Elusive Practices of Gender, Power, and Silence:
Theorizing the Relational Power of Elementary Teachers in the Policy Epidemic

Dissertation

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By

Heather Mae Bandeen, B.A., M.A.

College of Education and Human Ecology

The Ohio State University

2009

Helen Marks, Advisor

Patti Lather

Belinda Gimbert
Abstract

This study looks closely at the feminized profession of elementary teaching during the epidemic that defines the current educational policy climate, particularly since *No Child Left Behind*. As a profession that is not considered to be particularly powerful, elementary teachers provide a feminist and theoretically messy location to study ways that educational policy becomes transformed through complex processes of implementation.

This study reframes educational policy analysis with the introduction of a new hybrid model comprised of Foucauldian power theory and grounded work. By applying Gore’s (1995) “taming” of Michel Foucault’s theories of power in *Power/Knowledge* (1980), the researcher posits a model of the discursive structures of policy and teachers. These discursive structures are characterized by distinctive discourse patterns, specific power tools, and teacher subject positions. Through qualitative iterations of interviews and the use of a theoretical typology to sample elementary teachers over the course of a year and a half, subjugated knowledges of the lived effects of reform became visible.

To provide foundation to this alternative means of viewing policy analysis, the literature review traces the historicity of agency that has traditionally defined teachers throughout organizational theory, psychological analysis, and critical studies. As a post-structural break from the analysis of teacher agency and the influences of institutional
structures, the methodology iteratively unfolds to map power, discourse analysis, and the shifting locations of elementary teacher subject positions.

Though the primary findings describe powerful teacher silences as indicative of deference and resistance during continuous reform, critical subject positions also emerged. These subject positions surfaced the potential for theorizing conceptions of post-agency. Elementary teachers questioned not only policy constraints upon their daily work but also their personal attachments to discourses that define their very identity.

The study concludes with considerations for administrators and policymakers to incite a conversation with teachers beginning with the question of “Why these policies now?” The researcher encourages a systematic reframing of policy creation and implementation that relies upon questions of “why” rather than the traditional focus toward consistent refinements of “how.” Through retrenching teachers within policymaking, it is hoped that the educational system would be reinvigorated and sustained through teacher engagement with the norms that define their profession.
Dedication

To my Mom and Dad
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Vita

May 17, 1974……………………………… Born - Concord, Massachusetts USA

1997………………………………………….. B.A. Elementary Education,
Michigan State University

1997-1999……………………………… Elementary Teacher
Peoria Unified School District, Arizona

1999-2000…………………………………… Field Instructor
The University of Michigan

2000…………………………………………. M.A. Higher Education Administration,
The University of Michigan

2001-2004……………………………… Elementary Teacher
District Mathematics Facilitator
Traverse City Area Schools, Michigan

2004-2005…………………………………… Coordinator, Northern Education Programs
Ferris State University, Michigan

2007-2009……………………………………. Doctoral Intern
Center for the Advancement of Teaching
The Ohio State University

Field of Study

Major field: Education
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Chapter 1

Introduction:
Rethinking Educational Policy Analysis
Through a Study of the Lived Effects of Reform

Nowhere is the effect of complexity more apparent than in the translation of legislation into administrative action – what we have come to call “the implementation problem.”
-Richard Elmore (1985)

This study combines many factors: My own experience as an elementary teacher, my doctoral journey from feminism to post-structuralism, the particular uses of Foucault in understanding the “policy turn,” and the strengths of qualitative research in theorizing teacher lives. As the chapters unfold, each of these factors will be detailed. In this introduction, I intend to do three things: I will introduce the study and its significance, provide a history of shifting discourses of educational policy, and delineate significant terms, theoretical frames and the research design.

Introduction and Significance

For this study, I chose to work specifically with elementary teachers. As a contingent of the teaching profession that is overwhelmingly female, they operate in a lateralized, undifferentiated structure. Elementary teachers do not tend to define themselves according to specific disciplines and generally have the same job duties on
the first day as they do on their last. Additionally, this particular subset of teachers is not considered to be powerful. I thought that elementary teachers, who reflect the foundation of the American education system, would be an intriguing and messy feminist location to study ways that policy becomes transformed through processes of implementation. I was interested in the lived effects of the “policy epidemic” (Levin, 1998), specifically, how these teachers generate power and how that power operates during the many translations of policy. Butler (1997) suggests that traces of power may elude notation as they may not leave any “voice or signature” (p. 6); thus, teacher practices of silence provide a means to enact a variety of practices. These practices remain unregulated in terms of traditional detection, as a sort of flying under the radar of which teachers are both aware and unaware.

The significance of this study lies in contributing to the field of educational policy analysis. I undertake an examination of the subject position of “elementary teacher” as related to reform efforts in the United States. I demonstrate that a primary reliance upon policymaker decisions does not include a nuanced understanding of the discourses available to teachers during times of change. Such a Foucauldian study can create opportunities to look closely at the messiness and power dynamics that can become silenced. I use post-structural theory in ways that connect “language, subjectivity, social organization, and power” through iterations of grounded work (Richardson, 2005, p. 929). Across several methodological iterations toward the creation of a theoretical framework, I shifted from becoming enamored with the teachers I interviewed to instead become enthralled by patterns that emerged from data. What emerged was an analysis of
the intersectionality of teacher discourses in relation to policy discourses in terms of what becomes the privileged knowledge during policy implementation.

This study will demonstrate that: (1) Policy and teachers both produce power; (2) Policy power and teacher power operate differently; and (3) Understanding the different ways that power operates may lead to policy implementation processes that acknowledge teachers as powerful actors.

Elementary teachers form relationships within a uniquely lateralized system where loyalties develop (Lortie, 1975) and power is produced. As Mills (1956) explains, class interests such as those among teachers, can stretch and extend generative patterns from individual concerns. Teacher perceptions of the lived effects of reform include glimpses of unseen and unregulated silences that characterize teacher production of relational power. Within layers of discourse, elementary teachers can feel isolation as individuals in their classrooms but also a shared sense of professional isolation. As a contrast to the rational power of policy, teachers’ personal connections paired with these isolations create a foundation for teacher power to operate and be produced.

Over the years, the work of Michel Foucault has been used by activist educators to analyze everyday schooling practices. By applying a relational theory of power primarily derived from Foucault’s Power/Knowledge (1980b), I take a closer look at the social/political discourse frameworks of teaching and policy implementation. A post-structural lens can be used to recognize discourses as flooded with interpersonal tones and signifiers that signal to teachers and wield power. Discourses can be analyzed through patterns of social interaction and evidence of relational power. Throughout this
process, elementary teachers are framed as subject positions that shift as new policy norms and regulations are introduced.

**A Feminist Post-structural Stance**

The feminist frameworks of this study are used to serve as consistent reminders of the historical subtexts of the elementary teaching profession (Miller, 1996; Weiler, 2001). I attempt analytical moves toward an “unmasking [of] the politics that underlie some of the apparent neutrality of educational reform” (Ball, 1990, p. 7). As Harding (1991) suggests, issues of “value neutrality” can be troubled by surfacing the “relational and concrete” work by women that functions undetected, yet makes the theorizing of abstractions possible (p. 27). I recognize powerful layers of discourse that serve to “filter, skew, shape, block, transform, construe and misconstrue” (Peshkin, 1988, p. 17). By assuming a feminist post-structural stance, I intentionally reference “a radically different vision of [teacher] subjectivity as embodied, sexually differentiated, multiple and relational” (Leach, 2000, p. 224).

As policymakers attempt to reform individual teacher’s instructional practices, they assume that teachers are rational actors with “agency” who make choices in classrooms (Bandura, 1989). It is precisely this idea of agency that is displaced in this study with the concepts of subject positions through which teacher power can be theorized differently. When theorized as subject positions that signify “knots in social space” (Nespor, 1997), elementary teachers are framed as reflecting shifting discourses during times of change. By looking closely at ways that the discourses of policy and teachers shift, interact, and diverge, I demonstrate that the complexities within policy
analysis can become visible through the use of Foucauldian power theory. By tracing the
divergence of teachers discourse from those of policy, silence is identified as
representative of unregulated power. Surfacing these silences provides a means to better
understand the implications of policy and the unexpected outcomes of implementation.

**Shifting Discourses of Educational Policy: From Local Control to Epidemic**

Conceived from the very beginning as a vehicle to integrate masses of immigrants
into the fabric of democracy, public education was spearheaded in part by Horace Mann.
Mann established common schools throughout the country and described his ideal society
“as one being held together with a common set of values, welded in a common set of
experiences” (Karier, 1986, p. xxii). Decision-making regarding the management of these
schools was initially conducted through established and routine town hall meetings. Then
as social and political issues increased in complexity, decision-making mechanisms were
replaced with a bureaucratic structure. This historical break from community
involvement represented a move toward models similar to those found in today’s
educational policy that is insulated from direct public input.

Over the years, the federal government became involved in educational policy by
leaving administrative choices largely in the hands of the states (Cohen & Hill, 2001). In
the early 1980’s, state governments attempted to increase “efforts to regulate, restructure,
and otherwise reform schools through various results-based policies” with tools of
“capacity, incentive, and opportunity” (Malen, 2003, p. 197). After years of growing
impatience with ineffectual state efforts to improve education, the federal government
began to move toward direct intervention to dictate that “all students achieve high
standards” (Honig, 2006, p. 10). Reflective of “technologies” that endorse the privatized influences and “managerialism” to encourage standardized performance, these federal political discourses shifted to promote aggregate definitions of institutional success (Ball, 2006, p. 13).

The shifts in policy reflected a move away from local control to large-scale federal intervention. The passing of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)* represented the first shift from local control to the possibility of federal intervention. In 1965, the federal government began to allot Title I money to encourage specific actions from teachers in the nation’s neediest public schools (Kirst, 1995). Throughout years that followed, there was an emerging concern about impending global markets which later led to *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*. Released in 1983, this report emphasized links between education and international success while supporting a model of competition among schools (Cross, 2004) – marking an incitement toward what Levin (1998) called a “policy epidemic.” The third shift resulted in *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* during the Clinton years where initially states were told to find unique ways to meet the increasingly standardized federal mandates (Spring, 2005).

In the most recent attempt at federal educational policy, the George W. Bush administration with bipartisan Congressional support and public approval, passed one of the most prescriptive systems to date -- the *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001, which became known as *NCLB* (Cross, 2004; U.S. Department of Education, 2004). As DeBray-Peloit and McGuin (2009) observe, since *NCLB*, “the nature of the conversation has changed” with regard to educational policy (p. 17). The increasing federal role
creates an institutionalized bureaucracy where teachers are leveraged, engaged, and subjected to surveillance. Meanwhile, professional decision-making discussions move beyond teachers’ prevue to be managed by policymakers and other stakeholders. As NCLB was implemented, previous federal teacher-in-residence programs within the U.S. Department of Education dissolved and remained absent. In a perfunctory acknowledgement of teacher input, Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings reintroduced a collaborative model with only months left before the end of the administration (Hoff & Keller, 2008).

A Post-structural Translation of the Complexity of Implementation

In a contrast to this day late and dollar short strategy, an emergent area in educational policy studies is “translational research.” To explore what is lost and silenced through the establishment of recent policy discourses, this study translates the complexity of what happens “within districts” during implementation by looking closely at teacher perceptions of the lived effects of reform. This is a momentary refusal of many institutional studies that solely explore “between district variance” and measure outcomes of policy implementation (p. 35). By using discourses as units of qualitative analysis, this study reaches beyond the “monolithic” means with which many school districts are typically framed and analyzed. As Spillane (1998) recognizes, when school districts are treated as institutions that are “internally homogenous,” many influences that affect educational policy analysis are lost. This study’s contention is that underlying complexity can become apparent when alternative theoretical lenses are used.
Initially translational research models, also called clinical studies, focused upon the inherent complexity of extending medical laboratory findings from the “bench to the bedside” and recently have influenced decisions surrounding education (Brabeck, 2008). Translational research is defined as “scientific investigation of interventions aimed to accelerate the uptake and use of evidence-based observations and practices to improve health services… and policy-level decision making” (http://www.morst.govt.nz, 2007).

Like medicine, education is interested in the complications, interventions, and resistances that influence outcomes. In continuing to refine prescriptions for teachers’ daily work through development of policy, efforts persist toward creating models of efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability. Historically, policymaking processes have ignored such translational studies of implementation and have relied upon claims of scientific neutrality. To overcome what Elmore (1985) refers to as the “implementation problem,” policymakers attempt to hold teachers responsible for measurable institutional outcomes but at the same time they ignore influential frameworks of the profession.

As Olssen (2003) observes, the federal government’s reliance upon externally derived policy models is directly linked to political recognition of science as the signifier of success in the global marketplace:

The current emphasis on competence-based qualifications, transferable skills and applied knowledge is consistent with the ‘grand narrative’ of emancipation through scientific progress linked to economic success (p. 181).

According to this “grand narrative,” educational policies can become more scientific if they are crafted as neutral, replicable models – freed from the complexities of daily life. The science of education is bound by two factors: a trepidation about education as a
science and an “unwillingness to be too closely associated with teachers” (Lagmen, 2000, p. 21). As Peters and Burbules (2004) explain, educational science has emerged as “a new rationalization designed to optimize its contribution to system performance” (p. 50).

This is precisely the kind of science that post-structural theory troubles. Traditions of modernity, characterized by natural laws derived from Enlightenment thought, create an objective view of the world that undergirds today’s science (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2004). By using an alternative theoretical approach to translate the complexity of reform, policy can be framed as a regulated collection of discourses which are “statements with internal rules… specific to the discourse itself” (Mills, 2004, p. 43). This methodological perspective dismantles assumptions surrounding policy’s use as a “natural” tool to reform education as:

Even the deep or underlying structures of meaning are themselves arbitrary; what we take to be the cause of meaning or intelligibility is itself already an effect; wherever you think you see nature, culture has already been there (Nealon & Giroux, 2003, p. 136).

These arbitrary structures can perpetuate a “narrowly defined scientism” (Lather, 2005, p. 5) to systematize unquestioned “truths” that maintain a range of “dominations” (Nozaki, 2006). When framed through a post-structural lens, these iterations of “truths” and “dominations” can translate teacher perceptions of the lived effects of reform. Talking about policy in this contrasting way reveals Foucault’s recognition of the “larger discursive shifts over time through which different kinds of subjecthood become possible – or impossible” (Davies, 2006, 425-426). In this spirit, this study is offered as a blurring of what Lather (2005) calls “a more capacious scientificity of disciplined inquiry” to interrogate the perpetuation of social and political frameworks (p. 5).
Shifting the Discourse of Policy Analysis: The Post-structural Corrective

After completing a genealogical tracing of the “truths” of teachers, I noted that the literature focused upon teachers, as individuals, in relation to their students in the classroom (Vongalis-Macrow, 2007). The modern dualisms of institutional structure and teacher agency appeared consistently across organizational systems perspectives, psychological analyses, and critical studies. Dialectical shifts between structure and agency are integral to ways that teachers are traditionally viewed.

Educational policy analyses tend to reflect the measurement of large-scale production systems akin to those found in organizational behavior or business management (Hill & Hupe, 2002). As Giroux (2002) contends, the discourses and texts surrounding teachers effectively blend “the imperatives of a market economy and demands of a democratic society” to create systematized market rules within public institutions (p. 4). Foucault (1980b) questions the powerful roles that institutions, traditions, and norms play in the regulation of which “truths” become privileged. Through the use of Foucauldian frameworks, systems of production can be viewed as “paradoxical” (Ball, 2003). The federal government endorses the adoption of policies blended with self-regulation systems to create a “regulative ensemble” that becomes focused toward production and emerges as familiar through naturalized repetition (Aglietta, 1979, p. 101).

Used here as a “philosophical corrective” to the traditional approaches of policymaking, I apply post-structuralism to examine and discuss educational policy processes (Peters & Burbules, 2004, p. 4). As Elliot (2006) observes, the “project of re-
describing educational research is necessary for political reasons” as such studies “can provide an alternative account of what is involved in modernizing the educational system” (p. 185). Invoking an alternative theoretical framework creates space for an active search for concepts that have become progressively silenced in educational policy analysis. As Mills (2004) suggests, the power of policy remains in ways that discourses are “principally organized around the practice of exclusion” by enforcing an ingrained system of the “unsayable” (p.11). To engage with discourse as a theoretical concept, I methodologically search for what “language does, and how it produces and situates individuals” (Yon, 2000, p. 54).

I am most interested in pursuing a discourse analytic that applies Foucauldian frameworks where “questions of agency are less clear” (Mills, 2004). The application of post-structural theory reconceptualizes structural assumptions regarding relationships among teachers and policy. Teacher discourses can become interpreted as more than inconsequential or reactive (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2006). Dean (1996) suggests that an intentional application of Foucauldian theory can stage “a critical engagement with our present and to diagnose its practical potential and constraints” (p. 210). Through the process of introducing, troubling, and recasting traditional educational policy analysis, I analyze present invisibilities and silences throughout teacher discourses. As an overt interrogoratory to constructions of Enlightenment thought, this study relies upon post-structuralism, particularly the work of Michel Foucault, to demonstrate a break from the assumptions of modernity to gesture toward what has yet to be imagined.
**Central Terms**

The following list of signifiers within policy’s “regulative ensemble” offer frameworks that run counter to definitions typically found in traditional educational policy analysis (Aglietta, 1979, p. 101). To make the “familiar strange,” I suggest a Foucauldian framework for educational policy analysis through the privileging of divergent “truths” (Adair, 2007).

**Policy.** Policy is the textual embodiment of modern norms. Explained by Pillow (1994), policy “is caught in the dilemmas of modernity by creating theories which discount the politics of policymaking… and ignore those for whom policy is constructed” (p. 6). Though traditionally educational policy attempts “to prescribe particular ways of responding to instructional situations” through legislative action (Hill, 2006, p. 63), Spillane (2008a) warns against such limiting definitions by explaining:

Narrow definitions and conceptualizations of policy are limiting and potentially misleading…. Legislation is only one of the many texts associated with any policy initiative – administrative rules, curricular standards, student assessments, pamphlets that interpret policy for various stakeholders, workshops about implementing the policy, and so on are all relevant policy texts (p. 638).

As Spillane (2008a) and others (Ball, 2003, 2006; Britzman, 1991/2003; MacNaughton, 2005) explain, the work of Michel Foucault can be useful in the process of policy analysis. Within Foucauldian frameworks, educational policy can be viewed as “an expression of political rationality… that establishes and maintains certain hegemonic projects” to sustain certain ways of knowing (Doherty, 2007, p. 193).

In its present state, policy deals with rational mandates of the universal as “a crude instrument for securing social ideals” described as “the drop-forge or the ax of
social change…not the knife or the scalpel” (Greene, 1983, p. 322). Policy is framed as a discourse or textual representation to reveal that social norms are regulated through an “audit” model (Strathern, 2000). Taken from financial accounting in the late 1980’s, the audit model characterizes professionalism as the emergence of a “political technology of the self” (Strathern, 2000, p. 62). In other words, the endorsement of prescribed regulations encourages a monitoring of oneself according to specific professional norms. Foucault (1980b) would suggest that policy regulations represent a modern “regime of truth” to determine what codes and signifiers can become speakable. Within the boundaries of “official talk” that establish a “normalizing gaze” (Pillow, 1994), teachers can appear as “producers/providers, educational entrepreneurs and managers” (Ball, 2003). Policy only allows for unexpected complexity through textual silences, commonly referred as “loopholes.”

**Discourse.** Without conceptual adherence to any political agendas, discourse has historically granted theoretical access toward grappling with the intricacies of power relationships (Mills, 2004). Within post-structuralism, discourse provides a means to explore “the general domain of all statements… sometimes as a regulated practice” while also recognizing silences, disruptions, and episodes of rhetorical performance (Foucault, 1973, p. 80).

Discourses can be viewed as “productive – actively shaping and producing subject positions and the material realities” (Allan, 2008, p. 52). The boundaries of discourses create and reflect patterns within “discursive formations” to reflect similarities to one another (Mills, 2004, p. 145). Discourses analysis maintains that “forms of
subjectivity are produced in negotiation with existing power relations and in the very process of those power relations being instantiated” (Mills, 2004, p. 17). In this study, power relations associated with policy discourses are viewed through Foucault’s concept of “governmentality.” Governmentality is explained as a “prism” that puts governing under “historicized” suspicion as “a deliberate, purposeful, technicised activity, directed at the subject” (Doherty, 2007, p. 196).

**Power.** In looking at theories of discourse, Habermas (1987) and Arendt (1958) suggest that the signifiers within discourse can generate power. Foucault extends this recognition of symbolic power beyond a “one-to-one exchange relationship between signifier and signified” to assert that power resides within the very enactment of signification (Olssen, 2003, p. 194). Central to any discussion of politics and associated discourse analysis is the concept of power. The power described by post-structural theory does not follow the classic model historically offered fifty years ago, which defined hierarchical domination. According to this definition, those with power can influence others to act in ways that they would not ordinarily act (Dahl, 1957; Gaski, 1984; Hayward, 2000).

In this study, power, embodied within policy, is defined as the introduction of norms that become commonplace within the social and economic institutions (Doherty, 2007, p. 199). As a contrast to modern hierarchies, Foucauldian frameworks theorize power as the diffuse blending of power and knowledge throughout discourses (Mills, 2004). Power is “embedded in everyday life in a nonobvious and deep-seated way” (Brocklesby & Cummings, 1998, p. 750). Foucault (1991) explains that “power and
knowledge indirectly imply one another” to give rise to a theory of “power/knowledge” where ongoing conflicts characterize the “forms and possible domains of knowledge” (p. 28). As Scott (1990) points out, a “hidden transcript” can emerge within resulting infrastructures. Discourse dominations create a “subculture” where teacher production of relational power can escape official documentation (p. 27). Within such a subculture, power “not only acts on a subject but, in a transitive sense, enacts the subject into being” (Butler, 1997a, p. 13).

“Teacher” as Subject Position. In recognizing the centrality of discourses surrounding public education as linked to global success, I frame the identity of “teacher” as “contested terrain” upon “which the politics of culture is being framed and often fought” (Hall, 1999, p. 123). Referred to as a “feminized ghetto” (Maxwell, 1999), as of 2006, women represented 91% of elementary teachers nationally. Britzman (1991/2003) explains that the positionality of teacher, as a signifier – a fragment of discourse, contains many dimensions of politicized codes:

A word such as teacher is already overpopulated with other contexts; with other people; with competing forms of knowledge; and with desires, pleasures, and fears. Thus, the word itself constitutes both a set of discourses and a set of practices. Its contradictory meanings cannot be isolated from the speaker, the listener, or the histories and practices that overdetermined contexts of education and pedagogy (p. 37).

In fact, Britzman (1991/2003) contends that the traditional methodological tendency to focus on the “technical” in studies of teachers demonstrates a political view that actually exists apart from what it means to define education. Teacher “performances” are treated
as “measures of productivity or output, or displays of quality, or moments of promotion or inspection” (Ball, 2003, p. 144).

In the recent educational policy implementation literature (Honig, 2006; Malen, 2003; Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002), teachers become an essentialized presence of schools -- often rendered theoretically and pragmatically invisible. In psychology, teachers react to stress with particular behaviors or stages of emotional acceptance (Daly, 2007; Daly & Chrispeels, 2005; Hebson, Earnshaw, & Marchington, 2007; Van Veen, Sleegers, & Van de Ven, 2005; Lasky, 2000, 2005). In critical studies, teachers become martyrs who often act alone to resist policy (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2006). Throughout all of these disciplines, teachers are theorized within “liberal humanist terms” – meaning that it is generally agreed that they are “autonomous individuals with varying degrees of freedom” (Davies, 2006, p. 425). Meanwhile, the professionalization of teachers is cast as mastery of prescribed norms that influence boundaries of individual freedom (Darling-Hammond, 1998, 2006). Troubled by Butler (1995), post-structural theory suggests that “the more a practice is mastered, the more fully subjection is achieved” (p. 45).

**Silence.** The genres and methodological framings of silence are wide-ranging. Self-silencing practices of women in intimate relations are documented in psychology (Jack, 1991; Harper & Welsh, 2007) while ethnographers apply silence theoretically in social constructions of the subject (Clair, 1998; Jaworski, 1993; Reinharz, 1992, 1994; Tannen, 1985). Post-colonial studies refer to silence and passivity as signifying “native” practices of resistance (Scott, 1985, 1990) and feminist scholars suggest that silence is productive and performative (Butler, 1993). Though typically “silence is pathologized as
absence” (Walkerdine, 1990, p. 35), silence can be fraught with meaning and signification. Termed as “silence within voice,” patterns of silence as resistance may be indicative of powerful tools of discourse (Bachrach & Baratz, 1962). Butler (1995) explains that silence is conceptualized as yet another “performative effect of a certain kind of speech” (p. 137). Mazzei (2007) refers to silence as an “active presence” while Fine (1991) suggests that “silencing shapes language, representations, and even the forms of resistance permitted or not” (p. 9). Silences are intricately linked to the concept of “performativity” (Ball, 2003; Lyotard, 1984). Teacher “performativity” is defined by policy’s measurement of “their worth” according to an externally controlled “field of judgment” (Ball, 2003, p. 144). These varying definitions acknowledge that “there is not one but many silences, and they are an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses” (Foucault, 1980a, p. 27).

**Resistance.** In light of globalization and economic stratification, the concept of resistance has regained academic traction (Hoy, 2005; Vongalis-Macrow, 2007). After emerging in France during politically tumultuous 1960’s and 1970’s, it has made a notable scholarly resurgence (Hoy, 2005). Recently in the United States, studies explore teacher resistance to explain unexpected policy outcomes (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2005; Bushnell, 2003; Zembylas, 2003, 2005a, 2005b). The analysis of resistance may provide insight regarding what has been lost as educational governance has shifted toward an increase of federal intervention. In the words of Gitlin and Margonis (1995), these studies recognize teachers’ “good sense” and uncover the need to engage teachers in policymaking.
Traditionally defined as the theoretical opposite of reproduction, the location and definition of resistance should not be oversimplified. Primarily, descriptions of resistance have tended toward righteous narratives of “historically significant” behavior associated with social class (Johanneson, 1992, p. 302). The daily practices that may only subtly erode existing power structures often elude labels of resistance. Small acts of defiance, sometimes referred to as “routine resistance,” can be dismissed as passivity, stupidity, or submissiveness (Prasad & Prasad, 1998). Though frequently overlooked, these subtle acts may actually represent the “stubborn bedrock upon which other forms of resistance may grow” (Scott, 1985, p. 273). Within critical frameworks, Hoy (2005) defines these practices as “ethical.” Hoy theoretically extends and credits these elusive practices as creating the foundation for resistance, subversion, and divergence from hegemony.

**Timeliness of the Study and Research Questions**

Recent federal decision-making models determine expectations for the American education system by using a “context of justification” that tests policy efficiency and effectiveness through the measurement of outcomes (Kuhn, 1996). This context of justification supports “assumptions about what is of importance to study, what constitutes legitimate knowledge, and what counts as evidence” (Glesne, 2006, p. 6). Meanwhile, the “context of discovery” that frames initial questions and policy proposals can often be overlooked (Harding, 1991, p. 7). With a persistent focus upon justification, policies can assume an ahistorical, omniscient stance designed to deliver objective organization to the complexity of teachers’ daily life. Viewing policy as possessing “a neutral status
embodied in a free-floating progressive rationalism” is fraught with “dangerous and debilitating conceits” (Ball, 1995, p. 263).

While traditional analyses tend to reify beliefs that teachers utilize agency to make rational choices between binaries of compliance and resistance, I use an alternative theoretical frameworks to raise new questions. As a post-structural shift, theories of Foucauldian power can be applied to frame processes of policy implementation and the lived effects of reform differently. The tendency toward viewing teachers as “unitary” subjects echo conceptions of the “Cartesian subject” that is “unique” and “self-contained” will be avoided (Mills, 2004, p. 30-31). As a contrast, Foucauldian translations of policy analysis can uncover teachers’ varying access to discourses that allow them “to act alone and with others, upon the boundaries that define [their] field of action” (Hayward, 2000, p. 8). In a shift from a reliance upon modernist analyses of agency (Bandura, 1989), Foucauldian theories of power suggest an understanding of the “self as an effect of discursive formations, an effect [that] is not foundational in itself” (Mills, 2004, p. 92).

Educational policy can be viewed as discourses that “shore up those in power, entrench current standards, or extend the ideals of the system” (Hopkins, 1998, p. 5). Policy can shape complex work into discrete, measurable practices – and transform teachers into isolated subject positions that become framed by falsely bounded niches of “success or failure” (Britzman, 1991). These measurements and transformations can be analyzed by exploring ways that power operates through the recognition, circulation, and substantiation of certain discourses.
Post-structural theory identifies ways that teacher subject positions shift in relation to new policy discourses. The methodological approach creates new analytical categories that glimpse the views of the dominated -- those at “the bottom of hierarchies of power” and creates space for a recognition of silences (Sprague & Zimmerman, 2004, p. 56). This closer look at the “subjugated knowledges” and silences of teachers disrupt the central positioning of policy. By tracing the divergence of teacher discourses from those of policy, I identify silences as indicative of teachers’ unregulated power. The following research questions are designed to explore discourses associated with educational policy and teachers while developing a model for post-structural educational policy analysis:

(1) In what ways does silence operate for elementary teachers?  
(2) How does recognition of teacher discourses disrupt discourses of policy?  
(3) How are power and knowledge recast in light of the divergent discourses of policy and teachers?

In the following section, I outline the theoretical framework and methodology for this study. Acknowledging that “discourses are not simply texts, they are a form of power” (Doherty, 2007, p. 195), I use a Foucauldian framework to test the boundaries of modern educational policy analysis.

*A Theoretical Framework: Foucauldian Conceptions of Power & Grounded Work*

The discrete elements of a Foucauldian theoretical framework and grounded processes are brought together to demonstrate ways that traditional approaches to educational policy analysis are limited. Initiated as a critical feminist exploration of ways that teachers use silence to resist, a new hybrid model emerged through a series of steps comprised of theoretical development, grounded processes, and an immersion in the work.

By looking closely at rationality with reference to what Foucault (2000) calls “the art of governmentality,” I identify a rigid “regime of government” as perpetuated through public institutions - including schools (Dean, 2004). The differentiation of discourses used by policy – and, also, by teachers - is apparent when policy is framed as one of many tools of governmentality. I theorize teacher uses of silence as more than mere rhetorical absence by relying upon Foucault’s “structural methodology” to frame silences as unregulated presences throughout discourse. Through these unregulated presences and other practices, teachers produce power. In an attempt to “avoid both methodological individualism and a linear sense of causal determinism” (Olssen, 2003, p. 192), I identify evidence of power within policy processes and among teacher relationships. As Foucault explains, “When I speak of relations of power, I mean that in human relationships… power is always present” (1984, p. 292). I look closely at ways that discourses become unavailable during reform through the use of teacher subject positions to make a theoretical shift from a historic overemphasis upon teacher agency (Bandura, 1989).

My primary research interest resides in rethinking modern approaches to educational policy through theorizing teachers’ relational power. Though increasingly, some studies suggest that educational policies may be analyzed more deeply through a lens of post-structuralism -- primarily though ethnographic approaches (Ortner, 1994),
policy archaeology (Scheurich, 1994), and genealogy (Pillow, 1994, 2000, 2003), gaps remain particularly when it comes to processes of implementation and teacher perceptions of the lived effects of reform. Consistent and elusive gaps primarily persist in a progressive silencing of teachers. As a contrast, I theorize a model that allows for power to reside with policy and teachers in an effort to analyze the normalization and regulation of teachers. By generating a theory of elementary teacher discourses characterized by silence, I intend to demonstrate the ways that teachers operate during reform. The powerful tensions between policy and teacher discourses highlight the inability of reform to take hold and become sustainable during, what Levin (1998) calls, the “policy epidemic.”

