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"Joyful ELD Works!": How Ideological Clarity Helps (and Does Not Help) Educators Navigate English Language Development Policy

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"Joyful ELD Works!":

How Ideological Clarity Helps (and Does Not Help) Educators

Navigate English Language Development Policy

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Education

by

Olivia Elvira Davis Obeso

2024

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

"Joyful ELD Works!":

How Ideological Clarity Helps (and Does Not Help) Educators

Navigate English Language Development Policy

by

Olivia Elvira Davis Obeso

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

University of California, Los Angeles, 2024

Professor Louis M. Gomez, Chair

In response to persistent inequities in the education of English learner-classified (EL-classified) students, scholars have increasingly called for the preparation of educators who are able to disrupt dominant hierarchies of language and knowledge in schools. One concept that has been developed to describe what it takes to disrupt these hierarchies is *ideological clarity* (Bartolomé & Balderrama, 2001), which refers to a process of critical and consistent reflection on ideologies underlying practice. Though scholars assert that ideological clarity will act as a catalyst for more equitable practice, this scholarship rarely makes explicit the policy contexts in which educators work. This is a glaring oversight, given that, in some cases, these policies have proven to act as a constraint on educators' ability to engage in the kind of equitable instructional practices that scholars of ideological clarity praise. At the same time, educational language policy can also be an important lever for remediating inequities for linguistically marginalized students. In this dissertation, I explore the intersection of the processes of ideological clarity and policy

sensemaking in the context of English language development (ELD) policy, a core component of contemporary policies intended for EL-classified students. In this *relational* and *exploratory* qualitative study (Ravitch & Carl, 2016), I illuminate the strategies that equity-focused educators engaged in to navigate the complexities of ELD policy. I identified four policy navigating strategies that reflected a spectrum of advocacy for EL-classified students: building allies, buffering, building student and family agency, and reimagining. Additionally, I found that educators were more willing to experiment with their agency in the context of ELD policy when they treated their own professional vision as an important object of their reflection when they were engaged in ideological clarity. In outlining the implications of these findings, I emphasize that while educators *can* resist harmful implementations of ELD policy, engaging in these strategies can carry varying personal and professional risk for educators. Thus, I also call for teacher educators, policymakers, and researchers to advocate for systemic changes that would make these strategies less necessary, or at least less risky, for educators who are pursuing educational language equity for EL-classified students.

The dissertation of Olivia Elvira Davis Obeso is approved.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to Eli, who made a Ph.D. a possibility for my future.

To the elementary dual language residents who have allowed me into your classrooms and into your emotional first-year teaching journeys for the past five years. I admired and learned so much from your perseverance.

To Mrs. Morales for showing me what designated ELD *can* be, for always being vulnerable, and for allowing me to learn about the struggles and joys of teaching ELD to middle- and high-school newcomers alongside you.

To the ELD teachers, coaches, and coordinators who allowed me to share your wisdom and continued to advocate for yourselves and your students in this dissertation.

Finally, to my beautiful niblings, Mason, Milo, and Ellinor: may you always have teachers who love and see you for your amazing selves, and fight to make sure others do too.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

ELD has had such a controversial history. And, just because it's better now, doesn't mean that we

can't keep evolving it, you know? And so I hope that we, as educators, keep that in mind that just

because, you know, we're applying more inclusive practices and, let alone like, we're navigating this

in a framework that's like, not as racist as it used to be, it doesn't mean that, well, we're fine, you

know, it's working. As kids are changing, and as culture is changing, we have to change with it. And

so, I hope we keep it in mind.

-Ana, 2nd/3rd grade dual language teacher, Los Angeles County

Motivation

English language development (ELD) is a core component of contemporary policies intended for

English learner-classified (EL-classified) students. The development of ELD as educational

language policy was the result of decades of advocacy by immigrant origin communities, scholars,

and policymakers in California and nationwide, in response to controversy around sink-or-swim

approaches to language instruction for multilingual and immigrant origin youth that resulted in

widespread exclusion of these students from rigorous curricula (Gutfreund, 2019; Hakuta, 2011;

Merino & Rumberger, 1999; Ovando & Combs, 2012). However, the historical marginalization of

EL-classified students is the result of complex social, political, and pedagogical histories that have

made it difficult to pinpoint discrete policy solutions to the inequities these students face. Crafting

and implementing educational language policies that facilitate, rather than detract from, more

equitable educational language experiences is a contentious task made all the more difficult by

these complex histories and ongoing ideological discord (Citrin et al., 2017; Hakuta, 2020; Valdés,

1997). In this context, teachers and other educators who work closely on the implementation of

ELD often struggle to do so effectively and equitably.

Take for example the experience of a teacher I call Maddie[1], who was in her fourth year

working as a fifth grade teacher, when she participated in an interview for this study. Maddie

described first starting to feel that ELD was "unjust" in her first year of teaching:

> I had a student who I'll call Adrian...and he was so confused about why he was in ELD.
>
> And he had been at my school since kindergarten and it was the first time that a teacher
>
> had kind of explained like, what this hour of instruction is, and who receives what support
>
> during this time. And he got so frustrated because nobody in his home speaks Spanish. He
>
> couldn't speak a lick of Spanish, nothing. And he was like, "I am in the wrong spot."...And
>
> so he was just so frustrated...like, "what is happening here?" And then going through that
>
> process with his mom as well and trying to figure out what we could do for him. Because
>
> this isn't – there's a clear flaw in the system, if he has been in this school since kindergarten,
>
> mom didn't know what ELD was, didn't know that he was in it, didn't know why he was in
>
> it, or how he could get out. It was just like a mind-boggling moment of just like, oh my
>
> goodness, how is this happening? How is this happening to these students that it's not even
>
> who they're trying to target with this instruction?

Throughout our interview, Maddie called out multiple shortcomings of the ELD policy ecosystem

in which she worked, including this (mis)identification of students who might need ELD, ways in

which the language assessments EL-classified students had to take were developmentally

inappropriate, and the deficit attitudes that some of her colleagues expressed about what these

students did and did not know. My final question of each of the interviews that I conducted for this

study was some version of: "If you could design your ideal set of EL/ELD policies, what is

something you might redesign, replace, or add?" Maddie had many suggestions, drawing on

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[1] All educators' names are pseudonyms, some of which they selected themselves, others that I selected for them if they
were uninterested in picking their own.

examples of other educational policies, policy changes she had seen in the past, and her imagination about what might best serve EL-classified students. When I asked her then if she had anything to clarify before we concluded the interview, she asked to build on my question:

> You had talked about like the perfect way to do ELD outside of the system. But I also feel like I would like to touch on the perfect way to do ELD within the system... 'Cause I feel like I've got something good going and my students do too, so I just wanna highlight it...making it be like a fun and purposeful time. And not just like using the ELD companion to your ELA curriculum, and not just doing ELPAC practice task types, but doing it in a way where the kids feel good about it.

Maddie emphasized that despite her frustrations, she did not believe that ELD had to be a space that she and her students dreaded, and described how she had found space to mold ELD into something more rigorous and enjoyable. In a follow-up email the following day, she shared: "Got news today that we reclassified 4 of 7 ELs in my class with their new ELPAC scores. Joyful ELD works!" I use Maddie's words in the title of this dissertation, because her experience represents a key assumption of this inquiry: while ELD policy may be imperfect and present various constraints that make it difficult for educators to engage in linguistically equitable practice, ELD does *not* have to be an inherently deficit place and educators do *not* have to sacrifice their personal and professional well-being to engage in equitable ELD practice. Rather, educators can wedge open space (Hornberger, 2005) to engage in instructional practice that is meaningful and joyful for themselves and their students.

Explanations for why deficit practices persist even through political and social change often focus on ideology and specifically how ideology informs the conceptualization of policy at multiple organizational levels. I use ideology to describe socially constructed and dominant "framework[s] of thought" that serve to reproduce and rationalize systems of activity (Bartolomé, 2008b, p. xiii).

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To understand the roots of the inequities EL-classified students face, scholars have pointed to how dominant ideologies continuously re-form in policy discourse and through processes of policy implementation (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Katznelson & Bernstein, 2017; Valdés, 2020). Ideologies also persist in the field of education more broadly through scholars and educators who reinscribe dominant tropes of EL-classified students in their research and practice (K. D. Gutiérrez & Orellana, 2006; Seltzer, 2019). Thus, rather than point to policy or individual practice as *the* source of harmful ideologies, I examine the interplay between policy and educators' policy implementation as a site where ideologies can persist or be interrupted.

In this vein, scholars have advocated for preparing educators who are able to recognize, grapple with, and respond to ideologies underlying educational policy and practice that could be contributing to the ongoing marginalization EL-classified students (Bartolomé & Balderrama, 2001). *Ideological clarity* is one concept that describes this kind of critical reflective practice, and has been primarily developed in the context of the teaching of linguistically marginalized students (Alfaro & Bartolomé, 2017; Bartolomé & Balderrama, 2001; Expósito & Favela, 2003; Venegas-Weber & Negrette, 2023). Ideological clarity frames individual educators' critical reflection on the assumptions undergirding persistent norms in the education of linguistically marginalized students as an essential skill that allows them to "understand if, when, and how...[they] maintain unequal and what should be unacceptable conditions that so many students experience on a daily basis" (Bartolomé, 2004, p. 98). Indeed, given that inequities in EL-classified students' outcomes and experiences have persisted despite decades of policy advocacy and evolution (Gándara et al., 2003; Hakuta, 2011; L. Hill et al., 2019), it is important that we consider individuals' practice as a potential catalyst for transformation while also examining the limits and possibilities of individual educators' efforts to interrupt these patterns.

However, just as with similar constructs (e.g. critical consciousness, see Watts & Hipolito-Delgado, 2015), there has been a dearth of attention to the processes through which educators act on the critical reflection that characterizes ideological clarity to engage in corresponding sociopolitical action. In other words, how do educators who know better figure out how to do better? More notably, research focused on educators' engagement in ideological clarity neglects to contextualize this process in the context of policy, despite prior scholarship that highlights how language policies that circumscribe instructional practice for students are technically, theoretically, and ideologically difficult for educators to make sense of and enact (Flores & Schissel, 2014; Hernandez, 2017; Hopkins, 2016; Hopkins et al., 2022). Though there are many aspects of the policies related to EL-classified students support over which educators have very little control, there are also many opportunities for educators to find space to (re)interpret language policies in agentive ways across organizational layers from district (D. C. Johnson, 2011), to school (Mavrogordato & White, 2020), to classroom (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2006). Educators' agency for making policy adaptations is necessary for making policy work in increasingly local contexts, though some adaptations go beyond policymakers' original intentions. In some instances, such agency is said to be important for undermining the potential harms of inequitable policies (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2006; Lapayese, 2007; Mavrogordato & White, 2020) while in others, teachers' agency is a framed as a barrier to educational reform and a cause of continued inequities (Bertrand & Marsh, 2015; Lockton et al., 2020).

I situate this study in the context of ELD in California and consider the experiences of the teachers, instructional coaches, and coordinators who are tasked with implementing ELD policy. Because ELD (and similar policies in other states) can be implemented in ways that perpetuate egregious inequities for EL-classified students, I explore the potential for individuals' agency in their equitable implementation of designated ELD at various organizational levels (district, school,

classroom) when they engage ideological clarity. I use "ELD policy" to refer to a set of resources and routines that educational organizations are tasked with implementing for the purpose of ensuring that EL-classified students receive high-quality English language instruction. The 1974 Supreme Court case *Lau v Nichols*, in which Chinese American families in San Francisco sued the school district for failing to provide adequate language support and access to the mainstream curricula, marked an important moment in establishing educational rights for students who come to school speaking languages other than and in addition to English (Hakuta, 2011). Since that time, California has put considerable effort into developing standards, resources, and language program models that aim to meet the mandate established through that case.[2]

At present, the core implementational space of these policies in schools is designated ELD, a protected instructional time that schools and districts are required to provide to EL-classified students in order to support their language acquisition needs.[3] In K-5 elementary contexts, designated ELD is often implemented as an instructional block, taught by the regular classroom teacher, but sometimes implemented as pullout depending on the resources and needs of each school community (L. Hill et al., 2019). At the secondary level – usually 6th-12th grades – designated ELD is its own class period, which has been a source of ongoing concern for practitioners and researchers who have documented how this limits access to A-G courses,[4] making it difficult for EL-classified students to graduate college ready (Estrada & Wang, 2018; L. Hill et al., 2019; Hopkins et al., 2022).

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[2] I outline a brief history of educational language policy in California in Chapter II, including attending to some of the clear missteps and controversies in these efforts.

[3] The processes around ELD that I describe throughout this introduction can be confirmed through this site: https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/

[4] The A-G courses in California are courses that are designated to meet standards for college readiness. Not all courses in high schools are designated A-G. Students must complete A-G course requirements to be eligible for admission to UC and CSUs: https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/hs/hsgrtable.asp

Designated ELD in California has also been critiqued as a mechanism that segregates EL-classified students into classrooms that offer them little validation of their existing rich language repertoires and limit their access to rigorous language and content instruction (Abril-Gonzalez & Shannon, 2021; Cabral, 2022). However, while this kind of segregation may be features of policies such as Arizona's early 2000's policies that required EL-classified students receive four hours of intensive designated English instruction each day (Gándara & Orfield, 2010), in California, such segregation might be better attributed to insufficient institutional guidance for implementing designated ELD in schools and districts (L. Hill et al., 2019; Hopkins et al., 2022).

In addition to designated ELD, all educators are required to provide integrated ELD, which is the ongoing language development support provided throughout content area instruction. Both designated and integrated ELD are required to adhere to ELD standards. The ELD standards were developed (and later revised in 2012) to align with content area standards, with much of the focus being on their alignment with English language arts standards, and have been integral in California's response to the nationwide standards movement (Llosa, 2005; Merino & Rumberger, 1999; Na et al., 2021). These standards are intended to represent the English language knowledge and skills that students need to participate in what is often referred to as "mainstream" (and tends to mean English only) classrooms. Educational leaders and policymakers have attempted to support ELD standards implementation through the creation of policy documents such as the English Learner Roadmap and others that draw explicit connections between ELD standards, other content area standards, and examples of instructional practice (Hakuta, 2018; Lagunoff et al., 2015).

The ELD standards are also not without controversy. The standards movement more broadly has been described as a neoliberal project that serves to artificially define what counts as proficiency and reinscribe hierarchies of knowledge and power (Au, 2016; Rosa, 2016).

Proponents of the ELD standards argue that they are necessary for ensuring that EL-classified students have access to language instruction that supports their unique developmental needs (Merino & Rumberger, 1999; TESOL International Association, 2006). Regardless of these debates about standards, there is evidence that even with standards being so integral to ELD policy, students frequently do not have equitable access to high quality designated or integrated ELD instruction and educators often lack the professional learning opportunities that would support them in engaging in more effective practice (Santibañez et al., 2021; Santibañez & Gándara, 2018; Santibañez & Umansky, 2018).

