an analysis of the preparation, development, and experiences of various participants across multiple years of affiliation to the national organization and alternative path to teaching certification program. Through the use of qualitative methods, we are able to focus on the multiple facets of teacher preparation (e.g., TFA, university, school-site) of each participant, rather than limit the investigation based on teacher certification (e.g., bilingual). In so doing, this study adds a new lens on language policy appropriation research with an investigation of themes that prevail across teacher preparation pathways and contexts, in addition to individual teacher traits and characteristics.

The Figured World of English Language Development Teaching

We frame our work with *sociocultural* theory (Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1991), recognizing that individuals actively construct knowledge through participation in social and cultural activities that simultaneously are affected by the individual, interpersonal, and institutional planes (Rogoff, 2003). Taking the sociocultural perspective on educational policy, we conceptualize the dynamic and complex co-construction of policy and practice emergent from the interpretations and actions of multiple stakeholders, including schools, administrators, and teachers (Datnow, Hubbard, & Mehan, 2002; Levinson & Sutton, 2001). The complexity of policy formation and implementation can only be captured through consideration of the interactions and negotiations that occur on multiple planes

and between various actors in any given policy context (Ricento & Hornberger, 1996; Rogoff, 2003). Using the sociocultural theoretical framework, we zoom in to examine teachers, policies, and the interplay between teachers and policy in Arizona ELD classrooms and zoom out to consider the broader role of teachers and teacher preparation in restrictive policy contexts.

Grounded in sociocultural theory, we use the conceptual framework of identities in practice (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998), which recognizes that individuals enact situated identities in figured worlds. A *figured world* is a socially and culturally constructed realm of interpretation used to make sense of the complexities and tensions of daily life. In a figured world, discourses, cultural constructions, and assumptions that constitute the familiar aspects of daily life create a standard storyline used to figure the meanings of characters, acts, and events (Holland et al., 1998). Institutions and institutionalized structures of power, status, and influence provide depth and organization to the figured landscape (Holland et al., 1998) and ensure the repetition and ritualization of situations over time. In Arizona classrooms, the figured world of ELD teaching involves the discourses and cultural constructions (e.g., language mandates, student labels) that constitute the familiar aspects of teaching: the participants (e.g., teachers, students, administrators) and their common acts (e.g., instruction, assessment) as situated in a particular institution (e.g., education, schools) with different positions of power (e.g., new teacher, administrator).

Socially organized and reproduced, a figured world creates boundaries that position and relate participants (Holland et al., 1998); however, individuals have the ability to identify and participate in their own way through *situated identities* (Gee, 2005). Referring to the different ways of participating in different social groups, cultures, and institutions (Gee, 2005), socially situated identities trace participation within the figured world (Holland et al., 1998). Within the figured world of ELD teaching, teachers utilize the institutionally supported discourse and practice to evaluate their efforts, understand themselves, and interpret their positions in the school. Further, teachers identify and participate in the figured world as a "certain kind of person" (Gee, 2000, p. 100), which allow individuals to take various perspectives related to state (i.e., *nature identity*), position (i.e., *institution identity*), individual trait (i.e., *discourse identity*), and shared experiences (i.e., *affinity identity*). Individuals form, enact, and sustain perspectives and situated identities in complex ways (Gee, 2000), which guides teachers' participation in the figured world of ELD teaching.

Identity mediates behavior, which leads to individuals' *agency* to make decisions and participate in varied ways in the figured world (Holland et al., 1998). Although the figured world provides actors with social and cultural constructions to make meaning of daily life, these are not static scripts that dictate actions. Through *appropriation* (Rogoff, 1995), individuals actively change their involvement, including their understanding of and responsibility for activities and practices. Specific to language policy in the sociocultural framework, appropriation (Levinson & Sutton, 2001) occurs when teachers interpret, modify, and contest policy mandates to fit their local contexts and to match their own ideologies, personal histories, and professional backgrounds (Datnow et al., 2002). Within the figured world of ELD teaching, teachers' situated identities mediate and guide their agency on how to appropriate language policy in classroom practice. Instead of reproducing static policy prescriptions, teachers actively engage in decision-making and shaping of language policy.

Method

We conducted this qualitative study (Erickson, 1986) in the Phoenix metropolitan area with two samples of ELD classroom teachers who entered the profession through TFA: (a) *alumni* who continued to teach after their two-year commitment and (b) *current corps members* in their first or second year of teaching. We utilized the same methods of data collection and analysis with both samples to investigate the research questions.

In the spring of 2010, we selected a sample of TFA alumni who were active Kindergarten-through-eighth grade (K-8) teachers in ELD classrooms in Arizona (Sample 1; see Table 1). We sent an invitation via e-mail to 25 alumni; of the 13 respondents willing to participate, 10 met the criteria of current ELD classroom placement and 8 participated in interviews. The alumni participants represented a range of corps years, grade levels, and school placements around the Phoenix region; because these alumni teachers had full SEI endorsements, teaching in Arizona classrooms when public school teachers received the mandate to obtain this endorsement, all were eligible to teach in ELD classrooms. The ethnicity and gender of the sample—primarily Caucasian and female— adequately represented the larger population of TFA alumni who continued teaching in the region.