**Introduction to Inquiry Design: Grounded Work and *A Priori* Theory**

In applying grounded perspectives (Glaser, 1992; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) as well as Foucauldian frameworks of power to this study, I create a blended methodological approach. I contribute to the growing literature concerning educational policy as a means to surface possibilities of relational power produced by teachers. The design for this qualitative methodology combines grounded perspectives by generating “theory that is developed inductively from a corpus of data” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 65) with *a priori* theory that is applied deductively (Glesne, 2006). Through the use of teacher retellings as data, I undertake an analysis of ways that policy discourses become introduced, regulated, and normalized. By locating and explaining teacher silences, I analyze and discuss the theoretical characteristics of policy while relying heavily upon grounded theorizing.
The following Foucauldian analysis will include elementary teacher observations from across contexts, experience levels, and theoretical subject positions with reference to the methodological recommendations by Gore (1995). Gore contends that qualitative inquiry should be leveraged toward generative theoretical development. I experiment with qualitative and post-structural approaches to create a hybrid model of policy analysis as described in the following chapters.

**A Qualitative Methodology to Interrogate Discourses**

The qualitative methodology, comprised primarily of sixteen interviews and ongoing conversations with co-researchers over a year and a half, creates a theoretical model that “works the limits of voice” to interrupt assumptions of modernist agency throughout educational policy analysis (Jackson, 2003). While the voices of teachers will not be privileged as “truth,” they are analyzed to explore teacher perceptions of the lived effects of reform. The intersecting discourses, signifiers, and texts of teachers will be traced to map the policy shifts as iterations of privileges and subjugations that create new knowledge and in turn power. Though I position this study to provide a translation of power and an acknowledgement of complexity, I recognize the danger of positioning any findings or privileging of teacher voice as “savior” (Lather, 2007, p. 8). Instead, I intend that the Foucauldian framings and associated findings might challenge the shift toward privileging models that are denuded of contextual complications.

Throughout my interactions with fifteen elementary teachers and one principal, I drew upon post-structural theory to illuminate silences at the intersection of policy and teachers. Previous Foucauldian studies have been undertaken in an attempt to highlight
implicit power dynamics within normative procedures of pedagogy (Gore, 1995, 1997; Ares, 2008). To sort teacher interviews, I applied a template derived from Gore’s (1995, 1997) work that “tames”
1 Foucault with a typology of the “major techniques of power.” The resulting theoretical framework revisits the “decontextualization and categorization” elements of Gore’s work to generate theory. For this study, the charting of discourses and mapping of relational subject positions reveal the power of policy -- and also the power of teachers. In short, I attempt a post-structural break from traditional framings of the teaching profession and suggest that elementary teachers may in fact be quite powerful.

By blending processes of data collection with the initiation of subsequent interviews, I trace an iterative theorizing process and the creation of a hybrid theoretical model. Though capturing organized snapshots of grounded work, I systematically alter coding processes, experiment with a possible grounded survey instrument, and complete an interview process that contributes to “construct validity” claims (Miles & Huberman, 1984; Lather, 1986; Spillane, 1998). I use theoretical sampling (Garrett & Li, 1985; Patton, 2002) as a means to construct a study that incorporates Michel Foucault’s theoretical frameworks of power (1980b) blended with elements of Glaser & Strauss’ grounded theorizing (2006). Extending from sampling, through to coding, and eventually an engaging the analysis of data, I decenter policy’s privileged knowledges by creating an alternative hybrid model (Glesne, 2006). By working within and against such a model, I undertake a series of methodological steps to revisit, trouble, and question the usefulness of a Foucauldian framework toward encouraging alternative theoretical approaches to

1 Jennifer Gore thanks Philip Wexler for the use of this terminology.
policy analysis. As St. Pierre (1995) notes, both “feminist and post-structural researchers find… qualitative methodologies useful as method becomes tool rather than guarantor” (p. 122).

**The Iterative Unfolding of Interview Data and Theory Development**

I worked closely with two co-researchers and engaged in concentrated experiences to complete field work and theorizing that would lead to “rich data” (Hesse-Biber, 2007) to create “thick description” (Geertz, 1973). Interviews were structured to explore the intersectionality of multiple discursive and nondiscursive influences of teacher environments, perceptions of accessible discourses, and definitions of silence. My previous experiences as a teacher surfaced throughout the process to create a “participatory model” (Oakley, 1981; Reinharz, 1983; Hesse-Biber, 2007) characterized by an in-the-way/out-of-the-way exchange of experiences (Lather, 2007).

In the transcription and coding process following iterations of conversations and interviews, I coded transcripts for emerging themes and patterns while moving toward a discourse analytic (Mills, 2004; Parker, 2005). The ongoing attempt to “read the silences” allowed me to systematically identify which questions became resisted as dangerous, what struck an emotional chord, and how teachers signaled reluctance (Jones & Jenkins, 2008). These fragments of response data and tracking of silences served as starting places for the “member check” component of ongoing conversations (Reinharz, 1992). All the while, I continued to reflect upon Foucault’s question: “[A]t what price can the subject tell the truth about himself [/herself]” (1983, p. 442)?
By mapping these iterative steps of working with co-researchers, conducting interviews, becoming immersed in post-structural theory, drafting versions of a model, and then expanding my interviewing sample, I was able to frame the subject positions of teachers and policy in theoretically rich ways. The selection criteria generated by the use and reorganization of Gore’s “taming” typology guided the remaining data collection choices while providing inroads to develop a hybrid model. The post-structural template of Gore’s (1995, 1997) creates the “major techniques of power” was reorganized and applied to latter rounds of sampling and theorizing. Moving away from a naturalized analysis of “the rational knowing self” central to “scientific thought” (Peters & Burbules, 2004) and the common sense of bureaucratic infrastructure (Weber, 1947), this study provides an alternative approach to policy analysis. As Mills (2004) observes, Foucault’s work is useful toward uncovering ways that power and knowledge become intertwined while highlighting that “all of the knowledge we have is the result or the effect of power struggles” (p. 19).

**Discourse Analysis: Excavating Silences**

During the description and interpretation of patterns throughout the study (Erickson, 1986), I applied Foucauldian discourse analysis (Foucault, 1980b; McNaughton, 2005). As an aspect of reviewing data, discourse analysis can uncover patterns of power production throughout teacher discourses – particularly as silence emerges to confront policy. By conducting a close analysis of discourses and contextual complexity, I attempt to acknowledge, as Lather (1991) suggests, that it “is not a matter of looking harder or more closely, but of seeing what frames our seeing” (p. 675). As a
means to uncover traces of such diffuse power, Schwandt (2001) explains that Foucauldian discourse analysis can reveal “systems of thought that construct subjects and their worlds” by looking closely at implied structures, social processes, and empirically derived practices (p. 58).

This analysis looks closely at the lived effects of reform and the complexity of implementation through developing and troubling an “‘inside understanding’ – the actor’s definition of the situation” (Schwandt, 2000, p. 102). Though it would be impossible to fully describe the individual teacher perceptions, the use of a discourse analytic allows for the intentional disruption of traditional approaches to policy analysis. My intention is to build upon teacher explanations of power production particularly during times of change – when divergent discourses may become most apparent (Ares, 2008; Britzman, 1991/2003; Gore, 1995; McNaughton, 2005). Edelman (1970) observes that “accuracy is not the important characteristic of political language”; instead policy power is wielded by language that creates familiar systems while rendering questions invisible (p. 115).

Conclusion

The primary aim of this study is to theorize the relational power of teachers as related to the rational power of policy. Using a qualitative methodological approach, intersecting with a Foucauldian theoretical framework, this study demonstrates that analysis should not divide “social structures from discourse” (Campbell, 2000, p. 54). By studying modern educational policy analysis and the lived effects of reform, I attempt to uncover empirical incidences of confrontation, disruption, and legitimatization of colliding discourses. These “stuck places” (Lather, 2007) of ambiguity may create further
opportunities for archaeological (Schuerich, 1995) and genealogical lenses (Ferguson, 1991, Pillow, 1994, 2000, 2003) to illuminate the issues of implementation. Lather (2004) suggests that an engagement with “obstacles” of policy can provide a means of “producing different knowledge and producing knowledge differently” (p. 28). Through the process of de-centering modern assumptions of educational policy, teacher subject positions may be redefined and additional entrance points for analysis and innovation may be located.

A strict adherence to a “scientific management ethos” (Tyack & Strober, 1980) should be questioned in light of the fact that “science,” as a pursuit of inquiry, is designed to question and confront the common wisdom. In surfacing patterns of teacher silences as indicative of teacher production of relational power while also reframing educational policy, I hope that the intentional shifts to exclude teachers from policymaking processes may be reconsidered. Through efforts to dismantle the “conventional and limited definitions of policy analysis,” an increasingly “rich and democratizing agenda” may emerge (Marshall, 1999, p. 69). Teachers should not remain narrowly defined within modern roles where their power persists as unrecognized. As Giroux (1988) points out, there is a “transformative role that schools can play in advancing the democratic possibilities inherent in existing society” (p. 185). This study reflects only a starting point for theorizing educational policy analysis with gestures toward a post-structural perspective.
Summary of Dissertation

This study is organized into seven chapters. Each chapter contributes to the development of a post-structural educational policy analysis. By introducing a grounded theoretical approach blended with *a priori* theory, the hybrid model looks at policy production of rational power and teacher production of relational power. The first chapter introduces the purpose, timeliness, and importance of the study while also outlining paradigmatic and methodological approaches. Chapter Two provides a review of the empirical and theoretical literature. A thorough description of the blended methodological approach will be included in Chapter Three. In Chapter Four and Five, I introduce the hybrid model as supported by data analysis. In Chapter Four, policy discourses will be introduced and followed by the introduction of teacher discourses in Chapter Five. In Chapter Six, the interactions between policy and teacher discourses surface claims of a critical subject position for teachers among the manifestations of leadership and resistance. In Chapter Seven, the implications for post-structural theory, as a framework for translations of the modern project of educational policy analysis, will be highlighted.
Chapter 2

From Agency to Discourse: Shifting the Margins of Policy Analysis

The problem is at once to distinguish among events, to differentiate the networks and levels to which they belong, and to reconstitute the lines along which they are connected and engender one another.
- Michel Foucault (1980b)

This chapter is comprised of three sections to provide an overview of contrasting frameworks used to describe relationships between teachers and policy. In the first section, I will review existing literature to explain modernist analyses of teacher agency while providing a genealogical perspective for current educational policy models (Bandura, 1989; Maher, 2001). An overview of organizational systems perspectives, psychological analyses, and critical studies will illustrate existing modern discourse frameworks. To fracture these frameworks, I review the historical feminization of the elementary teaching profession while proposing that teachers may use silence as a tool of resistance. Intricately connected to studies of silence is the work of Michel Foucault (1980b) and associated post-structural theories that surface “subjugated knowledges” (p. 81). In a purposeful shift beyond a critical resistance perspective toward a Foucauldian discourse analysis, the third section introduces associated studies of teachers and policy.

By shifting educational policy analysis toward a post-structural lens that uncovers “structures of domination” (Peters & Burbules, 2004, p. 5), I reassess the definitions of
relationships between teachers and policy. The research analytic and methodological choices, introduced in the next chapter, will include a theoretical framework that reflects tools of power. Educational policy, as a regime of politicized discourses, will be portrayed as “the incessant replication of norms that materialize that which they govern” (Hey, 2007, p. 440). The qualitative methodology of this study is designed as an active search for complexity. This search is intended to “diagnose power/knowledge relations and their manifestations in our classifications, examinations, practices, and institutions” (Peters & Burbules, 2004, p. 5). Taken together, the review of literature in this chapter and proposed methodology in the next chapter translate historicized and prevailing discourses to locate the power that exists throughout, what Friere (1985) refers to as, a “culture of silence.”

**Teacher Agency: Historical and Political Assumptions**

Traditionally educational research and policy have been framed by linearity, rationality, and humanism (Peters & Burbules, 2004). Theories of teacher “agency,” as named by Bandura (1989), are translated into assumptions of teachers as rational actors. With an adherence to models of rationality, educational policy often delineates prescriptive steps to determine “particular ways of responding to instructional situations” (Hill, 2006, p. 63). This is notable as over the past years, the federal government has increasingly intervened in the daily work of teachers. To create an institutional science, *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* specifically, supports teachers toward “prescribing an instructional cure” (Spellings, 2006).
Certain discourses become privileged while others are maligned in accordance with policymaker determinations of neutral and ideal institutional outcomes. This leads to policy models that can become viewed as “a series of Pavlovian cues rather than an instrument for reasoning and analysis” (Edelman, 1970, p. 116). Any evidence of individual or group deviations can easily be labeled and dismissed as categorically wrong. Pillow (1994) explains that:

Educational policy is caught in the dilemmas of modernity by creating theories which discount the politics of policymaking and producing polemical definitions which simultaneously construct and ignore those for whom policy is constructed (1994, p. 6).

As Lather observes (2002) in Foucauldian terms, “the shaping of subjectivity via the disciplining of bodies requires the tools of social policy.” These tools are used to “police’ populations to do the ‘right’ thing” (p. 7).

With reference to political language, signifiers, codes, and texts, policy encourages certain definitions of individuals, groups and relationships among teachers. Edelman (1970) observes “accuracy is not the important characteristic of political language,” but instead serves as illustrative of “appraisals common to members of a group” (p. 115). Modernity frameworks that enforce the privileging of certain norms and regulations can be shifted slightly with post-structuralism to understand how silences among elementary teachers may be enforced. By using high stakes testing, No Child Left Behind (NCLB), as the “thin end of a potential enormous wedge,” weakens federalism traditions (Will, 2009). Local governments are blocked from directly influencing curriculum and teachers (Goodman, 2006, p. 88).
Currently, assumptions of present educational policy maintain that (Sunderman, Tracey, Kim, and Orfield, 2004, p. 10):

(1) the creation of enhanced ‘external accountability’ models with ‘sanctions’ will force schools toward measurable improvement and encourage teachers to alter instructional practices to raise student achievement; and

(2) the imposition of market-based competition will lead to better schools.

The primary concern, in solely adhering to policies like No Child Left Behind (NCLB), is that the system of education becomes equated to privatized practices that adhere to “an authoritative order of compliance or noncompliance” (Britzman, 2003, p. 1). As a contrast from previous educational policies that emphasize a refinement of organizational “bureaucracy” or encourage individual “professionalism,” the recent policies are markedly different. NCLB and related interventions represent attempts “to align public sector organizations with the methods, culture and ethical systems of the private sector” (Ball, 2003, p. 216).

Silencing in the educational policy arena paired with the assurance of market-based accountability has set the stage for the deterioration of credible teacher discourses. The federal government allegations of “soft bigotry of low expectations” (Paige, 2003) and accusations of teacher complicity in a system that “suckles kids through” (Bush, 2000) makes the shift toward models of competition and regulation seem commonsensical. An underlying assumption of current American educational policy is that teachers can become politically transformed into entities that need to be fixed by a strict external, business-like authority (Olssen, 2003; Scheurich, 1994). As policy wields power through “boundary objects, brokers, or boundary practices” (Coburn & Stein, 2006, p.
simplistic assumptions attempt to overcome the complexity of soft variables that influence teachers. By strengthening “the accountability aspects of the system… and attaching incentives and sanctions” (McLaughlin, 2006, p. 211), teacher decision-making and the messiness of localized relationships become invisible.

Accounting for teacher perceptions of policy is no small feat as Lipsky (1997) acknowledges in his theory of “street level bureaucrats.” Traditional policy models indicate that teachers are generally change averse (Huberman & Miles, 1984; Gitlin & Margonis, 1995). Newer analyses explain that teachers involved in collaborative school environments are more accepting of change if they have a voice in how policy is implemented locally (Honig, 2006; Smylie & Hart, 1999). Both of these types of policy analysis models tend to narrow teacher contributions as primarily connected to questions of pedagogy while “the authoritative part of their agency is underutilized” (Vongalis-Macrow, 2007, p. 433). By presenting and describing the subject positions of elementary teachers throughout this study, I demonstrate ways that discourses reflect texts that can be read, traced, and mapped (Smith, 1990). I shift the focus of this study from modernist analyses of teacher agency to post-structural discourse analysis to look closely at teacher perceptions of the lived effects of reform.

The Genealogical View: A Historicity of Agency Norms

The emergence of such policy models is not a sudden aberration by any means. Butler (1993) suggests that it is important to consider the “historicity of norms” when examining the progression of a feminized profession, such as teaching (p. 187). Tracing a “genealogy of the subject” (Foucault, 1980b) allows for a denaturalizing process that is
focused upon ideological “disruption” (Pillow, 1994). By uncovering policy assumptions, I attempt to change the political shape of the thinkable in relation to teachers (Gordon, 1991). Genealogy is conceptualized as:

A form of history which can account for the constitution of knowledges, discourses, domains of objects, and so on, without having to make reference to a subject which is either transcendental in relation to the field of events or runs in its empty sameness throughout the course of history (Foucault, 1980b, p. 59).

By providing this genealogical tracing of teachers’ historicized subject positions, I review and analyze modernist analyses of teacher agency in relation to the emergence of an educational “policy epidemic” (Levin, 1998).

In taking up a genealogical tracing (Foucault, 1990, 1979; Pillow, 2000, 2003) of the structural “truths” of teaching, I show that underlying frameworks “are not something invented” entirely by policymakers or by teachers. Instead they are representative of politicized models “imposed” by a range of cultures, societies, and social groups that work to selectively silence and exclude (Butler, 1997a, p. 291). Foucault’s conceptualization of Nietzsche’s genealogy, in particular, emphasizes a tracing of ways “objects that can be examined as either true or false according to the codes of discourse” (St. Pierre, 2000, p. 497). Historical tracings of “disciplines” such as hospitals and schools teach the “submission to a particular order that defines for the subject what can be done, where, and when” (Peters & Burbules, 2004, p. 64).

The following three sections will review educational research findings to reveal that teacher agency, central to traditional educational policy analysis, is genealogically framed one of three ways. Throughout a selective meta-review of educational research, I found that teacher subject positions are positioned as: (1) technical components in
organizational systems perspectives; (2) victimized in psychological analyses; and (3) resistant in critical studies.

**Components of the System: An Organizational Systems Perspective**

When supported by an organizational systems perspective (Baldridge, 1972; Weber, 1947), policy tends to rely upon conceiving teachers as technical components in a mechanistic structure of schooling. The agency of teachers, framed as rational actors, underlies accountability mechanisms, rewards/sanctions, and other leveraging systems. The core political assumption is that a teacher becomes representative of “the self [who] both knows itself and the world through reason” while rationality is emphasized as “the highest form of human functioning” (Burbules & Peters, 2004, p. 4). The American education system represents an institutionalized bureaucracy. In such a bureaucracy, hierarchical mechanisms guide rational actors while optimal bureaucratic processes become created to improve institutional outcomes.

Primarily couched in Weber’s frameworks of bureaucracy (1947), an organizational systems perspective implies that schools as hierarchies allow for reporting and accounting adjustments (Hoy & Miskel, 2005; Hoy & Sweetland, 2001). Compliance requests and associated sanctions, if procedurally appropriate and systematic, will limit inconsistent teacher behaviors and fix the profession. This impersonal perspective tends to regard teachers as “regulatory problems” subject to removal and replacement (Sunderman, Orfield, & Kim, 2006). This perspective applies a series of prescriptive “rules that specify what types of actors are allowed to exist, what structural features they exhibit, what procedures they can follow, and what meanings are associated” (Ruef &
Related findings explain that teachers, as a central component of the American education system, are not trained properly to carry out processes required of the institutional bureaucracy. As Coburn and Stein (2006) assert, many scholars “have increasingly come to see the problem of educational policy implementation as one of teacher learning” (p. 25). If teachers could be fixed through the improvement of certification programs or better on-the-job training, educational policies could be understood and applied more readily and systems would operate more efficiently (Berman, 1986; Firestone, Fitz, & Broadfoot, 1999). Countless technical critiques of education schools and teacher certification requirements support the premise that teachers must be professionalized in different ways (Fullan, Galluzzo, Morris, & Watson, 1998; Goodlad, 1999; Zeichner, Melnick, & Gomez, 1996). Numerous proposals have emerged to improve professional development models for teachers once they have been hired and assigned a classroom (Borko & Putnam, 1993; Richardson, 1999).

Spillane (2004) explains that teacher knowledge in terms of subject matter, pedagogy, and student learning limits institutional abilities to comply with policy demands. This lack of knowledge affects ways that “reformer’s aspirations for all Americans get played out” (p. 238). The results of a focus upon an organizational systems perspective has yielded a federal model where the normative structures of schools increasingly conceptualize teachers as an aggregation of “objects” rather than individualized “subjects” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2006). Teachers tend to reflect a generalized mass rather than a profession comprised of complex individuals (Vongalis-
The associated logic dictates that consistent application of “technocratic mindedness” leads to efficiency (Bullough, Gitlin, & Goldstein, 1984). Teachers count only in practices that directly relate to institutional measures; therefore, schools promote the encouragement of student achievement by creating procedures and benchmarks (Hess, 2006; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2006). Under the organizational systems perspective, policy should tell teachers what to do while emphasizing the potential for institutional failure.

Today, Weberian bureaucratic theories are readily apparent in American educational policy as federal and state governments hold schools and school districts accountable through the reporting of measurable outcomes. By reflecting the theories of Weber, Foucault theorizes that policy reflects “a form of disciplinary power” (Olssen, 2003, p. 196). Intimately tied to the rise of neoliberalism “as a form of governmentality [that] works by convincing… workers that there is no choice at a systemic level” (Davies, Gottsche, & Bansel, 2006, p. 308), models of educational policy represent the “increasing power of the evaluative state” (Apple, 2001, p. 416). Teachers are told to follow scientifically determined models of “what works” (Honig, 2006; http://whatworks.ed.gov). Policymakers introduce these models as “natural and neutral” rules for teachers (Apple, 2001, p. 413). Some researchers (Elmore, 2004; Hill, 2006; Spillane, 2004) recognize that few social problems can be solely defined as “technical” as most “embody normative conflict about means and ends” (McLaughlin, 2006, p. 210).
Victims: Psychological Analysis

Recent psychological analyses (Daly, 2007; Daly & Chrispeels, 2005; Hebson, Earnshaw, & Marchington, 2007; Lasky, 2000; Lasky, 2005; van Veen, Sleegers, & van de Ven, 2005) that focus upon teacher “threat-rigidity” reactions and/or “emotionality” highlight teacher emotional nature. As a somewhat polarized contrast from viewing teachers as mechanistic and rational, perceptions of teachers as victims are evident within psychological analyses (Miller, 1996; Weiler, 2001; Walkerdine, 1990). With the undertones of gendered bias, elementary teachers are often described as unable to break from the intensely emotional tendencies of caring and nurturing (Reio, 2005). Such an approach indicates that teacher agency is characterized by reactive and often futile behaviors. These studies generally reinforce policymaker power as consistently being held over teachers who have little substantive recourse. Waller’s (1961) question: “What does teaching do to the teacher?” – reflects the emotional damage from the impersonal nature of a bureaucratic system.

Some studies that attempt to uncover psychological effects of NLCB explore teacher threat-rigidity responses in relation to an increasing federal use of “threat and sanctions” (Daly, 2007; Daly & Chrispeels, 2005). The concept of “threat-rigidity” is defined as regimentation of teacher behaviors in response to stress from increasing job requirements (e.g. reactive responses, myopic decision-making, limited consideration of peripheral information). The system’s overall “threat-rigidity” effect is defined by measurement of teacher survival practices (Staw, Sandelands, & Dunton, 1981). Researchers demonstrate this effect by contrasting documentation of typical teacher
behaviors with reports of behavioral rigidity during “crisis-induced stress.” Daly (2007) explores teacher stress-related behaviors by applying a mixed methods approach that combines focus groups, interviews, and large-scale surveys. With recognition of variables of “trust” and “leadership,” teacher stress reactions change “information-processing patterns at the individual, small-group, and organizational levels” (D’Aveni & MacMillan, 1990) to become observable as “threat rigidity.”


Overall the message of these psychological studies is that teacher emotional tendencies can impede their abilities to be powerful. When theorized as nurturers, teachers can become defined in terms of “others” and become construed as victims. A
feminist critique by Walkerdine (1990) points out that “the rational self” is portrayed as a “profoundly masculine one from which the woman is excluded.” The “thinking subject” persists as the omniscient male policymaker while, at the same time, women remain at the intellectual periphery as emotional caretakers (p. 59-63). While teachers are overwhelmed by emotion and cannot act rationally, policymakers become portrayed as the necessary evil. The logic follows that a rational template must be applied to guide behaviors of teachers who may make irrational, emotional decisions.

The scientific and arguably masculine approach to policy applies a “view from above or nowhere” to intervene (Haraway, 1998, p. 585). While these studies can provide an understanding of ways that the “emotional attachments” to colleagues can influence teacher daily behaviors, any insistence that emotions should trump or negate policy can quickly become dismissed as irrelevant (Feuer, Towne, & Shavelson, 2002; Reeves, 2006, p. 33). Meanwhile, the privileging of emotions as authentic representations of nurturing and dedication can create problems for professionalization as teaching remains mired in images of motherhood. Such views of teaching invite assumptions of political powerlessness while these particular studies leave many unanswered questions relating to effects of educational policy among American elementary teachers.

**Teachers as Resistant: Critical Studies**

While teachers are often dismissed as emotionally stubborn in the face of reform, some critical researchers use teacher resistance as a vehicle to question the increasing institutionalized reliance upon federal policy. These researchers view such resistance as a rich conceptual resource to develop an understanding of unexpected policy outcomes.
(Achinstein & Ogawa, 2006; Gitlin & Margonis, 1995; Sunderman, et al., 2004). As a focus of social analysis, resistance has gained academic momentum in light of the international trends of globalization and emergent patterns of economic and social stratification across populations (Hoy, 2005; Vongalis-Macrow, 2007). Recently in the United States, critical studies of resistance in schools explored teacher resistance to policy (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2005; Bushnell, 2003). Interestingly, teacher noncompliance is not always defined as negative. In the words of Gitlin and Margonis (1995), researchers make the case that teacher refusals may signify principled decisions motivated by their “good sense.”

The latest and most comprehensive study, completed by Achinstein and Ogawa (2006), reflects a thorough review of the limited literature concerning teacher resistance to policy while documenting the protest of two elementary teachers. Through the analysis of extensive interviews conducted as an offshoot of a larger study, these two teachers are reported as individually confronting and vocally resisting aspects of a new literacy program. They refuse to comply with the policy that, in their opinion, would only provide a short-term rise in student standardized test scores. Additionally, these teachers contend that using this literacy program would undermine richer student learning opportunities obtained through the existing inquiry-oriented instructional methods. While teacher resistance may be assumed as representative of a “psychological deficit or reluctance to change” (Achinstein and Ogawa, 2006, p. 20), the findings of this study challenge policymakers to think otherwise. These researchers contend that teacher resistance is a
perpetually ignored concept and one that can be mined for useful instructional insight and ethical perspective.

The next study of teacher resistance to policy blurs the line between critical and post-critical work by using Foucauldian metaphors derived from *Discipline and Punish* (1975). Using a qualitative methodology, Bushnell (2003) explores the daily life of eight elementary teachers in New York City. Bushnell’s ethnographic work documents an effort to standardize daily instruction with “teacher-proof” materials and high-stakes tests while teachers are constrained by bell and loudspeaker systems (Bushnell, 2003). By taking a closer look at one school environment as a highly-regulated social structure, Bushnell describes teacher resistances as “covertly passionate.” Bushnell observes teacher “water cooler discourse” and notes teachers’ diminishing “autonomy, decision-making, and authority” (Bushnell, 2003, p. 266). Meanwhile, resistant practices are labeled as a “charade of professionalism” (Bushnell, 2003, p. 266). Teachers are described as maintaining an outward appearance of a cooperative environment while they “exercise little voice about how they are held accountable” (Bushnell, 2003, p. 267). The findings call for a redefinition of professionalism to include increased teacher control over daily decision-making.

Professionalism and teacher resistance to policy are rarely paired together in explanations of educational policy analysis. Policymakers have historically characterized the teaching profession as preferring “stability” rooted in a fear of “novelty” or change (Huberman, 1973); therefore, it is commonly understood that teachers simply resist change for the sake of change (Gitlin & Margonis, 1995; Huberman & Miles, 1984). In
contrast, critical researchers maintain that this may not always be the case. Over the years, there have been conceptual and theoretical analyses of critical resistance generally (Hoy, 2005); yet, with the exception of these previous studies (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2005, Bushnell, 2003), most lack recent empirical connections to teachers. The gaps in the current policy analysis literature invite further theorizing of teacher resistance to policy as “good sense” while potentially allowing for alternative models of policy analysis to take hold (Gitlin & Margonis, 1995).

**Historicized Feminization and Genres of Silence**

In this study, I shift from these modernist analyses of teacher agency to a Foucauldian analysis of discourses. By using alternative theoretical access points, I translate the power that circulates as policy is introduced. I look at teachers relationally to underscore the “incommensurable networks of social practices” that also generate power (Frazer, 1989, p. 20). With the use of post-structuralism, I interrupt modernist policy analysis by refusing the assumption that neutral, external policies must fix teachers and in turn theoretically frame teachers and policy differently.

Elementary teachers emerge as powerful subject positions that generate discourses and power tools that run counter, divergent, or parallel to those of policy. Maintaining teacher power as limited to the classroom ignores the fact that historically feminized codes, signifiers, and discourses frame and influence their work. The following section will review historically feminized frameworks of the elementary teaching profession followed by an exploration of the genres of silence through a range of research traditions. This study demonstrates that silences can be “inhabited and therefore
legitimated” with meaning (Mazzei, 2003, p. 361). Then, I will explore some of the ways that post-structuralism has been used to analyze educational policy. In conclusion, the theoretical basis for framing elementary teachers as relationally powerful will be briefly introduced.

**Elementary Teaching: Still a Feminized Profession**

Assumptions related to elementary teacher power are influenced by the professions’ historic feminization. In fact, teaching is often described as *emotional labor*, which necessitates drawing upon the “coordination of mind and feeling” in a process that presumably comes naturally to women (Hochshild, 2003, p. 7). Akin to other feminized work (e.g. nursing), such reliance upon mind *and* feeling is said to be required to meet the needs of others (Maher, 2001). It is without question that remnants of teaching as a feminine duty remain. These historicized discourses can cause educational theorists to be reluctant in recognizing and supporting teacher “authority, knowledge, and expertise” (Miller, 1996, p. 27).

The *National Education Association (NEA)* reports that the number of women in elementary teaching is rising to a 40-year high (http://www.nea.org/newsreleases/2006/nr060502.html). As of 2006, women represent 91% of elementary teachers nationally and, though the diversity of the United States is rising, this is not reflected in most elementary teaching staffs which tend to be 90% white (Campos, 2006). In a time when many professions are increasingly varied along gender, race, and class lines, by and large the elementary teaching profession maintains its homogeneity (U. S. Census, 2001). Historical white social norms based upon “private property and competition” that have
kept women isolated and in the home for years – creating an elusive oppression that is “hard to uproot” (Zinn, 2003, p. 103). Until the mid-twentieth century, elementary teaching was one of the few choices open to women causing it to gain designation as a “pink collar profession” (Wines, 2006).