The standards movement has been paired with the expansion of assessments, both summative and formative, which also play an important role in determining which students are EL-classified and placed into ELD (L. Hill et al., 2021; Llosa, 2005; Rosa, 2016). When students first enroll in a public school in California, they are required to fill out a Home Language Survey (HLS) in order to determine whether or not their English proficiency should be assessed using the English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC). The ELPAC is also used in conjunction with an additional English language arts assessment and teacher recommendation for student's reclassification to fluent English proficient, which exits them from designated ELD and its associated language supports (L. Hill et al., 2021).[5]

There are some questions as to whether the HLS accurately identifies students who might need additional language development instruction (Salerno & Andrei, 2021), and various educators I have worked with and interviewed for this study have questioned the validity of using the ELPAC to assess students' proficiency, particularly in the earliest grades. Indeed, studies of the pre-cursor to the ELPAC (the CELDT) found that the assessment may have been "too blunt an instrument"

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[5] "Parent recommendation" is a fourth element of reclassification. However, this element often simply consists of parents signing a document indicating that they have been informed that their student is ready for reclassification.

for understanding students' linguistic assets and needs (García Bedolla & Rodriguez, 2011). Additionally, the data from these assessments are not necessarily useful for educators' instructional planning, either because they do not know where to access this data or do not know how to interpret it (Santibañez & Gándara, 2018). Educators also express frustration with feeling that the standardized assessment regimes their EL-classified students are subjected to are quite burdensome and make it difficult for them to support language development in a holistic manner that does not simply teach to the test (Cabral, 2022; Hernandez, 2017).

Thus far, I have named three components of ELD policy that present ideological and technical challenges for educators: the first is designated (and integrated) ELD, the second is the ELD standards, and the third is assessment and the data produced by assessments. Despite the tensions that these aspects of ELD policy present, some of the educators I have worked with and educators in prior research have challenged the idea that ELD policy is inherently deficit-oriented, focusing instead on wielding their agency to create an ELD experience that is affirming and sustaining for their EL-classified students (Estrada & Wang, 2018; Hopkins et al., 2022). However, educators, students, and scholars have also argued that school systems on the whole are still far from achieving linguistic equity in their support of EL-classified students (Abril-Gonzalez & Shannon, 2021; L. Hill et al., 2019; Santibañez & Gándara, 2018; Valdés, 2020).

Indeed, there is reason to be concerned that the implementation of these ELD policies is at times contributing to the ongoing marginalization of EL-classified students. For example, scholars have argued that the "English learner" label itself "conceals more than it reveals" (Martínez, 2018, p. 515) reducing students to what they do not know instead of building from their strengths, which seems to also have implications for EL-classified students' perceptions of themselves (Flores et al., 2015; M. G. Lee & Soland, 2023; Umansky & Dumont, 2019). Educators taking issue with the ways that routines for course placement can limit students' access to rigorous

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and enriching learning experiences highlight that the classification in itself serves to rigidly categorize students in such a way that does not take into account all of the variation in their assets and needs (Abril-Gonzalez & Shannon, 2021; Cabral, 2022; Valdés, 2020). Others argue that these policies are a necessary lever for holding educational organizations accountable for providing EL-classified students with equitable educational opportunities (Hakuta, 2011; Umansky & Porter, 2020). The historical context of educational language policy in California clearly demonstrates that policy matters for the kind of experiences that educators provide for students (Gándara et al., 2000; Gutfreund, 2019). However, policy is not predictive of practice, given that policy is implemented through cycles of interpretation by organizations and individuals tasked with enacting it (Hornberger, 2005; D. C. Johnson, 2011). Across these perspectives, there is a sense that enacting ELD policy in ways that improve the educational experiences for these students is far from straightforward.

Through this dissertation, I intend to offer insight into how educators navigate ELD policy in such a way that allows them to resolve tensions that arise through the process of implementation. This insight can be valuable to support teacher educators in reflecting on their practices of developing justice-oriented educators, policymakers in their evaluation of how ELD policies contribute to and constrain possibilities for greater equity, and researchers in considering to what (and to whom) they attribute persistent inequities for EL-classified students.

Defining Educational Language Equity

Part of the struggle to make schooling more equitable for EL-classified students is perhaps due to the variation in what is meant by *equity*. Debates around equity have centered on distinctions between process and product (Louie & Gereluk, 2021; I. M. Young, 1990), data for accountability and data for improvement (Bryk et al., 2015; Koski & Reich, 2006), and equity versus equality (Cochran-Smith & Keefe, 2022; R. Gutiérrez, 2012). The differences in definitions of equity

matter for how data are interpreted, what outcomes individuals or communities believe they are working toward, and their strategies for doing so. Because I am concerned with whether and how engaging in ideological clarity allows educators to implement ELD in ways that are equitable for EL-classified students, I briefly define and provide my own perspectives on language equity here.

I rely primarily on Rochelle Gutiérrez's dimensions of equity (R. Gutiérrez, 2012), originally developed for the context of mathematics teaching, to define language equity in this dissertation. The dimensions that she outlines are useful for understanding some of the main strands of educational language equity work. In this framework, Gutiérrez identifies four dimensions: access, achievement, power, and identity. She calls access and achievement the "dominant axis" of these dimensions (R. Gutiérrez, 2012, p. 20). The dominant axis is focused on supporting students' in accessing what Delpit (1995) called the culture of power. In terms of language, access and achievement dimensions of equity encompass the idea that we know what kind of language is most often seen as valuable socially and on standardized assessments, and so ELD practice must support students in performing language in those ways so that they have access to particular social and academic opportunities. This axis might be considered more aligned with product definitions of equity, where the focus is on students' performance on common measures.

Gutiérrez calls power and identity the "critical axis" of these dimensions of equity (2012, p.20). The dimensions of power and identity are more representative of what Cochran-Smith and Keefe (2022) called *strong equity* which takes into account the sociohistorical formation of social systems, including schools. These dimensions are focused on educational transformation that could make schools more reflective of marginalized students, rather than asking how marginalized students can better fit into the systems that already exist. For example, while ELD policy is often framed as teaching EL-classified students the English language skills they need to participate in so-called mainstream classrooms, this ignores the myriad of linguistic knowledge that teachers

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themselves may come to school with (Obeso, under review) and frames students, rather than monolingual schooling systems, as in need of remediation. Power and identity dimensions of equity are particularly important in light of research that has emphasized how the continued linguistic marginalization of EL-classified students is in part due to ideological definitions of success that consistently devalue or misread these students' abilities (Adair et al., 2017; Flores & Rosa, 2015; García & Otheguy, 2017; M. G. Lee & Soland, 2023).

My motivation for defining the variation in conceptualizations of equity here is twofold. First, it is important to be clear about what equity *can* mean, so that I can more precisely speak about language equity throughout this dissertation. Second, I believe that this variation in definitions of equity is part of what educators struggle through when they are trying to reconcile the demands of policy on their practice with their own vision of what their students need and deserve. I have seen this struggle many times with the teachers I have met through my research and practice in teacher education, when they feel conflicted in trying to balance preparing students for the frequent assessments they are subjected to that have implications for their educational futures, and affirming the rich language knowledge that students bring into the classroom. In what follows, I draw on these ideas about equity to discuss the value of ideological clarity, and further breakdown the ideological conflicts of policy implementation.

Ideological Clarity as a Tool for Equity

Scholars have described the knowledge and orientations that constitute anti-deficit thinking about EL-classified students using concepts such as critical consciousness (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017), sociolinguistic consciousness (Lucas & Villegas, 2013), and ideological clarity (Bartolomé & Balderrama, 2001). These concepts are grounded in similar epistemological orientations and suggest a need for a deep sociohistorical understanding of the origins of language norms, particularly as they manifest in schools. Common across these concepts is the notion of critical

reflection, where individuals consider the role of power in social hierarchies and norms, and the subjectivity of the assumptions, theories, and ideologies that reinforce those norms. These concepts thus tend to focus on the power and identity axis of equity. The core proposition of these concepts is that in engaging in critical reflection – intentionally noticing the theories, assumptions, and ideologies that undergird inequities in schools – educators will choose to take action to interrupt those inequities. In use, however, research that utilizes these concepts often lacks clarity about whether they refer to process, state, or belief (Jemal, 2017), and does not pay sufficient attention to *how* critical reflection on ideology and inequity turns into sociopolitical action (Watts & Hipolito-Delgado, 2015). Furthermore, though these concepts, and ideological clarity in particular, have been theorized as an essential skill for teachers of EL-classified students specifically, this scholarship has yet to explore if and how ideological clarity helps teachers respond to the policy demands inherent to the teaching of these students.

Though many frameworks that describe the inclination and skills for discerning ideologies have proven useful in the work of critical scholars pursuing more linguistically equitable educational norms, ideological clarity is the primary framework I use in this dissertation given that it has been developed primarily within the context of teaching students with marginalized linguistic identities, such as those who are EL-classified (Alfaro & Bartolomé, 2017; Bartolomé & Balderrama, 2001; Expósito & Favela, 2003). The notion of ideological clarity emerged as a response to what Bartolomé called the *methods fetish*, which she used to critique teacher education that focuses primarily on discrete classroom practices without attending to dominant ideologies in schooling that have the potential to perpetuate harm toward marginalized students (Bartolomé, 1994). Bartolomé defines ideological clarity as "the process by which individuals struggle to identify and compare their own explanations for the existing socioeconomic and political hierarchy with the dominant society's" (2004, p. 98). This concept is valuable for

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educational scholars and teacher educators to frame what it takes for teachers to continuously recognize and evaluate ideologies that they encounter in the ever-evolving contexts of their practice. Since earlier theoretical work where Bartolomé and colleagues focused primarily on teachers of linguistically marginalized Latinx students (Bartolomé & Balderrama, 2001; Trueba & Bartolomé, 1997), ideological clarity has also been taken up to empirically examine the work of Black teachers (Watson, 2017), teachers working with immigrant populations (Bartolomé, 2010; Expósito & Favela, 2003), history teachers (Blevins et al., 2020), and the preparation of social justice-oriented educators more broadly (Alfaro & Quezada, 2010; Assaf & Dooley, 2010; Philip, 2012). This scholarship has provided rich examples of what ideological clarity can look like, but leaves the connection between what educators come to understand through ideological clarity and their response to that understanding in their classroom practice somewhat underdefined.

This under definition has meant that, while this critical pedagogical stance has proven to be valuable for reframing how educators see and discuss their work with EL-classified students, there is still much that is not understood about the role that this thinking plays in educators' ability to respond to policy demands in their practice. Policy is sometimes framed as an insurmountable impediment to equitable and critical pedagogies, such as in scholarship that highlights the experiences of educators dealing with English language assessment regimes that they feel undermine their assertions about the value of diverse linguistic knowledge in their classrooms (Flores & Schissel, 2014; Hernandez, 2017). At the same time, educators have also been able to resist perpetuating what they perceive to be harmful ideologies in their practice (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2006; Mavrogordato & White, 2020; Urrieta, 2010). A primary goal of this dissertation is to understand through what strategies and under what conditions educators might be able to do the latter, in ways that serve multiple dimensions of equity, but especially power and identity.

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I argue that understanding the relationship between ideological clarity and policy implementation is an essential connection to make for at least two reasons. First, because policies circumscribe what educators believe that they can and should do for EL-classified students in schools (Heineke, 2015; Hernandez, 2017). For example, Hernandez (2017) shares the experience of dual-language immersion teachers who felt that they could not meaningfully balance English and Spanish in their classrooms given the routines around testing in and of English, that communicated the utmost importance of English not only to teachers, but also to their students. And second, prior research has documented *that* educators can subvert policies that they find to be ideologically problematic for their EL-classified students (Hopkins, 2016; Keisler et al., 2024; Mavrogordato & White, 2020; Urrieta, 2010), without systematic attention to the skills and resources that allows them to do so in cases where others with similar critical orientations cannot. This disconnect grew increasingly apparent to me as I worked for five years with first-year teachers emerging from a preparation program rooted in principles of justice, who would tell me that they knew *that* they wanted to do better for their students, but often felt that they *could not* because of the policies communicated to them implicitly and explicitly in their school communities.

As the language and concepts of policy texts are interpreted across varied communities of practice and by individuals with different histories and schema, they are enacted in unique ways. It is not necessarily undesirable for policy meaning to change through implementation, and it may happen for a variety of reasons. One catalyst for policy variation through implementation may be that those who are enacting the policy at more local levels have different values and discourses that they are drawing on, so that they interpret the meaning of policy language in unexpected or unintended ways (H. C. Hill, 2001). Another may be that individuals feel that the specifics of policy requirements undermine the intention of a given policy, and enact the policy differently than it is written to stay true to its purpose (Mavrogordato & White, 2020). In any case, while individual

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actions are not enough to transform education, it is clear that individuals can play an important role in how students experience policy and can find agency to instigate organizational change (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2015; Urrieta, 2010).

Certainly, ELD policy in California leaves significant room for interpretation and variation in what ELD becomes at the school level (Hopkins et al., 2022). This means that while teacher educators can support teachers in developing ideological clarity and pedagogical practices, they cannot know the nuanced barriers that educators might encounter across school contexts. Thus, given that deficit ideologies can be perpetuated through assumptions underlying policy implementation (Ascenzi-Moreno & Seltzer, 2021; García & Otheguy, 2017; Strong & Escamilla, 2023) and that policy creates real but not necessarily predictable constraints for educators' practice (Heineke, 2015; Hopkins et al., 2022), I ask how ideological clarity might serve as a catalyst in educators' navigation and enactment of those policy demands. That is, I explore how educators' ability to discern ideologies in ELD policies allows them to respond to those policies in ways that align with their values and visions of equity.

My Position and Stake in This Study

I came to the work of preparing teachers for the complex demands of language and policy in practice through my prior personal and professional experience. Growing up, I was constantly told by my paternal grandparents, aunties, and uncles that we are Mexican and to be proud of our identity. I also heard many stories about why my dad and his nine siblings, who grew up Ventura, San Gabriel, and Riverside, largely did not speak Spanish. A story that always stuck with me in particular came from my oldest auntie who told me that when she was in kindergarten, she was threatened with expulsion for speaking Spanish in class. As proud as they were of being Mexican, my grandparents were also proud of being "American" and they came to learn that "American" at this time meant "English speaking." These early interactions with the school system ultimately led

them to institute English only in their household as a way to protect their children and ensure they would have access to "The American Dream." Nine of the ten siblings ended up graduating from universities like Stanford, UC Berkeley, and UC Santa Barbara. Despite all of these efforts to fit into dominant frameworks of success, my youngest auntie once recounted an experience with a professor at UC Berkeley who told her that he did not believe her when she said that nearly all of her Mexican-American siblings had attended and graduated from college. And, one of my cousins whom my grandma helped raise told me that later in life, Grandma told her that she deeply regretted that her kids had mostly lost their Spanish.