Table 1

Sample of Teach for America alumni in English Language Development classrooms

Pseudonym	Professional Background					Personal Background		
	Corps	Years of Teaching	District	School	Grade	Ethnicity	Language Ability	Gender
Amalia	Phoenix 2005	5	Central	Maravilla	1	Bi-racial	Monolingual	Female
Andy	Phoenix 2007	3	North	Castle	6, 7, 8	Caucasian	Monolingual	Male
Ashley	Houston 2006	4	Central	Maravilla	3	Caucasian	Bilingual, Spanish	Female
Jada	Phoenix 2007	3	South	Campos	K	Caucasian	Bilingual, Spanish	Female
Kara	Phoenix 2007	3	South	Campos	1	Caucasian	Monolingual	Female
Rachel	Phoenix 2003	7	Central	Maravilla	3	Caucasian	Monolingual	Female
Sarah	Phoenix 2006	4	West	Brown	4, 5	Caucasian	Bilingual, Spanish	Female
Stefanie	Phoenix 2006	4	West	James	6, 7, 8	Caucasian	Monolingual	Female

In the fall of 2011, we selected a sample of TFA corps members placed in ELD classrooms in Arizona (Sample 2; see Table 2). We sent an invitation via e-mail to the 15 Phoenix corps members in ELD classrooms and found 7 individuals willing to participate who were currently in ELD classroom placements. This sample included both first- and second- year corps members in placements ranging from Kindergarten to 5th grade primarily on the west side of the Phoenix region; the West District, a large, K-8 public school district with a long-standing partnership with TFA Phoenix, was one of the few partner districts willing to place corps members in ELD classrooms. Like Sample 1, the ethnicity and gender of the sample—primarily Caucasian with more

women than men—adequately represented the population of TFA corps members placed in the Phoenix region.

Table 2
Sample of Teach for America corps members in English Language Development classrooms

	Professional Background					Personal Background		
Pseudonym	Corps	Years of Teaching	District	School	Grade	Ethnicity	Language Ability	Gender
Annie	Phoenix 2011	1	West	Summit	K	Caucasian	Monolingual	Female
Elena	Phoenix 2011	1	West	Sierra	K	Asian	Bilingual, Spanish	Female
Mandy	Phoenix 2011	1	West	Prospect	4	Caucasian	Monolingual	Female
Owen	Phoenix 2011	1	Charter	Sanchez	5	Caucasian	Bilingual, Portuguese	Male
Peter	Phoenix 2010	2	West	Brown	4	Caucasian	Bilingual, Spanish	Male
Rhonda	Phoenix 2010	2	Charter	Uplift	4, 5	Caucasian	Monolingual	Female
Shelly	Phoenix 2011	1	West	Sierra	1	Caucasian	Monolingual	Female

We held individual, qualitative interviews (Kvale, 2007) with each of the 15 participants in the combined samples. The same protocol guided all interviews (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003), consisting of 25 prompts and questions around 6 major themes. We held the interviews primarily in teachers' classrooms before or after school, but a few teachers preferred to meet at another location (e.g., coffee shop) outside of school hours. We utilized digital voice recorders to capture the audio data from the interviews, which lasted approximately 45 minutes per participant. With the help of graduate assistants, we transcribed the interview audio files into Word documents that were uploaded to *Nudist Vivo 8.0* for data analysis.

We utilized discourse analysis (Gee, 2005) to analyze the data. Following data collection, we individually utilized topical discourse analysis to discern the major trends and themes that stood out from the discourse of TFA alumni and corps members, respectively. To enhance validity, the two graduate students who transcribed the interview data also shared inclinations emergent from their extensive exposure to teachers' discourse. After collaborating to triangulate themes that emerged from the linguistic cues and clues in the data, we conducted critical discourse analysis to refine the analysis to code the key words, situated meanings, and discourse models reflected and constructed in teachers' language (Gee, 2005). Where points and themes emerged in our triangulated analyses of teachers' discourse, we utilized qualitative software to organize the nodes to speak to the research questions, which specifically illuminated the enactment of situated identities (Gee, 2000, 2005;

Holland et al., 1998) utilized to make meaning of their practice as ELD teachers. These coordinated rounds of discourse analysis led to the following findings on how current and former TFA teachers utilize identity and agency related to language policy in the figured world of ELD teaching.