The profession became academically marginalized and feminized as Horace Mann initiated the American common school movement in the mid-1800’s and designed a separate training model for elementary teachers (Karier, 1986). By establishing the early normal school model apart from the college system (Gitlin, 1996), Mann followed a German vision that emphasized the production of teachers “who were highly skilled in methodology but extremely weak in academic content beyond the actual level that they were going teach” (Karier, 1986, p. 62). These job requirements reflected the national value of “republican motherhood” as a natural extension of traditional feminine attributes (Boydston, 1994; Kerber, 1997). The result is that the American teaching profession does not rival other professions such as law or medicine for respect or notoriety.

In reviewing the history of American education, words like “invisible” and “silence” derived from critical feminist literature are used to frame teaching – particularly with regard to elementary teachers (Butler, 1997a; Weiler, 2001). Remnants of teaching as a naturally feminine duty persist despite repeated efforts to strengthen teacher professional status (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Some say that efforts to apply “scientific-management ideologies” (Ortiz & Marshall, 1988, p. 125) to the field of education have creates a system where the public assumes that men supervise women and women teach children (Gutmann, 1987). In accounts of progressive classrooms, the “teacher” is an
unmentioned presence that only becomes recognized through student performance (Weiler, 2001). Such theorizing has reified traditional gender roles by creating hierarchies reflected in school districts today (Smulyan, 2004).

Silence as Presence and Resistance

Studies of teacher resistance reveal implicit influences of power, gender, discourse, and modernist analyses of agency (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2006; Bushnell, 2006; Gitlin & Margonis, 1995; Havelock, 1971). In the past, teacher resistance was explained as a simplified parallel to student behavior (Bullough, Gitlin, & Goldstein, 1989). The result is that teachers become labeled as insecure or dogmatic in their belief systems or are told that their behaviors are symbolic of a reluctance to sacrifice for the greater good (Gitlin & Margonis, 1995; Havelock, 1971; Rosenholtz, 1989). To reconceptualize elementary teachers with regard to educational policy, traditional psychological analyses of silence will be reviewed and briefly extended into post-colonial perspectives. By presenting a variation of silence theories, I demonstrate the theoretical advantage of using a Foucauldian lens as an alternative approach to educational policy analysis.

Critical studies of resistance and silence emerged as fashionable following a time when global liberation movements made news around the 1970’s and 1980’s (e.g. governmental unrest in Latin America, Africa, Asia; end of the Cold War; the fall of communism in Eastern Europe) (Hoy, 2005). Beyond commentaries of union strikes that are now illegal in most states, studies lack empirical connections between teachers and educational policy (Lieberman, 2000). When teachers are framed as resistant, it is usually
as facilitators who utilize critical progressive pedagogies (Friere, 1973; Giroux, 1983, 1988; hooks, 1994). Though historical studies have referred to teacher disagreement with state tests, the concept of resistance has not been extensively studied in relation to present models of educational policy (Bullough, Gitlin, & Goldstein, 1984; Gitlin & Margonis, 1995). Now even in the era following *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)*, teacher resistance to policy is minimally documented (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2006; Bushnell, 2006; Zembylas, 2005).

Previously considered a peripheral aspect to resistance studies, silence has emerged as a separate topic of discourse research over the last twenty years. Evident in psychology and sociology, silence is labeled as a byproduct of gender rules or dominant speech frameworks. In psychology, studies of self-silencing practices in intimate relationships became a popular area of inquiry (Jack, 1991). Women’s high self-silencing tendencies tend to be the focus of these studies. These gendered practices are linked with social perfectionism and are often paired with simplistic researcher recommendations that women should be more vocal (Jack, 1991). In this context, women’s silences are often blamed for stress-related health problems (Harper & Welsh, 2007); yet, these silences could be recognized as strategic refusals to become involved with threatening or dangerous situations.

Mazzei (2007) explains that “keeping silent, being silent, and not speaking” can all be thought of “discursive moves” (p. 41). In this study, recognition of silences is used to uncover the teacher elusive resistance laden with consequence (Bachrach & Baratz, 1962) even though historically silence has been “pathologized as absence” (Walkerdine,
1990, p. 35). According to Scott (1990), who studied passive resistance in post-colonized countries, multiple resistances and the diffuse power of “the oppressed” reveals ways that discourses shape inhabitable subject positions. He maintains that the “recovery of non-hegemonic voices and practices that subject people” calls for a fundamentally different methodology to glimpse the complexity that lies beyond traditional reporting mechanisms (p. 19).

As Scott (1990) suggests, when social and political discourses become prescriptive, social and political rigidity can emerge as oppressive. When teachers encounter policy, they may appear to conform but may instead be wielding tactical tools of power:

When the script is rigid and the consequences of a mistake large, subordinate groups may experience their conformity as a species of manipulation. In so far as the conformity is tactical it is surely manipulative (p. 33).

Teacher silences may suggest that policy texts can operate as “symbolic domination.” Through silence, teachers may deviate from involvement with policy discourses where political values would be “shared and assigned and coexistence attained” (Edelman, 1970, p. 114).

International studies further caution against assuming that silences are natural expressions of individual gender or group passivity. Researchers have located intentional uses of silence during processes of colonialization (Gumperz, 1982; Luke, 1994). In post-colonial studies, anthropological documentation of “native” behaviors suggests that silences and perceived laziness, traditionally labeled as maladaptive, actually represent resistance. As Fanon (1961) observes in The Wretched of the Earth, encounters with
colonial forces cause “natives to hardly ever seek for justice in the colonial framework.”

Instead, alternative discourses are used (Cohen & Fermon, 1996, p. 616). Scott (1990) refers to tensions between the public transcript and the hidden transcript that “mask” societal power:

The greater the disparity in power between the dominant and subordinate and the more arbitrarily it is exercised, the more the public transcript of subordinates will take on a stereotyped, ritualistic cast (p. 3).

Operations of power during policy implementation create a differentiation of transcripts.

Drawing upon Gramsci’s conception of hegemony (1971), Scott explains that public transcripts, or interpretations of the lived efforts of reform, can lead to misinterpretation. When framed by Foucauldian theoretical frameworks, silences may actually reflect the “performative effect of a certain kind of speech” (Butler, 1997a, p. 137) or indicate, according to Hoy (2005), the “resistance of the powerless” (p. 8). While such strategies may not be forceful enough to overthrow oppressive domination, silences can be conceptualized as indicative of “everyday resistance.” Sociological ethnographic studies cite the masculine control of social institutions and Western language (Clair, 1998; Jaworski, 1993; Reinharz, 1994; Tannen, 1985). Women’s silences become translated as a legitimate means to avoid complicity. Silences can be “read” as refusals to participate within boundaries of masculine norms (Houston & Kramarae, 1991).

Locating evidence of teacher silences specifically may be a matter of reframing previous educational policy analyses. For example, Giroux (1983) observed teacher submissive behaviors during his studies of schools. Giroux theorized that teacher silences had “little to do with deviance and learned helplessness, but a great deal to do with moral
and political indignation” (p. 289). Giroux’s insight may be indicative of a history of research traditions where teachers “cannot represent themselves” so “they must be represented” (Marx quoted in Spivak, 2005, p. 476). Reframing past research findings may allow for the questioning of ways that teacher silences become labeled by “others” as submissiveness or demureness. Alternative theoretical frameworks can reassess teacher silences to uncover ways that resistances become mislabeled.

Post-structural Perspectives Concerning Today’s Educational Policy

To translate the power of teachers in relation to policy, post-structural theory complicates assumptions surrounding implementation. Post-structuralism, loosely defined as a “movement of thought,” refuses reduction to a “set of assumptions, a method, a theory, or even a school” by engaging in a “complex skein of thought embodying different forms of critical practice” (Burbules & Peters, 2004, p. 18). The work of Gilles Deleuze, Michel Foucault, and Jacques Derrida shifts the theorization of the “self” from modern agentic structures to social and historical constructions (Hoy, 2005). The self becomes textually representative of oppressions achieved through the primary societal reliance upon scientific models of governance (Hoy, 2005, p. 57-58).

By applying the work of Michel Foucault, particularly Discipline and Punish (1979) and Power/Knowledge (1980b), I look closely at the frames of modernist educational policy analysis in this study. Foucault’s theories of power can be used to connect complexities of:

Language, subjectivity, social organization, and power. The centerpiece is language. Language does not ‘reflect’ social reality, but produces meaning, creates social reality. Different languages and different discourses within a given
language divide up the world and give it meaning in ways that are not reducible to one another (Richardson, 2005, p. 929).

In looking at the perpetuation of social realities that divide the world, Foucauldian theories of power (1980b) use dimensioned lenses to illuminate ways that teachers are portrayed, categorized, and surveillanced. Through the recognition of “subjugated knowledges,” a “whole set of knowledges that have been disqualified as inadequate” become visible (Foucault, 1980b, p. 82). The uncovering of subjugated knowledges and teacher silences fracture, trouble, and rupture policy’s generalized language that rely upon claims of innocence (Lather, 1991).

Foucault (1979), in his study of prisoners, and Nietzsche (1887/1996) suggest that power relations can be disrupted and further explored through an analysis of “bodies” that are quelled or silenced (Olssen, 2003). Foucault’s description of “subjugated agency” is reflective of “subjected and practiced bodies, docile bodies” (p. 139). As Foucault (1980b) suggests, the subjugations of bodies allows for a new genre of visibility: the “reappearance of… disqualified knowledges…” (p. 82). Through application of Foucault’s “structural methodology” that attempts to “avoid both methodological individualism and a linear sense of causal determinism” (Olssen, 2003, p. 192), teacher discourses can be theorized differently. Teacher discourses can be traced as not only individual acts but also practices that involve complex relationships and often regulated or subjugated force.

Lather (2007) describes a Foucauldian counter-science positioned as an opportunity for post-structural theorizing around the “paradoxes that structure our work”
(p.77). Post-structural theory, in particular the work of Michel Foucault, frame educational policy analysis as more than a measurement of teacher actions as benchmarked by policymakers. According to Mills (2004), the Foucauldian conception “of moving power away from a fixation on the State and hence on top-down model of power is important in the sense that it enables us to see power as a relation rather than a simple imposition” (p. 34). By theorizing power as diffuse and elusive, it can be viewed as a relational force that is impossible to escape. Even among abject subject positions – such as elementary teachers -- at the bottom of the organizational hierarchy, power is evident. Teachers do become engaged with and influenced by power. As Foucault (1980b) specifies, power is:

> Never localized here or there, never in anybody’s hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed through net-like organization. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. They are not only its inert or consenting target; they are also the elements of its articulation. In other words, individuals are the vehicles of power not its point of application (p. 98).

As power circulates through diffuse threads in this “net-like organization,” teachers can be theorized as the “vehicles of power” rather than “targets.” With Foucauldian theories of power, I reframe the boundaries of teacher agency in relation to educational policy, from teachers as objects of study to subjects that generate profound influences upon policy successes and failures.

**Studies that Integrate Post-structuralism and Policy Analysis**

Most post-structural analyses refuse a conception of unitary subjectivity where individuals rely upon internal rationality to navigate the world (Hegel, 1967). In contrast
Foucauldian theoretical frameworks use discourses as access points to explain subjectivities and silences. Nietzsche recognized that discourses and silences are “socially and psychologically bound” and his work gestures toward the need to theorize individuals within complex theoretical frameworks (Neumann, 1943, p. 164). Studies by Britzman (1991) and MacNaughton (2005) demonstrate that teacher discourses can be analyzed with alternative theoretical lenses to surface discourses and texts as “curtailed, divided, overthrown, caricatured, theatricalised” (Foucault, 1980b, p. 81).

Britzman’s (1991) early post-structural ethnographic work that focuses upon discourses of teacher preparation is helpful toward reconceptualizing teacher subject positions. By reflecting upon teacher discourses of resistance, persistence, and survival, Britzman uses a Foucauldian framework to refuse any imperative to “speak from a position of truth” (Mills, 2004, p. 29). Britzman fractures the traditional binaries of teaching. She interrogates the shifting discourses that frame pre-service teacher subject positions to uncover teachers’ normalized processes of “compliance, conformity, and dependence” (p. 22). Of interest with regard to this particular study is Britzman’s observation that “the complexity of relationships… must be understood” (p. 26).

MacNaughton (2005) also engages with the politics of discourse; yet, she uses Foucault in relation to privileged knowledges of early childhood education. The developmental “truths,” as a rigid policy of sorts, subjugate alternative teacher discourses. McNaughton documents developmental discourses as they intersect, coalesce, and collide as these early childhood teachers contemplate critical reflection and activism. By questioning the knowledges of their work, the teachers engage in a sustained inquiry
process. Both Britzman (1991) and MacNaughton (2005) provide models of Foucauldian discourse analysis to reveal eruptions of complexity, contradictions and enforced silences throughout assumptions of policy neutrality.

Lastly as central to the framework of this study, Gore (1995, 1997) demonstrates a “taming” of Foucauldian theories of power in *Power/Knowledge* (1980b) through an analysis across three contexts. Gore (1997) shifts the “shape of the thinkable” – and, inherently, “the speakable for teachers” (Gordon, 1991) through expanding theories of power among individuals engaged with teaching and learning processes. By creating a generative means to explore Foucault’s “eight techniques” of power production, Gore’s ethnographies reveal discourses characterized by a range of privileges and subjugations. To add to Gore’s work, Ares (2008) posits a grounded theory that includes “counter-moves” of power (i.e. counter-regulation and counter-normalization). Both researchers uncover ways that “the circulation and techniques of power” influence the “appropriation of roles and redistribution of power” within classrooms (Ares, 2008, p. 99). In citing and reorganizing this particular power typology, I create a new hybrid model to explain the divergence of policy and teacher discourses while theorizing the power that operates throughout teacher relationships.

**Conclusion**

In closing this chapter, I used a genealogical tracing of organizational systems perspectives, psychological analyses, and critical studies to illustrate the limitations of modernist structures of teacher agency. To fracture these structures, I proposed that many silences characterize historical feminizations of the profession. I created
connections between previous studies of silences and post-structural theories of power by applying the work of Michel Foucault and his analysis of the “subjugations” of speech (1978/1990, p. 17). Through temporary abandonment of modernist structures, I experimented with a subversion of policy power through theorizing elementary teacher production of relational power. To theorize “as if” elementary teachers could be powerful actors in the implementation of policy: What might this make possible? In the next chapter, I include a thorough description of the methodological approach.
Chapter 3

Qualitative Methodology as an Iterative Unfolding

Discourses that speak for and against the city, then, like all discourses, are strategic incursions into our imaginations. - Robert Beauregard (1995)

In this chapter, I review the iterative methodological steps that unfold within a post-structural approach. The qualitative methodology theorizes gender, power, and silence as related to traditional approaches to educational policy analysis and elementary teacher discourses. As St. Pierre (2000) suggests, “power is very much implicated in the production of knowledge” (p. 496); thus, this study interrupts assumptions surrounding “what constitutes legitimate knowledge” (Glesne, 2006, p. 6).

Situated in a Foucauldian theoretical framework with recognition of historicized feminizations, the multi-stepped research and reflective process spirals and revisits a grounded approach to generate new theoretical perspectives (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). I apply the work of Michel Foucault (1980b) to explain teacher discourses and subject positions characterized by silences and silencing (Butler, 1990; Deleuze, 1986; Weems, 2000). This study is guided by grounded theorizing that frames teacher silences as active presences – that shift and skew power as policy is introduced. In the following pages, I combine a priori theory with a grounded methodology to create a hybrid model that
provides a new approach to educational policy analysis while also positing teacher perceptions concerning the lived effects of reform.

**Inquiry Design: Blending A Priori and Grounded Theory**

As Schuerich (1995) mentions in his outline of “policy archaeology,” this study is not intended to reflect claims of a definitive reading and interpretation of the works of Michel Foucault; instead, this study has emerged from “repeated readings” that encouraged my thinking in theoretically rich ways. Through the use of post-structuralism, I follow an inquiry model of “research as praxis” (Lather, 1991) as a means of “rethinking” policy analysis (Pillow, 1994). My attempts at praxis become expressed as engagement with a grounded theoretical process, defined by Glaser & Strauss (1967) as:

> Theory that is developed inductively from a corpus of data. If done well, this means that the resulting theory at least fits one dataset perfectly. This contrasts with theory derived deductively from grand theory, without the help of data, and which could therefore turn out to fit no data at all (p. 65).

Through grounded work and processes of theory development, I shift between the objective and subjective dualisms of tying “grand theory” to emerging strands of interview data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

The design for this qualitative research study is comprised of the iterative blending of grounded theory and Michel Foucault’s theorizations of power. I use a grounded theoretical approach to methodologically move away from the frameworks of “logical positivism” based within modernist analyses of teacher agency (Glesne, 2006, p. 12). By developing a series of codes and selectively sampling specific elementary teachers, I identified “emergent categories” so that a new theory of teacher power could
emerge (Glesne, 2006, p. 12). As a means of “changing the shape of the thinkable” with regard to educational policy analysis (Gordon, 1991, p. 3), I initiate an exploration of teacher silences – sometimes termed as “what is missing” (Reinharz, 1992). I use post-structural theory to recognize that “all human action [as] intrinsically interactive” to produce data that edges slightly closer toward glimpsing the intricacies of power (Habermas, 1992, p. 28). While theorizing teacher power as relational, I relied upon Foucault’s theorizing of privileged knowledges, subjugations of speech (1978/1990, p. 17), and the “net-like” boundaries of power (1980b, p. 98).

**Staging an Interrogation of Modernist Agency: Building a New Theory**

This section accounts for an inquiry design that studies divergent discourses in relation to the theoretical, pragmatic, and political ramifications of traditional educational policy analysis. By invoking a post-structural *episteme* that Foucault identifies as “the problematic of the subject” and the “unity of a discourse throughout time” (Peters & Burbules, 2004, p. 42-43), I explore the complex relationships between elementary teachers and educational policy. The processes delineated in the following pages will frame initial steps applied in a qualitative exploration of discourses. A Foucauldian analytic disrupts modernist approaches to policy analysis to surface what Erickson (1986) refers to as: (a) the “invisibility of everyday life”; (b) the “need for specific understanding through documentation of concrete details of practice” and; (c) the “local meanings” of signs, symbols, and discourse patterns (p. 145). In applying grounded processes (Glaser, 1992; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) as well as *a priori* theory to this study, I create a new theory (Glesne, 2006) that establishes discursive formations of policy and teacher
discourses, suggests divergent power tools, and theorizes subject positions for teachers during reform.

Existing models of educational policy, such as *No Child Left Behind* (*NCLB*), tend to approach issues of reform through frameworks that describe individual teachers working in classrooms with children (Wallis & Steptoe, 2007). Binaries of compliance and resistance frame elementary teachers through a reliance upon causal models. The result is that studies can become mired in the “classic stuck place” (Lather, 2007) of defining teachers in terms of policy while researchers wrestle with what sanctions or appeasements can be offered to “get teachers to do as they are told.” This study is intentionally crafted as a search for complexity through Foucauldian theories of power to develop a diffuse framework of layers of discourses, relationships, and power productions as “forms of domination” (1980b, p. 69).

The primary aim of the following three phases will be to introduce steps that informed the creation of a theoretical framework that allowed me to shift from a research analytic of teacher agency to one of post-structural discourses. The phases, outlined below, took place over the course of a year and a half. They are written with support of notes, interview data, and the guidance of post-structural analyses of educational policy (Britzman, 1991/2003; Pillow, 1994, 2000, 2003; Scheurich, 1994). I connect “language, subjectivity, social organization, and power” through the following methodological explanation (Richardson, 2005, p. 929). Each of these phases will demonstrate an iterative unfolding that allows *a priori* theory to remains closely tied to an emerging corpus of data.
During this first phase, I completed steps that include a pre-pilot study and a review of the modernist analyses of teacher agency. To prepare for the initiation of field work, I enlisted two co-researchers and conducted three foundational interviews with two retired elementary teachers and a retired elementary principal. As a culminating step, I coded data to create a sampling approach to continue the study while also drafting some initial theories addressing the lived effects of reform.

Participants:
Allison, retired elementary teacher and co-researcher
Susan, newly tenured elementary teacher and co-researcher
Kim, retired elementary teacher and key informant
Jennifer, retired elementary teacher and key informant
Emily, retired elementary principal and key informant

Preparing for Field Work and Enlisting Co-Researchers

To develop credibility for the theoretical basis of my upcoming study, I drafted a plan to enter the field and designed questions to address teacher perceptions of reform (see Appendix A: Timeline of Study Methodology). While gaining access and reestablishing previous affiliations with two Midwest school districts, two elementary teachers joined this study. In the months to come, I planned to explore teachers’ personal connections beyond the classroom and, for this reason, I knew that establishing an element of trust during the interview process would be crucial. I invited these specific individuals who trusted me as a colleague to assume roles as co-researchers.

This inclusion of two co-researchers was purposeful. While completing a small pre-pilot interview and field study during the previous year, I experienced difficulty with reaccessing teacher discourses. The results of my small field study and associated interviews yielded a corpus of disappointing data. I was, in the words of St. Pierre (2008), “wary of the supposed conscious, stable, unified, rational, coherent, knowing, autonomous, and historic humanist” framing of the teacher subjectivities (p. 320); yet, I
remained dismayed with this preliminary data. Even though I knew that expecting data from interviews to represent an authentic “truth” was futile, these pre-pilot encounters produced situations where teachers became interested in telling me what they thought I might want to hear as a representative of a research university. I soon found that these teachers in my pre-pilot study did not care that I had once been “one of them.” After they repeatedly responded with blank looks at my attempts to establish rapport, I realized that I would not be allowed access to teacher discourses – on mere faith alone.

Following that experience, I decided to include two co-researchers for three methodological reasons: (a) To leverage ongoing relationships that were conducive to frank discussions; (b) To gain access to a network of many elementary teachers; and (c) To understand evolving field perceptions related to recent policy. To gain a breadth of perspective, one of the co-researchers, Allison, was retired while the other, Susan, had recently received tenure and planned for a long professional career. My initial intention was that these co-researchers would primarily assist with understanding how policy became translated into teacher discourses and practices. In this way, I intentionally leveraged an insider/outsider research position (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009).

I was very interested in creating some analytical mechanisms that would allow for iterative confrontations of my sole researcher subject position while resisting slides toward easy answers. Enlisting co-researchers created ongoing conversations related to: (a) Developing a theoretical framework; (b) Establishing a connection of “trust” within a profession where I no longer held membership; and (c) Creating a consistent mechanism for “peer debriefing” to gain additional input concerning my research conclusions.
(Glesne, 2006, p. 37). The value of knowing that I too had been an elementary teacher allowed access to frank discussions and consistent information sharing throughout the progression of the study over the course of a year and a half.

As luck would have it, Allison volunteered to become more active in the initial steps of the study to accompany me to the first three interviews. She became, not only a co-researcher but a co-interviewer, who actively participated as the study began. Allison leveraged her relationship with me as well as her existing relationships in the field by bridging our cursory grasp of the study’s theoretical basis with her deep understanding of the teacher perspectives. Her participation led to a strong start to data collection and resulted in an exciting, foundational corpus of data. Allison’s intimate “knowing” opened toward a space of lively conversations where I, as the researcher, could assume a secondary role who observed and facilitated occasionally with questions and suggestions. My initial research questions tended to be rather broad and in this case were used to inspire a swapping of stories, a series of “remember when’s,” and an exchanging of philosophical insights.

*Foundational Interviews with Key Informants*

Allison, the retired co-researcher, accompanied me to the first two in-depth interviews. The retired elementary teachers had been employed by different Midwest school districts and they graciously allowed us to talk with them for many hours. The rich data yielded from these foundational interviews was largely due to Allison’s presence. Her insider perspective provided a bridge between the developing theoretical framework and insights from these former elementary teachers (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). Following
these two interviews, Allison also accompanied me to an interview with a retired elementary principal which also proved to be useful for framing findings at the conclusion of the study.

As I began these foundational interviews, the two teachers emerged as “key informants.” These teachers became labeled as “key informants” as their participation assisted with a thorough analysis process by adding extensive insight regarding “project participants, their backgrounds, behaviors, and attitudes” (Sharp & Frechtling, 1997, p. 3-14). Characterized by “extensive probing and open-ended questions,” these foundational interviews provided a rich foundation for the first steps of grounded theorizing that extended into the remainder of the study (Sharp & Frechtling, 1997, p. 3-6).

During this initial series of three interviews, I created a process that connected the steps of data collection with theorizing to prepare for subsequent interviews. Tracing emergent theorizing and capturing organized snapshots of grounded work allowed me to systematically consider altering questions while experimenting with items for a possible grounded survey instrument. This in-depth interview process contributed to the emergence of “construct validity” claims that emerged and took shape throughout subsequent phases (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Lather, 1986; Spillane, 1998). These construct validity became recognizable as “systematized reflexivity” so that Foucauldian theories of power could become translated by teacher insight (Lather, 1991, p. 67).

The two teachers, as key informants, provided extensive references to power, silences, and persistence that became ripe for rigorous conceptual development and led to “the growth of illuminating and change enhancing social theory” (Lather, 1991, p. 67).
As opposed to later interviews where teachers spoke only with me – as the sole researcher, these foundational interviews, with Allison, the co-researcher, allowed me to concentrate deeply on twists and turns of the conversations. I began to mark specific patterns as I took notes so that I could ask questions based upon recurrent themes. In a sense, there was a “triangulation” of roles during these interviews that led to the most provocative and interesting interactions of the entire study (Denzin, 1978). The dual perspectives of the emerging data and the development of future interview questions created a mechanism to confront any “inappropriate certainty” (Mark & Shotland, 1978; see also Miles & Huberman, 1994). My partnership with Allison led to a fruitful theoretical start and strong empirical base for creating a grounded theoretical framework and later developing a hybrid model for post-structural educational policy analysis.

**Foundational Coding and Consultation**

The impetus for beginning to tie theory to grounded work began with the review and transcription of these two foundational interviews with the two retired elementary teachers. As I completed the first coding process, I began to note that the teachers recognized the influences of their colleagues and described shared understandings of the appropriate use of silence. Teachers explained that there were three primary influences upon their access to discourses: (1) The desire to be respected by other teachers; (2) An understanding of what not to say to administrators; (3) An awareness of public misperceptions about the teaching profession. As I repeatedly reviewed these first interview transcripts, many patterns became apparent to align with some emergent suspicions concerning teacher resistance. But even more interesting, other patterns did
not. I coded the transcripts for ways that these teachers produced power while at the same
time refusing any suggestions of “resistance.” Strikingly, some teacher practices did not
even directly acknowledge specific educational policies.

It was during these first phases of grounded theorizing that this study decidedly
emerged as a study of the lived effects of reform. I theorized that teachers utilized
discourses characterized by silence while policy used overt commands of power. I noted
some opportunities for potential “transferability” and “dependability” data points among
conversations with the two teachers and the subsequent interview with the retired
elementary principal (Guba, 1981). This initial theorizing emerged through an
interruption and momentary reinscription of “unexpected connections, relations, and
complications” (Talburt, 2004, p. 92). As I coded patterns and disruptions, I began to
refuse traditional subject positions of elementary teachers and decided to undertake an
interrogation of traditional approaches to educational policy analysis.

**Phase II: January 2008–April 2008**

*I sampled the next round of elementary teachers (n=6) with a purposeful model
(experience), field tested and discarded a grounded survey, developed a theoretical
model of power, and coded the interview data. During this phase, I continued to engage
in conversations with co-researchers and had on-going interactions with key informants.*

**Participants (Purposely Sampled by a Range of Experience):**

Jessica, a retired elementary teacher
Sylvia, a retired elementary teacher
Carrie, a student teacher
Lisa, a student teacher, exited the teacher education program
Kelly, a mid-career elementary teacher
Elizabeth, a former elementary teacher who now has another professional career
Purposeful Sampling and Phase II Interviews

I conferred with the co-researchers as I began my first round of interviews with six elementary teachers. During this first phase, I used “purposeful sampling” to explore the complex ways that teachers with varying years of career experience used silence as a tool to resist, persist, and survive during processes of policy implementation (Patton, 2002). The intention was to sample teachers across the spectrum of experience levels so that I would better understand perceptions of policy and the influences of teacher relationships. I intentionally chose, in cooperation with co-researcher advice, a series of participants with whom I had personal and professional relationships as a former teacher. Most interested in continuing to locate patterns of elusive statements, significations, and explanations of teacher resistance, I anticipated that there would be an intimate cast to these interviews. In talking over my sampling choices with co-researchers, we predicted that the dialogues would be colored with symbolic exchanges, silences, and quiet admissions -- not to be shared with “just anyone.”

As a means of developing trust, I chose to conduct all of the interviews apart from the school environment in personal settings.² Throughout these six interviews, characterized by intense exchanges and at times emotional reflections punctuated by incidents of laughter and tears, I developed a theory about the potential nature of a power produced through teacher relationships. These teachers reported certain discourse practices and silences as necessary components of their daily work.

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² Two of the interviews were conducted on the phone as one of the elementary teachers was undergoing surgery when I was in the area and another had recently relocated to another state.
The patterns that stretched among those who were retired to those at the very beginning of their teaching career seemed particularly illuminative. As I conducted these interviews, the questions grew throughout an iterative process of building upon insight and undertaking additional exploration. Conducting this extensive interview process allowed me to engage in a concentrated experience with each teacher while gaining “rich data” (Hesse-Biber, 2007) to create the “thick description” (Geertz, 1973). My previous experiences surfaced at times to create a “participatory model” (Oakley, 1981; Reinharz, 1983; Hesse-Biber, 2007) characterized by an anticipated in-the-way/out-of-the-way exchange of experiences that required ongoing researcher reflexivity (Lather, 2007). Though these interviews were constructed by drawing upon sketches of emergent theoretical frameworks, I was mindful to give teachers latitude to define their own experiences. The initial identification of the dynamics of power and silence became central to discourses and perceptions that opened toward later theorizing.

**Review Transcripts**

Throughout the initial analysis of data, I developed a variety of codes paired with description and interpretation of teacher discourse patterns (Erickson, 1986). These key informant and second phase interviews surfaced a set of codes that indicated patterns within teacher discourses and diverged from those of educational policy (Reinharz, 1992). The data drawn from “key informants” assisted with the further development of “construct validity” claims based systematic analysis and reflection (Lather, 1986).

It was during this phase of coding that a hybrid model theorizing teacher production of relational power began to emerge – based on a Foucauldian typology of
power. I shifted from modernity frameworks that perseverated upon teacher agency and instead became interested in teacher subject positions as reflections of discourse. I was particularly intrigued by locations of silence and the descriptions of what became “unsayable” during reform. This methodological phase was marked by much experimentation and theorization combined with co-researcher consultations and occasional key informant conversations. Their insight pushed me to refuse, as Lyotard (1997) reflects, the search for resolute answers to my research questions. Instead, I approached the next iteration of theory development in an effort “to address and carry forward” emergent patterns and questions (Talburt, 2004, p. 421).