Against the backdrop of this family history, my parents enrolled me in one of the only elementary schools in Seattle, Washington that taught Spanish, and later became the first dual language immersion program in Seattle Public Schools. I heard the message from this young age that Spanish was an important part of our familial identity as Mexican-Americans, even though our experience with the language had been fraught. I also heard conflicting messages about my identity from my peers, some of whom would ask me what it meant to be Mexican, and others who would tell me I was not really Mexican because I could not speak enough or the right kind of Spanish. It was not until I moved away from Seattle to go to the University of Arizona in Tucson that I started to meet others with similar familial histories. It was in Tucson that I started to understand these common familial experiences as the legacies of restrictive language policies and social attitudes. I chose to go into teaching so that I could create spaces that would not ask families to shed their language identities for educational success, regardless of the policies that would surround my classroom. Ultimately, after working across multiple and mostly non-traditional classrooms, I chose to pursue research as a way to respond to harmful language policy legacies on a broader scale.

I approach research as an act of advocacy for improving conditions for teachers. I think of this study as an opportunity to understand how the field of teacher preparation might better

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prepare educators to navigate the complex contexts of language policy in which they practice. I am also cautious in undertaking a study focused on educators' ability to navigate policy, when I believe that policy at the state, district, and school levels needs to change to make educators' development of equitable practice more feasible and less risky. I believe that the struggle of ideological clarity is valuable for examining the assumptions that we, as educators, normalize when we leave them unexamined. For the teachers I work with, I see the way that being able to name ideologies and their impact is helpful for them to be able to clearly articulate their beliefs and goals for their teaching. However, I am not sure their ability to engage in ideological clarity always helps them develop instructional practices that are more equitable or meaningful to them and their EL-classified students in light of ELD policies. In fact, it seems that some actually feel less empowered to act against harmful ideologies when they see how pervasive they are. At the same time, I am troubled by scholarship that suggests that when educators seem to go along with ideologically problematic norms it is because they are ignorant or insufficiently committed to social transformation and equity, without humanizing their identities and experiences. With this dissertation, it is my goal to respond to these observations by clarifying what role engaging in ideological clarity does or might play in helping teachers integrate ELD policy into their practice.

Research Questions

In this dissertation, I ask whether and how ideological clarity matters in teachers' policy implementation. The questions that guide this research are:

RQ1: What is the relationship between the processes of policy sensemaking and ideological clarity?

RQ2: How do educators navigate ELD when they engage in ideological clarity?

Overview of the Research Design

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The scholarly goals of this study were *relational* and *exploratory*, in the sense that I intended to clarify the relationship between the processes of ideological clarity and ELD policy implementation (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The practical goal of this study was to illuminate practice that equity-focused educators engaged in to navigate the complexities of ELD policy, to gain insights that could be useful for informing pre-service and early career professional development, as well as ongoing language policy advocacy.

I recruited teachers currently teaching designated ELD in public schools in grades ETK-12, ELD instructional coaches whose primary task was to support teachers in their designated and integrated ELD instruction in schools, and ELD coordinators who were often focused on improving ELD structures across a school or district, and were tasked with ensuring that ELD policy was implemented correctly. These educators were diverse geographically, representing 13 different counties in northern, central, and southern parts of the state. Most identified as white or Latinx/Hispanic, but overall represented a variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds, learning experiences, and years and types of experiences working in public schools. Furthermore, the communities that these educators worked in represented a variety of languages. For example, educators in Sacramento Country spoke about recent influxes of Farsi, Dari, Ukrainian, and Russian speakers, while educators in Los Angeles County primarily spoke of Spanish-background EL-classified students. They also described experiencing widely different sociopolitical contexts within their school and in their broader communities.

Educators were recruited through an initial survey that was designed to capture basic demographic information and probe their self-reported engagement in ideological clarity-like reflection. I collected data through in-depth interviewing (Levitt, 2021) so as to capture data central to the research questions as well as explore themes that were not expected. I began analysis after the first interview, with line-by-line process coding to capture activity and in vivo coding to capture

the particular contexts of activity that participants described (Saldaña, 2021). After the first five interviews, I then began axial coding: an approach to "reassembling" the data and identifying categories that would form the basis for the development of a conceptual framework (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Saldaña, 2021). By continuously disassembling and reassembling the data, I explored multiple explanations for the relationship of engaging in ideological clarity and ELD practice that I also continued to probe through revised questions in ongoing interviews. Through analysis, I developed a framework for recognizing and coding how educators engaged in ideological clarity as policy sensemaking, and four strategies that they engaged in to tether this thinking to their instructional practice.

Summary

In this dissertation, I explore the relationship between the processes of ideological and policy sensemaking situated in California's ELD policy context. I contend that this study is important for understanding how educators can be prepared and supported to work toward greater equity for EL-classified students. In illuminating the experiences of these educators, I also aim to inform how policymakers think about the constraints and affordances of ELD policy. In Chapter II, I review and draw connections between literature focused on ideological clarity, language policy and policy sensemaking, and teacher agency. In Chapter III, I describe the methodological design of this study. In Chapter IV, I share what I found about the relationship between engaging in ideological clarity and making sense of ELD policy, and name four strategies that educators employed to move their sensemaking into instructional practice. Finally, in Chapter V, I discuss the implications of these findings for educators, researchers, and policymakers.

CHAPTER II: CONCEPTUAL FRAMING

In this study, I explore the relationship between ideological clarity and ELD policy implementation. In Chapter I, I argued that this is a valuable relationship to explore because while prior literature has claimed that critical reflective processes like ideological clarity are necessary for equitable instructional practice, it is not clear whether these processes are useful for educators to navigate the pressures they feel are imposed by language policies. I begin here with a sketch of the various ideologies that have been named in the study of educational inequity, and language inequity in education more specifically. I then delve further into how prior scholarship has described and studied ideological clarity. Specifically, I grapple with the variation in how this concept has been applied and draw on germinal scholarship that developed the idea of ideological clarity in order to settle on a definition that I use throughout this study. I then consider perspectives for defining language policy which guides my definition of what counts as ELD policy and how ideology has been represented in EL-related policies historically. Furthermore, I highlight individual educators' role in making sense of policy both as individuals and as collectives within their professional communities. Finally, I consider what has been said about teacher agency in policy implementation and organizational change, to frame the potential options that educators have in responding to ELD policies. I conclude this chapter by drawing explicit connections across all of these literatures to foreshadow the methods of data collection and analysis that I employed in this study.

Ideology and Educational (In)equity

Ideologies are socially constructed "framework[s] of thought" that serve to reproduce and rationalize systems of activity (Bartolomé, 2008b, p. xiii). They can be thought of as the dominant sociopolitical schema through which educators understand and justify the current state of educational systems, and thus, how they choose to act within these systems. In educational context,

ideologies shape how inequities are defined and, as a result, what would constitute appropriate responses to those inequities. Many ideologies have been named and examined by scholars who seek to identify the subjectivities of language education. These ideologies represent distinct theoretical perspectives yet also overlap in important ways. Though ideologies can easily go unnoticed as inevitable patterns in activity, they are recognizable in discourse and action (Bartolomé, 2008b; Gerring, 1997). Thus, in what follows, I offer definitions of dominant ideologies relevant to the experiences of EL-classified students and their educators, and examples of discourse and action that represent those ideologies.

Ideologies that have been defined as harmful for EL-classified students fall under the broad umbrella of what can be described as deficit ideologies, which attribute students' lack of academic or social success to their personal characteristics rather than a result of the systems within which students are learning (Valencia & Solórzano, 2004). For example, when faced with data that show that EL-classified students struggle with content area learning, educators might dismiss these outcomes as expected, instead of questioning their own practice (Bertrand & Marsh, 2015). Deficit ideologies work to *other* students such as those who are EL-classified. Othering refers to the process of defining social groups as outside of an established norm and thus not belonging in a shared space or culture (Langer-Osuna & Nasir, 2016; Said, 1979). In this sense, deficit ideologies might thrive particularly well under theories of equity that focus only on access and achievement, leaving the normalized definitions of access and achievement unchallenged. Furthermore, othering can undergird the isolation of designated ELD teachers, when so-called mainstream teachers reject responsibility for EL-classified students (English, 2009). Indeed, the term "mainstream" can be used in such a way that suggests that EL-classified students are not part of the core audience for educational organizations.

Importantly, deficit ideologies do not have to be intentionally malicious to be harmful. For example, what some have deemed the "pobrecito syndrome" is an example of how well-intentioned responses to educational inequities for EL-classified students can be highly problematic (Bartolomé & Balderrama, 2001). Pobrecito is a word in Spanish that expresses sympathy for an individual, and can be translated to "poor little one" in English. Pobrecito syndrome describes the schema that some educators apply to their support of linguistically marginalized students where they treat these students as incapable of deep learning and thus "protect" them from more rigorous learning opportunities (see also Adair et al., 2017). This response to inequity is harmful because it focuses *only* on making students feel safe without building on those feelings of safety and belonging to sustain and expand their assets.

Raciolinguistic ideologies refer to the ways that racialized individuals such as EL-classified students are perceived as linguistically deficient even when they perform language identical to that of their white peers (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Raciolinguistic ideologies undergird educators' expectations that racialized students will struggle with language, regardless of their observable linguistic practices (Cabral, 2022; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Rosa, 2016; Valdés, 2020). These ideologies help to maintain what Cabral (2022) calls the "linguistic confinement" of Latinx youth labeled as long-term English learners (LTELs), which refers to patterns of exclusion and marginalization of racialized youth within schooling organizations. Indeed, though LTELs are often youths who grew up in the U.S. primarily speaking English and there is evidence that their ongoing inability to reclassify to fluent English proficient is a result of limited opportunities to learn because of their linguistic confinement, they are often still subjected to educational isolation and tracking (Abril-Gonzalez & Shannon, 2021; Flores et al., 2015; Flores & Lewis, 2023; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Strong & Escamilla, 2023).

Similarly, ideologies of languagelessness and semilingualism frame students as lacking proficiency in *any* language (MacSwan, 2000; Rosa, 2016). Students' apparent lack of academic and linguistic achievement have long been attributed to their being languageless and semilingual, in the sense that they are perceived as lacking a command of either English or another language (see for example Cummins, 1979). This perspective can matter for how students are taught and perceived by educators. For example, scholars have highlighted that students can be denied access to deeper learning opportunities as a result of educators' perception that they lack language and thus would be unable to engage in meaningful learning about the content areas (Adair et al., 2017; Jacobs, 2001). These ideologies of linguistic deficiency are thus harmful because they misdiagnose what students know and do not yet know, thereby misleading educators in their decisions about how to support their students.

Ideologies of standardization rely on the prescriptivist perspective that there are correct and incorrect ways to language, which can be contrasted with *descriptive* perspectives of language that prefer to examine how language is actually wielded for different purposes and audiences. These ideologies are intertwined with ideologies of linguistic deficiency. MacSwan (2000) described how semilingualism fundamentally misrepresents language development, particularly bilingual language development, by highlighting how it relies on "poorly designed" assessments of linguistic ability (p. 20). He argued that instead of providing a useful heuristic for understanding individuals' language repertoires, semilingualism simply perpetuates narrow, prescriptivist perspectives of language. These ideologies of standardization legitimize language assessments as accurate measures of language proficiency, even though they are incapable of capturing the unique hybridity of multilingual students' repertoires (Ascenzi-Moreno & Seltzer, 2021; García & Otheguy, 2017; Macswan & Rolstad, 2006).

Monoglossic ideologies are similar to ideologies of standardization, in constructing a supposedly neutral linguistic norm that is based on English-speaking, monolingual, and often middle-upper class practices to which EL-classified students do not conform (Flores & Schissel, 2014; García & Otheguy, 2017). Monoglossia is also intricately related to assimilationist ideologies, in that assimilationist ideologies encourage a focus on EL-classified students' ability to approximate these monoglossic norms (Bartolomé, 2008b). These ideologies are not just about pursuing homogeneity in named languages, but also in cultural meanings around language and learning, and dialects of language (Bartolomé, 2008b; Cabral, 2022; Ruíz, 1984). Monoglossic and assimilationist ideologies undergird the frustration that dual language teachers feel that, even in bilingual settings, the hyper-focus on English proficiency makes it difficult to cultivate authentically bilingual spaces (Flores & Schissel, 2014; Hernandez, 2017).

Individually and collectively, these ideologies work to reproduce the most harmful trends of EL-classified students' education such as being isolated (Cabral, 2022; Estrada, 2022), tracked into less rigorous learning opportunities (Callahan, 2005; Umansky, 2016), provided with insufficient resources for learning (J.-H. Lee & Fuller, 2020), and pushed to focus on assimilation at the expense of their rich linguistic and cultural funds of knowledge (Hernandez, 2017). Efforts to focus on educators' ideological awareness are motivated by research that posits that schooling continues to marginalize students not because teaching practice remains stagnant, but because of these persistent ideologies underlying definitions of educational problems and solutions reify existing sociocultural hierarchies. It is from this perspective that the notion of ideological clarity was developed and taken up by scholars and practitioners in teacher preparation.

Ideological Clarity

Research that focuses on educators' ideological orientations often focuses on their beliefs as a stagnant lens, presenting the stances that they commit to and their descriptions of marginalized

students as evidence of their preparedness (or not) to encounter the ideological landscape of schooling (Lucas & Villegas, 2013; Sleeter, 2001; Solano-Campos et al., 2020). A significant body of research in teacher education is focused on teachers' established beliefs about teaching and the communities that they will serve, and new beliefs that become established through coursework. For example, surveys and scales such as the Language Attitudes of Teachers Scale (Byrnes & Kiger, 1994) have been used to determine what teachers believe about their students who are labeled as English learners or otherwise linguistically marginalized (Dobbs & Leider, 2021; Karabenick & Noda, 2004; Reeves, 2006). Identifying teachers' beliefs about language and teaching is useful for understanding the landscape of ideologies that teachers hold as they enter and make their way through the teaching profession. However, these moment-in-time measures show only a sliver of what an educator's perspectives on educational language practice can or will become across time and contexts.