Table 3
Interview protocol

Organizing Theme	Sample Prompts and Questions
Personal History	Tell me about your path to joining Teach for America.
	How did you come to teach in the ELD classroom?
Culture, Language & Learning	How do kids learn (culture and language)?
	How does your classroom reflect your views on learning?
English Learners	Tell me about the ELs in your classroom.
	What are the benefits and challenges of teaching ELs?
English Language Development	Describe what the four-hour ELD block looks like in your classroom.
	What benefits and challenges come with the ELD structure?
	Describe the training and support you received for teaching ELD.
Societal Lens	What do you think of Arizona's English-only language policy?
	What do you hope to see in the future for ELs and education?
Goals & Reflection	What are your goals for the remainder of the school year?
	What are your plans moving forward in the future?

Results

In this section, we outline the findings of our study on TFA teachers' discourse and situated identities in the figured world of ELD teaching. To respond to the three research questions, we organize this results section into three sub-sections: (a) authorized positions of novice teachers, (b) individual experiences with teaching and learning, and (c) shared affiliation with TFA. In each sub-section, we respond to the research question using the specific facet of situated identity emergent from and reflected in teachers' discourse: institution identities of corps members, discourse identities of alumni, and affinity identities of corps members and alumni (Gee, 2000), respectively. We then discuss our findings on how teachers' situated identities and related experiences and preparation guide participation and agency in the language policy process.

Institution Identities: Authorized Positions of Novice Teachers

In this sub-section, we present findings related to the first research question: *How do teachers conceptualize their role in the language policy process?* To explore how teachers enact situated identities to make meaning of their role in the language policy process, we use the perspective of *institution identity* (Gee, 2000), which is grounded in a position within an institution that determines the amount or degree of power an individual holds. In the figured world of ELD teaching, the identity of the new teacher positions corps members at the bottom of the top-down policy structure within the educational institution. Whereas alumni conceptualize more agentive roles in the policy process, the data demonstrate that corps members situate their *institution identities* as novice teachers with limited initial preparation and extensive school-site pressures.

Construction of the unprepared novice role

First-year corps members constructed and utilized the situated identity of the new teacher – placed in an ELD classroom without knowledge or preference, positioned by authorities within the top-down power structure of the educational institution. All five first-year teachers recounted stories of "randomly" receiving their teaching placement without prior knowledge of Arizona language policy or the ELD approach. Annie gave an animated rendition of her path to the ELD classroom:

> [The principal said,] "Can you teach ELD?" I said, "To be honest with you, ma'am, I don't even know what ELD is." She goes, "I'll call Human Resources." In the next hour she was like, "Yup, you can teach it. You are going to be our Kindergarten ELD teacher." And I said, "Great! Let me know what that is so that I can start reading up on it!"

Mandy described conducting a Google search to find out the details of her placement for her two-year commitment: "I didn't know what it was. They kept saying *ELD*, and I looked it up and saw that it was the English Language Development." Whereas Annie and Mandy had time to research the approach, Shelly found out on the first day of school: "I didn't even realize I was going to be ELD until I got here my first day .... I didn't realize all the laws they had and all that other stuff." In addition to the emphasis on what they "didn't know," corps members' personal accounts detail their original entry as outsiders to the institutional structure – unfamiliar with both the "ELD" label for their designated classrooms, as well as the laws and policies that guided practice in those classrooms. In so doing, corps members actively constructed the situated identity of the new teacher to position themselves as the uninformed and unprepared novice in the broader policy process.

To further construct the dependent position of this institutional identity, corps members called specific attention to the absence of preparation for ELs during their initial TFA summer training, describing Institute as the "bare bones they [TFA personnel] can immediately provide us within two months." First-year corps member Shelly, who went through a teacher preparation program with an ESL endorsement prior to joining TFA, stated her surprise:

> I know that at Institute there is so much to do and so little time, and so I know that they just try to do the essential things, but honestly I was surprised that at Institute they didn't do anything with ELD, and I'm like, we're in Phoenix, Arizona [a linguistically diverse locale].... So, it was surprising to me that there was nothing about specifically teaching ELD or English language learners.

To meet the minimum requirements for teaching in an ELD placement, the state required new corps members take an online SEI course prior to entering the classroom. With that as the only exposure to principles and strategies for teaching ELs, Rhonda explained, "I don't honestly feel like I had very much preparation because quite frankly, that wasn't the most rigorous thing I've ever done in my life." Similar to other corps members' discourse, Shelly and Rhonda attributed their lack of foundational knowledge of teaching ELs to deficiencies in their initial teacher preparation prior to entering the ELD classroom.

Accommodation of authoritative discourse

Positioning themselves as unprepared novice teachers, corps members further enacted the institution identity of the new teacher – a role that Annie coined as the "rule follower." Corps members' discourse consistently reflected the *accommodation* of authoritative policy demands. Smagorinsky and colleagues (2004) described how new teachers use accommodation to negotiate the tensions between knowledge from teacher preparation and pressures at school sites, which shape and situate their identities. With limited initial teacher preparation, corps members reproduced

structures within the figured world of ELD teaching, consistently emphasizing the need to comply with the external demands of state, district, and school authorities. The recurrent use of accommodated and authoritative discourse demonstrated corps members' reliance on ELD mandates to make meaning of daily practice.