**Foucauldian Power Typology and De-naturalization of Reform**

My grounded theoretical efforts became coupled and intimately linked with the work of Foucault (1980b), as applied by Gore (1995) and Ares (2008). With completion of foundational and key informant interviews, I further explored theories of Michel Foucault, particularly *Discipline and Punish* (1979) and *Power/Knowledge* (1980b). I began to look more closely, as Lather (2005) suggests, at what was framing all that I was seeing in this shift to post-structural policy analysis. The first quote that shook the very foundation of all that I took for granted was Foucault’s questioning of reform itself. In a conversation with Deleuze entitled *Intellectuals & Power* (1972), Foucault states:

> Either reforms are designed by people who claim to be representative, who make a profession of speaking for others, and lead to a division of power, to a distribution of this new power which is consequently increased by double repression; or they arise from the complaints and demands of those concerned. This latter incidence is no longer reform but revolutionary action that questions… the totality of power and hierarchy that maintains it (p. 208-209).
According to Foucault (1972), reform could be considered a ripe concept for interrogation by highlighting the sources of power. I was interested in the political tensions between repression and revolution. I began to theorize policy discourses within a discursive formation in the same way that teacher discourses could be sketched within a discursive formation. This marked one of my final decisive theoretical breaks toward post-structuralism as I formulated a viable model to de-naturalize the common wisdom that characterizes traditional approaches to educational policy analysis. By sketching a model that looked at the relational power of teachers, I refused policy’s hierarchical power and created a means to think differently about the power that operates during processes of policy implementation, as demonstrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Power as Producing Discursive Formations of Policy and Teachers
This model posits formations of discourses associated with policy and teachers. Educational policy is decentered with a counter-center of power among teacher discourses. These two discursive formations of power reflect silences as active presences – codes that skew power within efforts by policy – but also by teachers. To take a closer look at the *micro* elements of reform (Reinharz, 1992; Vongalis & Macrow, 2007), I demonstrate that relative discourses are “made possible and exploited by power” (Grosz, 1994, p. 150).

During this phase, I was also influenced by theoretical frameworks created by Nespor (1997) as he studied a Virginia elementary school. Nespor conceptualized the school as “an intersection in social space, a knot in a web of practices that stretch into complex systems” (p. xiii). This framework created an access point for considering teachers as subject positions that might produce and embody shifting discourses. The philosophical tensions between theory and practice that characterize Nespor’s research processes reflect his warnings of the dangers of permitting a separation of “theory from empirical description” (p. 196). His repeated caveats concerning a balance between theory and practice supported the beginnings of this Foucauldian model.

**Phase III: April 2008-November 2008**

For this final phase, I created a theoretical sampling typology to accompany the use of a theoretical framework and interviewed the final group of elementary teachers (*n*=5). I used a “taming” typology of Foucauldian theories of power to create a hybrid model to explain the lived effects of reform while applying discourse analysis.

**Participants (Sampled according to Theoretical Typology):**

Julie, a newly tenured elementary teacher who was reassigned to the junior high school
Rebecca, a newly tenured elementary teacher
Karen, an experienced elementary teacher
Jacqueline, a mid-career elementary teacher
Rachel, an untenured elementary teacher
**Theoretical Sampling**

In approaching the next round of interviews, I incorporated my grounded perspectives and experimentation with *a priori* theory to sample the remaining elementary teachers by using a theoretical model. The use of theoretical sampling allowed for the selection of teachers to become a central aspect of the study rather than a peripheral decision by engaging with theory development to fracture and reframe research assumptions (Garrett & Li, 1985; Patton, 2002). In the words of Richardson (2005), “theory is architecture” (see also Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). This sampling approach allowed for a methodological opportunity to construct a new theory. By doing so, I was able to choose teachers who could best address lingering gaps as well as deviant cases to expand my interview sample accordingly (Silverman, 2005).

The following model, shown in Figure 2, demonstrates the theoretical sampling approach that I used to select elementary teachers for the final round of interviews. In this third phase, I shifted from a purposeful template that used years of teaching experience to, instead, organize and further develop the sample with a theoretical framework in mind. I theorized that teachers become, in a sense, bundles of codes – “knots in social space” that become reflections of certain discourses (Nespor, 1997). I sketched these “knots” as four archetypal subject positions to capture the ways that teachers become constructed and situated among shifting systems of discourses (e.g. Silent Survival, Silent Resistance, Vocal Leadership and Vocal Resistance).

By mapping iterative steps of working with co-researchers, conducting interviews, becoming immersed in post-structural theory, drafting versions of a hybrid
model, and then expanding my interviewing sample, I developed a threaded conceptualization of the subject positions of elementary teachers. The use of discourse analysis creates a theoretical space where “where questions of agency are less clear” while “questions of how much control one has over what happens as a result of one’s actions are very much to the fore” (Mills, 2004, p. 27). I was able to apply an alternative theoretical lens that revealed the shifting and expanding of multiple binaries among shifting discourses. By moving away from an analysis of teachers as “rational” and “knowing” (Peters & Burbules, 2004), I acknowledged the power of policy while also reframing teachers as powerful. I relied upon Foucault’s explanation that discourses are reflective of:

> Infinitesimal mechanisms, which each have their own history, their own trajectory, their own techniques, and tactics, and then to see how these mechanisms of power have been - and continue to be colonized, utilized, involuted, transformed, displaced, extended, etc. by ever more generalized mechanisms (Foucault, 1980b, p. 99).

By focusing upon the translations and transformations as reflected throughout discourses, I used strands of coded data to support the series of theoretical frames that illustrated elementary teachers in relation to policy. By positing that teachers are influenced by policy and one another, I drafted a theoretical model where I sorted elementary teachers into four subject positions. As observed by Grosz (1994), the “body becomes a ‘text’ and is fictionalized and positioned within myths and belief systems that form a culture’s social narratives and self-representations” (p. 119). Through the application of this sampling typology (see Fig. 2), specific elementary teachers were identified, again with the assistance of co-researchers.
We worked together to select elementary teachers who might illuminate subject positions within the developing theory where the least data had been gathered. The use of “resistances,” “survivals,” and “leaderships” captured the politics of what becomes “speakable” and silenced during reform. Throughout the analysis in the following chapters, these theoretical subject positions will be further discussed.

**Conducting Phase III Interviews**

Prior to interviewing this final set of elementary teachers (n=5) following theoretical sampling, I prepared strands of, what St. Pierre refers to as “response data” (1997), from the work with co-researchers, key informants, and second phase interviews.
I repeatedly revisited the questions of: In what ways do teachers perceive available discourses? What subject positions do teachers perceive as alternatives from the ones that seem to be delineated for them? During this process of posing interviews questions, I continued to “read the silences” to determine what questions seemed to be resisted as dangerous, what struck a chord, and what signaled reluctance (Jones & Jenkins, 2008). The identification of teacher silences served as access points for final data analysis and further theorizing.

Refining Theoretical Frameworks through Discourse Analysis

Traditional analytic methods, including processes of data description and interpretation (Erickson, 1986), accommodated grounded theorizing during cycles of data collection to be followed by discourse analysis (Parker, 2005; Schwandt, 2001; Weems, 2000). In an iterative process that remained closely tied to interview data, I undertook the generative work of theory development while repeatedly considering insight from the field. Policy processes became framed with Foucauldian perspectives to surface layers of discourse, tools of power, and shifting subject positions of teachers. I deconstructed binaries and simplistic contrasts as a means to uncover the perpetuation and adherence to hierarchies (Peters & Burbules, 2004). Following Britzman’s (1995) recommendations, I considered the structures of teacher “secondhand stories” (p. 233). I used multiple lenses to identify the emergence of discrete discourses and new analytical categories to review transcripts while revisiting a series of co-researcher conversations.

Schwandt (2001) explains that processes of Foucauldian discourse analysis study “systems of thought that construct subjects and their worlds” by looking closely at
implied structures, social processes, and empirically-derived practices (p. 58). Discourse analysis may be applied, as suggested by Lather (2008), to provide a means to glimpse:

How we are shaped by dominant discourses toward construction of docile bodies that meet needs of state institutions in order to generate counter discourses resistant to dominant powers that want to measure, assess, diagnose, cure, transform (see also Foucault, 1969; Weems, 2000).

To analyze discursive formations of policy and teacher discourses during this third phase, a Foucauldian lens “demand[ing] attention to historical specificity” was used (Walshaw, 2001, p. 482). As Figure 3 illustrates, a series of binaries shape the traditional categories that are commonly used to make sense of the world. These binaries can be questioned with the use of a post-structural approach to analyze data and gain new perspectives with regard to policy analysis. Feminist post-structuralism, specifically, can be used to refuse subjectivities that adhere to binaries as a means to avoid caricatures of heroines or villains (Weems, 2000).

Building upon other qualitative studies that have led to theory development in relation to teaching and learning (Gore, 1995; Ares, 2008), I applied discourse frameworks to acknowledge the “subject” as teacher in relation to teacher. By grappling with ways that teachers interact, I use the concept of discourse to emphasize “the permanent possibility of a certain resignifying process” (Butler, 1992, p. 13). Through the

![Figure 3. Binaries of Power Production (Lather’s adaptation from Weems (2000))](image-url)
use of Foucauldian theoretical frameworks, I resist notions that teachers need to act and react in certain ways. The familiar narrative of teacher suffering and children “left behind” invites heroic images that required a masculine leader to make everything better. At the same time, I also resist emancipatory narratives where teachers attempt to collectively save themselves.

**Retracing the Development of a Hybrid Model**

During the iterative rounds of interviews, I located patterns of discourse that cohered to a discursive formation of teacher power – when examined in the aggregate and individually. As I applied the theory of the “art of governmentality” (Foucault, 1991) blended with the concept of discourses to the growing pile of interview transcripts, I found little in terms of available discourses for elementary teachers. I shifted toward an exploration of discourses to look specifically at policy’s “organized scientific discourse” and searched for subjugations that render some ideas as unspeakable (Nozaki, 2006, p. 74).

I developed an interest in teachers relationally rather than as individuals who operate in their classrooms. I began to question ways that teachers produced power among one another – particularly with regard to silence and other elusive practices that operate under the radar of policy regulations. I wanted to look at the relationships that teachers had with one another as I sensed there might be power there, a

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*Surveillance*  
*Distribution*  
*Totalization*  
*Individuation*  
*Classification*  
*Exclusion*  
*Normalization*  
*Regulation*

**Figure 4:** Gore’s (1995) Typology of Power Derived from Foucault’s *Power/Knowledge* (1980)
diffuse power that diverged from policy, but power that created an unwieldy terrain while policy faltered. By viewing teacher discourse as inextricably linked to relationships, analytical steps began to frame patterns of the “organization of language into certain kinds of social bonds” (Parker, 2005, p. 88).

By using the typology of power that Gore (1995, 1997) created to “tame” Foucault, I completed the final rounds of coding by applying these “major techniques of power.” I stretched and reconfigured the work of Gore (1995, 1997) and Ares (2008) to develop a theoretical framework. I created a chart that transformed this “taming” typology. This Figure 5, explained in-depth throughout the following chapters as a working hybrid model, reflects ways that Gore’s typology of Foucauldian power tools (i.e. Surveillance, Distribution, Totalization, Individuation, Classification, Exclusion, Normalization, & Regulation) was rearranged. I mapped two discursive formations of shifting discourses to create a framework that was representative of the divergent power tools of teachers and policy to design Figure 5 below. All of the power tools and associated page numbers directly relate to Foucault’s work as explained in Power/Knowledge (1980b). Throughout the data analysis that follows, each of the power tools will be delineated as related to teacher perceptions of the lived effects of reform during this “policy epidemic” (Levin, 1998).
I began with the assumption that discourses would influence the \textit{normalization} and \textit{regulation} of teachers. In the case of policy, the ideal normalization and regulation of teachers would lead to optimal institutional outcomes. In the case of teachers, normalization and regulation define teacher membership processes.

The discursive formation of policy discourses became specified on the left side of the table. I theorized that policy discourses applied the tools of \textit{surveillance} and \textit{distribution}. Modern policy discourses applied accountability mechanisms as surveillance. I also noted that the geographical organization of “bodies” within educational institutions reflected distribution.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Rational Power Tools} & \textbf{Shared Power Tools} & \textbf{Personal Discourse Tools} \\
(\textit{Policy}) & (\textit{Policy and Teachers}) & (\textit{Teachers}) \\
\hline
\textbf{Surveillance} & \textbf{Totalization} & \textbf{Classification} \\
“supervising, closely observing, watching, threatening to watch, or expecting to be watched” & “the specification of collectives, giving collective character” & “differentiating groups” \\
(p. 235) & (p. 242) & (p. 239) \\
\hline
\textbf{Distribution} & \textbf{Totalization} & \textbf{Exclusion} \\
“distribution of bodies in space – arranging, isolating, separating, ranking” & “the specification of collectives, giving collective character” & “a technique for tracing the limits that will define discourse” \\
(p. 240) & (p. 242) & (p. 238) \\
\hline
\textbf{Individualization} & \textbf{Totalization} & \\
“giving individual character to oneself or another” & “the specification of collectives, giving collective character” & \\
(p. 242) & (p. 242) & \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\textbf{Figure 5. Power Tools of Policy and Teacher Discourses}

Note. Techniques of Power, by Foucault (1980b) and applied by Ares (2008); Gore (1995) has been adapted to explain counter discourse tools used to normalize and regulate teachers. All page numbers reflect Gore’s identification of Foucault’s specifications in \textit{Power/Knowledge}. 

\textit{Surveillance} “supervising, closely observing, watching, threatening to watch, or expecting to be watched” (p. 235)

\textit{Distribution} “distribution of bodies in space – arranging, isolating, separating, ranking” (p. 240)

\textit{Totalization} “the specification of collectives, giving collective character” (p. 242)

\textit{Classification} “differentiating groups” (p. 239)

\textit{Exclusion} “a technique for tracing the limits that will define discourse” (p. 238)
On the right, I designated the discursive formation of teacher discourses as differentiated from policy. I theorized that teachers tend to assert classification and exclusion influences in relation to one another. As teachers create groups, they determine who is respected while also excluding others to create shifting patterns of informal memberships.

In the overlapping middle section of Figure 5, I included the two tools shared by policy and by teachers. I theorized that policy discourses and teacher discourses both applied: totalization and individualization. Totalization allots “collective character” and individualization assigns “individual character to oneself or another” (p. 242). Policy applies rational tools of institutionalized recognitions and sanctions that are awarded for aggregate, collective achievements. On the other hand, teachers apply these tools according to personal signifiers based on groupings (i.e. particular interests or talents, the same lunch hour, having children, etc.). In terms of individualization, policy use of “the rational” and teacher uses of “the personal” diverges. With policy, “individual character” is lent by labels like “highly qualified” or “technologically proficient.” In contrast, individuation is signified personally through labels such as a friend, mentor, or enemy.

**Claiming Space for a Theoretical Subject Position**

During these ongoing coding and analytic processes, I located theoretical space for the unexpected emergence of a critical subject position for elementary teachers. Empirical evidence of leadership and resistance was located systematically in an effort to question grounded theorizing that suggested silence as characterizing the sole inhabitable subject positions. I searched for breaks among teacher narratives of shifting privileges
and subjugations to look for the discontinuities, and “jagged edges” (Lather, 2008). To interrupt my theorizing processes, I consistently revisited Foucault’s theory of “power” as a concept that does not frame teachers as “inert or consenting target[s].” In contrast, teachers are “the elements of its articulation… vehicles of power not its point of application” (Foucault, 1980, p. 98). As vehicles of power, teachers embody the confrontations, disruptions, and legitimizations of the colliding discourses among policy and teachers. I applied teacher retellings to locate and trace these unexpected patterns of power while methodologically exploring evidence of teacher efforts to gain a foothold in the translations of policy. I systematically isolated incidents of novelty -- as teacher refusals of reform so that evidence of discord could surface.

**Elements of the Qualitative Research Design**

This section begins with an acknowledgement of researcher reflexivity as an initial and ongoing process to temper coding, analysis, and interpretation of data. Researchers can never “claim to be speaking from a position of being outside power” and so my intent in this section is not to claim methodological innocence (Bryce & Hume, 2003, p. 180). In an effort to acknowledge my own subject position as a white, female, elementary teacher, I am only able to work within and against the limits of currently circulating discourses, subject positions, and discursive formations available at this time. While this study will make a case for the deconstruction of some “dominant discourses,” I will remain “complicit” with others (Mills, 2004, p. 30). To clarify an awareness of such complicity, elements of the research design are explained: reflexivity, triangulation, trustworthiness, reliability and validity.
Reflexivity

My subjectivity, framed as a “garment that cannot be removed” (Peshkin, 1988), was integral to establishing “confirmability” of the data throughout the formulation and initiation phases of this inquiry (Guba, 1981). I implement a reflexive process that accounts for the researcher as “instrument” (Patton, 2002, p. 14). As observed by Jones (2002), “researchers must be careful to check their own subjectivity and theoretical stances so that decisions are indeed rooted in the research process as it unfolds” (p. 464).

That being said, I value reflexivity without becoming “reflexive to a fault” (Lather, 2008) as I am wary of glorifying an external analytic researcher position – as a contrived and falsely objective “view from above or nowhere” (Haraway, 1998, p. 585). For in any study of elementary teachers who, traditionally and theoretically (Maher, 2001; Weiler, 2001), are not permitted such indulgent subjectivity, the tools of inquiry must work the relationality of an iterative model of participatory research, systematic reflection, and a methodology that remains closely tied to the data. I make my “own understanding problematic” by engaging in “collaborator’s backtalk” while challenging assumptions that seem to reinscribe structures of existing power (Schon, 1991, p. 356).

Such efforts can best be construed as a “deconstructive exercise for locating the intersections of author, other, text, and world, and for penetrating the representational exercise itself” (MacBeth, 2001, p. 64). In explicitly stating that “all knowledge is affected by the social condition under which it is produced” (Mann & Kelley, 1997, p. 392), I continue to grapple with the need for researcher reflexivity throughout my interaction with data that I have collected, analyzed, and reported upon. Roman & Apple
(1990) maintain that any “democratization of knowledge” must recognize that “questions confronting researchers about their methods and design, as well as validity of their conclusions are not only procedural and technical matters but political ones as well” (p. 39). Questions of politics remained integral to acknowledging the subject positions that became available for all individuals involved in this project.

By foregrounding my researcher subjectivity, I underscore that everyone carries a mental picture of themselves in various contexts – including policymakers. The fragile conceptions of validity paired with the politics of representation cannot be methodologically or pragmatically ignored (Fine, 2008). Though the admitted dangers of reinscribing privilege according to new dogmas remain, I use a post-structural lens to scrutinize traditional educational policy analysis. Throughout this process, I continued to be suspicious of the teacher identity that makes me the most comfortable. I asked myself: What elements can I not think without? How can complexity be embraced in educational policy without becoming immobilized? How can strength be derived from the recognition of all that remains unknown? Efforts were made to be suspicious of an alternative means of approaching at educational policy analysis. Exploring the intersections between teacher perceptions of themselves and the ways that they are perceived by policy, I tried not to settle for data defined by easy binaries or causal statements.

**Triangulation**

Throughout the three methodological phases, I identified some empirical and methodological constraints. In terms of creating the triangulation of methods for validity claims, a study of teacher discourses and silences does not lend itself readily to a broad
base of quantitative or even qualitative methods. I initially explored elements of
document analysis and grounded survey development and then discarded them after poor
alignment with emergent research questions. The ongoing experimentation with
methodological triangulation was most useful as a means to emphasize that qualitative
studies can easily be distracted by inquiry instruments that reinscribe positivism. In
recognizing a process where subjects inevitably “become recognized and misrecognized”
(Britzman, 1995, p. 235), I tried to resist the temptation of forcing the emerging data to fit
a convenient template for generalization and categorical reporting of data.

As Feuer, Towne, and Shavelson (2002) observe, methods should fit the research
question and should not be applied out of a contrived sense of obligation. In fact, the very
definition of inquiry dictates that “the choice of method must be linked to the question
being studied” (p. 5). Rather than triangulating methods, I triangulated patterns, contrasts,
and silences during member check processes.

**Trustworthiness**

To establish trustworthiness, I offer “clear and detailed descriptions” of data
collection while delineating the theoretical boundaries that I am establishing (Feldman,
2003, p. 27). I consistently revisited the question of: *What am I counting as data?* As
Britzman (2000) explains, she learned to admit “constructed categories” so that she could
“render them explicit” to “uncouple” her voice from voices of her participants. The
intersections of voices, retellings, and colliding assumptions are infinitely complex to
recognize, unearth, and identify. By developing rigorous and systematic steps of inquiry
toward the development of a theoretical framework, Jones (2002) proposes that “carefully
considered design must be situated in an epistemological framework as well as in methodological strategies.” She further emphasizes that such design “requires attention to epistemology, theoretical perspective, methodology, and method” so that the politics of representation might be engaged (2002, p. 462). To develop trustworthiness, I employed process transparency by enacting an “audit trail” to use as reference during conversations with co-researchers and key informants (Guba, 1981). I attempted to stage successive interrogations while creating “a more polyphonic text than one that verifies the accuracy of data and interpretations” (Talburt, 2004, p. 89).

**Validity**

The concept of validity persists as it “repeatedly resurfaces” in the processes of making larger social and political claims (Lather, 2005). What becomes paramount in considering a study, such as this one, is the prevailing “anti-foundationalism” that makes a blind adherence to modernity assumptions – including validity claims – obsolete (West, as cited in Lather, 2007). Still, I strengthened the validity of this qualitative study through use of three “verification procedures” (Creswell, 1998) by conducting: (1) a triangulated interview process with a co-researcher; (2) consistent member checking with co-researchers and communication with key informants during data collection and theory development; and (3) a detailed analysis of the data -- what Appadurai (1991) notes as “thickness with a difference.”

As Kvale (2005) recognizes, the concept of validity has an assumed a new stance in relation to an increasing reliance upon a scientistic model – which has assumed greater visibility in educational policy at the federal level. Though today, validity has come to be
known as the “truth value – the correspondence between research and the real world” (Schofield, 1990, p. 160), claims of such “truth value” should be handled with trepidation. Such claims within educational research can prompt dogmatic scientific claims about the replicable behavior of human beings (Hyslop-Margison & Naseem, 2008). While “qualitative researchers have to question seriously the internal validity of their work,” there should not an expectation that other researchers would find the same things or draw the same conclusions (Schofield, 1990, p. 160).

**Limitations of the Study**

The lack of generalizable results is a frequently revisited critique of post-structural inquiry. Generalizability is not a goal of qualitative research; yet, generalizing is certainly a traditional expectation of policy models. Inevitably, Foucauldian approaches do invite tensions and messiness to the field of educational policy analysis and this may be recognized as a limitation; yet, lack of generalizability can also be viewed as strength fraught with possibility. A post-structural approach redefines usefulness within the realm of policy analysis by destabilizing the common sense of tradition and by questioning that which is taken for granted.

In undertaking this study, I create an alternative approach to educational policy analysis to highlight insights that might be silenced through traditional methods. This study instead seeks to offer a generative model that hints at patterns, questions, and emergent themes that may be stretched into future considerations for policymakers. The interactions, the disruptions, and the complications, highlighted in the following chapters, can provide opportunities for innovation by leveraging complexities surrounding policy.
Without an acknowledgement of such messiness, there may be very little way of uncovering the implicit frameworks of power that affect teachers and the shifting of discourses that shape the lived effects of reform.

The methodology of this study combined *a priori* theory and iterations of grounded work over the course of a year and a half toward a hybrid model. While grounded theory approaches were standard in earlier qualitative work (Erickson, 1986), more recently, this hybrid combination of grounded and *a priori* has become best practice (Glesne, 2006). In this study, relying solely on one or the other would have been the limitation.

**Conclusion**

This iterative unfolding of method is structured as Foucauldian work within the qualitative research tradition to translate some of the complexity surrounding educational policy analysis. Theorized through an iterative analysis of the intersections of gender, power, and silence, this study is designed to frame the relationships between teachers and policy differently. I deconstruct the positionality of educational policy from its normative hierarchical position in relation to elementary teachers specifically. At the same time, I recognize the production of relational power among teachers so I use discourses to uncover silences as indicative of shifting teacher subject positions.

This theoretical shifting in relation to teacher silences may rupture the innocence of implementation efforts based on efficiency and accountability. One of the goals of this study is to allow for alternative access points to identify the necessary complexity of teacher work and the tensions that fracture teacher subject positions. To create relevant
and innovative educational policy analysis models, I suggest that discussions should begin with empirical incidences of confrontation, disruption, and legitimatization of colliding discourses. Analysis should not divide “social structures from discourse” so that power relations and governance shifts might be connected and further theorized (Campbell, 2000, p. 54). Chapters Four and Five use a Foucauldian analytic to look, first at the discourses of policy and, then in Chapter Five, the discourses of teachers.
Chapter 4

A Hybrid Model of Policy Analysis I: Policy Production of Rational Power

Policy deals with what is good in general, on the whole, and for the most part… best construed as aimed not at the advancement of specific benefits, but at the prevention of specific evils.
-Thomas Greene (1983)

The iterative process of coding transcripts combined with a review of Foucault’s theories of governmentality, discourse, and power, as explained in Chapter Three, provides the framework for data presented in the following pages.

In this chapter, I establish a discursive formation of policy discourses through iterations of grounded work linked with Michel Foucault’s theorizations of power. By interrupting hierarchical assumptions of policy power over teachers, I contrast policy production of rational power with the teacher production of relational power. My research interests grow out of interruptions of traditional policy framings of elementary teacher agency. I theorize elementary teacher subject positions within intersections and layerings to represent the privileging and subjugations of discourses and texts. My goal is to analyze the ways that policy becomes privileged “in circular relations with systems of power which produce and sustain it” (Foucault, 1980b, p. 133). Policy guarantees are placed under suspicion by translating the knowledge and power inherent within implementation processes. I reframe policy’s objective presence as a collection of
discourses that are “statements with internal rules… specific to the discourse itself” (Mills, 2004, p. 43).

This chapter sets up the analytical framework for the next two chapters. I begin with a description of policy’s primary characteristics to then introduce the Foucauldian power tools. The last section offers a sketch of a teacher subject position that aligns with the characteristics of policy. I analyze the lived effects of reform by looking at teacher perceptions of available discourses during change.

**The Discursive Formation of Policy Discourses**

The first aspect of the hybrid model is the discursive formation of policy discourses. The blended nature of the model grows out of the mix of Foucauldian power theory and the grounded work during interviews with elementary teachers. The norms of the discursive formations of policy and teacher discourses can be contrasted by positing alternative subject positions. Policy enacts a “silent survival” subject position for teachers; whereas, a “silent resistance” subject position will be theorized in the following
chapter as an inhabitable subject position among teacher discourses. What follows will introduce and unpack the elements of a discursive formation of policy discourses.

Educational policy is a “worked out discourse” that reflects the truths of global transformation (Olssen, 2003). While texts of policy are often framed as a neutral judgment, the collections of associated texts are “never ‘innocent’” as “a set of values” is always communicated (Usher & Edwards, 1994, p. 148). Policy’s disembodied objectivity is most often framed in such a way as to assert unmitigated authority. As Butler (1997a) explains, though policy is written by individuals, the operation of power is not traceable to these individuals:

The bureaucratic and disciplinary diffusion of sovereign power produces a terrain of discursive power that operates without a subject, but that constitutes the subject in the course of its operation. This does not mean that there are no individuals [involved]… It means only that they are not the originators of the discourses that they convey and that their intentions, however strong, are not finally what control the meaning of that discourse (p. 34).

The constitution of the subject is a technology of power. Power reflects “forms and systems of expertise and technology utilizable for the purposes of political control” while rendering the policy authors invisible (Olssen, 2003, p. 189-202). I introduce policy’s “audit” model to uncover the way that objectivity privileges texts and enforces silences through a range of subjugations (Strathern, 2000). By surfacing “audit” mechanisms that encourage teachers to internalize “new norms,” I interrogate the organization of truth and power systems inherent to policy implementation (Shore & Wright, 1997, p. 59-62).

Through the use of “audit” mechanisms, policy determines what becomes speakable for teachers. Elementary teachers become normalized and regulated into
alignment with “official” texts through the systematization of power. Policy delineates norms of the teaching profession and acceptable parameters of interaction by establishing boundaries in accordance with what Pillow (1994) calls “official talk.” This “official talk” establishes a rigidity that, by design, does not accommodate peripheral considerations, hesitations, questions, or recognition of alterative discourses. Pillow (1994) explains:

Statistics, demographics, charts, tables, means, averages, numbers, and even case studies in ‘official reports’ – are viewed as just that – ‘official.’ ‘Official’ data are accepted in their assumed expertise and neutrality. They tell ‘facts’ which cannot be argued with, ‘facts’ gathered scientifically and produced mathematically (p. 165).

As Britzman (2003) observes, “a discourse becomes powerful when it is institutionally sanctioned” (p. 39). The “official” status of these expert discourses and texts hang together in a way that becomes difficult to question.

One of the elementary teachers, Rachel, an untenured teacher, communicates that the epidemic of “official talk” is ubiquitous (Pillow, 1994, p. 165). Rachel observes that, though she may not agree with a given policy, she complies with policy boundaries. She explains the tensions between her perceptions of policy and “what she believes” to reveal her shifting subject position:

It goes against what I believe because I believe that, especially lower elementary kids should learn through play so much more than they do now. I just look at my classroom last year... My kids just did not have time to just play and explore. There are just so many things that we had to do and get done - that didn’t happen. And, for me, that’s hard because I believe that is how it should be but I don’t feel
that I can do that in my classroom because of all of the requirements with standards (ICH 53-58\(^3\)).

Policy power is evident in the normalization of Rachel’s practices and the regulation of her discourses. Her subject position becomes reflective of the implicit codes of policy “requirements” and “standards.” During the course of this study, many of the elementary teachers recalled similar tensions. They expressed in agreement with Rachel that navigating between policy and their own beliefs is “hard.”

Elementary teachers most often referred to the power of policy by recalling constraints upon their personal abilities to say or do certain things. Repeatedly, these teachers recalled times when new “regimes of truth” became privileged while others were subsequently subjugated or silenced (Foucault, 1980b, p. 46). Most interestingly, the retired elementary teachers recalled cyclical shifts of codes, signifiers, and texts that emerged as “speakable” or silenced depending upon new policy boundaries.

In short, policy discourses are privileged through use of requirements with standards that wield power in relation to teacher discourses. I theorize that as policy discourses are introduced to existing teacher discourses, the boundaries of what becomes “speakable” for teachers is altered.

**The Characteristics of Policy Discourses**

The first aspect of the hybrid model is comprised of the characteristics of policy discourses. The Foucauldian power tools within policy discourses are evident in the

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\(^3\) These notations indicate where these quotes can be found in the data corpus. ICH is a code that connects the research participant to the section of the data corpus to which the quote can be found. The number indicates the line number with the transcripts. This is all provided by way of offering an audit trail.
systemic normalization and regulation of elementary teachers. Certain knowledges become privileged while others are effectively subjugated. During implementation, elementary teachers may become aligned with policy through monitoring themselves and each other to maintain compliant subject positions. I posit that four primary characteristics indicate boundaries for policy discourses to reflect a discursive formation. The following list introduces these characteristics, in contrast with the characteristics of teacher discourses that will be dealt with in the next chapter:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Discourses</th>
<th>Teacher Discourses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absolute language</td>
<td>Tentative language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative data</td>
<td>Qualitative measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance of policy from history</td>
<td>Distance of teachers from administrators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production measures</td>
<td>Awareness of the necessity of “performativity”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Throughout the next four sections, the theoretical characteristics of policy discourses are theorized and described. Teacher explanations are blended with Foucauldian theories of power to create part of the hybrid model for post-structural policy analysis.