Ideological clarity is related to ideological stances but is not a specific standpoint in itself. Ideological clarity pushes past this moment-in-time thinking about teachers beliefs, and is defined by an ongoing "struggle to identify and compare" ideological standpoints held by individuals and organizations (Bartolomé, 2004, p. 98). Individuals who engage in this struggle continuously develop their capacity to understand how dominant frameworks of thought sustain the current sociopolitical order in order to recognize the link between their own practice and these frameworks (Bartolomé, 2004, 2008b; Bartolomé & Balderrama, 2001). To this end, evidence of ideological clarity may be visible in artifacts of pre-service course activities through which novice teachers conceptualize ideologies and analyze the assumptions underlying educational practice (Alfaro & Quezada, 2010; Assaf & Dooley, 2010; Expósito & Favela, 2003) and in practicing educators' descriptions of how they make decisions in and develop their practice (Alfaro, 2008;

Blevins et al., 2020; Venegas-Weber & Negrette, 2023). Specifically, it is teachers' exploration and connection-making that are examples of their ideological clarity, not only their beliefs themselves.

Scholars also highlight that teachers from marginalized backgrounds are not necessarily more equipped with an inclination to engage in ideological clarity, as they can internalize and perpetuate some of the harmful ideologies that were imposed on their own experiences (Alfaro, 2019; Alfaro & Bartolomé, 2017). Furthermore, reflecting on artifacts of context and practice will not be inherently productive or critical in the sense that teachers may continue to reinforce ideologies that they have internalized as natural (Bacon, 2017; Taylor et al., 2018). Finally, individuals who aim to support the development of educators who are able to engage in ideological clarity must be thoughtful about their own role in this process and not take for granted that efforts to develop ideological clarity will in fact lead individuals to be able to engage with its processes (McDonald, 2007; Sleeter, 2001; Taylor et al., 2018).

Defining Components of Ideological Clarity

Ideological clarity is a kind of critical reflection that focuses specifically on ideologies. Bartolomé (2004) defines ideological clarity as:

> the process by which individuals struggle to identify and compare their own explanations
> for the existing socioeconomic and political hierarchy with the dominant society's...[which]
> should help teachers to better understand if, when, and how...[they] maintain unequal and
> what should be unacceptable conditions that so many students experience on a daily basis
> (p. 98)

The overarching theory of action of ideological clarity is that, by identifying ideologies and noticing when their practice perpetuates dominant ideologies that marginalize their students, teachers will be able to interrupt these cycles and practice in more equitable ways. From this definition, I draw out three interrelated components of ideological clarity. First, educators' *noticing* or *identification*

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of ideologies. Because ideologies rely on their normalization to persist across social and temporal space, individuals must learn to actively identify them through discourse and practice (Bartolomé, 2008b). As a method for deepening their understanding, individuals engaged in ideological clarity also *compare* and *contrast* assumptions that underly taken for granted norms. This juxtaposing supports one's understanding of how ideologies can manifest across a variety of contexts. Finally, educators engaged in ideological clarity engage in some degree of *reflexivity,* turning the focus of their critical reflection back onto their own practice to consider "if, when, and how" they might be perpetuating these ideologies. I expand on each of these components in turn here.

Identification of Ideologies

To practice ideological clarity, teachers need to have some explicit exposure to frameworks and theories that explain how ideologies produce and rationalize hierarchical power relations in society (Assaf & Dooley, 2010; Bacon, 2017; Bartolomé, 2010; Kohli, 2019; McBee Orzulak, 2013; Taylor et al., 2018). In teacher education courses, this exposure generally occurs through assigned course texts with interpretive guidance provided by course instructors. However, teachers can also get exposure to these ideas through their social networks both within communities of colleagues and from the broader community. For example, authentic relationships with local community members, including students families, can serve as a source for new ideological and axiological understandings of teaching practice (Expósito & Favela, 2003; Ishimaru & Takahashi, 2017; Zeichner et al., 2016). What I mean here by "authentic relationships" is illustrated in research that examines relationships that are built on educators' recognition of the funds of knowledge of students and their communities (Bartolomé, 2008a; Moll et al., 1992; Zeichner et al., 2016). These respectful relationships can thus give teachers a window into other possibilities for what students are able to do and what they might need (Alfaro, 2008; Bartolomé, 2008a). That is, they might help teachers more accurately diagnose the educational "problems" that policy tries to address.

Educators may also notice ideologies that they have experienced through past and ongoing experiences (Blevins et al., 2020; Venegas-Weber & Negrette, 2023). In their case study of two novice social studies teachers that asked how ideological clarity informs critical pedagogical practice, Blevins, Magill, and Salinas (2020) relied primarily on semi-structured interviews to identify evidence of these teachers' engagement in ideological clarity. The authors presented quotes from their teacher participants describing their questioning of narratives that they had encountered in schools and discussed other perspectives they had been exposed to in higher education and at home that were revelatory for them. While moments such as these do not capture the ongoingness of ideological clarity, they can suggest individuals' willingness to seek out alternative explanations that surface subjectivity in the status quo, sometimes drawing on their own experiences and beliefs to do so.

Juxtaposition

Another important aspect of ideological clarity expressed in the definition at the start of this section is the comparison of assumptions and norms across practice and the contexts in which practice takes place. In her case study of a recent graduate of a Teacher Education Program at a California State University, Alfaro (2008) provided evidence of this teacher's engagement in ideological clarity in his comparisons of discrimination across school systems. This teacher described how he had first noticed differences in how students of different social classes were treated in Mexico across his practice in private and public school systems. He applied this lens to what he had experienced as a Mexican immigrant in public schools in the United States, and connected these observations to ideologies of race and class. Another example of juxtaposing is when educators compare themselves to their colleagues. In her article defining *authentic cariño* as a form of love that is informed by the practice of ideological clarity, Bartolomé (2008a) provided quotes from two teachers in which they compared their practice and beliefs to those of their colleagues in their

efforts to describe why and how they chose to "disobey" dominant expectations of early childhood teaching. For example, these teachers distinguished their use of Spanish in their pre-K classrooms as a tool for connecting with and humanizing children, from their colleagues' use of Spanish as a tool to reinforce rules and chastise students. In each of these examples, comparison is about refining one's understanding of observed practices and beliefs as a strategy for identifying and challenging potentially harmful ideologies.

Reflexivity

Relatedly, a final important component of ideological clarity is critical reflection directed inward – reflexivity – where educators analyze the perspectives that are reflected in their own practices. Teachers can practice reflexivity by participating in action research, identifying how their cultural knowledge is represented in their practice, and exploring the emotions that come with this self-reflection (Acosta et al., 2018; Assaf & Dooley, 2010; Matias, 2016). The examples of reflexivity in ideological in the literature are primarily represented in the context of pre-service teacher learning. Assaf and Dooley (2010) highlight moments in a pre-service "multicultural literacy course" where teacher candidates expressed their realizations that their prior actions around cultural and linguistic diversity were potentially harmful. One student shared, for example (p. 170):

> ...that she left class one day feeling worried that her classmates thought she was a racist because of a comment she made about walking in downtown Houston. She explained, "I did NOT want to be viewed as a racist and it made me feel very uncomfortable but yet the conversation made me think about my racist thoughts and I have always felt uneasy in those situations."

This demonstrates how a growing awareness of ideologies can also support educators' growing awareness about their own practices. There are much fewer examples of this kind of reflexivity in scholarship on ideological clarity. Indeed, though the quote that starts this section emphasizes that

reflection on ideology in discourse and practice should be tied to educators deeper understanding of their own practice, evidence of ideological clarity that is offered in these studies tends to be educators critiquing other individuals and systems.

Attending to Ambiguity in the Literature of Ideological Clarity

Being clear about ideological clarity as a *process* of questioning, comparison, and reflexivity is important because there is a degree of ambiguity in the literature that can make it difficult to study the concept. At the same time that ideological clarity is described as a process, an effort, and a struggle, authors have also at times used language that may confound the ideas of ideological clarity as practice and ideological clarity as state or stance. For example, Alfaro and Quezada (2010) discuss novice teachers moving "towards" ideological clarity, as if it were an end destination, and Bartolomé herself asserts that teachers "must strive to become ideologically clear" (Alfaro & Bartolomé, 2017, p. 15). This is not to say that these scholars think of ideological clarity as a static state, but that the language used to describe it may at times undermine the idea that it is a continuous process. The lack of clarity about what ideological clarity is and is not, is a similar dilemma in the theorization of other constructs in the literature that are used to describe essential knowledge and orientations for educators to counter the potentially harmful ideologies of schooling (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Lucas & Villegas, 2013; Rodriguez-Mojica & Briceño, 2019). I offer a brief discussion here that highlights some connections and ambiguities across how this family of concepts have been described. In doing so, it is my intention to more thoroughly describe ideological clarity.

In their framework of linguistically responsive teaching, Lucas and Villegas (2013) propose that teachers need to have a "value for linguistic diversity", an "inclination to advocate for" students labeled as English learners, and a "sociolinguistic consciousness" (p. 101). They describe sociolinguistic consciousness as "an understanding that language, culture, and identity are deeply

interconnected" and "an awareness of the sociopolitical dimensions of language use and language education" (p. 102). Thus, while this construct refers to the same kind of knowledge that scholars have associated with ideological clarity, it seems more endpoint than process. In other words, while sociolinguistic consciousness might be a plausible outcome of ideological clarity, it is not described in terms of an active process or struggle as ideological clarity is.

Critical consciousness is another construct that has been presented as important for positioning oneself in the sociohistorical context of schooling (Freire, 2009). Originally introduced by Paulo Freire for the purpose of critiquing oppressive schooling practices, critical consciousness has been taken up widely, including by scholars focused on linguistic marginalization in schooling (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Rodriguez-Mojica & Briceño, 2019) — the same context in which ideological clarity has been most extensively developed. Jemal (2017) identified inconsistencies in the use and advancement of critical consciousness in scholarship, pointing to a variety of definitions that focus on state, process, outcome, or some combination. In some cases, critical consciousness has been described as a "process of overcoming pervasive myths" to recognize the role of power in the development, distribution, and execution of bilingual education programs (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017, p. 419). This definition is remarkably similar to that of ideological clarity. However, scholars have intentionally positioned these concepts as unique, though related, in the literature.

For example, as a scholar who often draws on the notion of ideological clarity, Alfaro (2019) describes critical consciousness as "knowledge and commitment" that may be "informed by" ideological clarity (p. 195). On the other hand, Palmer, Cervantes-Soon, Dorner, and Heiman (2019) posit that "critical consciousness enables educators and other members of school communities to develop political and ideological clarity" (p. 123), suggesting the inverse relationship. Furthermore, Blevins, Magill, and Salinas (2020) describe ideological clarity as having

roots in critical consciousness, though it is not clear how they delineate the two. Thus, while existing scholarship has indeed positioned ideological clarity as a distinct concept, there is considerable ambiguity in what it refers to.

I contend that this ambiguity stems at least in part from the evidence that is presented of educators' ideological clarity. While the germinal literature that has developed and explored ideological clarity explicitly describes it as an ongoing process, educators described in these studies are often identified based on the classroom practices that they choose to engage in or their stated beliefs about linguistically marginalized students. Rather than thinking of this as a fundamental flaw of the concept, this serves as an indication that capturing ideological clarity *as a process* is difficult. That is, it is much more feasible to identify educators' observed classroom practices or stated beliefs, than it is to recognize what is largely an internal activity of grappling with the role of ideology in schooling. This ambiguity in the study of ideological clarity is not a reason to leave the construct behind, but to be exceedingly clear in what one is looking for and looking at when trying to understand the impact of engaging in ideological clarity. Moreover, the ambiguity around ideological clarity in particular is pertinent to this dissertation, because a clear definition is necessary for understanding how ideological clarity matters in policy implementation.

In this study, I treat ideological clarity as a process that is related to but distinct from instructional practice. For this reason, though scholars often describe educators as "ideologically clear", I choose to describe educators as *engaging in* ideological clarity so as to remain faithful to this notion of ideological clarity as an active struggle instead of end state. The evidence that I present of educators' engagement in ideological clarity in Chapter IV when I discuss my findings includes some of their narratives about how they came to epiphanies about ideologies underlying practice; their comparisons across contexts, moments, and colleagues; and their decision-making in response to the demands of policy implementation when they are articulated alongside careful

definitions of the assumptions that undergird their practice. I concretize this definition further at the end of this chapter when I describe the potential intersection of engaging in ideological clarity and policy sensemaking, and in Chapter III when I describe my process of analysis. In the next section, I define educational language policy and what it means to implement educational language policy, in order to circumscribe what I counted as evidence of ELD policy sensemaking in this study.

Educational Language Policy

For many, educational language policy is the legally binding requirements, policy documents (including those that are not legally binding), and discourses that are the result of negotiations between policymakers and stakeholders (Citrin et al., 2017; Hakuta, 2011; Katznelson & Bernstein, 2017). Educational policy is also the routines and resources that educators incorporate into practice in districts and schools that determine EL-classified students' local educational experiences (Estrada, 2022; Estrada & Wang, 2018; Hopkins et al., 2022). As these elements of policy come together in novel ways across contexts and communities of practice, their meaning is continuously reinterpreted to accommodate specific populations, needs, and assets (H. C. Hill, 2001; Hornberger, 2002; Hornberger & Johnson, 2007; E. J. Johnson & Johnson, 2015). In this dissertation, I look to document educators' responses to these tangible and discursive artifacts of policy that communicate what is expected of them, and their responses to those perceived expectations.

Policy implementation is a highly variable process, driven by a multitude of factors. Traditional views of policy implementation treat this as a rather linear process: federal and state governments write educational policy, educational organizations organize resources and routines for its implementation, and educators in schools take up policy in their practice (Diem, 2017). On the contrary, scholars are increasingly conceptualizing policy and its implementation as a practice

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of power in the sense that it tends to protect and reproduce the status quo (Diem, 2017; Levinson et al., 2009; M. D. Young & Diem, 2018). This does not mean that policy explicitly mandates the maintenance of hierarchies of power or resource distribution that intentionally leaves out marginalized communities. Instead, the concept of policy as a practice of power explains how policies that attempt to change practice on a broad scale are implemented through traditional discourse and routines, such that existing inequities persist through inertia.

One example of this can be seen in the implementation of California's Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) policy. LCFF was a policy that intended to make funding across the state's public school system more equitable by ensuring that schools that served students with greater needs and fewer community resources would have access to more resources. The LCFF focuses specifically on homeless and foster youth and EL-classified students. Research has come to mixed, though not contradictory, conclusions about the impact of this policy. First, LCFF policy has resulted in increased funding to schools with student populations that tend to have more intense needs, which is a valuable and intended outcome (Santibañez & Umansky, 2018). At the same time, others have argued that the tools schools have for understanding how to effectively use that funding are insufficient specifically for serving their EL-classified student populations (Lavadenz et al., 2018). Furthermore, Lee and Fuller's (2020) study found that while schools in Los Angeles Unified School District were receiving these funds, EL-classified students were not benefitting in all of the ways intended, as they still disproportionally tended to have less experienced teachers. This example demonstrates how seemingly drastic changes to educational processes (allocation of funds), can be hampered by persistent educational tools (available data) and norms (assignment of teachers to courses).