When dialoguing about classroom practice, corps members utilized accommodation, as they took on the institutional discourse in the language policy to describe their instruction of ELs. For example, when asked to describe her daily instruction, Elena responded:

> We have state-mandated blocks that we have to adhere to. So, it's 240 minutes of direct instruction a day, so we're not really supposed to do a lot of centers or anything like that. And so, those 240 minutes are composed of four 60-minute blocks so reading, writing, grammar, and then oral conversation, vocabulary.

Corps members utilized language directly from the language policy mandates to describe classroom practice, such as "direct instruction," "four 60-minute blocks," and "reading, writing, grammar, conversation, and vocabulary." With limited initial preparation for teaching ELs, corps members accommodated the institutional discourse.

In addition to the accommodation of institutional discourse, corps members also utilized authoritative discourse to position their role as the new teacher at the bottom of the top-down language policy structure. Annie described her lack of knowledge and preparation as strengths in the ELD classroom that required strict compliance by school, district, and state authorities.

> I think it's great that I came in knowing nothing. Because for me, [ELD is] the only thing that I know. And it's the expectations, so you rise above the expectations; you do what you have to do. So this is the state that we're in. And these are the laws that are here so the kids still deserve the best that they can receive. And that's all I can give them with staying within the regulations that we have.

Situating her identity as the unknowing novice teacher, Annie used authoritative nouns such as "expectations," "laws," and "regulations." Other corps members' discourse included a high frequency of additional authoritative nouns relegated from the institutional power structure, such as "state-mandated,""compliance," and "mandates." Corps members accommodated the institutional discourse and perceived themselves as actors with rigid linguistic and pedagogical scripts to follow.

Discourse Identities: Individual Experiences with Teaching and Learning

In this sub-section, we present findings related to the second research question: *How do teachers describe language policy implementation in their classrooms?* To investigate how teachers' situated identities mediate their discourse on language policy in classroom practice, we use the perspective of *discourse identity* (Gee, 2000), which is constructed and sustained through discourse—based on a trait, ascription, or experience of an individual, rather than the sanction or structure of an institution. In the figured world of ELD teaching, various socially situated identities support teachers' discourse on teaching and learning when describing language policy and practice in the classroom with ELs. Whereas corps members construct an institution identity, the data demonstrate that alumni enact *discourse identities* related to language and literacy teaching and learning, specifically shaped by preparation from personal experiences, school-based workshops, and graduate coursework.

The bilingual advocate

Alumni teachers who had gone through the process of second language acquisition themselves, particularly those who became bilingual during immersion experiences abroad, described language policy in ways that recognized the realities and challenges of learning another language and valued bilingualism. Ashley, Jada, and Sarah had studied, worked, and lived abroad in Chile, Spain,

and Mexico; these alumni drew on their experiences to design classroom practice that utilized Spanish, valued bilingualism, and allowed students to access authentic English. Jada explained,

> [Using Spanish] is one way of supporting students in their language development. Beyond that though, I think of just validating their culture. I think that's almost the reason why I talk more about my bilingualism. It's not to be like, "I want you to speak this way," but, "I've been to Mexico and I speak your language, and I know about this tradition in your culture, and I want you to know that that's not just tolerated but it's celebrated in this classroom."

The discourse of bilingual teachers, which used positive discourse to describe the celebration and utilization of Spanish in the classroom, contrasted to monolingual alumni teachers, who focused on the need for students to learn English as quickly as possible for success in both school and life.

Corps members with similar language learning experiences also expressed the value of bilingualism and referenced time abroad in interview dialogue; however, unlike alumni who recognized their role in language policy and actively negotiated demands to appropriately mold classroom practice, these novice teachers' descriptions of classroom practice did not fully infuse their multilingual and pluralistic values. A second-year corps member, Peter, explained his practice:

> When you take another language, you understand grammar more. You understand how languages are put together; you can compare and contrast them. And also, being able to speak Spanish I could see where some students might understand some things and not understand other things, for example infinitive verbs. What is that? It is like *hablar* or whatever. It is being able to compare them, give some examples. [Speaking Spanish] is not really allowed too much, but give some examples [of infinitives in Spanish].

Peter, who had undergraduate experience living and teaching in Latin American countries, utilized the bilingual discourse identity to frame his discourse and practice, but simultaneous utilized the institution identity of the new teacher referencing what was "not allowed" per the top-down policy.