**Absolute Language**

Absolute language characterizes policy. Language such as: “shall demonstrate,” “accountable,” “measure,” and “common expectations” create a framework where commands are used to wield power over teachers (No Child Left Behind, 2001). Policy’s absolute language maintains that teacher work should be standardized and measurable to
prepare students to compete in a global economy. Technical systems of checks-and-balances, as established by external policymakers, implicate that policy will transcend teacher inefficiencies. Policy use of absolute language recasts teacher work as mechanistic. As Allison, one of the co-researchers, observes: Elementary teachers used to have “a lot more freedom” (MRH 129) and Kim, a key informant and retired teacher agrees, teaching is: “Too rigid. Too rigid. It is just too rigid right now” (MRH 135). As policy becomes translated through the layers of implementation, the absolute frameworks represent a divergence from language that teachers recognize and use locally.

Kim explains that she felt a gradual policy shift over the years to privilege external authority and outside texts while teacher perspectives were no longer solicited. During the early years of her professional life, Kim remembers that teacher input was valued. Kim explains that education’s increasing reliance upon policy creates a series of texts that wield power that and ignore teacher knowledge:

Teaching doesn’t come from a book. You can read every book in the library and you are still not going to know how to deal with a classroom of children when you get there (MRH 163-164)... Half the time... you fudge what they want to see on paper. So okay, I can write it on paper for you and I’ll give it to you and I will get my name checked off because I handed it in but then it is going into the wastebasket on my end because I am not going to do it that way.... Because it was impossible to do it that way (MRH 186-190).

While this quote indicates that Kim understands the uses of conforming to policy, she does not perceive a connection between the rigidity of policy texts and the lived effects that she must navigate. Kim’s recognition of policy’s absolute language produced situations where she felt forced to perform steps of compliance to avoid retribution. As Allison, the retired co-researcher explains, “They always gave you a form to fill out. And
on the form it would say, ‘How it did you do this and how did you do that?’ (MRH 254-255). In this particular case, Kim completed policy’s prescriptive steps to appear compliant even if the documentation ended up in the wastebasket.

**Quantitative External Measures**

Numbers measure and define teacher compliance within specific policy boundaries. Karen, a teacher nearing the end of her career, noted that policy increasingly emphasizes measurable outcomes. The use of numbers redefines many of her relationships with other teachers and transforms her work into a contest. She explains that quantitative analysis is directly tied to a competitive model governed by numbers:

> It just seems like there is such a bigger focus on testing all of the time that it’s changed… I don’t know. It seems like we’re so caught up in all of the testing and test scores. That, I think, it almost makes it more competitive among everyone… like, ‘See what I’m doing’ (FAH 12-16).

Karen explains that the use of numbers results in teacher competition. By becoming so “caught up” in testing, teacher focus shifts from situational complexity to systems of numbers that have been calibrated apart from schools. Teacher competitions highlight the perceptions that measurable performances are necessary. Numbers can become easily conveyed across contexts so that a broader audience might be invited to participate in a critique of elementary teachers and their ability to produce certain outcomes. The presence of numbers can render associated practices and complex decision-making as invisible.

One of policy’s more common quantitative measures is time. Allison, one of the co-researchers and a retired elementary teacher, explains that policy references to
numbers are often in connection to the concept of “time.” Foucault (1977) observes that “the time table is an old inheritance” as it is easily monitored. Allison explains that “time” can be delineated as a “certain amount” to be monitored by others:

And the time frame…. You have a certain amount of hours. A certain amount of minutes in the day and, I don’t know about RS, but in HS we had to have a certain amount of minutes that the state mandated minutes of language arts, a certain amount of minutes of mathematics… (MRH 51-54) We had to turn in our lesson plans and then we had to break down the minutes (MRH 77).

Allison’s explanation of “breaking down” minutes reveals that policy is positioned to take precedence over teacher judgments. Not only are specific increments determined, but certain curriculum must be covered within prescribed intervals. As Foucault (1997) further explains, time that is “measured and paid must also be a time without impurities or defects… [while] the body is constantly applied to its exercise” (p. 151). Many elementary teachers explain that such purity of time and constant exercise becomes consistently thrown off-course because of the nature of their work with children.

Teachers are asked to numerically document their time usage but explain that the additional paperwork in itself uses time. Allison notes that her work as an elementary teacher progressively became transformed into “so many procedures” (MRH 348).

A retired elementary principal, Emily, recalls that the gradual shifting toward an adherence to quantitative measurements affected her supervisory work. In her last years, she says that administrative duties included increased accounting so she retired and took a position at a local university. The shift toward a “top-down” model guided by numbers became a distraction from goals that she had pursued in the past:

There has been a lot of top-down implementation of stuff, and that is one of the reasons why I decided it was time for me to go, because I was being asked to do
things to teachers under the title of ‘Change Equals Improvement’ that didn’t feel like it was an improvement. It felt like I was there to check-up on them (CIH 29-32)… I trusted my teachers to do their jobs. I did not feel that I needed to be their watchdog, and what I was being asked to do was go in and see and literally count how many videotapes were laying around (CIH 129-131).

In echoing Emily’s sentiments, many elementary teachers explained that aggregate quantitative data became privileged over individual professional judgment. This held true regardless of years of teaching experience and, according to conversations with co-researchers, teacher perspectives become increasingly discounted as they near retirement.

Teachers described staff meetings where graphs and quantitative charts were repeatedly presented. The fact that few of them possess a background in mathematics often caused situations where numbers marginalized teacher perspectives during implementation (Ma, 1999). When teachers did voice concerns or questions, silence was maintained by the use of signifiers such as: “research says.” One of the retired elementary teachers, Jessica, recalls that she would often ask: “What research?” (RJH 36) and soon found that it was a rare administrator who could reference specific studies. Yet the isolated signifier of “research says,” when accompanied with numbers, was powerful. Introductions of policy were eased through claims of expertise connected to numbers associated with “research.” As Kim, another retired teacher recalled, “Most of the time, they just tried to pat you on the head and say, ‘Do it anyway’” (MRH 216).

The emphasis upon numbers created a discourse where teacher failure to have “their children” achieve an aggregate score often incites stress. Rebecca observes:

Everyone is stressed out. I think there is a lot of stress and I think, with that, comes a lot of time constraints. It is hard to fit it all in. Teachers are always panicking to get something done (NIH 219-220).
Rebecca’s observations gesture toward an array of numerical boundaries associated with policy outcomes: hours in the day, segments of curriculum, and scores on tests. When individual teachers try to reach a number based on the achievement of all of their students, countless complex factors become silenced.

**Distance of Policy from History**

During implementation, policy generates power through systems of procedures that become presented as free-floating and neutral. These systems do not tend to acknowledge historical patterns of reform. By maintaining a distance from history, new policy can sometimes be viewed as a series of dictums that drop from the sky with little warning. As Levin (1998) points out, much of the recent language is presented as “self-evident”; whereas, models of today are starkly different from nearly a half century ago. Disciplined institutions, such as schools, emerge to deal with the construction of students, as objects, which are necessary for global competition (Ball, 2003). Such “apocalyptic consequences of failure” are a fairly recent invention (Levin, 1998).

In one of the Phase I foundational interviews, Kim, a retired teacher, reported that she sometimes remained silent when policy was presented as distanced from history. She recalled that, a few years ago, teaching kindergarten-aged children to print was strictly forbidden by district policy. Kim explained that this policy was introduced as an imperative without invitations for deliberation. Her professional knowledge was subjugated during administrative efforts of implementation. Kim did not say anything at the time but explained that, by not teaching students how to write, she would be negligent regardless of what a policy might say. She explains:
I would smile and nod my head and then close my classroom door and do what I knew… what I felt was right anyway. I think in kindergarten… we went through a period where you couldn’t teach letters and you couldn’t teach numbers and you definitely didn’t want to teach them to do any printing. They had this whole list of things not to do. And, I just sat there and smiled and I thought, ‘You have got to be kidding me.’ And, so I just shut my door and did exactly what I wanted to do (MRH 246-252).

The things that Kim was told “not to do” as new policy discourses were introduced indicates a silencing of teacher knowledge concerning previous policies. Teachers claim that the introduction of “new policies” is not “new” but instead reflects “cycles” of power or “pendulums” (MRH, MKH). Efforts to erase any logic associated with the teaching of printing skills reveal that the ahistorical framing of policy can be quite powerful. The implementation of this new printing policy suddenly caused Kim’s present way of teaching to become framed as “wrong”:

What they expect you to teach now compared to what you were able to teach before [has changed]. When I was teaching kindergarten, some of the teachers would ask, ‘Do you teach printing? Why do teach printing?’ [She would respond] Well, because they need to know to make the letters and they were like, ‘Oh, I don’t teach printing’ (MRH 89-92).

The questioning from other teachers indicates ways that the distancing of policy from historical patterns can “mask” any “ruptural effects or conflict or struggle” through systematic introduction (Foucault, 1980b, p. 82). With the seemingly sudden appearance of a new handwriting policy, the teaching of printing became subjugated. As the administrators monitored classrooms, teachers marginalized one another to ensure that past handwriting practices became “unsayable.” Accountability measures are often implemented with the use of broad-based rhetoric and the result is that policy may not be able to arouse much more than ill-defined panic. Policy discourses are “buried and
disguised in a… formal systemization” (Foucault, 1980b, p. 81) of implementation processes. Policy systemization can limit and/or erase teacher practices even if they were once a part of the common sense of teaching like learning how to print.

**Regulation of Teacher Performances Through Production Measures**

Policy emphasis upon institutional measures can render teaching processes invisible while creating urgency around production. The use of production measures cast teacher roles as technical in an increasing use of the “marketplace, military, and business concepts of alignment and the reduction of variation” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2006). Teachers are “encouraged” to “‘add value’ to themselves, improve their productivity, strive for excellence, and live an existence of calculation” (Ball, 2003, p. 145). Jessica, a retired elementary teacher, observes that business rhetoric is used to guide teacher attention toward institutional production. This is a change from years past as Jessica recalled that schools were politically separate from business. She explains:

> We have tried to make ourselves more business-like. It used to seem, when I started out in education, that we were something different than business. We weren’t a business. Now, its like business has gotten into this is the way that the world should work and schools are a business. And, I never heard that when I first started teaching… Schools were something different. We were like a social institution. More like a hospital… and hospitals have gotten to be more business-like too. You hear about the business model being applied to hospitals. That wasn’t true when I started out. I think that we were something different – it was a social… a social institution. We operated a little bit differently because we were there not to make things but to work with people (RJH 30-45).

The institution of education is following medicine with systems designed to measure production. This shift from institutions designed to “work with people” to one that can “make things” is also recognized by Sylvia. Sylvia, retired after thirty years, underscores
Jessica’s observations. She perceives an overt attempt to create an “effective” educational system by positioning teachers as mechanistic:

[Y]ou are nothing but a machine to them, you are no different than a piece of equipment, and frankly, if you have been here a long time, you are an expensive piece of equipment, and that is just fine as long as that piece of equipment works well, but if it doesn’t, guess what? Out and in with a newer, cheaper model, that will work (UIH 122-126).

An emphasis upon “production” is evident in Sylvia’s explanation. Signifiers such as “machine” and “equipment” communicate the perception that she is easily replaceable. Common references to mechanistic classifications such as “old teachers” and “new teachers” appeared in many related retellings. Elementary teachers, particularly toward the end of their careers, expressed that the newer teachers, as embodied signifiers themselves, generally became privileged by policy norms and regulations.

Rachel, an untenured teacher, describes policy production requirements as representative of powerful moving targets. By constantly adjusting goals and associated benchmarks, policy incites power and maintains consistent teacher urgency. Rachel notes that, with this urgency, elementary teachers can become isolated and focused toward compliance. Even with the use of “Professional Learning Communities” (PLC’s), where elementary teachers are told to meet monthly, they create new procedures to meet the next production requirements:

Once we figure out wherever we are going. That is the hardest part. We have to write these ‘smart goals.’ Where are we going? Then, something changes and we get the MEAP scores. And, it’s ‘Oh gee, the pendulum swings to a new topic.’ [laughter] Seriously (ICH 363-366).
Elementary teachers embody policy’s continual shifting to meet new measurements of production. As new policies are introduced, privileged discourses become adjusted while the priorities of schools and teacher subject positions also shift to reflect varying translations of the lived effect of reform.

**The Foucauldian Power Tools of Policy**

As the second aspect of this model, I theorize that policy utilizes four Foucauldian tools of power to normalize and regulate teachers. The power tools, featured in Figure 7, are derived from Gore’s (1995, 1997) “taming” typology of Michel Foucault’s (1980b) description of a diffuse model of power. Through the reorganization of this typology, I developed a new theoretical model to reflect the powerful tools of policy discourses and explain the lived effects of reform. Through the location of these tools that create “new norms,” policy is framed within this study as a technological system of “governmentality” (Foucault, 1991). Foucault maintains that the production of knowledge and the production of power are complex and simultaneous processes.

Knowledge/power becomes evident through “strategies, techniques, methods and technologies” (Foucault, 1991) to be applied by state apparatuses like schools. Lisa, a student teacher, observes, “If you aren’t willing to, kind of, ‘play the game.’ Then there are ways that ‘they’ will make you want to play the game” (MKH 234-235). In this section, I characterize the tools of power by using retellings of teacher performances as well as ways that silence operates to redefine existing teacher relationships.
Survelliance
“supervising, closely observing, watching, threatening to watch, or expecting to be watched” (Foucault, 1980b, p. 235)

Distribution
“distribution of bodies in space – arranging, isolating, separating, ranking” (p. 235)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rational Power Tools (Policy)</th>
<th>Shared Power Tools (Policy &amp; Teachers)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surveillance</strong></td>
<td><strong>Totalization</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“supervising, closely observing, watching,</td>
<td>“the specification of collectives giving collective character”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>threatening to watch, or expecting to be</td>
<td>(p. 242)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>watched” (p. 235)</td>
<td><em>(defined by the rational)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distribution</strong></td>
<td><strong>Individualization</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“distribution of bodies in space – arranging,</td>
<td>“giving individual character to oneself or another”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>isolating, separating, ranking” (p. 240)</td>
<td>(p. 242)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>(defined by the rational)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. This figure refers to the left side of the hybrid model presented on p. 79.

Figure 7. Foucauldian Power Tools of Policy Discourses

**Surveillance**
“[S]upervising, closely observing, watching, threatening to watch, or expecting to be watched” (Foucault, 1980b, p. 235)

Surveillance is a primary tool of power in the discursive formation of policy. To normalize and regulate elementary teachers, policy discourses are often crafted with “accountabilities” to construct teachers as objects of surveillance. As Foucault (1997) observes, the perfect mechanism of surveillance would “make it possible for a single gaze to see everything constantly” (p. 173). As Kim, a retired elementary teacher explains, “[When] I say ‘they’ – I am generalizing, [but] they know that an elementary teacher isn’t going to buck the system” (MRH 565-566).
When policy is implemented, specific discourses becomes privileged as “right.” Teachers referred to these signifiers as “eduspeak” or “buzz words” within framings of: “unpack that,” “think outside the box,” “world class,” “reflect,” and “cutting edge” (field note data). Policy language establishes “ground work” for surveillance while rendering alternative discourses as unspeakable. As Jessica, a retired elementary teacher who questioned new policy, recalled: “I felt somewhat abused when I stood up” (RJH 25).

Surveillance elicits a performance to enact a semblance of compliance. Julie, a newly tenured teacher, explains that the “performative” alignment of her subject position is reflective of policy discourses (Ball, 2003). Her awareness of the “right” signifiers reflects her knowledge of surveillance:

I would throw out one word and I saw all of their body language change. So I just kept going with it. It was almost like I was a stand-up comedian. I was working the crowd… I was throwing out all of the stuff that I knew they were into… They thought I was amazing. Not that they have really seen me teach or really know how I am in the classroom but those were all of the words that they wanted to hear (TIH 72-76).

Julie viewed her performances of policy as necessary. When elementary teachers sensed the surveillance of watchful administrators, colleagues, parents, and community members, many of them knew which words to “throw out” to deflect further scrutiny.

Surveillance was conducted through a litany of accountability mechanisms. Rachel, an untenured teacher, explains that she actually “feels” policy surveillance.

Echoing Foucault’s conceptualization of disciplinary institutions that enact self-regulation, policy surveillance creates a “regulative ensemble” (Aglietta, 1979, p. 101). In these ensemble processes, teacher bodies become aligned with institutional purposes.
Rachel explains that she is “supposed to do” certain things according to what “the district says.” She feels it daily:

I definitely feel it. For me and, I think, a lot of teachers, you are going to do what is expected of you which is what you are supposed to do as a teacher and, what supposedly, is ‘best’ for the kids based on [what] the district says (ICH 75-77).

Rachel internalizes an allegiance to policy goals of production. This framing by policy according to what is “best” signifies the power of surveillance and becomes reflected in Rachel’s subject position. Surveillance reflects “a decisive economic operator [as] both an internal part of the production machinery and as a specific mechanism in the disciplinary power” (Foucault, 1980b, p. 175).

Policy’s generalized use of surveillance redefines relationships through the constant sense of being monitored (Foucault, 1980b, p. 71). Jennifer, a retired elementary teacher, describes the relationships that she once had with parents, students, and other teachers through collaborative pursuits. Aspects of these relationships were eliminated or redefined as new policy was implemented. During her conversation with Allison, the co-researcher, Jennifer explained:

I didn’t mind change because there is always change. There is change in everything. I just didn’t like that I was no longer allowed… For instance, every year we used to put on a really good play. We would put it on for the parents and the students and make the scenery. And, we would use the gym when it was free and we would do it after school. We just weren’t allowed… We weren’t allowed to do it anymore (MKH 394-398).

Policy power, as surveillance, effectively blocks certain practices. The sense of no longer “being allowed” to continue with certain activities indicates subjugations through surveillance paired with a privileging of new policy.
Tools of surveillance extend beyond the explicit means by which administrators directly regulate teachers to teacher self-regulation. The objective and anonymous authorship of policy creates seemingly irrefutable surveillance. According to Lisa, a student teacher, the processes of policy implementation leave teachers with little room for refusal. They can become caricatured as compliant subject positions or, in the words of Lisa, akin to “martyrdom” (KBC 146). Specifically, Lisa observed teacher silences surrounding unrealistic expectations that teachers “adopt” or have “hoisted” upon them. After coming to the teaching profession following several years as a lawyer, she vividly describes the internalization of teacher surveillance. Lisa described such self-regulation like this:

“I saw that was this sort of ‘martyr complex’ that people either have hoisted on them or just adopt that ‘I am a teacher and so if I have to work twenty hours a day to make this happen for a student then that is what I am going to do... If my principal gives me two significant extracurricular projects, I just do it’ (KBC 146-150).

As Lisa observes, teachers may try to meet policy requirements even if it meant sacrificing themselves. Her observations are indicative of Bentham’s model prison that Foucault draws upon throughout his theorizing of power in Discipline and Punish (1975). As with the prisoners that Foucault describes, elementary teachers are systematically regulated so that they gradually develop habits of self-regulation. Lisa’s label of the “martyr complex” reveals that policy power can linger long after administrative enforcement disappears.
Rebecca, a teacher who recently received tenure, grapples with the power of policy and surveillance as “accountability.” She questions policy power while also acknowledging its required and natural presence:

I think there’s always that push to hold everybody accountable. And, I guess you have to have accountability or else people do... [drifts off as if to figure out what teachers would actually do without accountability] I mean, accountability is important. It is a factor that has to be included. I feel like there’s a loss. A lot lost with that. Monitoring the wrong things (NIH 250-253).

What is interesting about this observation by Rebecca is that she senses a “loss” that is difficult to verbalize – becoming almost impossible to utter. As Mills (2004) observes, rules of discourse become “natural” as a “result of what has been excluded, that which is almost unsayable” (p. 11). After years of exposure to accountability mechanisms that endorse the “right” signifiers, Rebecca’s hesitance signals that to question policy surveillance is too dangerous.

**Distribution**

“**Distribution of bodies in space – arranging, isolating, separating, ranking**”

*(Foucault, 1980b, p. 240)*

The tool of “distribution” wields power by geographically arranging “bodies in space” (p. 240). This “space” can be theorized as the physical institutional arrangements in schools or the terrain of discourses. Foucault’s framing of “the body as a site of inscription and resistance” is central to distribution (Pillow, 1994, p. 30). Distribution can operate as “disciplinary power [that] manifests its potency, essentially, by arranging objects... [as a] ceremony of objectification” (Foucault, 1997, p. 187). Use of the tool of distribution within institutionalized space is particularly powerful as elementary teachers do not tend to work directly with other adults.
Distribution is intimately linked to the divisions and organization of physical space. As Allison, the retired co-researcher, recalls that bodies and space shaped her daily work:

If you are not a teacher and you are not in that situation… You don’t have any idea what it’s like to have all of those bodies in one small space for a whole day… through all activities and then teach (MKH 137-139).

The “small space” not only constrains teacher movement but also their power to organize and conduct activities with students. As teachers operate in rooms where other parallel activities are not visible, this institutionalized distribution of bodies isolates teachers from one another as they have similar experiences. Any connection that elementary teachers might make with one another is primarily limited to retellings at lunch or before/after the work day. These women are essentially trapped as going to the bathroom or walking down the hall for food would mean that students are left unsupervised. Kim, a retired teacher, commented that her “favorite aspect of retirement is allowing my body to be ‘normal’” (MRH 338). The power of this physical entrapment, or distribution within space, uncovers the “fragility” that is “related to our bodies and everyday existences” (Foucault, 1980b, p. 80).

The tool of distribution is also evident in the ways that money and supplies are institutionally bestowed. To comply with new policies, elementary teachers buy additional instructional materials with their personal money. As Lisa, a student teacher who left the profession and returned to her work as a lawyer, recalls being told that she would need to use her paycheck to buy classroom materials. One of her university field instructors told her, “If you don’t buy the supplies… who really loses in all of this? Your
students” (BKH 171-172). Lisa explained that she “chafed” under this: “Just suck it up mentality” as her mentor teachers held second jobs to make ends meet. As Rachel, an untenured teacher, echoes, “When you get a hundred bucks for your classroom for crying out loud… Every book in my classroom is mine” (ICH 413-418). The patterns of distribution, in this case, caused elementary teachers to spend their own money.

Along with space and materials, the tool of distribution assigns a “ranking” that determines terrain of discourses that prioritizes aspects of teacher work. As policy requirements become rigid, Julie defends her narrowing role to parents and community members. Even as her practices become increasingly constrained, she must also legitimize the policy that limits her choices. Julie explains and re-explains the boundaries imposed by the implementation of new policy:

> I constantly would have parents wanting me to do things – an end of the year project or a Christmas gift and they don’t understand how much pressure there is to cover curriculum and standards… and that this is a job. I am not here as an entertainment director and people just don’t understand how much work it is. That it is really, truly a grind and it is so intense. [Her husband] just doesn’t understand that I just can’t go to the bathroom when I want… or I can’t just check [the news]. He looks up news and takes breaks whenever he wants (TIH 117-122).

The distributions associated with a regimented school day create the need for elementary teachers to, not only adopt policy; they also must defend it.

Jacqueline, a mid-career teacher, explains that the boundaries of policy are constantly being expanded while institutionalized space and time remain the same. As Carrie, a student teacher, concurs, “Sometimes, we almost feel like it is a boot camp. Students come into class and we’re like, ‘Get to work’ in the morning” (RKH 115-117). Policy discourses distribute imperatives to existing teacher work loads while leaving
them to sort and defend what is most important to accomplish. The aggregation of policy discourses communicate that “Teachers still do not do enough” serve as a constant means of distributive control. To illustrate this point, Jacqueline recalls an interchange that she had with her mother following a local news story:

This little guy was burning incense and the house caught on fire and he didn’t know how to use the fire extinguisher. And my own mother said, ‘Don’t they teach that at school?’ And I said, ‘Mom, what do you mean do we teach that at school? We teach everything. Now you want us to teach fire extinguisher use?’ But truly, we teach... [drifts off as if to consider the lengthy list] When you think about it: Conflict resolution skills... besides the academics... And then people say, well, ‘Why aren’t the academics where they are supposed to be?’ We teach so much and I don’t think that people realize that. I know that they don’t recognize the hours that we put in (JIH 176-181).

Elementary teachers understand that their subject positions are constrained by the increase of policy requirements; meanwhile, the public expects them to always do more. As Rebecca explains, “you make time, which is why everyone is probably stressed out during the year because you give up your own time” (NIH 340-341). Any protest by elementary teachers concerning the inequalities of distribution can become construed as their refusal to help children which in turn is framed as indefensible.

**Totalization & Individuation**

*Assigning “character” either collectively or individually by policy*

Policy discourses wield Foucauldian power tools of “totalization” and “individuation” to assign collective or individual rational “character” to teachers. These tools bestow credibility upon elementary teachers with signifiers such as: “highly qualified,” “reallocate,” and “award” (No Child Left Behind, 2001). Specific recognitions like merit raises, career ladders, and public congratulations represent these tools’ assignment of rational character. The emergence of new educational policy
discourses can actually be related to the introduction of a new culture as a colonialization by anonymous texts through that reassign values. As Fanon (1963) observes, “colonial domination… is total and tends to oversimplify… [and] disrupt in spectacular fashion the cultural life of a conquered people” (p. 263).

Through Foucauldian power tools of totalization and individuation, teachers learn that by acting in certain ways they will either be recognized or be erased through the reassignments of value. Foucault (1997) explains that “as power becomes more anonymous and more functional, those on whom it is exercised tend to be more strongly individuated” (p. 193). According to Julie, policies become implemented in such a way as to label resistant teachers as “nobodies”:

If you ask questions in this district, you are labeled ‘a whiner’ and ‘a problem’ and sometimes they make your life miserable. You were treated as ‘a nobody.’ That is the thing they do as a means of control. You are treated as though you are ‘a nobody’ so that you don’t matter (TIH 355-358).

Teachers are “seen” and translated by policy through a set of variables that promote “truths” of policy systems while imposing a range of “dominations” (Nozaki, 2006).

Policy’s ability to “assign character” can become visible during implementation processes. Karen, an elementary teacher nearing retirement, is not presently recognized by new policies and/or by her administrator. She explains:

When we were in a meeting and sharing ideas, I really felt like she [the administrator] jumped on other people’s ideas. I would say something and it was just kind of, ‘Okay.’ And then we would move on. And that’s where I got the feeling where what I had to say was not important… And, I decided that I just wasn’t going to join in. I didn’t matter because these other people had all of the ideas anyway. I knew who was important (FAH 124-132).
Elementary teachers are recognized in accordance with new policy discourses. This alignment, or characterization, reflects rational signifiers.\(^4\)

Carrie, a student teacher, sorts through complexities of how policy assigns rational “character.” She provides insight concerning the lived effects of reform by recounting a grade-level professional development meeting. Administrators introduced a literacy policy and emphasized the need for specific outcomes. They privileged the variables of time and efficiency while teachers tried to explain the difficulties with implementation processes. Carrie recalls:

The teachers kept talking about time issues and then the coordinator and the principal were saying that you should have bigger groups. You should have fewer groups and you should be able to meet with them more often. They’re [teachers are] saying, ‘Well, we already have five kids in a group. Do you want us to have eight? That just sounds silly’… it got to a point where the literacy coordinator said, ‘I’m hearing a lot of excuses, which I understand, but we need to think outside the box to solve these problems.’ And, the teacher just stopped talking and, for about the next ten minutes, it was just… It was… I have never felt so uncomfortable in my entire life (RKH 37-46).

Carrie perceived contradictions and inconsistencies between the new policy and her observations of literacy instructional within elementary classrooms. The elementary teacher subject positions shifted during this confrontation as their “collective character” was determined. The administrator characterization resulted in physical and verbal withdrawals by the teachers. Their questions are silenced by the administrator reiterations of new literacy policy outcomes and the inclusion of: “think outside the box.” This particular signifier seems to convey that, if these teachers tried harder, then policy

\(^4\) Notably, Karen expressed gratefulness for an opportunity to “be listened to” when her interview was completed (AFH field notes).
problems could be solved and institutional compliance could be achieved. Carrie recalls this particular incident with palpable emotion.

Carrie perceives policy as physically blocking ways that teachers can be heard. She struggles to come to terms with the “character” that the elementary teachers are assigned. The repetition of policy by this administrator demonstrates the “constraints upon the interpretation of text” as “it historicizes the text as something that originates in the world, which insists upon its own being” (Ashcroft & Ahluwalia, 1999, p. 6).

An Alignment with Policy Discourses

Through policy’s privileging of certain discourses and the subjugating of others, teacher bodies and discourses can be limited by the space that they occupy during times of change. The following description is offered as a snapshot of a suspended subject position of, what I term, “silent survival” within the discursive formation of policy. The description of this subject position is not intended to essentialize elementary teachers or to define them in a static way. Instead, I use subject positions to understand the discourses that teachers may perceive as available/unavailable throughout shifts of policy discourses. The codes and patterns that emerged from teacher retellings coalesced to shape this subject position and the ones in the following chapters. These counter-narratives are derived from the theoretical sampling model used in the third phase of the study. The presentation and description of a series of four subject positions allows representations of teachers to develop as counter-narratives in contrast to the narratives of policy. I use teacher subject positions to theorize that individuals embody discourses that can be traced and mapped within the boundaries of policy.
The Subject Position of Silent Survival
(Non-adherence to Teacher Norms; Adherence to Policy Norms)

The subject position of “silent survival” is often assumed when teachers enter their first job. The discourse practices of elementary teachers that reflect “silent survival” indicate the willingness to be a “team player” for the support and endorsement of new policy. They acknowledge the futility “to fight city hall.” Any disagreement is not usually shared publicly. Teachers, in this subject position, recognize the precariousness of one elementary teacher’s ability to make any meaningful change. Instead, these teachers recognize that they must do “what is required” and adamantly explain that the students should come first. The elementary teachers who reflect the discourses of “silent survival” are admittedly disinterested in vocally resisting policy. They may tend to avoid any discourses associated with negativity. These particular teachers explain that they do not want to be thought of as “trouble” or a “problem teacher.”

Within the subject position of “silent survival,” elementary teachers do not perceive accessible discourses during policy processes. They remain silent and try, if at all possible, to operate “below the radar.” As Rachel points out, she learned from the very first day that to be successful as a new elementary teacher, she should remain silent. She knew to:

Shut up. Honestly with being a newer teacher, you try not to rock the boat much just because I am not tenured yet and that does have an effect on things (ICH 81-82).

“Silent survival” practices can often be passed down through generations of the profession. For example, mentor teachers will often instruct student teachers that they
should listen in the lounge but not say anything. As Carrie, a student teacher observed, the understood “rules about when to talk” are shared (RKH 39).

Positioned within the subject positions of “silent survival,” Karen, an end-of-career elementary teacher, admits that policy has gained increasing control of the profession and so she disengages. Her subject position reflects silence. This is a shift from previous years when she focused upon the development of personal relationships with other teachers. Now, much of Karen’s time is spent locating ways of “playing the game” of policy:

I think I just kept more to myself. And, you know, I find myself maybe even choking on some of the words – ‘playing the game.’ When you had to… [pauses as if to locate a specific example] saying things that you knew were going to be acceptable (FAH 149-153).

It is interesting to note Karen’s “choking” reference. She underscores the tensions of aligning her subject position with current policy discourses while hardly being able to say the necessary words. Still Karen emphatically explains the benefits of aligning herself with new models of policy.