Variation in policy implementation is not in itself an undesirable outcome. In fact, maybe the most predictable thing about policy is that it will always change through implementation, and

this is certainly true for ELD policy (Estrada & Wang, 2018; Hopkins et al., 2022). That is, as the language and concepts of policy texts are interpreted across varied communities of practice and by individuals with different histories and schema, they are enacted in unique ways. Policy variation through implementation may happen for a variety of reasons. One catalyst for policy variation can be that those who are enacting the policy at more local levels have different values and discourses that they are drawing on, so that they interpret the meaning of policy language in unexpected or unintended ways (H. C. Hill, 2001). Another can be that individuals feel that the specifics of policy requirements undermine the intention of a given policy, and they choose to enact the policy differently than it is written to stay true to its purpose (Mavrogordato & White, 2020). In any case, while individual actions are not enough to transform education, it is clear that individuals can play an important role in how students experience policy (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2015; Lapayese, 2007; Urrieta, 2010). By asking about the intersection of ideological clarity and ELD policy sensemaking in this dissertation, I am examining whether and how engaging in ideological clarity might be a catalyst for policy variation that could facilitate equity in EL-classified students' educational experiences.

Policy Discourses and Policy Enactments

One way to understand how the variability in policy implementation occurs, is by distinguishing policy as written, policy discourses, and policy enactments. I use policy as written to refer to those traditional artifacts of policy such as the California education code, the California English Learner Roadmap, and districts' policy memos that articulate the guidelines to which educators and educational organizations are expected to adhere. Policy discourses are the narratives about what policy is supposed to mean in a given context (H. C. Hill, 2001; Katznelson & Bernstein, 2017). Policy enactments are the more tangible and observable manifestations of policy discourses, such as curricular materials and educators' practices (H. C. Hill, 2001; Hopkins et al., 2022). What I

refer to as policy as written are a kind of policy enactments at the national, state, and sometimes

district levels of policy that are described as regulations and guidelines, and have an indirect impact

on educators' practices in schools through the discourses that they produce.

Various theories describe components of language policy and processes of implementation.

Guadalupe Valdés's theory of language curricularization, for example, describes the mechanisms

through which language is transformed into a subject to be taught as a somewhat ordered set of

grammatical and cultural rules (Valdés, 2015, 2016, 2018), reflecting policy discourses and

enactments. Instruction that reflects language curricularization treats language itself as the "object"

rather than a "medium" for learning (Jensen et al., 2021, p. 547). Categories of the mechanisms for

language curricularization are represented in a nested relationship where more concrete

enactments of policy exist within the context of broader professional, theoretical, and ideological

frameworks (Valdés, 2018). The mechanisms of language curricularization include the ideological

and theoretical frameworks that undergird how we categorize language and conceptualize stages of

language development. Other mechanisms named in this theory include required assessments that

purportedly measure individuals' language proficiencies, traditions of instruction that influence

what individuals believe is the purpose of language instruction, and instructor characteristics such

as the language varieties that they feel comfortable engaging in.

ELD is an example of language curricularization, in the sense that the pedagogical and

organizational goals of ELD are to teach students the language that they need to participate in

mainstream educational settings. Thus, making ELD policy and practice requires that the language

needed for mainstream learning is defined and operationalized as a discrete instructional practice

and assessment. To this end, I consider the mechanisms outlined in Valdés's theory (Valdés, 2016,

2018) to be components of ELD policy, because these mechanisms individually and together

communicate to educators how they are expected to provide ELD, even when they are not explicitly written into policy documents.

The nested relationship of mechanisms in language curricularization is also reflected in a predominant theory of language policy planning and implementation – that of a layered process like an onion where policy is made and remade across organizational and social contexts (Hornberger, 2002; Hornberger & Johnson, 2007; Ricento & Hornberger, 1996). In this policy implementational onion, policymakers at the state level constrain what is possible in implementation at the inner layers, yet educators at these inner organizational layers also have agency to develop practices that serve as "wedges to pry open" new possibilities (Hornberger, 2005, p. 606). Language policy is thus iterative, in the sense that policymakers use policy to construct directives for inner layers of implementation, and actors at those inner layers imbue new meaning in those policies through their processes of implementation.

While language curricularization takes into account organizational contexts of language policy and planning (national, state, district, school, and classroom), Hornberger and colleagues' onion structure make these contexts central to the structure of policy implementation. Policy discourses and enactments exist at each of these organizational layers. At the national and state levels, for example, "are the broad language policy objectives articulated in legislation or high court rulings at the national level," which can be understood as discourses that are then "operationalized in regulations and guidelines", which are an example of policy enactments (Ricento & Hornberger, 1996, p. 409). These enactments at outer layers of the policy onion then (re)produce policy discourses that get taken up in the enactment of policy at increasingly local levels (Citrin et al., 2017; Katznelson & Bernstein, 2017; Valdés, 2018).

Both of these theories suggest that the relationship between policy discourses and policy enactments is far from straightforward. Policy as written, for example, can be theoretically

ambiguous as politicians try to compromise with each other and construct policy discourses that are appealing to a broad coalition (Citrin et al., 2017; VanSickle-Ward, 2010, 2014). This debate and production of complex discourses can be seen in the structuring of Proposition 58 (2016), a ballot measure in California that asked voters to repeal the constraints put on bilingual education programs by Proposition 227 (1998). In constructing this proposition, politicians had to frame bilingual education in a way that would attract the support of broad swaths of the state's voting population. Ultimately, they relied on discourses of assimilation and neoliberalism in order to frame language as a resource, despite the potential contradictions between these discourses and the social justice frameworks that characterize the roots of these programs (Citrin et al., 2017; Gutfreund, 2019; Katznelson & Bernstein, 2017).

At the same time, policy as written is not "destiny" for practice (Katznelson & Bernstein, 2017). Ethnographic approaches to language policy and planning (LPP) demonstrate how policies can be taken up in unexpected and perhaps unintended ways across contexts (Hornberger, 2020). Variation in policy implementation occurs as policy discourses make their way through the filters of unique communities of practice and individual educators' professional visions (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2015; H. C. Hill, 2001; Horn, 2018). For example, ELD policy mandates routines such as: labeling students to place them into the correct designated ELD group or classroom, instructing students based on standards and curricula, and assessing students' language development. Though well-intentioned, the discourses and enactments of these policy routines can become the subject of critique. For example, Dabach and Callahan attend to the distinction between discourse and enactment in their critique of policy enactments that "follow the letter of the law, yet miss its spirit entirely" (Dabach & Callahan, 2011). They argue that, while the intention (discourses) of policies in the wake of *Lau v Nichols* (1974) was to ensure EL-classified students would have access to rigorous coursework and effective linguistic support, these policies have been implemented in ways

that restrict EL-classified students' opportunities to learn and develop strong academic identities (enactments; see also Callahan, 2005; Mosqueda, 2010; Umansky, 2016). In critiquing the enacted aspects of these policies, Dabach and Callahan also highlight how some problems might be rooted in the discursive aspects of these policies, such as when language programs are based on outdated research or ignore theory altogether for political motivations (see also Gándara et al., 2000).

When Abril-Gonzalez and Shannon (2021) describe designated ELD as *jaulas*[6] based on former students' experiences of ELD, they are critiquing the enactment of ELD that these students were exposed to. The students in their study complain that ELD is "boring" and that the teacher "never teaches [them] anything" (p. 9). Thus, while the broad policy discourse about ELD is that it is supposed to be a protected period of effective language instruction, it was being realized in this context as the enacted routine of watered down or non-existent language instruction, representing deficit ideologies. Similarly, Hernandez's (2017) ethnographic study of a Mexican immigrant family with a daughter enrolled in a Spanish-English dual language program found various "contradictions" in their experiences of the program. Though school leadership thought of their dual language program as an effort to address hierarchies of language, making all students "language learners", those intentions – or discourses – did not come through in the family's experience of the enactment of the dual language program. They described feeling that English, rather than bilingualism, was still elevated as the desired language outcome of the program given the burdensome routines of assessment that their EL-classified daughter was required to take while her non-EL-classified classmates got to "play" (pp. 140-141). In this way, they experienced assimilationist and monoglossic ideologies through the enactment of this dual language program.

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[6] Spanish for "jails"

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These studies are two examples of how ELD policy as enacted can embody dominant ideological frameworks even if some of their surrounding discourses offer different frameworks.

Discourse analyses represent a more focused critique on the discursive aspects of policy and highlight how ideologies can be represented in the discursive aspects of ELD policy before they are performed in practice. Katznelson and Bernstein (2017) examined the hopeful narratives in the discourses of dual language programming in California after the passage of Proposition 58 in 2016.[7] Their critical discourse analysis was motivated by their curiosity about why "1,000,000 voters who cast a ballot for Trump also voted to pass Proposition 58" (p. 11). They found that while the narrative of language instruction had shifted from Proposition 227, which severely limited bilingual and dual language programming, Proposition 58 relied on a "rebranding" of language as an economic resource, making the discourse of California's dual language more focused on access and achievement dimensions of equity and putting efforts focused on power and identity at risk (see also Citrin et al., 2017; Valdés, 1997). In the case of discourse analyses such as these, scholars argue that potentially harmful ideological frameworks are embedded in policies from their conceptualization.

At the same time, many scholars recognize that the discursive aspects of policy are not predictive of practice. Indeed, Katznelson and Bernstein conclude their discourse analysis asserting that "For discourse *not* to be destiny in the move from policy to practice, there must be a range of discourses in circulation for teachers and policymakers to draw on" (Katznelson & Bernstein, 2017, p. 22). That is, there may be multiple possibilities for policy represented across policy discourses that educators and educational organizations can draw on when enacting policy. The distinction between policy discourse and enactments is thus useful to attend to when considering

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[7] Proposition 58 repealed the main restrictions on bilingual education that had been put in place by Proposition 227 in 1998.

what it is about ELD policies that educators feel make it difficult to practice in ways they feel are equitable. I pick up and expand on this idea below when describing the role of community in policy sensemaking. In the next section, I offer examples of how ideology has been (re)produced across the language policy history of California that ultimately led to what ELD has become today and discuss these historical moments in the formation of ELD in terms of Rochelle Gutiérrez's (2012) dimensions of equity framework.

Ideologies in the Historical Formation of California's ELD: Implications for Equity

Here, I sketch a brief history of the EL-classification and related language policies in California, identifying how ELD came to be such a central element of EL-classified students' schooling. This brief history also helps to provide more context for the examples of educators' ELD policy sensemaking that I provide in Chapter IV. As I narrate important moments in this history, I identify examples of how monoglossic, assimilationist, standardization, semilingual, raciolinguistic, and deficit ideologies have persisted across sociopolitical eras (Flores et al., 2015; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Irizarry, 2011; Ovando & Combs, 2012). My intention in doing this is not to argue that any policy is inherently harmful or that the project of mandating accountability for EL-classified students is undesirable. I believe that policies that attempt to mandate educational equity are valuable catalysts for educators and educational organizations to examine and try to address pervasive inequities. In the words of one high school designated ELD teacher who participated in this study:

> I work within an organization to guide federally what happens with all different types of California ed laws, federal education laws too...because we see that not every district is [a large urban district] where they're open to understanding how various nuances and programs and legislation plays into that everyday lived experience of a student. Um, and so we're like, "Hey, what about, what about that guy that's in the middle of California where

the political environment is not welcoming?" You know, we have to put in pieces of

legislation that essentially are guardrails for the districts to make sure that, you know, even

if they don't want to, you know, they're doing the best thing for students.

At the same time, I do believe that looking historically at these policies is important for recognizing

that harmful practices can continue even without malicious intent. Drawing on the wisdom of

another participant in this study – a third grade dual language teacher shared:

ELD has had such a controversial history. And that, just because it's better now, doesn't

mean that we can't keep evolving it. You know, and so I hope that we, as educators, keep

that in mind that just because, you know, we're applying more inclusive practices and, let

alone like, we're navigating this in a framework that's like, not as racist as it used to be, it

doesn't mean that, well, we're fine, you know, it's working. As kids are changing, and as

culture is changing, we have to change with it. And so I hope we keep it in mind.

Thus, in this brief summary of the historical policy lineage that informs ELD, I focus on important

moments of ideological tension and persistence to highlight the need for continuously examining

these policies as scholars and educators to work against the continued marginalization of EL-

classified students. Through this selective historical narrative, I also situate elements of the ELD

policy system in terms of the four dimensions of equity named in the introduction: access, identity,

power, and achievement (R. Gutiérrez, 2012). My intention in making these connections is to be

clear that I am not arguing that policymakers are malicious and unconcerned with educational

equity,[8] or that these policies should all be abolished, but that unbalanced equity efforts may

perpetuate the status quo, even when individuals have the best intentions.

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[8] Though there are certainly examples of prominent individuals in educational language policy movements that do demonstrate clear racism and xenophobia toward immigrant-origin and otherwise EL-classified youth (Gutfreund, 2019; Ovando & Combs, 2012)

During the early to mid-1900's, language was intricately tied up in definitions of patriotic identity and economic pursuits, reflected in pushes for language education to be utilized as a mechanism for assimilating immigrants (Gutfreund, 2019; Ovando, 2003). These monoglossic and assimilationist ideologies were situated in social power relations, but also codified in laws such as those that used language to restrict immigrants' rights (Gutfreund, 2019; Ovando, 2003). Language became a core focus in the demands of the Civil Rights Movement, particularly for Asian and Latinx populations in California, as multilingual communities across the U.S. and in California pushed back against their inferior experiences in schools by advancing calls for bilingual education (Flores & García, 2017; Gutfreund, 2019). At this time, bilingual education was gaining political backing such as through California State Bill 53 of 1967 which allowed for the use of languages other than English to be used in instruction in California classrooms, and the national Bilingual Education Act of 1968 which encouraged the same on a national scale (Flores & García, 2017; Gutfreund, 2019). This discourse surrounding educational language programming for immigrant and otherwise linguistically marginalized student populations at this time treated bilingual education as part and parcel for ensuring greater educational equity (Hakuta, 2011; Ovando, 2003).

Yet, this movement was marked by theoretical and ideological variation that reflect variation in how it took up dimensions of equity. For example, while many community activists nationally and in California posited bilingual education "as part of a broader effort to dismantle [white] supremacist relations of power" (Flores & García, 2017, p. 17), others, and especially politicians, tended to push a vision of bilingual education as a tool for more efficient assimilation of multilingual students into existing linguistic and social hierarchies (Flores, 2020; Flores & García, 2017; Gutfreund, 2019; Ovando, 2003). These paradigms represent different foci of equity, with the former being more reflective of the power and identity dimensions that seek to upend

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traditional educational hierarchies of language, and the latter representing access and achievement where schooling would primarily be a process by which to Americanize students and ensure the production of a public that is relatively homogenous in their values and aspirations. The implementation and outcomes of bilingual education thus varied widely, but it was clear that assimilation was a dominant demand for educational language programming.