The prepared professional

In addition to the variance in description of language policy implementation by discourse identities of language teaching and learning, participants differed based on discourse identities of literacy teaching and learning. Sarah and Jada, two alumni teachers who explicitly stated their refusal to implement the prescriptive language policy, constructed and enacted discourse identities of prepared literacy professionals. Explicitly contrasting their instructional approaches with institutional policy mandates, they described constructivist orientations to literacy teaching and learning. Before going on to provide a rich description of her Kindergarten classroom practice specific to language and literacy, Jada asserted, "I don't teach ELD the way the state mandates that I do because I disagree with much of the model that they're trying to enforce." After similarly stating her disagreement with ELD mandates, Sarah described her workshop model that aimed to differentiate instruction by using quality children's literature:

> One of the focuses was really getting students to be able to pick books that are at their [reading] level so they have that knowledge [to comprehend the text], but they have control over what books they're reading. Then I will work with them on whatever [reading] strategy we're working on with the book that they've chosen.

Both Jada and Sarah described the rejection of discrete, skill-based language instruction for their preferred use of authentic literacy practices such as readers' and writers' workshop, literature circles, and culturally relevant literature that they had learned about in their university graduate coursework.

Rather than the rejection of mandates, other teachers in the alumni sample negotiated the policy demands to meet their students' needs, using their knowledge of how children learn to justify the integration of the language content areas. Kara explained the disconnect between the ELD mandates and how she makes her time more "fluid" to be appropriate for her first graders:

> We're given the really stringent times, which is just not how a primary classroom works. You don't teach vocabulary for an hour. You don't teach grammar for an hour at a time. So, mine are more like: if we do that sight-word practice every day, it's going to be vocabulary, it's going to be grammar, it's going to be writing. It's going to be all at once. So I definitely do literacy for four hours a day; it's just, that's what my kids need.

As a third-year teacher, Kara used her prior experience in a non-ELD setting paired with her preparation to teach literacy from her university graduate coursework to evaluate the efficacy of the policy mandates for her students. Drawing on personal experiences, school-based learning, and university graduate teacher preparation, teachers constructed discourse identities to make meaning of their daily practice in the figured world of ELD teaching. The variance in teachers' discourse demonstrates agency, as individuals utilize their perspectives, preparation, and experiences to appropriate policy in practice.

Affinity Identities: Shared Affiliation with Teach for America

In this sub-section, we present findings related to the third research question: *How do teachers utilize their TFA preparation to guide language policy appropriation?* To illuminate how teachers utilize their professional preparation as a lens to make decisions on language policy in practice, we use the perspective of *affinity identity* (Gee, 2000), which is shaped by the shared commitment to a social group with common endeavors and practices. TFA is an affinity group in which members share the mission of eliminating educational inequities through work in high-needs schools. In the figured world of ELD teaching, corps members and alumni enact the affinity identity of TFA to appropriate language policy in practice. Using the principles and ideals engrained during TFA preparation, teachers self-identify as a particular kind of person affiliated with this group (Gee, 2000). Shared by both corps members and alumni, the data demonstrate that participants enact *affinity identities*, utilizing the organizational discourse of TFA to make meaning of policy and practice.

Relentless pursuit of results

As an affinity group purposefully created by an organization (Gee, 2000), TFA uses core values and instructional practices to construct a bond between TFA teachers and maintain allegiance to organizational values and practices. The core values guide teachers in the organization's shared mission, including the "relentless pursuit of results" (TFA, 2012d). The TFA curriculum, based on the *Teaching As Leadership* framework, calls for teachers to set ambitious visions of students' academic success and work relentlessly to meet high academic goals for students (Farr, 2010, p. 5). Using this framework for student academic achievement, TFA trains teachers to set *big goals* and make *significant gains*, measured by quantitative results on assessments (Farr, 2010, p. 21).

Teachers used the shared discourse of the TFA affinity group to make meaning of their practice with ELs. Due to various frustrations with the pace of academic growth, including emphasis on standardized tests and comparison with mainstream students at the same grade level, teachers utilized discourse that reflected the deficit perspective on ELs. Owen, a first-year corps member, stated, "Unfortunately the achievement level of my kids is such that there are a few that grasp things on their own …. [My students] are sort of the lower performers." Owen's explicit description of his students as "lower performers" exemplifies other participants' deficit-based discourse, including conceptualizing learners with negative connotations such as "slower," "deficits," "deficiencies," and

"failing." The organizational insistence on the relentless pursuit of results narrowly defined in terms of performance on standardized test scores, paired with the institutional structures that isolated students with emergent language proficiency levels, supported deficit-based discourse as teachers felt unable to lead their students to the desired and expected results on standardized assessments.

Specifically focused on standardized test scores, participants described struggles around ELs reaching the original big goals set with mainstream students in mind. Rhonda, who had taught in a mainstream classroom for her first year of her two-year commitment with TFA, weighed her former and current students against one another.

It's hard for me because you don't see a lot of it [growth]. I mean, they make gains, but a lot of times it's really small things, and it takes a long time. So, it's really challenging for me because I compare a lot to the [mainstream] students that I had last year and the gains that I would see on a daily basis.