Even elementary teachers who do not reflect this subject position of “silent survival” do recognize and support others’ uses of silences. Rebecca, in her first several years as an elementary teacher, observed that other teachers cope with policy discourses through silence. Though she tends to be vocal concerning her perceptions of policy, she explains that these teachers are just trying to “keep up.” Though not her first inclination, Rebecca admits to feelings of being overwhelmed and defaulting to silence. She explains that she is just “done” with the cycles of reform: “It is too much. Too much” (NIH 206-210). In the silence that follows, there did not seem to be anything left to say.
Conclusion

In this chapter, findings were discussed with regard to the normalization and regulatory influences of policy discourses. In the next chapter, teacher discourses will be introduced as associated to teacher production of relational power and the use of silence as unregulated speech. Through the use of a Foucauldian lens, I have reframed policy as a collection of discourses that hang together, as a discursive formation. In this way, theoretical space can be opened to analyze a diffusion of power and lead to the next chapter that explores teacher production of relational power. The analysis of policy characteristics, primary power tools, and teacher positionality systemically reflect the “right” models of teacher compliance. With the use of “audit” mechanisms, policy texts determine what signifiers, contexts, and influences become privileged during this process. Lather (1990) warns that “conceptions of reason and logic are not innocent.” She emphasizes that “standards of rationality have functioned historically to impose definitions of human nature” (p. 329). By moving away from assumptions that teachers must be defined in terms of policy, I look instead at the shifting layers of discourses between policy and teachers.
Chapter 5

A Hybrid Model of Policy Analysis II: Teacher Production of Relational Power

To embody the norms that govern speakability in one’s speech is to consummate one’s status as a subject of speech.
-Judith Butler (1997a)

The previous chapter established a discursive formation of policy discourses that included distinct characteristics, power tools, and a theoretical subject position. In this chapter, teacher discourses are explored. To theoretically create a discursive formation of elementary teacher discourses, I used many iterations of grounded work to explore teacher subject positions and theorize their production of relational power.

By approaching educational policy analysis with a Foucauldian perspective, I look closely at teacher perceptions of the lived effects of reform. As a contrast to the previous chapter, this chapter begins with a theoretical sketch of the characteristics of teacher discourses followed by a description of the primary Foucauldian power tools. The last section will describe the inhabitable subject position of “silent resistance” that primarily aligns with teacher discourses. The previous subject position of “silent survival,” in Chapter Four, is in contrast to this subject position of “silent resistance.” As Mills (2004) explains, “discursive rules are always under negotiation and renegotiation” (p. 88). This chapter theorizes negotiated boundaries of teacher discourses that create a discursive formation that runs counter to that of policy.
Discursive Formation of Teacher Discourses

Though many policy analyses typically situate teachers in the communities of practice literature (Coburn & Stein, 2006; Lave & Wenger, 1990), I use Michel Foucault’s theory of power to glimpse the diffuse and relational qualities that characterize consistent patternings or “clusters” of teacher interactions. Foucault (1980b) theorizes that power can be construed as “an open-ended, more-or-less coordinated cluster of relations” (p. 199). A Foucauldian perspective resists the absolutes of teacher membership in discrete communities and instead looks for ways that teachers produce power among themselves through shifting relationships. In looking at teacher relationships, I analyze systems of subjugations and associated silences that create the lived effects of reform. As Ball (2003) observes, teacher struggles are “often highly personal” as they exemplify the intersectionalities of “belief and commitment, service and even love, mental health and emotional well-being” (p. 144).

This relational power is maintained and produced through perceptions that “others” do not understand the job. Susan, one of the co-researchers and a newly tenured teacher, explains, “It takes a teacher to understand, what it’s like. I don’t even think
family members truly understand. They might have sympathy for you but they can’t have empathy. You don’t until you’ve actually walked it and lived it” (LDH 205-207). Even though elementary teachers are not typically engaged with one another during the work day, they become accustomed to shared, unspoken understandings and localized truths. Through connections, relations, and memberships, teachers become conditioned while also having conditioning effects upon one another (Foucault, 1980b). As one teacher observes, “There is just something about elementary teachers” (ICH 244-245). Allison, a retired teacher and co-researcher, explains teacher connections to one another like this:

You know what they are doing in their classroom. And, you know how hard they are working and you appreciate them too. And, it makes it feel like if you had a difficult day -- you know that someone else probably did too [soft laughter] (MKH 131-133).

Elementary teacher efforts of “giving it their all” entail physical, emotional, and intellectual exhaustion that conditions teachers toward strong personal bonds with one another. Their exhaustions are unique to the “pink collar” professions (Wines, 2006) and are reminiscent of Zinn’s (2003) historical contentions, cited earlier, of women’s isolation and caretaking duties. Jennifer recalled that generally teachers feel “taken for granted, very often” (MKH 126) and continues to say that:

[Our] society doesn’t really respect teachers as some other societies do… And so that creates a bond between the teachers that know that, well, I am working hard, I am doing the best that I can on any given day, and I am giving it my all (MKH 126-129).

With the shared sense of professional isolation, teacher expressions of mutual appreciation produce relational power.
Data Analysis and Translations of Power

Using Foucault’s theory of relational power, I illustrate the lived effects of reform. By not ascribing to views of teachers as “simply passive victims” (Mills, 2004, p. 27), the methodological concept of discourse demonstrates the boundaries that political actors work within and against to create meaning and engage with one another. Elementary teachers frequently referred to shared relationships to explain influences and motivations concerning what they said or did. By establishing teacher production of relational power as a contrast to policy power, I use Gore’s (1995) work to explain that Foucauldian theories of power serve as a reminder “that power is not only repressive but is frequently productive” (p. 184). Elementary teachers produce power through their relationships. Emily, a retired elementary principal recalls, “my perception was that it was relationships, relationships, relationships” (CIH 110).

I do not intend to privilege alternate “truths” as located within teacher perceptions; instead, I illuminate some of the messiness that arises when discourses confront one another during reform. Foucault (1980b) theorizes that power “has no binary” as it is an “all-encompassing opposition between rulers and ruled at the point of power relations” (p. 93). Silence surfaces as one of the relational significations that appear throughout teachers’ spoken words, institutionalized understandings, and political framings. The following section addresses the Foucauldian power tools of classification, exclusion, totalization and individuation. This chapter will end with a description of the subject position of “silent resistance.”
Normalization and Regulation of Teachers in Relation to One Another

The power of teacher discourses results in the iterative normalization and regulation of elementary teacher subject positions in specific ways. Through informal teacher memberships and silences, teachers become aligned with certain localized discourses through monitoring themselves and each other. The negotiation of memberships allows teachers to maintain subject positions that confront, diverge or run parallel to those of policy. I offer evidence to show that “the individual is the product of power” by establishing the characteristics of a discursive formation of teacher discourses (Deleuze, 1986, p. xiii). The following list introduces four characteristics that define teacher discourses in contrast with the characteristics of policy discourses in Chapter Four:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Discourses</th>
<th>Teacher Discourses</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absolute language</td>
<td>Tentative language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative data</td>
<td>Qualitative measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance of policy from history</td>
<td>Distance of teachers from administrators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production measures</td>
<td>Awareness of the necessity of “performativity”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Throughout the next four sections, these characteristics of teacher discourses will be addressed and theorized as indicative of a discursive formation.
The Recognition and Exchange of Tentative Language

As policy embodies absolute language, teachers diverge with comparatively weaker patterns and structures of language; yet in the sense that these tentative signifiers are shared as natural, unmistakable relational power is produced. The tentative language that elementary teachers share among one another is a marked divergence from policy. For example, after I asked one elementary teacher to describe an ideal risk-taking environment, her response exemplified the use of tentative language:

I think that at staff meetings when you think that your ideas are heard and people don’t attack you. So, I guess just being listened to by various people. Validation from your peers. Probably people who have taken a risk before and have been successful. ‘Oh hey, someone else did it - maybe I can do it.’ (ICH 25-27)

This teacher language use noticeably diverges from policy use of absolute language. She uses “think” to temper any certainty in her statements and then adds words like “guess,” “probably,” and “maybe” to frame her perspectives and abilities as conditional. In general, teachers hesitated to make absolute declarations about their professional abilities and deflected personal compliments or professional credit.

During the Phase I foundational interviews where I observed conversational interactions (see Fig. 9), elementary teachers were consistently deferential to one another. As Figure 9 demonstrates, the two foundational interviews were characterized by frequent uses of tentative language.
Teachers offered suggestions, conditional statements, and questions to create a shared discourse while producing relational power. They frequently sought agreement before reaching any conclusion. Elementary teachers became powerful in an elusively persistent sense by making connections through tentative language. Throughout teacher interactions characterized by tentative language, statements were repeated, suggestions were reworded to signal agreement, and non-verbals were noted (e.g. catching one another’s eyes, nodding, soft laughter, shrugging, and leaning forward). Uses of “I feel”
and “I think” were conditioned with other codes of “like,” “if,” “maybe” and “kind of” to be further framed by the use of shared silences. Susan, a co-researcher, offers an explanation for the normalized uses of tentative language: “You’re giving your ‘best’ and worrying that your ‘best’ might not be good enough” (LDH 525).

According to Allison, a co-researcher and retired elementary teacher, policy involves the introduction of a script. Policy’s script and accompanying implementation processes does not recognize teacher ways of interacting. She recalled, “I felt that they [policymakers and administrators] really didn’t think teachers were very capable or smart. Everything was presented to us – to do it in a certain way and say a certain thing” (MKH 393-394). Notably, Allison’s remarks reflect tentative codes such as “felt” to indicate her point of view and “think” to acknowledge administrator perspectives. Elementary teachers spoke in ways that refused absolutes. They embodied power that deflected policy without an engagement in overt confrontation; yet, they succeeded in subtly undermining notions of policy authority. Tentative language created a discourse of an “agreeable means of disagreeing.” As teachers spoke, their tentative language refuses power held over them. By viewing everything as conditional, tentative, and temporary, teachers maintained their relationships and in turn their power as constant amid changing policy cycles.

When elementary teachers did become more authoritative in their language use, it was in response to any questions and suggestions that they should be more confrontational and vocal about their disagreements with policy. As Allison, the retired co-researcher, asserts strongly, “You don’t criticize. No, you just don’t criticize… You
just don’t. To argue about it doesn’t get you anywhere” (MRH 118). Allison’s refusals to abandon her use of tentative language was certain and unhesitating. Her explained need to maintain silence seemed powerful; arguably, more powerful than a choice to speak out alone. If a teacher does risk “breaking rank” to directly address an administrator, there seemed to be little to gain. Those teachers would become visible as individuals incapable of compliance. Shared uses of tentative language maintained that confrontations or protests from one teacher would be futile at best and detrimental at worst.

The Privileging of Qualitative Measures

As opposed to policy discourses that rely upon quantitative data, teacher discourses are characterized by qualitative measures. Elementary teacher power is shared and communicated through personal connections. Teachers measured their success through the retelling of narratives while relating immense details (e.g. the characterization of a student’s family life, the context of a classroom, the history behind a conversation). Teacher success was not defined by numbers or, in the words of Rebecca, a newly tenured teacher, by “money, fame, or stardom” (NIH 18). Their definitions of data were often tied to the elements of teaching and of relationships that eluded measure. These elements could be better recognized as professional judgment developed through the integration and understanding of multiple and blended qualitative perspectives. Rebecca explains the familiar language of policymaking by saying, “You have to be accountable. That’s important. Valid. No doubt about it” (NIH 294). But, then describes the values to which she personally ascribes. According to Rebecca, the qualitative elements of “laughter… the ‘aha’ moment… chaos…organized chaos…and curiosity
allow her classroom to “feel different” (NIH 329-348). This “feeling,” cultivated by the development of relationships with her students, serves as her indicator of success.

There are many qualitative narratives that frame the elementary teaching profession. Mugs, t-shirts, and keepsake books refer to “making the difference in the life of a child.” This familiar phrase is frequently emblazoned on teacher gifts and is a common theme prized in ways that the profession of teaching becomes storied. These stories emphasize that every child should be recognized as an individual and will become successful through his/her unique relationship to a teacher. Karen, an elementary teacher with thirty years experience, says that “the work that you are doing should prove if you are in it for the kids. I feel like it has moved away [from that] and the kids have more needs than they ever have” (FAH 23-25). The opportunities to help students and develop relationships were mentioned by every elementary teacher as the reasons for staying in the profession or missing it during retirement.

Elementary teachers talked with great detail about the qualitative development of their professional judgment as they worked with individual students. Susan, one of the co-researchers and a newly tenured teacher, talks about the professional satisfaction that she gains from working with “students who struggle.” She enjoys creating methods so that students will be successful and explains:

I have found that I really, really enjoy working with students who struggle. I really find it satisfying to work with kids with learning disabilities. It really is a challenge to me – finding a way to help them understand this concept. I find it really satisfying when I do (LDH 482-485).

Her process of “finding ways” alludes to the qualitative, systematic processes through which her professional judgment becomes refined. Susan’s motivation for continuing to
work with students remains in the daily satisfaction of supporting students. She talked at length about how she enjoys supporting students as they become confident, begin to take an interest in learning, and gain insight toward understanding.

Many of the elementary teachers also mention interests in the qualitative issues that frame and influence student learning. Jacqueline, a mid-career teacher, talks at length about the struggle that girls, in this case, can experience as they grow and develop. She expresses a desire to work in school counseling in order to support students’ social development. She explains:

I see those girls. I just went through it with my daughter. Fifth, sixth, seventh grade… Especially the girls who just don’t feel very good about themselves. I would like to help them through that. But maybe some of that is natural… Maybe you just naturally go through that. I don’t know. But just even to talk to other girls, how they relate to each other. You don’t need to put down somebody because they are overweight or the way they dress (GIH 69-74).

Jacqueline recognizes the importance of these issues as affecting ways that students view themselves and approach learning. The qualitative framing of Jacqueline’s questions, descriptions, and wonderings is unmistakable.

Teacher use of qualitative ways of knowing is integral to professional motivations and measures of success. Sylvia, a retired teacher who now works for a non-profit, explains that elementary teachers develop their professional judgment through opportunities to be professionally creative. She talks about policy encroachment at her former school and the ways that the “feeling” of the building has changed due to policy’s redefinition of data:

I am not saying there shouldn’t be consistency, because there should be, but it is also very cookie cutter, and I think it is such a hard job, that unless you have that passion for it, [and] you can be creative and what you know matters. I don’t know
that people can do it for thirty years anymore (UIH 155-157) … [she later reflects] It amazes me that that building was so consistent for decades and then could unravel so quickly and become so different, and I have parents who say that to me too that it just feels so different now (UIH 228-231).

Sylvia’s acknowledgement of policy efforts of consistency is in tension with her recognition that professional sustainability is rooted in creativity. She thinks hard about the sustainability of a teaching profession where the steps become prescriptive or, in her words, “cookie cutter.” In all, it seems that Sylvia regrets the loss of a time when teachers felt that “what you know matters.”

**Teacher Distance from Administrators**

When elementary teachers do talk with administrators, they tend to keep it on a personal level to maintain congeniality while not addressing policy directly. As Bachrach and Baratz (1962, 1963) note, choosing to not engage or participate can be powerful. Generally, teachers deal with administrators through distance and rarely though direct confrontation. Carrie, a student teacher, explains the sense that she is not “seen” as an individual perpetuates this distance. As an example, she recalls a university instructor who taught a methods course but did not “see” her peers within the pre-service teaching cohort. Carrie explains that, as her peers perceived this instructor’s disinterest in them, they became distant and disenchanted with learning new material. The recognition of this instructor’s “ultimate authority” is in contrast to Carrie’s knowledge of her colleagues’ needs:

She thinks that she is the ultimate authority on social studies and diversity. And, what we need as pre-service teachers. Like what we need to learn… And so, with all of that said… It is hard for her to know anything about us. And, to know what our concerns and our fears or to know why we feel the way we do. Because, she’s not… She doesn’t even see us. Like she sees past us (RKH 253-257).
The sense that her instructor sees “past” her and her peers captures many of the related explanations as to why teacher discourses include a distance from administrators.

Elementary teachers are certain that their professional opinions will not be valued. Lisa, another student teacher, observed the distance that teachers maintained in the field:

It was amazing to sit in a room with two administrators and a member of the community. And to see these teachers, ‘Oh yeah sure. Yeah. Great. Absolutely. That sounds fantastic.’ When you could just tell by their body language that they didn’t have the time [to coordinate an additional project] and it was going to be a major pain in the ass but they were going to do it because that is what is expected of them (BKH 222-227).

Instead of explaining the current constraints of their jobs, these teachers maintained distance even as related to the introduction of additional responsibilities to their already busy schedules.

By remaining “back a little bit” while also being “very friendly” and “very outgoing,” elementary teachers produce relational power that is not shared with administrators. Allison, a co-researcher, and Jennifer, a retired teacher, describe a shared, though admittedly ad-hoc, code of conduct. They both readily agreed that it was important to be congenial to administrators while also maintaining shared understandings and loyalties among teachers. Allison and Jennifer reflect on the necessity of such distance:

Most teachers stay back a little bit from administration. They are very friendly, though. (Nods) Very friendly. Very outgoing. Go to their house. Participate in social events but would probably never discuss true feelings or beliefs because, for one thing, it wouldn’t be adhered to… we would have been put down… And it would have been said that we weren’t doing our jobs… (MKH 21-29).
Elementary teachers know the rules of what is unspeakable while also acknowledging discourse boundaries. Their distance is intentional – though not normatively pre-mediated and/or linked to a specific event. In this example, Allison and Jennifer’s use of cordiality and silences as a means to gain “negative freedom” (Hayward, 2000). Their intentional distance expands the boundaries of what they can say and do by deflecting possible interventions by policy. It is maintained through classic performative expectations of being cheerful and friendly (BKH) or, in the words of Julie, a newly tenured teacher, being “a dynamo cutie” (TIH).

Julie, an elementary teacher who recently received tenure, further explains that she maintains distance and “keeps her head down” to avoid interacting with her administrator. She explains:

I just keep my head down, I don’t interact with him. I don’t send any behavior problems to the office. Because he hates that. Because they don’t want to deal with them. And, I have learned that [when they do] they don’t deal with them in the way that I want. So, I figured out how to make it work for myself (TIH 338-341).

By not dealing with her administrator, Julie maintains the relational boundaries that are shared among teachers. Sensing the commonality of these distances, Rebecca, another newly tenured teacher, says that if she were to ever become a principal, she would ask for teachers’ “professional opinion. Because that is what they are.” Then, she pauses and then reflects, “I think that part has been taken out” (NIH 190).

**Awareness of “Performativity” as Necessity**

Elementary teachers are acutely aware of the required performances of their job. Elementary teacher understanding of “performativity” begins early in their career (Ball,
Ball (2003) explains that this recent “policy epidemic” does not “simply change what we, as educators, scholars, and researchers do, it changes who we are” (p. 215). Teachers frequently referenced the unspecified power of “they.” Their constant use of “they” seemed to reference administrators, policy, community members or parents. In aggregation, this shared understanding of “they” creates a perceived need for performances from teachers. Lisa, a student teacher, observes that the shared sense of necessary performances become visible as “an official story. A party line” (BKH 8-9).

Julie, a newly tenured teacher, explains that professional abilities are actually secondary to teacher understanding of the need to perform and always be “on” (TIH 15). She remembers the transition from her role as an education student to a practicing elementary teacher as difficult. Julie is now on a self-regulated “autopilot” with necessary discourses and practices. This makes her job “easier”:

It is like being in a Broadway Show, Five Days a Week… From 8:00am to 4:30 pm with only a 40 minute intermission if you’re lucky. You are a performer. It is hard at first because you are not used to that. Because you come out of your college classes where you are this passive person learning about it and writing papers. But, when you first get your first job it is… You don’t realize how much. You don’t just have to perform in front of the kids, you have to perform in front of your colleagues because there is this whole culture of whatever school you’re in and this ‘speak’ that is expected from you. And then you have to perform in front of parents. And you do… it gets easier and you just forget about it. Like, I’ll just be on autopilot a lot of times. Performing in front of the kids. It gets easier (TIH 126-139).

Julie’s referencing of the required “speak” provides a glimpse into layers of discourse that shift as policy is introduced to teachers. Her admission that “it gets easier” alludes to ways that new discourses become integrated into teacher performances according to the policy of the time.
Elementary teachers reflect policy language as a part of being “on” during their job. Teachers, in the early parts of their career, explain that they are acutely aware of the saying the right things, wearing the right clothes, and seeming, in the words of one student teacher, “teachery.” Karen, an experienced teacher, explains: “You have to be ‘on’ – you can’t just say: ‘Stop! I’ve got to think about this.’ You have to have a balance all of the time” (FAH 243-244). In part, Rebecca thinks that this focus upon performance is fueled by constant fear. She explains:

I think there is a fear to make a mistake. There is a conscious effort to not make a mistake… I think there is a little bit of you that is worried that you will be reprimanded by a fellow colleague, by a principal… That your principal is going to get reprimanded from the higher-ups (NIH 137-140).

Teacher efforts at performance cannot be labeled easily as negative, defiant, or resistant. It seems more complex than that. Many of the elementary teachers recognized the awareness of new “eduspeak” or “official talk” as essential to their survival (Pillow, 1994). Teachers recollected ways that they had to perform to make policy “work.”

As Melissa, the co-researcher and newly tenured teacher, explains:

Whenever I am in professional meeting, I am constantly asking myself, ‘How’s this going to work? What does this mean to me? How can I translate this into plain English?’ (LDH 10)

Teacher performances are often blended with sense-making questions surrounding the lived effects of reform.

Mentor teachers often explain to student teachers that these performances are necessary. For example, Julie, a teacher who recently received tenure, provided performance instructions, per say, to her student teacher by encouraging her to say and do
certain things. Unfortunately, the student teacher failed publicly in front of an administrator by not preparing properly for the performance of a prepared lesson and administrative interview. The result, as Julie had predicted, was an increasing monitoring of the student teacher progress. By not performing appropriately, this particular student teacher became isolated from the other teachers: “That is what my student teacher didn’t get – that a lot of it is a show. And you are performing” (TIH 85-86). Notably, Julie later differentiates between what is “the show” and the “real” as if to gesture toward shifting layers of truths and subjugations.

Carrie’s observations, as a student teacher, indicate that teacher failure to recognize this necessary performance can become doubly detrimental. Teachers would risk breaking shared silences and not “heard” anyway. In her example, she observes a group of elementary teachers as they explain implementation issues to an administrator. The teachers try to convey that the instructional elements of time, resources, and teacher-to-student ratios are difficult to overcome. While Carrie sat in on this meeting, the teachers asked for help:

They [the group of teachers] were asking for help and they didn’t get any. And, so I think, they felt like that just wasn’t… [Teachers were thinking] ‘They’re not going to help me and they are going to say that I am the problem…’ What is the use of talking through any of these challenges (RKH 54-57)?’

The question of “What is the use?” early in Carrie’s career reveals ways that teachers observe one another during confrontations and begin to progressively acquire silences as an aspect of their relational discourses. Allison, the co-researcher, explains that teachers tend to respond to aftermath of such situations with “camaraderie…” and this is

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5 This analysis benefits from reading and analysis of Gayatri Spivak (1988) Can the Subaltern Speak?
expressed as: “Okay, we’re just going to close our doors and do it the way we do it” (MRH 403-404).

This camaraderie often included shared instructions concerning teacher performances as protection. Jennifer, a retired elementary teacher, recalled, “I know that we tried to help this one teacher – who was having problems and we told her, ‘Well, just make your desk look organized. They will think that you are organized’” (MKH 302-304).

The Foucauldian Power Tools of Teacher Discourses

By exploring which specific signifiers and texts are privileged during reform, the common sense surrounding the hierarchical power of policy can be interrupted. In the second section of this chapter, I do not intend to demonstrate an emancipatory power of teachers, in the collective sense. Foucault (1980b) points out that, “the great fantasy is the idea of a social body constituted by a universality of wills” (p. 55). By using Foucault’s theorization of power as “net-like,” I posit four primary tools of power that normalize and regulate teachers in relation to one another. The truths among the teacher discourses develop through production of relational power that arises from the creation of groups that include and exclude. These groups are created according to the shifting boundaries of what becomes speakable to “others” – particularly the “others” charged with introducing policy. Foucault’s (1980b) theories of power explore “the point where power reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourses… and everyday lives” (p. 39). Elementary teacher discourses
are defined by characteristics that diverge from policy to become embodied in subject positions that are included and excluded.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shared Power Tools (Policy &amp; Teachers)</th>
<th>Personal Power Tools (Teachers)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totalization</strong>&lt;br&gt;“the specification of collectives, giving collective character” (p. 242)</td>
<td><strong>Classification</strong>&lt;br&gt;“differentiating groups” (p. 239)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(defined by the personal)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Individualization</strong>&lt;br&gt;“giving individual character to oneself or another” (p. 242)</td>
<td><strong>Exclusion</strong>&lt;br&gt;“a technique for tracing the limits that will define discourse” (p. 238)</td>
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<td>(defined by the personal)</td>
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*Note.* This figure refers to the right side of the hybrid model presented on p. 79.

*Figure 10.* Foucauldian Power Tools of Teacher Discourses

**Classification**

“[D]ifferentiating groups” (*Foucault, 1980b, p. 239*)

Classification is a relational tool of power that involves the shifting of boundaries to include teachers – often alluded to through references to “loyalty,” “bond,” “relationships,” and “empathy” (field notes and interviews). Classification produces power by creating groups through the differentiation of shared codes, signifiers, and acknowledgements of certain texts. Though sometimes difficult to detect empirically,
powerful patterns of informal membership affect what teachers do and say. Classification patterns – particularly during processes of implementation – are quite powerful. Lisa, a former lawyer and a student teacher, describes classification as “a definite *esprit de corps*” by explaining that teachers are on “the same side. They might not always agree and they may not always think that everybody was doing the best that they could but there was just a loyalty there” (BKH 240-258).

Groupings among teachers seemed to be linked with the importance that many teachers assigned to their professional responsibilities. As Sylvia, a retired elementary teacher, explains that her sense of teaching is not confined to the 8-5 mentality of a “day job.” She emphasizes, as do all of the other teachers, that elementary teaching overtakes her life in an every-waking-minute-kind-of-way. Because of this, she maintains powerful personal relationships with other teachers who understand. When Sylvia recalls the earlier years as an elementary teacher, she talks of a love of working with colleagues:

I think it is very easy to almost have it overtake you 24 hours a day… you can wake up at 3:30 in the morning and think about this, this, and this. You are in the shower and think this, this, and this (UIH 161-166)… We were truly blessed. I mean, how many people can say for that many years that they absolutely loved going to their job? (UIH 228)

Sylvia uses “blessed” and “love” to refer to her sense of shared membership. Sylvia explains that although in years past elementary teacher methods were not “scientific,” teachers planned together, graded in small groups, and shared instructional materials (UIH 250-261). Because elementary teaching is such a large part of her life, she conveys an intimate intertwining of “the personal” with the professional. Sylvia emphasized that
even as teachers drive home, do things with their family, or take time for themselves, many are still thinking of the job and the associated relational negotiations.

Relationships are an implicit aspect of the daily work of teachers. Susan, a co-researcher and newly tenured teacher, underscores how much is given to her job and her relationships with other teachers. So much so that she has a difficult time differentiating her position as an elementary teacher from the rest of her life. As she explains, no other part of her life gets as much attention as teaching:

For me, when I am teaching. I give this job everything I have. There is no other part of my life that gets as much attention as this -- like this is it. Everything in me poured out for this – for this job. I’m, um, I can’t really describe it (LDH 201-203).

Susan’s pauses followed by her admission of “I can’t really describe it” gestures toward the many times that intangible qualities of teacher relationships became difficult to fully articulate with words but yet remained powerful. Although teachers often referred to an unmistakable power among teachers, they faltered with representing its presence via available discourses and signifiers.

As policy’s validation of teacher relationships, recent policies incorporate formalized teacher groups as a means of leveraging reform. One of the recent outgrowths of policy is referred to as “Professional Learning Communities,” or PLC’s. According to many elementary teachers, groups of teachers are generally assigned to prescribed communities according to externally evident criteria (e.g. grade level, subject matter) and are given a specific list of goals. Jessica, a retired elementary teacher, found this interesting and explains that groupings are an outgrowth of the relational organization of teacher discourses:
I think we seek relationships with one another. They tried to make ‘Professional Learning Communities’ for us but it was always such a natural thing for teachers… It is just something that teachers do. They form their own with people who are like-minded. And I think most teachers are like-minded in a way (RJH 126-129).

These differentiated groups of “like-minded” teachers wield power through relationships. As Jessica points out, there are many “natural” ways that teachers can become connected and in turn powerful. Jessica’s sense of relationships as “natural” surfaces the existence of the implicit power structures among teachers as so familiar that they persist as unmentioned. As Rebecca, an elementary teacher who recently received tenure, concurs:

We have this push of PLC communities and that’s great. But, our PLC communities are being guided from an administrative level…Where really, much of that work is not what the staff members feel is best for their classrooms… And, that’s unfortunate…We are supposed to turn in information to our principal who then takes it to the principals’ meeting (NIH 230-243).

Jessica’s comments indicate that she and other teachers discuss what might be “best” for the classroom in teacher groupings apart from policy’s mandated structure.

Elementary teacher subject positions are situated within informal membership boundaries that are negotiated during shifting group differentiations. Oftentimes, this relational power can be erroneously labeled as unfailingly supportive. These relationships can also operate as coercive. Karen, an end-of-career teacher, explains that teachers may control others through classification – by seeming to care and trying to force memberships in a range of informal groups. As an example, Karen recalls a discrepancy between what one teacher would say and what she actually implied:

I would feel like she was, kind of, overbearing. You know, like she really cared when really she didn’t care. She just wanted to be in control of things. A lot of times you got the feeling that what she was doing was much better than what you were doing (AFB 136-139).
Karen sensed that the initiation of this particular relationship might be rooted in trying to influence her practices. Through the negotiation of relationships, some teachers tried to influence their colleagues to help them to become “better” in some way. Susan, the co-researcher who recently received tenure, reported that classification among teachers can also maintain the boundaries of membership in formal committees. When elementary teachers are asked to join committees or to serve in an administrative capacity, the relational power that is produced is commonly referred to as “guilt” or “politics.” Susan admits that to “say no is very, very difficult” (LDH 10).

**Exclusion**

“A technique for tracing the limits of what will define a discourse” (Foucault, 1980b, p. 238)

Exclusion is a relational tool of power that traces “the limits” of teacher discourses through the use of silence. Exclusion can become visible through the withdrawals from engagement with certain teachers. By producing power through the separation of individual teachers, exclusion becomes a means of control. As Emily, the retired principal explains, “Sometimes it [the atmosphere among teachers] tends to be ‘cliquey’ and sometimes you have people that will isolate themselves from the group” (CIH 67). As Foucault (1980b) observes, the circulation of power “can be so subtle” but may emerge as “liaisons.” The subtle use of exclusion among teachers creates shared understandings of unspoken hierarchies and memberships as flexible, unpredictable, and political. Issues of gender are frequently mentioned in association with exclusion. As Emily, the retired elementary principal, further observed, “Oftentimes, I don’t think women support each other” (CIH 76).
Exclusion from informal teacher groups becomes particularly powerful as teacher affiliations become rigid. Carrie, a student teacher, recalls that exclusionary patterns within her student teaching cohort became evident in their very early months together.

She explains exclusion through the colloquial signifier of “cliquey”:

The cohort is very cliquey. I almost laughed out loud recently one girl overtly referred to ‘her group’ like in quotes… She said, ‘My group is off eating lunch but I just decided to stay here and study.’ [laughter] Doesn’t that seem so silly? That’s just hilarious to me… that it is like… It has become so obvious…it is hilarious because teachers have tried time after time after time to pierce these cliques…it’s really gotten to be kind of funny that there’s this segregation (RKH 280-294).