The Supreme Court Case *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) marked a continued affirmation of the educational rights of students who spoke languages other than and in addition to English. This case could be considered an important marker in the development of the category of English Learner because it required that schools and districts be held accountable for providing these students access to mainstream curricula and effective English language instruction. That is, in making these students a protected class, there needed to be mechanisms for identifying who should be considered as protected, how their outcomes could be measured, and ultimately who could be *reclassified* which refers to the process of removing the EL label and its associated supports (Hakuta, 2011).

Though the initial response to this ruling in California was to expand access to bilingual education across the state, social and political pressure ultimately turned against this appreciation of "multiculturalism." These responses illuminate the social pressures that make it difficult to pursue the identity and power dimensions of equity. Through policy mobilization against bilingual learning, propositions in California further restricted communities' discursive control of the place of their languages in school. In 1986, California voters demonstrated the persistence of assimilationist ideologies, as they voted to pass Proposition 63, which made English the official language of the state (Trasvina, 1988). Backlash to bilingual education also fueled the English Only movements of the 90's, leading to the passage of the anti-immigrant Proposition 187 in 1994 that sought to limit immigrant students' access to public schools, and Proposition 227 in 1998 that

constructed obscure and ominous barriers to bilingual education in the state (Gándara et al., 2000; Hakuta, 2020).

These "English Only" campaigns across the United States that arose in the 90's and early 2000's claimed that bilingual education programs were holding back multilingual students from becoming proficient in English and learning academic content (Ovando & Combs, 2012). The title of the anti-bilingual proposition in California – English for the Children – demonstrated a reliance at least in part on ideologies of languagelessness and semilingualism by asserting that bilingual education programs were producing students who were unsuccessful in any language. Furthermore, English Only implied a favoring of access and achievement over power and identity, suggesting that these dimensions were fundamentally incompatible. Though Proposition 227 was not an outright ban of bilingual education, it was experienced as such given the policy discourse that it produced, either because individual educators themselves interpreted it as a ban, or were in contexts where their leadership and communities interpreted it as a ban (Gándara et al., 2000). Still, in the proposition's wake, researchers continued to speak out and demonstrate the benefits of providing multilingual instruction to multilingual students, and educators who were bilingual continued to covertly engage in bilingual pedagogy within their individual classrooms (Gándara et al., 2000; Gutfreund, 2019).

The federal No Child Left Behind Act (2001, NCLB) marked a key moment in the early 2000's when ideologies of standardized grew increasingly prominent in educational infrastructure broadly, and ELD policy was no exception. NCLB mandated that states implement assessments and standards for ELD (named English language proficiency, ELP, in NCLB). California had already developed the state's first set of ELD standards in 1999, and began administering the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) in 2001 (Llosa, 2005; Na et al., 2021; Shohamy, 2017). The 1999 ELD standards were critiqued for being theoretically unsound (Na et

al., 2021), and studies of the CELDT as a central tool in the labeling processes for EL-classified students demonstrated the role of raciolinguistic ideologies in this category.

For example, a 2011 report examining the assessment tool used to identify English learners in California found that almost 75% of so-called English only (EO) kindergarteners would not meet the score thresholds necessary to be considered English proficient. But, the report concluded, this was "reasonable" because English monolinguals would not take the test in the first place and would never *accidentally* be classified as English learners (California Department of Education, 2011; see also García Bedolla & Rodriguez, 2011). Even now, in the 2018-19 school year, almost 45% of EO students in California were not meeting the score thresholds on the state's standardized English language arts assessment that are often required for EL-classified students' reclassification.[9] These tools thus do not necessarily capture some linguistic need that is unique to students who come to school speaking languages other than and in addition to English. Yet, they are used as evidence that these racialized students are in fact other, in contrast to a mainstream monolingual English speaker (Cabral, 2022; Flores & Rosa, 2015; García & Otheguy, 2017).

The CELDT has since been replaced and the ELD standards revised, though scholars continue to argue that standardized measures cannot capture the unique proficiencies of multilingual students (Ascenzi-Moreno & Seltzer, 2021; García & Otheguy, 2017; Martínez et al., 2019). Standards and assessments are not inherently inequitable, and questions around the impact of standards on (in)equity are complex given that there is evidence that many students do not receive high-quality standards-based instruction in the first place (Santibañez & Umansky, 2018). Still, the standards movement represents the delicate balance between holding educational

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[9] Report filtered by language proficiency can be generated here: https://caaspp-elpac.cde.ca.gov/caaspp/

organizations accountable, rooted in access and achievement definitions of equity, and sustaining a broader range of language proficiencies through public education that draw on power and identity.

For example, in preparation for standardized language assessments, students are often told to "answer in a complete sentence" even though it is common practice to respond to questions with single words and phrases across both formal and informal contexts, and full sentences can come off as stilted or unnatural speech. Consider this example of Sofia, an ELD coach, describing preparing her son to take the ELPAC when he was entering kindergarten:

> I did some prep...I'd say "they're gonna ask you things like...and you have to answer this way. So, let's practice if they ask you: how would you ask your teacher to go look for your water bottle? You have to ask, because I said the word 'ask' and let's practice this." Because some kids would just say like, "I left my water bottle outside." But they're not asking. And so I did kind of prep him a little with like that. "When they ask you this, you're gonna say this. When they asked you..." So I think with any with any of these standardized tests, part of it is learning how to take the test. And so could he have passed on his own maybe, but I don't know.

In fact, "I left my water bottle outside" is an appropriate and a linguistically complex way to ask to go get one's water bottle, because it demonstrates a command of *pragmatics*, or the kind of sociocultural meanings that are often suggested without being explicit (Hinkel, 2014). For example, when a window is left open and someone says "it's a bit chilly in here," that statement is not explicitly a question, but could be an indirect, polite request that a host close a window or make some other adjustment to the temperature of a space. To this end, the ideologies of standardization construct narrow possibilities for acceptable answers on assessments that may miss a range of answers that, in authentic "formal" language situations, would be considered proficient use of English.

As I have highlighted here, definitions of desirable schooling outcomes for immigrant students have historically relied on assimilationist ideologies by encouraging a focus on EL-classified students' ability to approximate white, monolingual English-speaking norms (Bartolomé, 2008b; Gutfreund, 2019; Ovando, 2003). There is evidence that policymakers continue to rely on these ideologies in language from the Education Code that states that English is "among the most important" of the "skills necessary to become productive members of our society" (1 EDC § 300), and in the processes prescribed by policy that require frequent assessment of EL-classified students in and of English (L. Hill et al., 2021). Because the access and achievement dimensions of equity have become so normalized through this policy history, it is easy for educators to draw on this normative framework and think of designated ELD only as an opportunity to address students' perceived language deficiencies.

Thus, it is important to consider this historical context of educational language policies in the state when defining what ELD policy means for educators. It is within this long history of ideological persistence in language education that scholars have called for teachers to engage in intentional reflection around the ideologies and manifestations of those ideologies in schools (Bartolomé, 1994; Bartolomé & Balderrama, 2001; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Valdés, 1997). In the following section, I define policy sensemaking in order to outline how educators encounter the discourses and enactments of policy to begin to discuss how policy sensemaking plays a role in perpetuating these dominant and familiar ideologies.

Policy Sensemaking

Classroom teachers' practice takes place at the center of multiple and often competing demands, including demands from policy (Honig & Hatch, 2004). Policy implementation has been described as a learning problem for teachers, as how they make sense of policy is impacted by their individual attributes, attributes of their social networks, and organizational norms (Bridwell-

Mitchell & Sherer, 2017; Coburn, 2001, 2005; Hopkins et al., 2019, 2022; Spillane et al., 2002).

Building on the notion that policy demands are both abstract and concrete, sensemaking has been

used to frame how individuals identify, understand, and respond to the demands of policy.

Sensemaking is "less about interpretation than invention" meaning that individuals "invent"

meaning to explain unfamiliar demands, and only then do they interpret those meanings so that

they can put them into action in their practice (Weick, 1995, p. 13).

Applied to educational policy implementation, sensemaking describes how educators

construct frameworks of meaning from policy artifacts – such as mandated assessments, curricula,

and policy texts themselves – that allow them to integrate the demands and tools of policy into

their practice (Coburn, 2001, 2005; H. C. Hill, 2001; Horn, 2018; Mavrogordato & White, 2020;

Trujillo, 2013). Sensemaking at the district and school leadership level involves the translation of

these ideas in state and federal level policy to construct policy artifacts that will be usable by local

educators. This includes producing or procuring curricula that align with standards (H. C. Hill,

2001), developing processes that respond to new models of decision-making (Trujillo, 2013), and

structuring professional learning communities that encourage particular instructional practices

(Lockton et al., 2020). These revised policy artifacts then become local policy for teachers. Thus,

the policy discourses that reach teachers consist of some original policy texts such as federal and

state standards, as well as policy artifacts that have been imbued with frameworks of meaning by

district and school leadership along the way (Coburn, 2001, 2005; Hopkins, 2016; Horn, 2018; D.

C. Johnson, 2011; E. J. Johnson & Johnson, 2015). Teachers themselves then make sense of

policy by filtering policy discourses through their own ideological stances, pedagogical knowledge,

and the social resources embedded in the organizations in which they work (Bertrand & Marsh,

2015; Coburn, 2001; Flores & Lewis, 2023; Hopkins, 2016). In what follows, I consider the role of

individuals' own identities and perspectives, and then the role of sociocultural contexts for their

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policy sensemaking.

Professional Vision in Sensemaking and Practice

A central element in the process of policy sensemaking is educators' *professional vision* (Goodwin, 1994; Hopkins, 2016; Mavrogordato & White, 2020; Spillane et al., 2002). Professional vision is related to how individuals are apprenticed into a profession such that they see the world through particular schema (Goodwin, 1994). Professional vision refers to the lens(es) through which an individual interprets and attends to what they notice in their practice. Researchers have cautioned that, while educators with prior experiences of marginalization themselves might bring unique insight to their understanding of educational structures (Daniels & Varghese, 2020; Kohli, 2019), they will not necessarily have more anti-deficit perspectives or engage more readily in ideological clarity (Alfaro & Bartolomé, 2017; Athanases et al., 2015; Bartolomé, 2008a). Even educators who have experienced educational marginalization in the past can continue to perpetuate harmful ideological practices when their professional visions are left unchallenged (Alfaro & Bartolomé, 2017).

Researchers of mathematics teaching have studied teachers' professional vision by examining what teachers notice about students' participation in the classroom and how they respond to students' participation in order to increase or improve the quality of participation (Sherin et al., 2008; Sherin & van Es, 2009). Studies on teacher noticing have illuminated how intentional professional development and "noticing interviews" help educators become more aware of what they notice and begin to notice more or different phenomena in their classroom, noting that this increasing awareness of their professional vision also ultimately has an effect on their practice (König et al., 2022; Munzer & Van Es, 2024; Sherin & van Es, 2009; van Es & Sherin, 2010). Thus, given that educators' prior experiences contribute to the development of their professional vision in ways that might not always lead to equitable practice, reflexivity and

vulnerability are valuable reflective practices for educators to engage in as they continue to develop their professional vision (Mendoza et al., 2021).

Organizational and Sociocultural Perspectives on Policy Sensemaking

On the other hand, policy sensemaking is frequently studied as a collective practice, focusing on the frameworks of meaning that are available throughout educators' professional communities (Blevins et al., 2020; Bridwell-Mitchell & Sherer, 2017; Coburn, 2001; Lockton et al., 2020). Collective sensemaking is often framed as a problem for the transformation of educational inequities, as dominant ideologies get reproduced through the policy discourses in these spaces. Indeed, these collective spaces seem to often give preference to the most authoritative voices in the room, making it perhaps more likely that they perpetuate discourses that reify existing power dynamics rather than upset those dynamics that permitted them authority in the first place (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2015; Heineke, 2015). However, the discourses that are dominant across teachers' social connections can be informed by critical reflective routines characteristic of ideological clarity. To this end, Kohli (2019) emphasizes that professional communities of teachers of color can be particularly affirming spaces as they collectively analyze experiences of marginalization through critical lenses. In spaces such as these where non-dominant voices are intentionally given more authority, non-dominant frameworks can rise the surface in reflection on educational structures (Daniels & Varghese, 2020; Kohli, 2019). This is important for the noticing and identification of ideologies that is a key component of ideological clarity.

The distribution of social capital and authority across organizations can also determine how individuals relate to each other in these structures and the extent to which individuals' ideas are heard (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2015; English, 2009; Heineke, 2015; Spillane et al., 2009). In many cases, the policy meanings that emerge from teachers' collaboration represents a default to the meaning that more senior or "expert" colleagues have drawn (English, 2009; Heineke, 2015;

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Hopkins, 2016). In collective sensemaking, authority and social capital in school communities more broadly can determine whose perspectives are taken up as lenses for policy sensemaking. For example, marginalized families and community members lack capital in schools' social hierarchies that would give their knowledge authority (Abril-Gonzalez & Shannon, 2021; Cioè-Peña, 2021; Ishimaru & Takahashi, 2017; Peña, 1998; M. Wang et al., 2004; Zeichner et al., 2016). On the other hand, Mavrogordato and White (2020) focus on educational leaders' perspectives on equity to emphasize that authoritative perspectives can push for more identity- and power-aligned equity perspectives as well.

Heineke's (2015) study of a professional learning community of educators making sense of Arizona's restrictive EL policy provides an example of the complex role of authority in policy sensemaking. Throughout the group discussions she documented, Heineke described how an instructional coach's interpretation that the policy mandated English-only instruction superseded teachers' attempts to consider how they might incorporate languages other than English in their instruction. It was only after a district audit of their EL policy implementation proved to be less rigorous than the coach had expected, that the teachers were finally able to push the instructional coach to open up the collective sensemaking discourse to other possibilities. The complexity of authority and power can be seen in this example: the instructional coach had authority to limit possible frameworks for collective sensemaking within the professional learning community, but the teachers also exercised power in their collective persistence and resistance that was ultimately strengthened by the elimination of looming district oversight.