Summarizing this comparison between mainstream and ELD classrooms at the third-grade level at her school, Ashley shared, "When I get my kids' scores back on whatever assessment that they've taken, I compare them to the mainstream classes, I'm like, 'Aw, they didn't do so well.'" At the same school as Ashley, Rachel described the "drawback" of teaching in an ELD classroom because of her students' struggles on district benchmark assessments: "I think the first four months; it was really hard as a teacher, feeling very unsuccessful, because the measure was these district-wide assessments, and my kids were failing, failing, failing, failing, failing." The emphasis on significant gains measured by standardized tests, both by TFA and this particular school (Heineke, 2009), supported these alumni teachers' deficit-based discourse on ELs.

Whereas most participants unknowingly utilized the deficit-based discourse to make meaning of their daily practice in ELD classrooms, one corps member recognized and identified the deficit perspective and its origin within the top-down institutional structure. Annie described the discrepancy in expectations between mainstream and EL students at the school- and district-level.

People don't hold them [ELs] to the same standards and expectations as the gen[eral] ed[ucation] kids. When we talk about grading we talk about honor roll, people in my district will tell me, "Your kids should not be [on honor roll] if they are pre-emergent, they should not be receiving 3s," which are meeting grades. Well, what if they are meeting [grade-level expectations]? My frustration is that they have these standards and then they don't really say to the kids or give them support that they need to be able to be able to meet them. And they hold them, "Well you're not going to meet it anyway, so we just won't worry about it."

Despite recognizing the institutional structures that held low expectations for ELs, Annie did not negotiate this discrepancy; instead, she maintained her position in the top-down power structure through her institutional identity of the new teacher. Overall, the affinity identity of TFA teachers, specifically focused on the relentless pursuit of results, sustained the broader institutional discourse on ELs within the figured world of ELD teaching.

Sense of possibility

Related to the core value of "sense of possibility" (TFA, 2012d), TFA acknowledges that "too many children in low-income communities are trapped in a cycle of poverty and educational inequity. Prevailing beliefs haven't led to the policies and investments necessary to break this cycle" (TFA, 2012c). In explanations for why the achievement gap exists, TFA asserts that various challenges in low-income communities put additional pressures on schools that generally do not have the systems, capacity, and resources to compensate (TFA, 2012c). With this shared understanding, TFA teachers enter schools believing that current policies are flawed and that not enough is being done to compensate and meet the needs of their students. The affinity identity of

the TFA teacher incorporates the organizational construct of *locus of control* (Farr, 2010), where teachers make decisions about classroom practice without relying on flawed structures and policies.

The alumni teachers' enactment of the TFA affinity identity, and the confidence they built through teaching ELs successfully, led them to act upon and expand their locus of control. Using knowledge from personal experiences and professional preparation, alumni evaluated and critiqued the policy that resulted in the lack of mixed grouping of ELs with native English-speakers, the teacher as the only model of a fluent English-speaker, stringent times for teaching discrete English skills, and lack of content area instruction. Building on these criticisms, alumni consciously utilized their active role in the language policy process, such as Jada and Sarah's dismissal of the discrete, skill-based mandates to incorporate student-centered language and literacy instruction, or Kara's holistic and integrative appropriation of the four-hour block of ELD teaching. Teachers' discourse on the appropriation of language policy in their classrooms reflected alignment with the affinity identity and TFA's construct of locus of control, as well the beliefs and values inherent in their individual discourse identities.

Discussion

In this study, the figured world of ELD teaching provided TFA teachers with a realm of interpretation to make meaning of the complexities in daily classroom practice. Nevertheless, the institutional discourse inherent in the language policy only provided a framework for teachers to *figure* the world; therefore, teachers identified in various ways with the figured world and had the agency to maintain, recognize, or negotiate the institutional discourse. Due to this capacity to act proactively, teachers had their own perspectives and identified in various ways with the expectations and routines of the figured world. Teachers' situated identities, specifically tied to different facets of teacher preparation, signaled the various degrees of identification with the figured world of ELD.

Framed with sociocultural theory (Gee, 2000; Holland et al., 1998; Rogoff, 1995, 2003), we zoomed in to analyze how TFA trained teachers interacted with language policy and practice in Arizona classrooms. We found that teachers' perceptions of their role in the language policy process varied based on institution identities, such as corps members' construction of the unprepared novice teacher positioned to maintain policy demands. Alumni teachers, armed with more knowledge of and experience with teaching ELs, often resisted the institution identity and enacted discourse identities based on individual traits and backgrounds; drawing on personal experiences of second language learning and professional preparation of literacy teaching, teachers described the implementation of language policy to match what they recognized as sound and effective language and literacy instruction. In addition to institutional and individual perspectives, teachers made decisions about language policy appropriation guided by their TFA affinity identity, reflected in the shared commitment to the organization's core values and the Teaching as Leadership framework (Farr, 2010). Using these findings, we zoom out to discuss the development of teachers as agents of policy on the various planes of teacher preparation.