Carrie references teacher “memberships” that reinforce boundaries of teacher discourse boundaries. Exclusion is powerful as she acknowledges complicity with these practices that she claims to disdain. Carrie makes reference to the “gossip” and “snide comments” that affect how she perceives her subject position outside of the classroom. While she claims to “loves” who she is with her students, as she emotionally describes her relationships with other teachers. She explains:

I just feel like such a hateful person (tears) because there’s just so much gossip and I don’t think I used to be like this… like talking about people behind their backs and making snide comments. I don’t know. I don’t know how to describe it… and I kept thinking, ‘I can’t wait until this is over.’ Because, I don’t like who I am at all right now. I love who I am in the classroom and I love my students but when I am with my peers, I don’t act very considerately or say considerate things. And, I think… back in my elementary placement. I have started to realize that it’s not any different to what I’ve seen (RKH 341-351).

Jennifer’s uses of the binaries of “hate” and “love” reveal the shifts in her subject position as she tries to locate herself in relation to the signifier of “elementary teacher.” By making connections between her pre-service teaching colleagues – and her
developing understanding of informal memberships in the field, Carrie observes similar exclusionary patterns. She reflects, “There’s definitely cliques of teachers and there are people who judge other people by how they work with their kids” (RKH 354-355).

Exclusions are often marked by a powerful teacher use of silence. Kim, a retired elementary teacher, recounts that other teachers excluded her through silence. Whenever Kim would “speak up” at meetings to address policy concerns directly with administrators, she found herself alone. Other teachers effectively subverted her efforts to address policy by enforcing certain boundaries of the “speakable.” Kim recalls isolation after she tried to initiate a conversation with an administrator during a meeting:

You get in the lounge and they complain and say, ‘Oh! I can’t believe he wants us to do this and how does he expect us to do that.’ And, then they get to a meeting where they have the opportunity to discuss it openly and intelligently and they all sit there like bumps on logs and won’t say a word (MRH 320-323).

Elementary teachers tend to talk freely and openly among themselves; yet, when Kim tried to take a concern “outside” of the teacher discourse boundaries, she was excluded. Kim’s frustrations were exacerbated by her thwarted desire to express professional judgment. She was prevented from suggesting a systemic policy change that would benefit teachers and students. Even when Kim volunteered to encourage others to speak up so they could risk together, she most often found herself alone. Kim recounts:

It was annoying to me. Stand on your feet. Say what you say. Do what you mean. Verbalize what your thoughts are. And, they won’t force you to do things that are ridiculous, but they [the other elementary teachers] allowed themselves to be pushed around (MRH 341-343).

Kim was frustrated by the silences that, not only excluded her from other teachers, but prevented open conversations about policy with administrators. Teacher uses of silence as
exclusion highlights ways that silence maintains boundaries to manage teaching away from the surveillance of “others.”

**Totalization & Individuation**

*Assigning “character” either collectively or individually by localized relationships*

Discourse provides the in-roads for teachers to form loyalties among their collective ranks while providing the linguistic location where “subjectivity is constructed” (Richardson, 2000, p. 929). Teacher use tools of “totalization” and “individuation” to assign collective or individual personal “character” among one another. These tools identify teachers through personal signifiers like friend, mentor or even enemy. Lisa, a student teacher, talks about the surprising lack of boundaries that make teaching intensely personal. She explains that her university classes and experiences in the field seemed to communicate that teaching is “like a calling instead of a job” (KBL 157). This lack of boundaries contributed to her return to the legal profession. According to Lisa, teaching is “an important job but a job nonetheless with boundaries” (KBL 158). Explaining shock at the lack of financial boundaries, time boundaries, and emotional boundaries, she could not understand the shared acceptance of multiple personal impositions as natural and unquestioned. Allison, the retired co-researcher, explained that the lack of boundaries was expected and normalized. She says that, “People don’t really want elementary teachers to have a life beyond school. They, kind of, picture you as sleeping under the desk like the kids do” (MRH 591-592).

A shared sense of professional isolation encourages teachers to develop relationships based on personal connections. Teachers develop personal relationships apart from their job requirements. Sylvia, a retired elementary teacher who now works
for a nonprofit organization, suggests that the institutional configuration of schools allows teachers to work together without professionally interfering with one another. Any interference by the mundane habits of others is eliminated. She explains that other teachers are not really affected if she, for example, comes late to work. Elementary teachers have few opportunities to work collaboratively on professional issues during the work day. As a result, teacher conversations tend to become focused upon the development of personal connections rather than upon concerns about professional traits (e.g. work habits, punctuality, organization). Sylvia explains:

I almost think it [the development of strong relationships] happens because you work in isolation all day. Because I have worked in an office before and I think it is harder when the dynamics of several people in an office together, people they don’t like… I think it makes it easier to be friends with each other, because whatever that person is like, it doesn’t impact how you do your job…if someone else comes to work late everyday or whatever, that has no impact on my job with my kids (UIH 198-206)

The recognition that individual habits do not impact the jobs of others also reveals how, when policy seems to reach directly into classrooms, individual teachers may feel individually targeted by policy. The institutional isolation creates a situation where teachers may feel singled out regarding professional challenges while remaining extensively and powerfully connected personally.

**An Alignment with Teacher Discourses**

Relational interactions by teachers become defined by privileging some discourses while subjugating others. Bodies and discourses of teachers can be limited by the space that they occupy during times of change. The following description is offered as a snapshot of a suspended subject position of, what I term, “silent resistance” within
the discursive formation of teacher discourses. The codes and patterns that emerged from retellings coalesced to shape this inhabitable subject position and the ones in the other chapters.

**The Subject Position of Silent Resistance**  
*(Adherence to Teacher Norms; Non-adherence to Policy Norms)*

The subject position of “silent resistance” is one that reflects characteristics and power tools of teacher discourses. Elementary teachers, within this subject position, used silence consistently as a means of gaining space to assert professional judgment. These teachers may share the sentiment of: “Oh, here is another new thing that they are trying this year. It will go away. And, they’re right. It usually does” (GIH 113-114). Notably, these teachers firmly refused the term of “resistance” during the interview process. The teacher discourses that reflect, what I termed to be, a subject position of “silent resistance” indicates an avoidance of policy discourses and a use of silence in the presence of administrators.

Susan, one of the co-researchers and a newly tenured teacher, explains that even though she often finds herself in a leadership position, she can understand other teacher resistances. She explained that the following reasons might cause her to resist:

> If I were to get burned out or exhausted or if I felt like I didn’t have a voice or wasn’t being heard in some way. If I felt like I was being forced to do things that made me… that I knew weren’t best for kids (LDH 586-588).

Interestingly, many of the retired elementary teachers named these reasons as influencing their eventual retirement decisions. Julie, as a newly tenured teacher, explains to one of her colleagues near retirement that engaging in discussions with administration is futile.
Julie cites her early career stage as somehow making it easier to keep quiet while one of her colleagues has difficulty with not resisting. She explains:

I am not as strong in my beliefs or in the way that I do things as Kristen who is more toward the end of her career. She is constantly just so upset because she holds really high expectations for kids… [and] you need to. I am always telling her, ‘You’re right but you’re not going to win this (TIH 407-411).’

Even a strong sense of being “right” did not have an influence upon whether these elementary teachers, in this subject position, would speak. These elementary teachers agreed that the most acceptable subject position, for anyone, would be a happy and hard-working teacher.

Performing a positive subject position that appears willing and compliant can be powerful as a means of resistance. Jennifer, a retired elementary teacher, explains:

Don’t complain. Didn’t do any good to complain - so why bother? Keep your parents happy… If you kept your students happy… and they were doing well on the tests… Then, that, of course kept the administration happy (MKH 89-91).

Teacher use silence and cultivation of strong collegial relationships to protect students from some aspects of policy (e.g. successive days of testing) by maintaining a “happy” environment. Despite some of the challenges that characterize the lived effects of reform, teachers would try to make policy procedures palatable – even fun, at times. Teachers spend money to buy supplemental materials or provide snacks as ways of deflecting policy intervention. They did not want policy to set the tone in their classrooms.

Jennifer, a retired elementary teacher, insists that these practices do not qualify as resistance. After talking about some of her “tweaks” of recent policy, she explains: “I
wasn’t resisting. I just figured out a very efficient way to do it” (MKH 429). Allison, one of the co-researchers supports and shares Jennifer’s refusal by providing further detail:

You are told to do \textit{things that} are designed by people who, very often, have never been in an elementary classroom so they don’t know that it is not going to work that way. You have to think in your head, ‘How \textit{am} I going to make this work?’ … Not necessarily the way that they said because it is not conceivable very often (MKH 435-439).

Though elementary teachers within this subject position usually refused vocal protest, specific passive acts and daily silent routines were common.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, teacher discourses were introduced as associated with a hybrid model that posits the relational power production of teachers and the uses of silence. The dual discursive formations of teachers and policy have been sketched with a series of characteristics and power tools. These characteristics and power tools have been offered as means to analyze ways that power is intricately linked with the privileging of truth. During reform, there are inevitable processes of privileging some truths while degrading others and, through this process, power is achieved through the signification of what it means to be a “good elementary teacher.” Teacher discourses are intricately linked with concepts of “membership.” Teachers produce power relationally by not sharing their knowledges with others who are external to the profession. So, often observances of silence are misread for acquiescence when there is disagreement or disinterest.

Elementary teachers produce relational power by diverging from externally derived expectations and maintaining silences among their ranks. In next chapter, the interactions between policy and teacher discourses are explored to recognize the lived effects of
reform through teacher subject positions of leadership and resistance. In effect, what will be argued is that a critical subject position for teachers is essential to translate policy into classrooms.
Chapter 6

When the Discourses of Policy and Teachers Collide:
Claiming a Critical Subject Position

We must make allowances for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it. - Michel Foucault (1978)

The goal of this chapter will be to explore the visible disruptions that occur as policy and teacher discourses collide. In Chapter Four and Five, teacher relationships, practices of deference, and uses of silences were described as powerfully productive. Throughout the following pages, I will theorize the teacher subject positions that emerge among intersections between the two discursive formations of policy and teachers to illustrate the vocal and confrontational manifestation of leadership and resistance. It is important to emphasize that a critical subject position for elementary teachers emerged from the development of a hybrid and interactive methodology. In short, claiming a critical subject position for teachers developed as the primary, though unexpected, fruits of this study.

Reflecting Upon (Re)framing Educational Policy Analysis

In Chapters Four and Five, policy is defined as a collection of texts that wield power to frame teachers as either compliant or resistant; whereas, teacher production of
relational power is characterized by silences and the negotiation of flexible, shifting relationships. The chart reviews the discursive formations that were described in the two previous chapters. These discursive formations are offered within a Foucauldian theoretical framework to explain the circulation of power during reform. The boundaries of policy and teacher discourses are perpetuated and become possible through iterative diffusions of power (Grosz, 1994). Tensions between policy and localized influences situate elementary teacher subject positions of visible leaders and resistors as teachers translate the broad goals of reform into the necessary situational complexity. The focus of this chapter will be to interrogate discourses, signifiers and texts of power inherent to the privileges and subjugations involved throughout policy implementation. This chapter provides insight regarding the collisions between policy claims to a neutral stance and teachers’ local and relational knowledges. To frame educational policy analysis differently, empirical disruptions among discourses are recognized as indicators of the messiness and complexity inherent to implementation. Building on the evidence, critical space will be theorized out of teacher discourses of leadership and resistance.

By theorizing power as “an intricate mosaic” (Foucault, 1980b, p. 62), I will analyze some of the unexpected policy outcomes and localized messiness related to what Elmore (1985) refers to as the “implementation problem.” The dotted line that cuts through the overlap between the two discursive formations is representative of the intersections between policy and teachers. Recognition of these intersections opened toward provocative theoretical space for recognition of a critical subject position for elementary teachers. Theorizing a critical subject position reveals how elementary
teachers risk their “deformation as a subject… not only to constraining principles per se, but to one’s attachment to them insofar as they constitute one’s identity” (Hoy, 2004, p. 100). My interests in this chapter are the empirically evident stops and starts in teacher practices and perceptions of their roles that occur when discourses collide during reform efforts.

Figure 11: Power as Producing Discursive Formations of Policy and Teachers

Sylvia, a retired elementary teacher who now works at a nonprofit, explains the many translations of policy affect ways that institutional pressures become distributed and perceived. The unexpected outcomes that accompany policy implementation produce shifts in discourses that open theoretical space for messy and complex teacher subject
positions. Sylvia cites the monetary controls, changing administrative roles, and the imperceptible shifts in teacher relationships as difficult to quantify or trace. She explains:

If somebody is dangling your purse strings, then they are pulling your puppet strings. It has to filter down and the administrators have no choice but to do this. What I think I have seen, it almost used to be that administrators were—‘What can I do to help you? What can I do?’ and I think that the pressures that they have felt has caused them to be terrible taskmasters and I think unless you have an administrator that is consciously aware of that, I am not even sure that they see the change in themselves (UIH 116-121).

In reflecting upon her professional career, Sylvia notes the shifts in teacher subject positions as policy exerts increasing external control. These shifts may be barely perceptible; yet, they are powerfully influential. In particular, Sylvia’s recognition of the shifting roles of administrators is illustrative of the variable pressures and the changing dynamics of ways that the teaching profession is viewed. Policy’s ability to wield power can be analyzed to uncover ways that teachers are silenced. Insistences of “no choice” repeatedly emerged in relation to policy throughout this study as indicative of the framing of policy as a natural, neutral, and necessary presence. In the following pages, the confrontations, disruptions, and legitimizations will be discussed as illuminative data disruptions that are indicative of abrupt shifts of power that gesture toward a critical subject position.

**Locating Theoretical Space for Visible Subject Positions**

This section highlights three areas where teachers explicitly confront policy. Though educational policy may seem to operate at a distance, the following areas represent snapshots of the critical disruptions that can occur when the intervention of policy becomes abrupt, immediate and localized, in the areas of: assessment; technology;
and teacher reassignments. In all three areas, elementary teachers explained that obvious confrontations, disruptions and legitimizations were commonplace. The power struggles between teacher leaders and teacher resistors are in stark contrast to previous descriptions of more elusive teacher discourses. This evidence uncovers existing ways that teachers do, at times, vocally interact with policy through the translations and negotiation of discourse boundaries. They can be vocal in their shared and individual attempts to protect existing practices through explicitly visible confrontations.

**Assessment: “A Ton of Testing” as an Affront**

The introduction of assessment is a hallmark of recent policy. Policy’s increasing use of externally derived models of assessment can displace professional judgment as the “field of judgment” is moved beyond the school. The now familiar criteria of “valuable, effective, or satisfactory” represent broad values that become prescriptive through policy (Ball, 2003). Cycles of assessments arrive to be routinely delivered into classrooms. The stacks of bubble sheets and test booklets signal invitations for teacher protests.

Elementary teachers do not tend to oppose the externally derived assessment models entirely, but they are weary at the amount. Policy’s increased use of assessments was repeatedly cited as “too much” (NIH 29). Protests seemed to be intertwined with policy power tools of surveillance and distribution, as discussed in Chapter Four. Policy distributes more tasks to an already busy and rigid school schedule while increasing the external controls of accountability.

While the previous chapters described teacher uses of silence to deflect certain aspects of policy, assessment was a consistent exception where teachers were opposed.
Teachers talked about it – loudly, unabashedly, and frequently. Susan, one of the co-researchers and an elementary teacher who recently received tenure, explains that vocal disruptions concerning the amount of assessment are commonly accepted and even expected:

You hear it, you always hear it - about the time that they [elementary teachers] have to take away from teaching to give assessments, to how long assessments take. You hear it in the lounge, at meeting… that is the one thing, I feel like, you hear everywhere and that nobody cares who hears it (LDH 269-271).

Susan mentions that “nobody cares” as if to indicate the shared understanding among teachers that, with regard to the amount of assessment, silence is not enough. Rebecca agrees with Susan that teachers discard silence to adopt more direct and confrontational tools of discourse. They question assessment utility and excessiveness without hesitation. Rebecca talks about a “saturation” of “testing” and refers to “burn-out” to explain that:

I think that it is going to reach a point of saturation. I think that our kids are going to be saturated. Our teachers are going to burn out. Because all we are doing is testing, testing, testing. Assessing, assessing, assessing. And, what are we really assessing for? What does the assessment really do? (NIH 524-528).

The question of: “What does assessment really do?” generally, persists as unanswered. Many elementary teachers talked about administering the battery of assessments to their students to then forward these completed forms on to “others.” After “others” check that the assessments have been completed, any results are rarely connected the teaching and learning processes. Assessments instead can become a normalized routine. Foucault (1980b) suggests that “pointless work, work for work’s sake” can be used to “shape individuals into the image of the ideal laborer” (p. 42). In fact, many teachers, I spoke
with, did not perceive assessments as relevant to daily goals of their job as there were few explicit connections.

As Susan, the newly tenured co-researcher, continues to clarify, teachers sensed that the “ton of testing” was sometimes completed to create scores to enter into administrative databases. She explains that teachers feel pressure without always perceiving the value:

I think they feel a ton of pressure and there is a lot of resistance to adding any more testing. And, I do think that there is a ton of testing. But, I also think that if the information is used as a valuable piece of information for next steps in teaching that it is valuable but if it is simply just for a score to put into a database that it is pretty much a waste of time (LDH 354-358).

Determinations of the proper use of “information” represent a site of messiness that becomes constructed as “political.” The divergent definitions of data are determined by policy and teachers create confrontations and disagreements at the site of policy translations. As Sylvia, a retired elementary teacher who is still professionally active in elementary schools, concurs:

With the requirements for assessment, the big joke is you don’t have time to teach because you are too busy assessing. Then what I think is really lacking, and I think it is not fair to teachers, is because it would validate that assessment if you then provided teachers with a good avenue for saying: ‘Okay, so you have assessed, now talk to me about what do you think about this? What is our next step?’ (UIH 175-179).

One of the lived effects of reform is the increased focus upon the production of assessment outcomes as an end process. When teachers are told to enter student scores in a database, an endpoint or identifiable tool of surveillance emerges. Even as teachers become more vocally resistant with regard to the rising number of assessments, they did
not think that any institutional change would result. Still, externally derived models of assessment seemed to represent an affront to the value of teacher voices generally; therefore, teachers refuse to acquiesce.

**Technology as a Site of Fear**

Technology also causes many visible disruptions in the implementation processes connected to policy. Teacher learning of technology adds additional layers to steps of reform and often creates complicated systems of implementation. Technology requires an investment in hardware but also in teacher training. Susan, one of the co-researchers and a technology representative for her building, frequently talked about difficulties of integrating technology into teacher work days. Convincing teachers to focus upon themselves and learn something new can be challenging for a profession that is consistently told to focus outward – toward students. She explains:

> Teachers came into training assuming that they wouldn’t understand. They didn’t practice a lot… They just thought that they didn’t have time for it. They saw it as ‘on top of’ all of the things that they are already doing (LDH 1-5)

After years of acquiring procedures to facilitate student learning, teachers become conditioned to think of their own learning as something “extra.” Further, technology can be seen as mechanizing aspects of work that teachers view as highly relational and personal (Bromley & Apple, 1998). Teachers hesitated to place machinery “on top of” everything else that needs to be done.

There were also many situational or pragmatic concerns such as lacking technical support. Teachers openly complained about the proliferation of “leftover” computers from middle and high schools that often broke down. Teachers did not “grow up” with
computers and did not have time in their days for experimenting and trouble-shooting as they work with large groups of students. Teachers knew that if they happened to encounter any technological glitches, students could become restless quickly.

Rebecca, a newly tenured teacher, explains that the confrontations and disruptions surrounding technology can be related to teacher “fear.” She maintains that there is a fear that the technology will further complicate an unpredictable school day. Teachers often perceive technology as yet another mechanistic entity that holds power over them. Rebecca talks about the:

Fear of if I click the wrong button how do I fix it, fear of making more work for myself when really it makes it a lot easier. It is the initial… Once you understand it – it is easy. Until you understand it, it is really difficult and scary – very frightening (NIH 80-82).

Teachers perceive an immense risk as they use new equipment while also managing the other aspects of teaching and learning. Technology trainings that are typically conducted apart from the school day do not seem to alleviate these fears. At times, elementary teachers’ linear approach to learning technology does not transfer easily into tangential school days. Technology can become construed as one more thing to balance.

Rebecca’s comments that technology can be “really difficult and scary” also highlights the uncertainty for teacher subject positions caught in the shifting layers of discourses as new policy is introduced. She explains technology as representative of surveillance characterized by many unknown variables. The perception of technologies that directly access classrooms can be frightening:

I think that there is a huge fear these days. I think the technology is scary. I think the way we are going is scary. And, I think, the push coming down from
government and as the state is pushing them in this era of technology to go more advanced… teachers are frightened (NIH 61-64).

As with assessment, technology represents a new presence within classrooms that makes policy seem concrete, immediate, and fast moving.

**Reassignments: On (Not) “Taking It All”**

Elementary teachers observed that silences became less important as they moved to higher levels of education. As Jacqueline explains, elementary schools are very different from the middle schools and high schools. When a teacher moves to a position in the “upper grades” away from an elementary building, certain aspects and worries of the job become automatically subtracted:

> Well, just all of those little things: agendas, birthday parties… all of these little managerial things are gone – permission slips. You don’t have to worry about how they [students] act in the hallway. That is different. I think that you could focus in on your subject area a lot better at the middle school level than at elementary school where you have five different subjects that you have to account for (GIH 214-217).

Jacqueline’s listing of “managerial things” alludes to the many mothering duties that accompany elementary teaching. These teachers work with the same group of students every day – all day. Their relationships with colleagues, students, and parents provide the foundation for professional decisions at the elementary level. In the other levels of education, the groups of students change while the subject matter remains the same.

Karen explains that elementary teachers are treated differently by the administration regarding the implementation processes related to policy. She wonders why her elementary colleagues “take it all” while others do not. Karen reflects:
I think that is true more of elementary teachers than of upper grades. Because you hear, those people won’t put up with anything, you know? Then sometimes you think: ‘God, we are kind of stupid, aren’t we? We take it all’ (FAH 298-300).

Elementary teachers shared the feelings that elementary schools often get the short end of the stick when it comes to district policy. Karen’s recognition of “taking it all” can become linked with episodes of eventual verbal disruptions where elementary teachers profess to “not being able to take it anymore” and sometimes deciding to retire.

Julie, a teacher who recently received tenure, reflects upon her transition from her elementary teaching job to a position at the local junior high. Julie remembers that, in her new location, she has shed her previous habits of silence in favor of more vocal participation. Though Julie typically remained silent in her former job, she explains that a new array of discourses became available at the junior high. She tends to be participatory now without fear of retribution. Julie emphasizes:

I definitely have a lot more moxy. I don’t fear. I don’t leave for home fearful anymore. Like I did in elementary, I was constantly worried that somebody was going to think that I was doing a bad job. Or not doing my job and there were going to be ramifications. Or, I could lose my job or get transferred. I don’t feel like that in junior high so much… I don’t feel scared anymore or guilty. There was a lot of guilt too (TIH 334-337).

Julie explains that her subject position as a teacher in relation to policy is different now. She hints at a potential shift for all teacher subject positions at other levels of schooling. Accessibility to discourses may widen as elementary teachers ascend the educational hierarchies. As Allison, the retired co-researcher, submits, “there seems to be the idea that teachers get smarter as they teach higher grade levels” (MRH 13-14).
As confirmation of Julie’s observations, Jennifer, a retired teacher who taught at both the elementary and junior high school levels, maintains that access to discourses can shift according to a building’s given gender composition. Junior high schools and high schools tend to have more men on staff. Jennifer recalls that, at the junior high school, the entire “atmosphere” shifted. Jennifer explains:

It was a different atmosphere. Less condescending, less subjective, less subservient… Ah, women. Somebody tells them to do it and they’ll do it twice. You tell a man to do it and if they don’t think it’s worthwhile… They won’t even do it. A woman will bend over backwards to do it… Especially elementary teachers, I think (MKH 151-154).

Her articulation of “condescending… subjective… and subservient” reflects some of the unspoken power dynamics between policy and elementary teacher discourses, specifically. Alluding further to the effects of feminization upon elementary teaching, Kim, another retired teacher, describes her former subject positions as “lowly” (MRH 118). In discussions with Allison, the retired co-researcher, she explains the implicit gender influences that affect perceptions of elementary teachers. She says: “At elementary, it is like you are the mother and mothers make everything okay… That is just not the case at other levels of education” (MRH field notes).

The Colliding Subject Positions of Leadership and Resistance

Through the interplay of policy and teachers, there is an iterative privileging of certain texts and signifiers and the subjugation of others. As mentioned in Chapters Four and Five, teacher bodies and discourses can be limited by the space that they occupy during times of change. The following descriptions are offered as counter-narratives to reflect what I refer to as subject positions of “vocal leadership” and “vocal resistant.” As
stated previously, these subject positions are not intended to essentialize elementary teachers or define them in a static means; instead, these reflections of a critical subject position, as outlined below, can be used to further understand the shifts of discourses during reform. When the discourses of policy and teachers collide, the “leadership” and “resistance” subject positions open toward a critical theoretical space for teachers where the confrontations, legitimizations, and disruptions give rise to fruitful insight. Through the collisions of policy and teacher discourses, policy becomes translated to reveal an array of unexpected outcomes.

*The Subject Position of Vocal Leadership (Adherence to Teacher Norms; Adherence to Policy Norms)*

At the intersection between the discursive formation of policy and the discursive formation of teachers is the shifting subject position of “vocal leadership.” Teachers who occupy the subject position of vocal leadership manage to maintain an active engagement with the discourses of policy and of teachers; therefore, they often emerge as teacher leaders. The teacher discourses that reflect “vocal leadership” indicate an intricate understanding of the politics of an elementary school.

Karen, a teacher nearing the end of her career, explains that Susan, one of the co-researchers and a newly tenured teacher, occupies a subject position of vocal leadership. Susan seems to navigate interactions with the discourses of policy and teachers with ease. She knows what to say, who to it say it to, and why. In describing Susan, Karen notes the characteristics of the subject position of “vocal leadership”: [You need to] “observe and figure out the situation before you talk. She is very observant. She knows how to talk and when to talk… She’s excellent” (FAH 289-290).
Within this subject position, these teachers acknowledge the complex intersectionality of navigating support for policy while also recognizing “subjugated knowledges” of teachers. Susan recounts the way that her “vocal leadership” subject position developed in relation to the curriculum:

People will, for some reason, feel the need to come to me and tell me all of their woes about it [the curriculum]. All of the things that didn’t go well that day. I don’t really have anything to do with it but they don’t feel like they can actually tell the administration what is going on but they can come and tell me why it won’t work for their grade level (LDH 254-257).

Teachers, like Susan, are aware of policy requirements while also remaining deeply entrenched in local relationships with other teachers. Because of Susan’s ability to maintain a foothold in both worlds, other teachers feel that that they can speak candidly with her and know that she will listen to them. Susan explains that other teachers come to her and ask questions about recent policy such as: “What are ‘they’ talking about?” She reports that she tries to “tell them the way that I make sense of it in my own head.” And, she adds, “I try to make them laugh too. That helps” (LDH 10-12).

Carrie, as a student teacher, occupied a subject position of “vocal leadership” during the very beginning of her teacher education program. She effectively communicated to pre-service teaching peers as well as to faculty members who taught methods courses. Carrie explains that the other pre-service teachers in the cohort tended to rely upon her to mediate a range of situations. She became less effective as time passed and said that it became increasingly difficult to fully represent the complexity of all that needed to become conveyed. Her attempts eventually became abandoned:
I think at the beginning, I think people looked to me to articulate their thoughts to mediate between professors and our cohort but now there’s not that relationship. It just doesn’t work and I don’t know if it’s because I just stopped trying to mediate and I just stopped trying because I felt like they [the professors] didn’t listen (RKH 321-324).

Carrie’s eventual disengagement from navigating the politics among policy and teachers is reflective of many of the retired elementary teachers who explained that, at the beginning of their careers, they initially inhabited subject positions as “leaders.” As the years passed, many witnessed the iterative policy cycles that eventually erased or downplayed teacher efforts. Gradually, these teachers tend to become progressively silenced or vocally resistant.

**The Subject Position of Vocal Resistance (Non-adherence to Teacher Norms; Non-adherence to Policy Norms)**

The last theoretical subject position is one of “vocal resistance.” The interviews that proved to be the most illuminating were with elementary teachers who did not claim to use silence and professed to disagreement with recent policies. These teachers tended to demonstrate a strong creative interest in knowing how to “make things work” in their own classroom while maintaining a faith in the profession generally. Elementary teachers, within the subject position of “vocal resistance” were passionate. They tended to be energetic and always in motion. Their vocal responses flare when “others” would scold them for not doing something “right.” While often labeled as negative, I found that much of what these teachers said seemed to make “good sense” (Gitlin & Margonis, 1995; see also Achinstein & Ogawa, 2006).

A “vocal resistance” subject position may be more common for career elementary teachers who are older as they possess the security of tenure. Rachel, an early career
teacher, explains that, though the “vocal resistance” subject position is alluring, it is dangerous. Untenured, she does not take the same risks that she admires in others:

I think it depends on the age of the teacher. And, I say that because, my mentor who has been teaching a long time. We had a big to-do. She wanted to bring in this author to our building. She wanted PTO to pay for it and they were passing around some of his books and one of the books says, ‘I have two Dads and I have two Moms.’ And, oh, the parents did not like that at all and they wouldn’t pay for it. But, you know, she stuck to her guns, and still did this author study with this person in her classroom. Whereas I don’t think that I would have done that being a newer teacher without tenure (ICH 243-255).

The teacher that Rachel talks about vocally confronts existing biases and politics as she sticks “to her guns.” Within this subject position, teachers described an ability to listen to colleagues and a readiness to “go public” with any concerns. Teachers’ sense of obligation for doing the job well was paired with their retellings of unique instructional methods. As Jessica, a retired elementary teacher, recalls that when policy affects her directly, she would like to “have a say”:

I don’t have to have my way but I want to have my say… I could go along with the final decision as long as I had some input. And, honest input. I think that was a huge change for me in education. It came from true decision-making at the site about things that concerned the site directly to where I felt like all of these decisions were made ahead of time.... It got to a point where you sat in a meeting and didn’t say anything because it wasn’t worth it (RJH 80-86).

Jessica’s progressive silencing and her recent relief of retirement was common. For many of the other retired elementary teachers, similar comments were offered such as: “Oh, I had blocked this out [from my memory]” or “I just couldn’t keep quiet anymore” or “That’s when I knew I needed to be done.” Elementary teachers in this subject position
struggled to come to terms with unwillingness by other teachers to openly discuss solutions to endemic issues.

Kim, another retired elementary teacher, explained her frustrations with her repeated efforts to be vocal about policy. She expresses dismay with other teacher silences and continual deference concerning “politics.” According to Kim, when the teachers do not share their professional insight and expertise, they forfeit chances to establish norms and regulations that reflect professional judgment. Kim explained that, in the void of teacher silences, other “experts” become privileged to dictate policies and the unfortunate result, in her mind, is that some of the decisions become “ridiculous”:

And the sad thing about the social workers or the psychologists or the principals was that most of them had never had classroom experience. The things that they wanted you to do in the classroom were absolutely ridiculous (RMH 128-130).