Indeed, the infrastructure within which educators engage in collective sensemaking matters for what and how they learn from their peers, and the filters through which they make sense of policy. School and district leadership play an important role in creating contexts for educators to learn from and with each other, particularly in the context of policy reforms (Coburn, 2001, 2005;

Hopkins & Schutz, 2019). For example, in Lockton, Weddle, and Datnow's (2020) study of the implementation of data-use policy, they found that teachers' discussions in professional development spaces tended to follow historical organizational priorities. This meant that teachers frequently limited their discussions of data to standardized assessment scores, instead of expanding their focus to a more holistic set of student data. However, educators also make sense of policy in informal or unsanctioned spaces for collective learning that they cultivate themselves, such as in breakrooms and classrooms after school, meaning that leadership does not always dictate the norms of their collective sensemaking infrastructure (Baker-Doyle, 2012; Bridwell-Mitchell, 2015; Hopkins et al., 2019; Spillane, Hopkins, et al., 2018). Across these spaces, the nature of educators' connections with each other is important for understanding how their practices change or persist.

While educators' beliefs may be more likely to change when they interact frequently with colleagues with different beliefs (Spillane, Hopkins, et al., 2018) learning that occurs outside of teachers' immediate communities of practice might be more difficult to integrate into their practice (Baker-Doyle, 2012). Literature focused on teacher collaboration and social networks suggests that educators might draw lines to define who belongs in their professional communities based on what they understand the responsibilities of their role to be (Bray & Russell, 2018; Cohen et al., 2020), the degree to which they are "similar" to other individuals in their schools or professional learning contexts (Moolenaar, 2012), and their perception of their own expertise and their colleagues' expertise (Hopkins et al., 2019; Hopkins & Schutz, 2019; Spillane, Hopkins, et al., 2018). Thus, patterns of learning through professional networks are not predictable, but depend in part on how educators understand their own professional identity and reciprocally, how professional networks impact their professional identity.

Organizational Persistence and Agency in Policy Implementation

To frame the potential space for agency that educators have in making sense of and navigating

ideologically and technically complex policies, I start here by highlighting the affordances and constraints that principle organizational change in schools. Institutions are a kind of organization that have gained strong social permanence and continuously reproduce longstanding relational, epistemological, and technical norms; Bridwell-Mitchell (2018) argues that schools can be classified as institutions because dominant schooling practices and structures tend to persist even in the face of seemingly drastic social shifts and policy reforms. Indeed, the ways that schools as organizations make resources and social connections available and accessible matters for how policy is taken up to change or maintain local norms (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2015; Bridwell-Mitchell & Sherer, 2017; Coburn, 2005; Spillane et al., 2009, 2011; Spillane & Hopkins, 2013).

There are two levels of organizational change that can be seen in schools: macro-level and micro-level changes (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2018). Macro-level change impacts the cultural norms and day to day activity of schools on a broad scale, such as through the standards movement and social forces that have pushed schools to focus on capitalism and globalism as dominant theories of the purpose of education (Au, 2016; Delavan et al., 2017; Katznelson & Bernstein, 2017; Na et al., 2021). In this sense, macro-level changes could be understood as shifts in dominant ideologies that shape educational practice. On the other hand, micro-level changes take place on smaller scales, such as in a single school, and are important for chipping away at broader institutional norms even if their impact is not immediately widespread (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2015, 2018). These micro-level changes are changes that individual and small groups of educators can instigate themselves. Thus, in asking whether and how educators' engagement in ideological clarity plays a role in their implementation of ELD policy, I want to better understand how educators take intentional action in their practice that might instigate micro-level changes.

Policy can constrain educators' ability to make micro-level changes, when curricula are forcefully mandated, such as through frequent classroom observations. In these contexts, educators

can still find that they are able to resist the enactment of what they perceive to be dominant ideologies in these curricula. In Lapayese's (2007) study of how five Latinx teachers teaching in Spanish-English bilingual settings resisted the implementation of various artifacts of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) policies, she described how they found ways to supplement and adapt the curricula that were mandated in their district (see also Datnow & Castellano, 2000). One teacher went so far as to hide their use of an alternative curricula by asking students to look out for and advise their teacher if they saw an administrator approaching their classroom so that they could take out their mandated materials.

When educators are navigating policy and making decisions about how to enact it in their practice, they are enacting agency within the process of policy implementation. Indeed, though policy does have an impact on teachers' practice, teachers also have agency in the shape that policy takes (D. C. Johnson, 2011; Lockton et al., 2020). However, teachers having agency in policy implementation also means that they can infuse policy with harmful ideologies as they implement it. For example, when implementing reforms encouraging data-driven instruction, educators have been shown to rationalize poor academic performance driven by deficit ideologies that put the onus of responsibility for failure on students themselves, rather than on the educators' instructional practice (Bertrand & Marsh, 2015; Lockton et al., 2020).

Educators making sense of policy are often doing so collectively rather than individually. This can mean that they are able to mobilize their communities as agentive responses to policy. Work around institutional change that targets standardized assessment demonstrates the utility of strong social ties. Educators have lamented the regimes of standardized assessment that serve as an impediment to their efforts to spark institutional change. These assessments, which are most often in English, contradict the routines of multilingualism that educators try to enact, especially in bilingual programs (Flores & Schissel, 2014; Hernandez, 2017). Some educators act agentively

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when they try to reframe the validity or meaning of these assessments within their community to establish broad local consensus (Leo, 2023). The opt-out movement, relies on coalitions with students than families to push back on the overreliance of educational policy on these assessments for holding schools accountable (Bellamy Foster, 2016; Y. Wang, 2017)

As I described above, authoritative perspectives in these collective spaces can end up having an outsized impact on the practices that educators choose and believe it is possible to engage in, potentially limiting their agency. Still, educators will not always default to the meaning that emerges from collective sensemaking. For example, Bridwell-Mitchell (2015) found that even when newer teachers lack social capital to influence the nature of and frameworks for policy sensemaking, they can still make sense of policy in their private practice in ways that diverge from a collective consensus. Others find ways to push back loudly or through subversive acts in attempts to make space for the kinds of practices that are aligned with their professional vision (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2006; R. Gutiérrez, 2015). Thus, understanding how teachers' private practice diverges from how they understand their colleagues' practice might be another way to frame their agency in policy implementation.

Prior research highlights that there are various mechanisms and outcomes of educators' agency in policy implementation, though there is consensus that agency must be understood in the sociocultural context in which it is being enacted, as the culture and structures of individuals' context impact the action they take (Biesta et al., 2015; Datnow, 2012, p. 194; Lockton et al., 2020; Pantić, 2015; Priestley et al., 2016). For example, Lockton and colleagues (2020) describe how educators enacting policy in unintended ways is agency in itself, whether or not they intend for their professional judgement to change what policy looks like from what policymakers imagined. Leo (2023) describes educators' reframing of standardized assessments of English as agency, wherein educators and their students challenge the validity and value of these assessments. Others

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frame resistance to policy as an important quality of agency for activism, such as in Achinstein and Ogawa's (2006) depiction of teachers' agency as actively ignoring or retooling curricula that they are told to implement in their classroom, and Mavrogordato and White's (2020) description of educational administrators agency for policy adaptations as intentional decisions rooted in commitments to social justice (or a lack thereof). These examples demonstrate variation in how intentional educators are in acting agentively, and their ultimate purpose in doing so. Given that I am concerned with whether and how ideological clarity helps educators respond meaningfully to the ideological challenges of ELD mentioned in the previous section, I am primarily interested in definitions of agency that consider how educators intentionally make and follow through on decisions about how to make ELD meaningful for their students along multiple dimensions of equity.

Emirbayer and Mische (1998) describe a framework of agency that can capture the variation and connectedness of each of these examples of agency. Their framework involves an iterational element (habit), a projective element (imagination), and a practical-evaluative element (judgment). The iterational element is essentially the theories of activity that individuals have learned from past action and choose to continue to enact in current practice. These authors note that this makes iterational agency feel akin to structure, but that there is a layer of agency in selecting and perpetuating such routines. The practical-evaluative element is about making sense and taking action in the present. It involves noticing that action needs to be taken, determining what kind of action is needed, and executing an. The projective element is about imagining future possibilities and acting towards those. Individuals do this through guessing what will be possible and narrativizing those possibilities, predicting how multiple variables will come together, and refining that theory by some sort of experimentation. These components of agency are overlapping

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and also have different effects in practice. I use these categories of agency to further categorize some of the literature on teacher agency in policy implementation, to illustrate important variation.

Agency as Habit

Iterational agency is also called *habitual agency* (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 971) suggesting that educators demonstrating this component of agency continue to enact the discourses with which they are already familiar, fitting policy into these familiar frameworks instead of grappling with whether or not policy and their professional vision are truly working off of aligned theories. When educators implement policy in ways that are characteristic of iterational agency, they are making sense of policy through the lens of their professional vision, often uncritically. At the same time, iterational agency does not have to mean that educators fail to engage in ideological clarity in and through their policy sensemaking. For example, an educator could determine that a policy discourse produced locally in their district or school aligns well with their professional vision. That is, if school or district leadership enacts policy in such a way that might be characterized as resisting dominant ideologies, such as some of the educational leaders in Mavrogordato and White's (2020) study of social justice leadership, educators may choose to perpetuate those local policy discourses and enactments because, through their engagement in ideological clarity, they have come to see them as equitable.

A common narrative when discussing the ways that educators enact agency as habit, is that they are spoiling the transformative policy reforms that come down from the state and district levels. Hill (2001) documents one case of how a state's math reform, intended to transform student mathematics engagement and learning, was thwarted not because of any intent to undermine or change the policy, but because educators' schema led them to unintended understanding of what was expected under this reform. Hill usefully framed this as a problem of translating the language of policy across sociocultural and organizational contexts, where local communities did not have

access to the same schema that policymakers had developed through the process of negotiating and coming to a shared meaning that they tried to communicate through the policy as written. In a piece of insight into how this occurred, Hill described how one district was focused on ensuring that state and curriculum "objectives were both faithfully represented in the final document, rather than balancing competing claims about the nature of mathematics, or how it should be taught." (p. 298). That is, the district was focused on the technical dilemmas of ensuring that a new policy could be fit into a curricular scope and sequence, without seriously taking up theoretical or ideological dilemmas in mathematics teaching. In this way, the district uncritically applied a kind of collective professional vision to the policy discourses that they received from the state.

As I suggested earlier, however, not all examples of agency as habit are the result of a lack of reflection on theory and ideology. In particular, I appreciate the framing of Gitlin and Margonis of teachers' resistance to policy reforms as "good sense" (Gitlin & Margonis, 1995). These scholars argued that in cases where iterational agency is the result of intentional action on the part of educators, motivations for the intentional action can provide useful insight into potential or inherent problems with a given policy. In their experience supporting the implementation of a management reform policy at an elementary school, Gitlin and Margonis treated the faculty resistance that they encountered as potentially insightful, ultimately finding that the questions teachers were raising were identifying legitimate tensions in the underlying theories of the reform. For example, though the reform was supposed to enhance teacher authority by encouraging increasingly localized control, teachers' objections to the district retaining control over how learning outcomes would be measured meant that "it [was] likely that this approach to site-based decision making did little to alter the authority of teachers" (p. 396). Thus, educators refused the policy because they firmly believed that it would require significant labor *without* ultimately changing the nature of their work. This example illustrates how agency as habit *can* be the result of

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intentional and insightful reflection on policy where educators come to see new patterns as perpetuating existing theories of action.

Agency as Imagination

Another element of agency is what Emirbayer and Mische call projective agency, which they describe as "the imaginative generation" of other "possible future trajectories of action" (p. 971). This imaginative agency is one way that educators respond to their understanding that the current way that things are done is ineffective, by hypothesizing what else might be possible. This kind of imaginative agency reflects the practices of educators who attempt to gain authority over policy discourses, reframing the meaning of policy artifacts that they are expected to engage in, and is important for moving toward organizational change (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 993). That is, educators' ability to imagine and enact meanings that are different than those that are dominant, represents some degree of control over their practice. In studies that focus on this kind of discursive imagining, educators are presented as working to disrupt the dominant narratives that undergird policy either for themselves or more broadly in their professional communities.

Agency as imagination is one response to policy measures that educators cannot completely reject or ignore, such as the standardized assessment regimes associated with the EL classification that many ELD educators in California and elsewhere describe as a key source of tension for their practice (Flores & Schissel, 2014; Hernandez, 2017; Leo, 2023; D. Palmer & Snodgrass Rangel, 2011). In his study of teachers in New York, Leo (2023) describes how educators and EL-classified students made space to discuss how the Regents Exams (a standardized assessment required for high school graduation in New York) was not reflective of their knowledge. Thus, in their learning communities, the Regents Exams were delegitimized as a measure of their learning, even though students would still be required to take them. In this example, while educators were unable to halt

the policy enactment of assessment administration, they were able to create space for alternative discourses of these policies.

Most examples of imaginative agency focus on educators in pre- or in-service professional development opportunities. Indeed, the idea is that projective agency will ultimately inform the actions that educators choose to take to act on their present situations (agency as judgement), which is aligned with the purpose of professional development that intends to support educators in imagining possibilities for practice that they could ultimately act on. Some of what educators are engaged in through these learning opportunities is more akin to ideological clarity, or reflection more broadly, but there are also moments where they draw on prior and current experiences, and other course resources to commit to future practice (Keisler et al., 2024). Keisler, Ordoñez-Jasis, and Mejia (2024) examine the wisdom of five literacy leaders of color in a literacy leadership program who engaged in efforts to "redefine, rewrite, and recreate" literacy possibilities in their schools (p. 2). They offer examples that illustrate how their preparation program supported their ability to see beyond their critiques of what currently existed, such as when these educators imagining different possibilities for the literacy interventions offered at their schools. In some of their cases, these educators also worked to "persuade" their colleagues and administrators that their visions may be possible.

Agency as Judgement

Practical-evaluative agency is described by Emirbayer and Mische as similar to "practical wisdom", where educators bring together habit and imagination to take action on their present situations. This element of agency is characterized by "situationally based judgment" where educators enact their tacit knowledge to make decisions about and respond to their current context (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 994). In the context of policy implementation, practical-evaluative agency can be observed in how educators justify their practice when they are challenged by colleagues and

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administrators (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2006; Acosta et al., 2018) or how they find ways to subvert

and circumvent demands that they object to (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2015; Mavrogordato & White,

2020; Urrieta, 2010). In this way, agency as judgment is a kind of enactment of habit and

imagination.

Mavrogrodato and White (2020) study the role of school leaders in the experiences of EL-

classified students, and frame leadership as arbiters of social justice and equity in the EL policy

system. One area of focus was how educational leaders responded to a recent policy change and

whether their response made it easier or more difficult for EL-classified students to reclassify out of

the label. Though most of these leaders tended to believe that they were simply implementing

policy without playing a role in interpreting its meaning, they were in fact making judgments about

how they could respond to these policies in ways that served current routines, assets, and needs in

their schools. One conclusion that is drawn in studies such as these is often about the knowledge

that educators do or do not have that leads to them making these judgements. While their

knowledge is of course important, I argue that they do not always sufficiently consider the role of

social and organizational context in making particular options available to enact.