Sociocultural theory perceives development as occurring on three mutually constituting and inseparable planes (Rogoff, 1995); whereas activities on one plane may be the focus of analysis, the other planes remain in the background. Conceptualized in this study as the figured world of ELD teaching (Holland et al., 1998), teachers' realm of interpretation simultaneously included the personal, interpersonal, and institutional planes (Rogoff, 2003). As we focused our analysis to answer each research question, we foregrounded the discourse identities on the personal plane, the affinity identities on the interpersonal plane, and the institution identity on the institutional plane, while recognizing that all simultaneously contributed to teachers' participation and development as

actors in the policy process (Gee, 2000; Rogoff, 1995). Alumni participant Jada, for example, exercised her agency by negotiating the restrictive language policy mandates to match her bilingual and bicultural values and incorporate her knowledge of constructivist literacy instruction. Mediated by her TFA affinity identity, she recognized the flawed policies and rejected the institutional discourse; using discourse to identify herself as a bilingual person and well-versed literacy teacher, she described closing her classroom door to carry out student-centered language and literacy instruction. Teachers' agency and corresponding appropriation of policy stem from this *combination* (Gee, 2000) of socially situated identities (Gee, 2000) across multiple planes of development (Rogoff, 1995, 2003).

Foregrounding the *institutional plane* (Rogoff, 2003) of the figured world of ELD teaching, we recognized a *continuum of development* in how teachers interacted with the institutional discourse and authoritative structure inherent in the restrictive policy. In the first year of teaching, enacting the institution identity of the new teacher, corps members primarily practiced *maintenance*, as they carried out the language policy in practice as prescribed from state, district, and school officials. Second-year teachers tended to demonstrate *recognition*, where individuals began to conceptualize their ability to mold policy mandates in classroom practice. Different from corps members, alumni teachers displayed varying manifestations of *negotiation*, as they made cognizant decisions about appropriating policy in practice. On the institutional plane, school and district authorities *apprenticed* teachers into the figured world of ELD teaching, supporting the "development of mature participation in the activity by the less experienced" (Rogoff, 1995, p. 142). As demonstrated in this study, teachers vacillated on the continuum based on experience, where less experienced teachers maintained policy demands and more experienced teachers enacted situated identities on the interpersonal and personal planes of development to negotiate policy and practice.
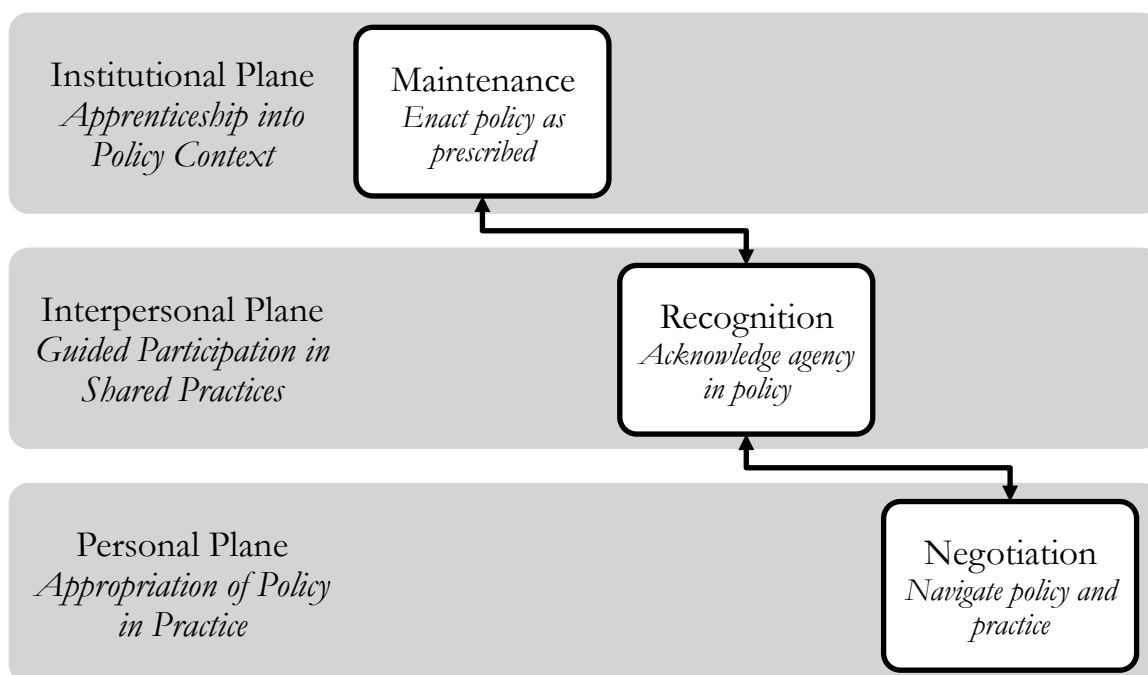
Figure 1. Development of teachers as agents of language policy