She was particularly dismayed when discourses from professionals without any teaching experience took precedence over the judgments of teachers with years in the classroom.

Rebecca, a rare newer teacher within the “vocal resistant” subject position, explains her love of the job: “I knew that teaching would be a change and challenge – every single day. For six years, it has been -- every single day. And, I love it” (NIH 9-11). The personal aspects of her job bring tears to her eyes as she speaks, but cannot be chalked up to mere reactive stance. It seems to be more than that. As Jessica explains, “Our job is never done. What we see… We are moms, we are Dads, we are social worker, we are counselor, we are friend, we are archenemies. I think we’re all of it in a day” (NIH 375-379).
Rebecca continues to explain that the educational leadership should be conducted differently: “There’s not a right or a wrong answer to things. And, there’s not a right way or a wrong way. There’s an avenue to get you there. And, it varies so much depending on your classroom and your style” (NIH 264-266). Reflecting creative insight, Jessica and others who occupy this subject position of vocal resistance consistently respect other teachers’ professional judgments and abilities.

**Conclusion**

The lived effects of reform, in this chapter, are characterized by teachers’ visible questioning and involvement with implementation processes. Policy’s absolute language defines teacher subject positions as very narrowly confined to particular parameters of compliance. On the other hand, teacher power is relational and characterized as “fluid” (MRH 11). The collisions of policy and teacher discourses create a “network of social boundaries that delimits, for all, fields of possible action” to open space for later post-agency theorizing (Hayward, 2000, p. 27). Discourse boundaries can be foregrounded through looking closely at evidence of the confrontations, legitimizations, and resistances among policy and teachers.

This study challenges existing assumptions surrounding elementary teachers and does not operate from the presumption that all teachers need to be fixed by others outside the profession. While organizational theorists may contend that increased pressure on the elementary teaching profession yields higher standardized test scores, many teachers insist that education should be measured by the aspects of learning that exemplify creativity, critical thinking, and an engagement with others. After life-long careers as
elementary teachers, Jennifer and Kim, mentioned that there were numerous aspects of the curriculum (e.g. the production of plays, the exploration of tangential student questions, the analysis of a country that sparked the interest of the class) that had been eliminated to allow for sole reliance upon standards-based instruction. As Ball (2003) explains, policies not only serve as “vehicles for technical or structural change” but “for changing what it means to be a teacher” (p. 145).

In closing, I make the case that a humane, deliberative approach to policymaking should be considered. Some of the desirable goals would be that teachers become engaged with ongoing leadership, consultation, and perspective taking to create greater transparency surrounding the need for policy. Though counterarguments abound regarding lack of efficiency, the study’s findings surface the question of: “An efficiency toward what?” As observed by Thomas Friedman, in The World is Flat, the innocence of present policies and corresponding implementation processes should be questioned. Friedman (2005) points out that when institutional inefficiencies are eliminated, the danger becomes a loss of much more. He explains:

Some of the inefficiencies are institutions, habits, cultures, and traditions that people cherish precisely because they reflect non-market values like social cohesion, religious faith, and national pride. If global markets and new communications technologies flatten those differences, we may lose something important… which are sources of identity and belonging that we should try to protect (p.112).

As the embodiment of “inefficiencies,” the subject positions of elementary teachers are both remapped and reconfigured each time new educational policy is introduced. Many “inefficiencies” are, in fact, valuable and become silenced by the streamlining of policy
models to endorse the alignment of prescribed procedures. As Rebecca, a newly tenured teacher, points out by claiming that “something is missing,” an alignment of silences has accompanied policy’s alignment of procedures. For educational policy models to work toward innovation, elementary teachers must be recognized as viable members of a public institution that maintains a presence in every community in this country and, as such, wields enormous power.

In the final chapter, implications of applying post-structural theory to the modern project of educational policymaking will be highlighted. Pragmatic considerations for administrators and policymakers will be reviewed while areas for future studies are suggested to illustrate ways that alternative theoretical lenses can lead to framing policy analysis and the profession of teaching in powerfully productive ways.
Chapter 7

The Knowledges of Post-structural Policy Analysis: Considerations for Administrators and Policymakers

If the artist does not perfect a new vision in his process of doing the acts mechanically and repeats some old model fixed like a blueprint in his mind.
- John Dewey (2005)

Throughout this study, I carefully examined ways that elementary teachers became positioned in relation to policy as a means of thinking about analysis differently. By surfacing taken for granted traditions of educational policy analysis, the power that sustains common sense and perpetuates familiar teaching discourses can become visible. To question the wisdom surrounding modern approaches, I located elementary teacher silences, identified ways that teacher discourses disrupted policy, and explored how power/knowledge becomes recast as the discursive structures of policy and teachers are located. As a result of creating a new way of framing policy and teachers through post-structural theory, the sections of this chapter provide recommendations for administrators and policymakers. I will conclude with suggestions for further directions for study, including the development of a post-structural theoretical framework that may provide alternative in-roads to educational policy analysis while interrupting assumptions surrounding the profession of elementary teaching.
Suggestions for Shifts in the Administrative Stance

There are many gaps in the educational policy literature. One of the notable gaps, visible with the federal intervention of *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* and related policies of the present time, is that policymakers have largely neglected administrative roles in prescribing policy implementation processes. Failing to address this key aspect of implementation highlights a misunderstanding of translations that occurs throughout the many processes of policy. According to many researchers (Elmore, 2004; Hill, 2006; Spillane, 2004), the “implementation problem” largely remains in communicating policy across different contexts. Even a cursory exploration of intersections among policy and teacher discourses quickly reveals the endemic complications within roles of educational administrators. Therefore, the contention in this final chapter is that administrators and policymakers should recognize the intricate tasks involved in confronting, analyzing, and translating issues that frame educational policy analysis. As policies are introduced to teachers, it is essential that there be an examination of ways that existing discourses will be affected as new patterns of silences, disruptions, assertions, and reflections emerge.

Policy use of codes and signifiers should be examined for ways that teachers are positioned in relation to the aggregation of institutional outcomes. As policy discourses are introduced to teachers, administrators should engage with an analysis of why existing discourses will be forced to shift within their localized situation. In other words, an active search for complexity within the tensions among discourses of policy and teachers is essential to recognizing ways that teachers are influenced while also influencing one another.
In challenging traditional models of educational policy analysis, the Foucauldian framing of this particular study seeks to locate administrative approaches that recognize the lived effects of reform. Within current organizational and political structures, administrators often serve as primary mediators for the introduction of new policy. Many elementary teachers explained that administrators view policy as a natural and neutral aspect of education while viewing the teaching profession as aggregately troublesome. The framing of elementary teachers as a nuisance or an obstacle to successful policy implementation creates an unsustainable educational system and a profoundly troubling erosion of democratic ideals. In the first section of this final chapter, I offer recommendations for principals and site-specific administrators as related to policy implementation and working with elementary teachers during reform.

Administrative Analysis of Policy Implementation. Within the current organizational structure of elementary schools, administrators are often the first ones to encounter new educational policy. Most often, elementary teachers referred to administrators as “middle management.” In their eyes, administrators were positioned as the conduits through which policy is presented to them. Teachers explained that most often administrators immediately move from the knowledge of new policy to finding ways for the district aggregate reports to reflect institutional compliance. Characterized by PowerPoint presentations and the distribution of forms, new procedural systems are introduced and promoted through staff meetings. Policy is treated as a neutral tool to be obeyed. As Rebecca, a newly tenured teacher, points out, there are administrative gaps as
policy is usually presented as an imperative with “no choice.” By framing educational policy differently, administrators may invite critical teacher engagement.

By looking at implementation through a Foucauldian lens that recognizes the significance of the knowledges privileged by policy, administrators can initiate deliberative discussions that shift from procedural conversations of “how?” Instead of solely focusing upon compliance, teachers could become engaged with conversations of “why?” Presently, elementary teachers perceive policy as framed by implicit messages of: “We don’t have a choice” and “Shut up.” New educational policy becomes automatically assigned unmitigated power. Meanwhile, teacher perceptions of their personal abilities can become eroded when policy is introduced as imperative. The message persists that teachers need to be fixed. The paradox is that teacher subject positions are increasingly belittled while expectations of their professional abilities continue to grow (Miller, 1996).

Acknowledging what Lipsky (1997) calls the profound influence of “street level bureaucrats,” success cannot be sustainable by merely introducing policy and leveraging teacher practices with tools of surveillance and distribution; instead, administrators must examine their leadership roles as a complex undertaking. In order to successfully assist during the multiple translations of policy, administrators should develop a relational awareness of all that is currently occurring in classrooms and among teachers. Assuming that teachers, as rational actors, will adopt new policy-based discourses and associated practices by introducing research-based evidence and blocking teacher questions and suggestions is insufficient and unsustainable.
Recognize Existing Teacher Responsibilities. Teachers explained that administrators do not tend to demonstrate understandings of the multiple, complex duties currently required of the profession. In fact, many elementary teachers recalled that, during the introduction of policy, administrators would instruct them to stay quiet regarding such existing obligations. Teachers were told to figure out a way to “make it work.” Demands, presented in this way, tend to silence the confrontation, deliberation, and resistance, while also not allowing teachers to share and reconfigure the expanded workload in creative ways.

The pressure upon administrators to demonstrate efficiency and production can impede conversations concerning the mounting and diverse responsibilities of public schools. The presentation of new educational policy could be initiated with requests that elementary teachers routinely explain current responsibilities. This step could provide a working framework for the addition of the new policy requirements. By requesting mutual information sharing across constituencies, policy’s hierarchical “audit” model that is designed to solely solicit teacher compliance can be interrupted. The teachers I spoke to were warned not to make complaints or became placated to being told to “do it anyway.” Time should be invested toward breaking silences and isolation surrounding their current teacher responsibilities.

Oftentimes, elementary teachers noted that administrators seemed to perceive any “push-back” during policy presentations as indicative of “negativity” when, in fact, that was not always the case. Teachers, as would be expected of any group of learners, try to understand new educational policies by integrating new information with their current
responsibilities and understandings. During such a process, questions arise. Questioning and the discussion of new ideas are common aspects of any learning process. Teachers need to be heard by other adults to gain validation and support for professional ideas so that they can think deeply, make connections, and problem solve before they become isolated with large groups of students once again.

**Restructure the Solicitation of Teacher Ideas.** The fragility of elementary teacher subject positions should be recognized during policy discussions. When structuring any type of feedback session regarding new policy, teachers repeatedly requested that their opinions not be initially solicited within a large group format. Teachers explained that this method of soliciting deliberation, when thrown to the building staff -- in mass, made them uncomfortable and reticent. Daily isolation with students does not allow them to be equipped to immediately risk their thoughts about a new idea in such a large forum. Their engagement in an intellectual, adult discussion requires a purposeful shift from their daily repetitive conversations that facilitate student learning. Many teachers explained that they were much more at ease when they initially discussed new policies in smaller venues. Teachers were admittedly hesitant to comment on new initiatives until they had the chance to discern the landscape of emerging policy discourses. As Susan, the co-researcher, pointed out, teachers need time to sort through: “What does this mean for me and my students?”

Traditional administrative solicitation of feedback in perfunctory requests during building staff meetings often resulted in the emergence of fringe, polarized comments. These ranged from those offered by teachers who were “in cahoots” with administration
and those with vehement disagreements to new policy. In other words, these larger forum
discussions solicited fire alarm comments that accomplished very little in terms of
illuminating complexity. Within this traditional routine, the polarized “agreeers” and
“disagreeers” tend to emerge in a predictable exchange. Though large group discussions
may be seen as efficient from an administrative vantage point, teachers disapprove.
Soliciting feedback in this way detrimentally trains large portions of the teaching staffs to
become spectators in the routine fights between explicitly powerful contingencies.

**Frame Teaching as a Love of Learning.** In talking to retired elementary teachers,
the early years of their careers included many opportunities for creativity and an
appreciation for one another’s talents and ideas. Often with the increasing introduction of
policy discourses, these opportunities have become stymied. Allison, the co-researcher
who has now retired from elementary teaching, reflects that her previous job has morphed
into “so many procedures.” Elementary teachers would enjoy the opportunity to fall in
love with a subject of their own – as a means to develop a skill set and a talent within the
profession. Some professional development opportunities could be redesigned to spark
and facilitate such learning. By reinvigorating teacher subject positions as learners,
teachers may develop areas of expertise and creative insight rather than consistently
being relegated to the constant study of compliance procedures. Elementary teachers
could become engaged with learning that may not always be directly related to school
day procedures but might inspire innovation and insight concerning the complexity of
teaching and learning processes. In other words, teachers could embody a “love of
learning” and could develop relationships with colleagues around professional growth rather than only personal interests.

I propose that teachers be given the chance to make choices about deepening their appreciation of a range of subjects. An engagement with content courses (e.g. mathematics, history), artistic opportunities (e.g. photography, creative writing), or even travel (e.g. exchanges with local schools, summer excursions) would greatly enrich all that elementary teachers could bring to the classroom. Susan, one of the co-researchers suggested that if teachers are location bound, these opportunities could be facilitated by “webinars” with universities, museums, or other school districts. By allowing teachers to truly learn a new discipline or acquire a new skill, they can explore teaching and learning processes apart from a single-minded and constant focus toward the refinement of policy procedures.

**Professional Development as Policy Study.** I found that few people, at any level of education, possessed in-depth knowledge or any understanding concerning specific policies. In fact, upon talking with administrators and teachers, I was hard pressed to find anyone who had actually read even a portion of *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* or could explain the intricacies of even one district-specific policy. Administrator presentations of professional development tend to focus upon a refinement of the “how” of policy to create “efficient” and streamlined procedure systems. As an alternative, I am suggesting that administrators restructure a portion of professional development as an opportunity for educational policy analysis.
It seems ironic that the policies, which are assigned so much credence, are not actually read by most individuals in education. This realization only underscores the ways that the word “policy” can leverage power. For elementary teachers, the result can become a debilitating awareness of non-specific surveillance paired with significant fears of missing a “moving target.” The current feeling by many teachers seemed to be that policy was unpredictable and elusively punitive.

Borrowing from Scheurich’s (1994) “policy archaeology” approach that encourages policymakers to trace the roots of policy initiatives, teachers could be engaged in similar conversations. As a teacher and now a researcher, I distinctly remember not knowing about the morning tragedy of September 11th until lunch time. This monumental event and others mentioned during my interviews, underscore the void of the profession’s engagement with larger questions. Elementary teachers, whose days are often referred to as constant “triage,” do not have a minute, in the words of Julie, to even “check the news.” Perceptions of ahistorical policies and seemingly abrupt decisions could be connected to social and political trends as a means of providing an understanding and even activism or advocacy related to: “Why this policy now?”

Suggestions for Shifts in the Policymaking Stance

In this second section, recommendations are included for policymakers as they consider the complexity of discourses involved in reform. In crafting future policies, it is recommended that the confrontations, disruptions and legitimizations between the discourses of policy and teachers be mined for clues to future innovative approaches to
policy. Through the following section, considerations are discussed that would honor and invite engagement with elementary teachers.

**Prioritizing Translational Models During Reform.** The prevailing, unspoken assumption seems to be that when educational policy is introduced to teachers, those making the demands (e.g. government agencies, publishers, administrators) possess complete knowledge to undertake all aspects of implementation. This is impossible. While government agencies and publishers may list ideal outcomes and corresponding instructional processes, there is no replacement for systemic, programmatic translational models. The use of translational models would demonstrate complications that may arise as policy is introduced to classrooms. In order to examine ways that new discourses are privileged and others are silenced, elementary teachers should be invited to participate in ongoing conversations and experimentation with policymaking representatives, administrators, and publishers to illuminate the immense complexity surrounding implementation processes. Such translational models must become a rule of course when new policy is implemented.

During such studies of translation, definitions of valid data need to be expanded and be made visible to grant teachers access to complex layers of discourse involved throughout educational policy analysis. Though policy discourses maintain that external intervention forces elementary teachers to engage with “data-based decision-making,” my contention is that they always have – with rudimentary qualitative data. As elementary teachers progress through their careers, they accumulate invaluable insight that is often ignored by policy yet remains priceless. Teachers have always had data for decision-
making – and its foundation is the professional knowledge base that accumulates through years of experience. Recently, there has been a reduction of an institutional recognition of professional judgment in favor of an allegiance to external measures; yet, teacher knowledge can be very useful for crafting viable, innovative and sustainable implementation processes.

Consistently sharing information from the pilot phases to wide-spread implementation processes allows for sustained collaboration concerning the refinement of materials and consistent questioning. Sustainable models of change can only be facilitated through the development of a policymaking stance that does not seek to work around elementary teachers.

Establishing Grace Periods for New Policy. Teacher perceptions of policy as a “moving target” can be directly linked to the ever-shifting implementations that elementary teachers consistently mentioned. As the politics of curriculum shifts and associated systems of surveillance morph, self-regulation or “constant paranoia” can characterize teacher views of policy. Newer teachers tend to express an eagerness to do anything while experienced teachers grow tired of disposing of expensive materials and the relearning of “new” instructional approaches. These materials and approaches disappear only to emerge again several years later. Allison, the retired co-researcher, talks at length about the humiliation that she felt as newer teachers would snicker behind the backs of experienced teachers. New teachers seemed to think that they were more properly skilled or simply “better at change” when in fact, she told me, “we had already been through every change three or four times in our career.”
A documentation process for reform paired with a possible grace period concerning the implementation of policy at all levels would be helpful. As mentioned by Rebecca, a newly tenured teacher, the present educational policy cycles are simply “too much.” Grace periods could be considered as a requirement of any major educational reform. If policymakers had to consider that any policy would be in place for a period of, at least three years, there might be greater hesitancy before asking teachers to try something new.

**Be Mindful of Personal Funds Invested in Classrooms.** The sheer number of reforms, mentioned by teachers, was sobering. With the introduction of each policy, elementary teachers spend copious amounts of their own money. These practices must be limited and not implicitly framed as necessary. Many of the teachers repeatedly noted their personal investment in their classrooms as a sacrifice that seemed to be required of anyone who was “dedicated.” The previous example offered by Lisa, during her student teaching experience, recalled a practicing teacher who spent $3000 of his own paycheck to enrich learning opportunities. As I conferred with the co-researchers, they suggested that if common monetary investments like these could be minimized, elementary teachers may more willing to try to new ideas and even move among grade levels more often. In other words, teachers could become positioned toward professional flexibility if personal attachments to specific curriculum and grade-level classrooms could be minimized.

Minimizing personal attachments to books, materials, and classroom decorations could allow teachers to use institutionally-purchased instructional materials without the pressure of personal financial investment. It was noted that at the elementary level, the
urgency of providing personal supplementation for the core curriculum became normalized as necessary – even essential. Many teachers struggled with imagining what a successful elementary school classroom would look like without such investments. Yet if these personal investments could be minimized, the core-searchers seemed certain that teachers would find repetitive policy changes more palatable.

**Encourage Teachers to Write.** Elementary teachers should be encouraged to write for publication. As members of a historically feminized profession, the visibility of teachers could potentially be strengthened by narratives that expand narrow definitions of elementary teaching as a profession. In the absence of invitations by policymakers for engagement with issues of public importance, teachers could gain a foothold in policy discourses by writing in web-based forums, a diversity of print-based media, and in local newsletters. This idea of teachers as writers within public advocacy could be introduced as an important aspect of the profession through thoughtful considerations of existing teacher education coursework.

A written knowledge base could be facilitated by attendance at educational conferences. Though admittedly teacher time is at a premium, there may be opportunities for collaborations with universities. Teachers, entrenched within the daily job of working in schools should be recognized as the core of the profession. Currently the range of “others” who speak for teachers seem to reap the most rewards in terms of public recognition. Efforts can be made to create conversations about challenges or aspirations of elementary teachers that include a discussion of present social and political issues. Rather than to perseverate on definitions of institutional compliance, flexible deliberative
models may create spaces for teachers to interrupt political compulsions to fix them. Additionally, the endemic blaming of teachers that can become fashionable at the post-secondary level should be analyzed and interrogated. An increase of teacher generated texts could also provide stronger connections between perceptions regarding the lived effects of reform and the development of new policy analysis.

When talking with Allison, the retired co-researcher, I was reminded that one of the curiosities of the study was teacher uses of silence. Her caveat is that many of the elementary teachers profoundly fear -- and avoid -- being labeled as negative. She explained that speaking is less “dangerous” than writing as there is no indelible textual authorship that might later be construed as resistance. Teachers’ almost debilitating fears of becoming associated with negativity may be alleviated by efforts to normalize the presence of their professional judgment as necessary within an educational debate. The loosening of policy binaries of compliance/resistance toward models that recognize complexity may surface shared understandings that to disagree with policy is not bad. Educational policy should be structured to invite questions, discussions, and reflections.

**Future Directions for Study**

This study was designed to interrogate the prevailing common sense of educational policy research. The Foucauldian policy turn from modernist humanism to the divergent post-structural analytic of discourses creates rich opportunities to reengage with the shopworn problems of education. As Silbey (2003) asserts, “what makes science morally, and rationally, compelling is that it is a public enterprise…” (p. 121). Correspondingly, Silbey encourages the qualitative community to take necessary steps to
strengthen its public presence. In this case, I endeavor to denaturalize assumptions surrounding traditional policy analysis. This is a public imperative and not one that will succeed without mishap. But as Rebecca, a newly tenured elementary teacher, pointed out to me, this is: “what our job is… that is how we learn. You walk you fall, you walk you fall, you try you fall. And, then you walk, walk, walk…” Alternative theoretical frameworks can be used as one step toward understanding unexpected patterns and practices of reform while learning from and not merely dismissing falls along the ways.

The following list represents some areas for future study:

**Tool for the Analysis of Teaching Frameworks:** Work closely with teachers to develop a large-scale tool that looks at the social, political, cultural, and economic frameworks of the profession. All of the issues that characterize the national debates about access, equality, and quality of life are exemplified in the classrooms of today. Beginning with the complexities that teachers identify as central to their daily work, a rich database may be developed to assist policymakers in locating innovative starting points for legislative proposals.

**Ethnographic Study of Teacher Subject Positions:** Develop an observational tool to analyze the subject positions that teachers occupy during reform. I would like to conduct an ethnography that closely examines teacher occupation of the subject positions theorized during this study. One of the goals would be the development of an instrument that, when combined with teacher reflections, may look more closely at uses of silence and perceptions of what teachers can/cannot say during times of change.
**An Administrative Analysis:** Engage in an analysis of administrator decision-making as they translate policy to encourage institutional compliance. I would be most interested in the ways that administrators perceive themselves as powerful. What influences how administrators operate during policy implementation processes? Who do they think teachers are? What becomes privileged, in their minds, and what becomes expendable? How do administrators navigate teacher perceptions that they function as “middle management” and what kind of changes do they hope to make?

**An In-Depth Observation of Policymaking:** This is an area that continues to be neglected in educational policy analysis. Policymakers tend to operate behind a curtain of neutrality where their discourses become framed as logical and rational. I would like to complete an ethnography at the state-level to study the life of a policy from conception to implementation. Such a study would create a transparency that may interrupt the sterile neutrality of today’s approaches to educational policymaking and subsequent analysis.

Each of these ideas represents my on-going interest in looking at educational policy analysis through alternative theoretical lenses. Post-structural theory can be used to frame policy differently and may open theoretical space toward the exploration of critical subject positions for elementary teachers. By subverting categorical “claims of totality and universality and the presumption of binary structural oppositions” (Butler, 1990, p. 40), an active search toward complexity can place dichotomizing logic under suspicion while de-centering notions that policy possesses unmitigated power.

**Further Development of Post-structural Policy Analysis:** This study demonstrates what becomes visible when educational policy analysis is framed by post-
structural theory - particularly in relation to elementary teachers. As a break from
classical policy analyses that primarily measure institutional compliance, this study
views policy as a collection of discourses that privileges certain knowledges. Through
surfacing confrontations, disruptions, and legitimizations, the lived effects of reform can
become visible. The hope is that, through alternative post-structural lenses, some useful
Foucauldian perspectives might be located for the creation of future policy analysis.

The goal is to illuminate the messiness that accompanies reform and shapes the
daily interactions of elementary teachers. This is a contrast to traditional framings of
educational policy analysis that promote models of neutrality. When policy is privileged
as a neutral framework that demands compliance, any existing teacher discourses or
counter-perspectives can become automatically labeled as “resistance.” Increasingly, the
resurgence of a scientific management perspective dictates that “formalized, rationalistic,
and mathematical terms” supersede “a voice grounded in personal, common sense, and
localized particulars” (Mehan, 1993, p. 265).

By stepping away from assumptions of modernity, new perspectives, processes,
solutions, and questions arise to reinvigorate how we look at the roles of elementary
teachers, as foundational to the institution of American public education, in productive
ways. Educational policy could be crafted differently (Ogawa & Achinstein, 2008;
Spillane, 2008b). Models that mandate static outcomes could begin to encourage flexible
processes of deliberation. Proposed reform models could include relevant vibrancy and
be implemented with greater consistency if teachers developed the sense that their
professional decision-making was reflected in the policymaking apparatus. Teachers
could be invited to work together, with policymakers and others, toward educational improvement and in turn related social issues.

Donmoyer (1997) suggests that epistemological sharing, as presented through alternative theoretical frameworks, may provide a “purpose-based tool” to explore the “complex processes of teaching and learning.” If sharing across multiple constituencies became a consistent reality, the consideration of alternative theoretical lenses might result in a “more thoughtful teaching and more balanced policymaking” (1997, p. 195). As Albert Shanker, a past president of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), submitted during a speech in 1985, some individuals may say that “it’s dangerous to let a lot of ideas out of the bag, some of which may be bad. But there’s something that’s more dangerous, and that’s not having any new ideas at all at a time when the world is closing in on you.”

To advance “scholarship about ‘deep-structural’ solutions” for American education (Dumas & Anyon, 2006, p. 168), creating systems for teacher input does not simply mean that there should be an emphasis upon shared decision-making processes at the building level. Current structures for teacher engagement invite input concerning how certain policies may be implemented, but that is not enough. The range of district-based or building-specific initiatives to involve teachers do not acknowledge the need for a new policymaking model where teachers can gain a foothold in public leadership roles. The shifting political nature of the country and American education demands nothing less.

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6 http://www.shankerinstitute.org/aboutal.html
There must be a resurgence of faith in the politics of local teachers and schools as imperative components of any federal politics aimed at global success.

**Conclusion**

This has been a study of the discourses of policy and teachers and the subject positions that elementary teachers may occupy during reform. It has attempted to enact a post-structural analysis through the application of *a priori* theory blended with grounded work. Its empirical base consists of a year and a half’s worth of conversations with three phases of interviews with elementary teachers (n=15) and one retired elementary principal. Its conclusion includes a hybrid model that explains what happens to teachers under conditions of reform. The study offers two conceptual innovations: Subject positions as a framing device and theoretical intersections as systemic through and across which policy and teacher power operates.\(^7\) The rational power production of policy and the relational power production of teachers are sketched as discursive formations to deconstruct assumptions surrounding endemic policy hierarchies. The patterns of teacher silences take shape as powerful presences that skew teacher subject positions among privileges and subjugations while also uncovering the progressive silencing of experienced teachers.

By looking at elementary teacher use of silence and complicity within relational productions of power, the interaction of discourses between policy and teachers can be further explored. Recognition of leadership and resistance, specifically, is essential to sustainable implementation processes as shifting teacher subject positions profoundly

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\(^7\) This framing benefits from Nancy Campbell’s (2009) critique of the subject positions of science and technology workers.
influence the translations of policy. Through looking closely at ways that these subject
positions may emerge as critical to question and interact with policy, new questions,
perspectives, and interest may be raised and explored. By claiming critical theoretical
space for teachers, I gained the chance to look closely at what existed all along.
Elementary teachers are actively questioning their own grasps of post-agency across the
complex contexts of an epidemic of educational policy.

   My hope is that these new frames of policy analysis will make it impossible to
formulate and implement educational policy without the active involvement of teachers
and an effort to understand of the lived effects of reform. The only means to create
innovative change throughout education is with a faith in the notion, to borrow the words
of Sylvia, one of the retired elementary teachers: what teachers know “really does
matter.”
Appendix A: Timeline of Study Methodology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Stage of Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2007</td>
<td>Completed pre-pilot to test qualitative methodologies in the field: Looking at resistances to policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September – December 2007</td>
<td>Drafted a review of modernist analyses of teacher agency in organizational studies, psychology, and critical literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2007</td>
<td>Proposed a pilot study with elementary teachers to look at ways that they resisted, persisted and survived during reform; Contacted co-researchers following IRB approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2007</td>
<td>Conducted three foundational interviews with assistance of co-researchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2008</td>
<td>Transcribed and coded three interviews for initial analysis and drafted proposal for study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2008</td>
<td>Developed coding, a base of open-ended interview questions, and initial theoretical base for the study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January – February 2008</td>
<td>Completed key informant interviews with teachers selected by purposeful sampling (e.g. experience)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2008</td>
<td>Field tested and discarded grounded survey instrument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February - April 2008</td>
<td>Developed a framework of power that might reflect the relational power of teachers and the rational power of policy by applying the taming of Foucault by Gore (1995, 1997)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2008</td>
<td>Transcribed interviews for ongoing analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2008</td>
<td>Reviewed conversations with key informants and created a theoretical typology for continued sampling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2008</td>
<td>Submitted another IRB proposal to continue the study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May – June 2008</td>
<td>Completed interviews with elementary teachers with the intent of developing a deeper understanding of subject positions during reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July – August 2008</td>
<td>Transcribed and analyzed remaining interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September – November 2008</td>
<td>Refined theoretical framework to communicate a blended model of a priori and grounded theory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The elementary teachers in this table largely reflect professional experiences across two Midwestern states that are ranked highly for their teacher educational programs. The experiences that are referred to throughout the study reflect several different school districts. Most of the retired teachers are now in alternative careers.
### Appendix B: Theoretical Sampling Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Silent Resistance</th>
<th>Vocal Leadership</th>
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<tr>
<td>(Adherence to teacher norms; Non-adherence to policy norms)</td>
<td>(Adherence to teacher norms; Adherence to policy norms)</td>
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<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>Susan</td>
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<td>(Elem teacher/Early career/Co-researcher)</td>
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<td>Lisa</td>
<td>Carrie</td>
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<tr>
<td>(MEd/Exited/Phase II)</td>
<td>(MEd/Student teacher/Phase II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie</td>
<td>Sylvia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Elem &amp; Jr High/Early career/Phase III)</td>
<td>(Elem teacher/retired/Phase II)</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Vocal Resistance</th>
<th>Silent Survival</th>
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<td>(Non-adherence to teacher norms; Non-adherence to policy norms)</td>
<td>(Non-adherence to teacher norms; Adherence to policy norms)</td>
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<td>Allison</td>
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<td>Jacqueline</td>
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<td>(Elem teacher/Mid-career/Phase III)</td>
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<td>Karen</td>
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<td>(Elem teacher/early career/Phase III)</td>
<td>(Elem teacher/End of career/Phase III)</td>
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<table>
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<th>Normalization &amp; Regulation by Teachers</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Normalization &amp; Regulation by Policy</strong></td>
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<td>Additional Interviews:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emily</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Elem principal/Retired/Key informant)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Elem teacher/Alternative Career/Phase II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Elem teacher/Mid-career/Phase II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Elem teacher/Mid-career/Phase III; intervening crisis)</td>
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References


Baldridge, J. V. (1972, February). Organizational change: The human relations perspective versus the political systems perspective. *Educational Researcher, 1*(2), 4-10.


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