Simultaneous to the apprenticeship into the institutional structures, discourse, and expectations of the figured world of ELD teaching, teachers engaged in communication and

coordinated efforts within their affinity group (Gee, 2000) on the *interpersonal plane* of development (Rogoff, 1995, 2003). When teachers enacted the TFA affinity identity, they utilized the organization's shared mission, core values, and common practices to frame and make meaning of their practice in ELD classrooms. With key organizational principles, practices, and discourses introduced during initial teacher preparation and continuously reinforced during ongoing professional development and support, the affinity group utilized the concept of *guided participation* to involve teachers in communication and coordinated efforts while participating in culturally and socially valued activities (Rogoff, 1995, p. 142). As teachers engaged in the shared endeavors of the affinity group over time, participation in the figured world shifted, as they began to recognize their active role in the flawed policy process, as emphasized in the organizational discourse (TFA, 2012c).

Maintaining both the institutional and interpersonal planes of development in the background, teachers utilized individual perspectives, experiences, and preparation on the *personal plane* (Rogoff, 1995, 2003) of the figured world of ELD teaching. The discourse identities (Gee, 2000), which individual teachers enacted to situate themselves as a specific kind of person possessing a particular trait or background, directly related to various facets of teacher preparation, including personal experiences with second language teaching and learning, professional experiences as language and literacy teachers in schools, and learners in university graduate coursework. These personal facets of teacher preparation unique to each participant mediated their interaction with policy. For example, unlike the other first year teachers who reflected the maintenance of policy demands, Shelly utilized her undergraduate teaching certification and ESL endorsement to recognize her active role in the policy process as she discussed plans to creatively implement balanced literacy during the four-hour block. Demonstrating the personal process of *participatory appropriation* (Rogoff, 1995), individual teachers changed through their involvement in personal and professional experiences, in the process preparing themselves for subsequent involvement in and impact on teaching and learning.

Implications for Policy and Research

Situated in classrooms in which policy is enacted into practice, teachers are at the center of policy formation and implementation (Menken & García, 2010; Ricento & Hornberger, 1996) and school reform efforts (Barth, 1990; Datnow et al., 2002). No matter how restrictive the language policy mandates (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010) or high stakes the compliance measures (Iddings et al., 2012), teachers will construct and enact situated identities to make meaning and decisions to shape policy appropriation in classroom practice. Mutually constituting planes of development (Rogoff, 1995, 2003), including personal, interpersonal, and institutional processes of teacher preparation, simultaneously inform teachers' identity, agency, and appropriation of policy.

With this in mind, rather than relying on increasingly restrictive language policies to incite school reform and educational change for ELs (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010), teacher preparation policy should be prioritized to develop effective and multifaceted ways to prepare and support teachers who are well-equipped to negotiate the policy demands and complexities of today's classrooms. With no *one-size-fits-all* approach to prepare teachers to recognize and negotiate their roles in various policy contexts across diverse and dynamic linguistic and academic settings (Levinson & Sutton, 2001), policy actors and educational stakeholders at schools and universities must examine their roles in the development of teachers as agents of policy.

Building out from the teachers at the center of the policy process (Ricento & Hornberger, 1996), school and district administrators must deconstruct the authoritative role (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010; Iddings et al., 2012) of the administrator and focus on the improvement of institutional structures and supports that apprentice teachers into educational settings (Barth, 1990).

Rather than reinforce top-down restrictions on practice, administrators can emphasize the school-based preparation and support of teachers to become more effective and responsive to the EL population (Barth, 1990). Supporting this plight for collaborative and contextualized teacher learning in schools, state administrators and policy makers can provide flexible guidelines and resources to prepare teachers to make informed decisions when appropriating policy into practice.

In addition to the layers of administration within K-12 schools, districts, and systems, teacher educators in traditional, alternative, and professional development programs must recognize and reveal teachers' agentive roles in the policy process (Menken & García, 2010; Ricento & Hornberger, 1996), providing opportunities for teachers to grow personally and professionally through various experiences and contexts, such as individual excursions to learn a second language or ongoing collaborative dialogue with other ELD professionals. Contextualized in the sociocultural setting of the school and community, policy stakeholders must prioritize the preparation of the central actors of the policy process: teachers.

In addition to the implications for the various actors within the multiple layers of the policy process (Ricento & Hornberger, 1996), this study holds implications for those who research policy in this era of educational reform. Rather than limit investigations to static policy documents or resulting student achievement data, studies should embrace the complex and dynamic nature of the policy process (Levinson & Sutton, 2001) and its many actors (Ricento & Hornberger, 1996). In addition to the sociocultural lens on policy research (Levinson & Sutton, 2001), scholars must acknowledge the central role of teachers in policy, the complexity of teachers, policy, and the interaction between teachers and policy (Datnow et al., 2002), to investigate ways to support the development of teachers as agents of policy.

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