Scholars such as Achinstein and Ogawa (2006), on the other hand, offer perspectives on

the stakes that educators face when they attempt to engage in subversion and resistance for social

justice reflective of agency as judgement (see also Acosta et al., 2018). In their study on novice

teachers' resistance to a scripted literacy curriculum that was widely used in California in the early

2000's, they illustrate the creative ways that two first-year teachers worked in more meaningful

instruction. Though both were praised by their administrators for their effective literacy practices,

these teachers also ultimately left their schools. For one teacher, her resistance to the curriculum

put her at odds with most of her colleagues, and she was left feeling isolated without strong

professional connections in her school community. She was let go from her position after her first

year. The second teacher found more support for his practices in his school community but, after a new superintendent began to more forcefully mandate the scripted curriculum in his second year, he ultimately left the district in search of a school where he wouldn't have to feel that he was swimming against the current. These experiences are incredibly important to consider as activists and scholars increasingly demand that educators engage in very visible forms of subversion. Indeed, it is important that educators are able and willing to take risks in the journey toward educational transformation (R. Gutiérrez, 2015), but it is also important that they find ways to survive *and* thrive to sustain themselves in the profession.

Conclusion: Ideological Clarity as Policy Sensemaking

To conclude this chapter, I tie together this literature to discuss the potential intersection of ideological clarity and policy sensemaking. I build on this prior work to introduce a framework (Figure 2.1) that represents the relationship between policy, ideology, and the individual in policy implementation, and illustrates the various foci of educators' reflection when they are engaged in ideological clarity as a process of policy sensemaking. In this figure, there are three layers of policy informed by theories of policy implementation as an "onion" made up of increasingly local organizational layers with the classroom at the center (Hornberger, 2020; Hornberger & Johnson, 2007; D. C. Johnson, 2011; Ricento & Hornberger, 1996), as a practice of power through which social hierarchies are continuously reproduced (Diem, 2017; Levinson et al., 2009), and as a set of mechanisms that turn practices, such as language, into a subject that can be taught (Valdés, 2015, 2016, 2018). This figure operationalizes how I came to see ideological clarity as policy sensemaking through iterative cycles of coding and analysis of interviews with the ELD educators who participated in this study.

Figure 2.1. Elements of Ideological Clarity as Policy Sensemaking
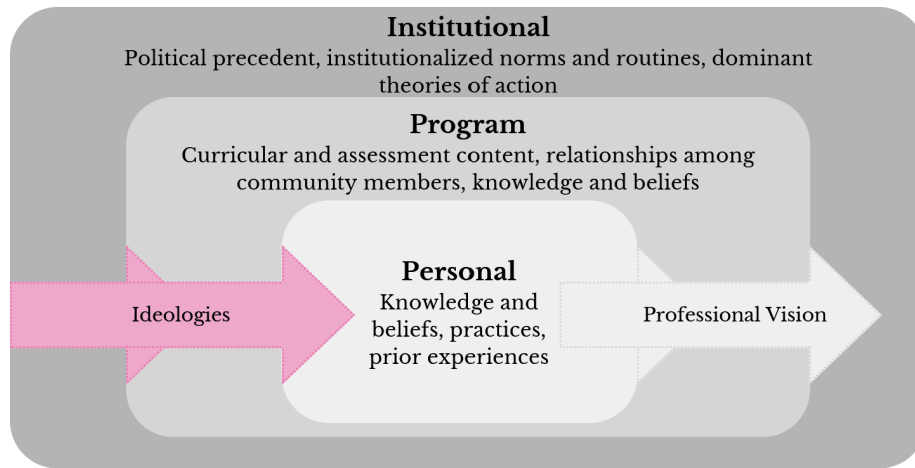
This representation allows me to capture various insights about the affordances and constraints of policy sensemaking. First, by identifying elements such as political precedent and institutionalized norms, for example, this figure takes into account that policy is experienced as both discourse and enactments that have formed historically and are continuously reformed through policy (Levinson et al., 2009; Valdés, 2018). Second, the multi-layered approach has been used to describe policy and policy implementation in prior scholarship, because it represents that actions that are physically and organizationally distant still influence individuals' practice at increasingly local levels, and that individuals can influence policy at outer organizational layers through their policy sensemaking as well (Hornberger, 2005, 2020). Furthermore, this figure takes into account that discourses and enactments become increasingly concrete the more localized they get (Valdés, 2018). Finally, I incorporate theories of ideology and its relationship to policy in this figure, by representing ideology as a framework that snakes through these layers and elements of policy, influencing what educators believe is possible in their practice (Flores & Schissel, 2014; Hornberger, 2005). This also reflects notions of ideological clarity as a process in which educators identify and reflect on ideology as it emerges across contexts, practices, and discourses (Bartolomé, 2004).

The outermost layer in this representation is the institutional layer of policy, which is represented in political precedent, the institutionalized norms and routines that may be perceived as the natural order of things, and relatedly, theories of action that are widely accepted and perpetuated through momentum more than individual choices (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2018; Scott, 2005). ELD educators in this study discussed the institutional layer of policy when identifying sources and mechanisms of organizational authority. They also often highlighted how resource distribution and organizational emphasis on specific practices or measures of knowledge acted to sustain institutional norms.

Within the institutional layer of policy is the program layer, which refers to the policy of more localized communities of practice (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2003; Wenger, 2011) and the tools employed within communities of practice that construct policy discourse and enactments. The program layer of policy refers to the more concrete content of curricula and assessments, the relationships that exist between individuals in their community, and the distribution of knowledge and beliefs within their community. ELD educators attended to this layer when they discussed, for example, the extent to which they felt that curricula represented culturally responsive themes or their students' linguistic and cultural identities. Their descriptions of their relationships with other designated ELD teachers, or mainstream teachers, were also representative of the program layer of ELD policy.

Finally, the personal layer of policy is characterized by the confluence of individual's knowledge and beliefs about policy, their policy-informed practices, and their prior experiences that inform their responses to policy. In this context, educator and student activity systems meet to create unique spaces within their institutional and program policy layers (K. D. Gutiérrez et al., 1999). Educators' personal discourses and enactments of ELD policy include their perception of their own goals for their practice, and their thinking and action toward reaching those goals.

It is from the vantage point of the personal layer of policy that individuals look outward through the lens of their professional vision (Goodwin, 1994) to make sense of policy as it exists at the program and institutional layers. Professional vision includes notions such as educators' conceptualizations of language (Valdés, 2018) and understanding of the purpose of schooling or language instruction more specifically, which impact what they notice in the context around them (Munzer & Van Es, 2024). Thus, professional vision is represented by an outward arrow in Figure 2.1 because it is a framework that individuals are imposing on their observations of policy. Finally, ideologies are represented as arrows from the outer layers of policy into the personal not because individuals do not perpetuate policy themselves – indeed, their professional vision can be shaped by and perpetuate ideologies – but because ideological clarity focuses on *dominant* ideologies that are held locally and broadly in society, and impose on the practice of individuals within sociopolitical contexts. The imposition of ideologies is highlighted in Figure 2.1, because ideologies are the primary focus of educators' reflection across the layers of policy as they are engaged in ideological clarity.

In Chapter III, I describe the relationship between this figure and my coding and analysis of educators' interview data. In Chapter IV, I use this figure to examine the ways that ELD educators reflect on ideologies through and across these layers of policy. I show how it allows me to identify and categorize variation in how they do so, and better understand how educators ultimately engage in the ELD policy navigating strategies that they described.

CHAPTER III: METHODS

The scholarly goals of this study were *relational* and *exploratory*, in the sense that I intended to clarify the relationship between the processes of ideological clarity, policy sensemaking, and implementing policy agentively (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The practical goal of this study was to better understand why, when, and how educators find space to develop equitable practice within the context of ideologically and technically complex ELD policy. As a teacher educator myself, I was motivated to gain insights that would be useful for informing pre-service and early career professional development, and for advocating for better conditions for ELD educators. To this end, I recruited educators who represented a variety of identities, experiences, and organizational positions in ELD policy implementation, and used in depth interviewing (Levitt, 2021) to explore their experiences of engaging in ideological clarity and navigating ELD policy. In this chapter, I start with a description of the educators who participated in this study. I will then highlight the rationale behind the processes of recruitment, data collection, and analysis to respond to my two guiding research questions:

> **RQ1:** What is the relationship between the processes of policy sensemaking and ideological clarity?

> **RQ2:** How do educators navigate ELD policy when they engage in ideological clarity?

Participants

The participants in this study represented a range of geographical and organizational diversity, professional experience, and engagement in ideological clarity. The state of California does not capture data about the ELD teachers and staff, in part because all teachers are authorized to teach ELD regardless of their credential since 2006, so it is impossible to know the demographics of specifically ELD educators in the state. Thus, my focus was not on ensuring that educators who participated in this study were representative of the demographic make up of educators across the

state – and indeed, they were not – but that they represented diverse identities and experiences that seemed to be relevant to their experiences of navigating ELD policy. Table 3.1 shows some basic information about the 26 participating educators. In what follows, I provide a more detailed overview of the organizational contexts in which they worked; their racial, ethnic, and linguistic identities; and their professional development and experience. This information is partially collected from the screener survey that all educators completed before participating in an interview, and other information was shared through some of the common questions in the interview protocol.

Table 3.1. Study Participants

Pseudonym	Experience	Position(s)	Grade Level(s)	Race/Ethnicity	County	Credential Institution
Adelio	5	Teacher	9-12	Asian/Asian American	Solano	UC
Ana	3	Teacher	2/3	Hispanic/Latinx	Los Angeles	UC
Antonio	17	Teacher	K	Hispanic/Latinx	Los Angeles	UC
Ariana	17	Teacher	9-12	Hispanic/Latinx	Stanislaus	CSU
Beatriz	5	Teacher & Coach	6-12	Hispanic/Latinx	Los Angeles	UC
Brian	4	Teacher	9-12	Asian/Asian American	Fresno	CSU

				White		
Cassidy*	5	Teacher	6	Hispanic/Latinx White	San Diego	Out of State
Christina	5	Teacher & Coordinator	6-8	White	Ventura	Out of State
Christine	15	Teacher	3-5	White	San Diego	Private
Damian*	4	Teacher	9-12	Hispanic/Latinx	Sacramento	Out of State
Elena	16	Coach	TK-12	Hispanic/Latinx	Stanislaus	UC
Elise	16	Teacher	4	Asian/Asian American	Monterey	Private
Ian	25	Teacher	5	White	Monterey	CSU
Isabel	15	Coordinator	9-12	Hispanic/Latinx	Sacramento	Private
Jasmine	11	Teacher	K	White	Merced	CSU
Jimena	27	Coach	TK-8	Hispanic/Latinx	Merced	CSU
Julieta	4	Coach	6-12	Hispanic/Latinx	San Diego	CSU
Kenneth	9	Teacher, Coach, & Coordinator	10-12	Hispanic/Latinx	Los Angeles	UC
Kiera	5	Teacher	K-5	White	Sacramento	CSU
Lakshmi	10	Teacher	K-6	Asian/Asian American	Stanislaus	CSU

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Lilia	5	Teacher	4	Hispanic/Latinx	Santa Barbara	Private
Maddie	4	Teacher & Coordinator	5	White	Los Angeles	UC
Ms. M	18	Teacher	K	Hispanic/Latinx	Los Angeles	CSU
Rosa	16	Teacher	9-12	Hispanic/Latinx	Orange	Private
Sofia	16	Coach	TK-5	Hispanic/Latinx	Los Angeles	Private
Tracy	18	Coach & Coordinator	K-12	White	Santa Clara	CSU

Note. Educators selected these identifiers from set lists on the screener survey found in Appendix A.

* First year in California

Social and Organizational Contexts

Representing a variety of grade levels was important given that there is some research that suggests that working with EL-classified students in secondary settings is associated with different policy and social demands than in elementary settings (Callahan, 2005; Hopkins et al., 2022; Mosqueda, 2010; Santibañez & Gándara, 2018; Strong & Escamilla, 2023). As of the 2022-23 school year, about 59% of the state's EL-classified student population were in elementary schools and about 41% in middle and high schools. My participants somewhat resembled this make up, with 12 (47%) working primarily in elementary grades, 11 (42%) in secondary, and three (11%) spanning elementary and secondary grade levels.

Participants also represented some diversity in their geographic location, reflecting some of the variation in EL-classified student populations across counties and districts. For example, educators in Los Angeles county who participated in this study described having mostly Latinx, Spanish-speaking populations, many of whom were second or third-generation, while educators in Sacramento discussed the impact of a recent influx of Afghan refugees on the make up of their classroom.[10] Research also suggests that attitudes about language policy can vary across geographic areas with different histories of policy, immigration, and resources (Hopkins et al., 2022; D. C. Johnson, 2011; E. J. Johnson & Johnson, 2015). For instance, one participant in Stanislaus County asserted that policy is one important way to respond to ideological differences across different contexts, saying:

> ...because we see that not every district is in LA Unified. Not every district is the San
> Francisco, Oakland Unified, where they're open to understanding how various nuances
> and, and things, programs and legislation plays into that everyday lived experience of a
> student. And so we're like, "Hey, what about, what about that guy that's like, in the middle
> of California where the political environment is not welcoming?" We have to put in pieces
> of legislation that essentially are guardrails for the districts to make sure that even if they
> don't want to, you know, they're doing the best thing for students.

Given that such social norms and attitudes are an important factor in how individuals experience policy (English, 2009; Hopkins, 2016; Leckie et al., 2013), the variation in geographic setting helped me to capture some of the different kinds of pressures that educators can experience under ELD policy. While I did not have participants from each of California's 58 counties, 25 of the 26

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[10] More information about language demographics across districts can be found here: https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/ad/fileselsch.asp

participants were from the 18 counties that collectively educate over 85% of the state's EL-classified student population.[11] These include urban, suburban, and rural districts and schools.

Finally, within their school buildings, educators described a variety of experiences in terms of how ELD was organized and supported organizationally. Some educators described feeling that there were few individuals in their school who had expertise that was useful in making sense of ELD policy. Ian, for example, shared that he did have a few colleagues with whom he was able to talk about ELD, but did not feel that their conversations were productive or particularly insightful:

> She and I talk often about this, but she's in the same pit I am and she's not as old of a teacher as I am. She doesn't have the same – I don't want to be mean about it, but depth of experience to draw from. Like for anything, you know, everybody needs to know the one that knows more than you. That's a thing I haven't found. I can find people to complain about it with but I can't get answers about stuff if that's what you're asking.

Rosa and Adelio also expressed having to look out to the district offices or other schools in search of colleagues who could support them in making sense of their new roles in ELD at their schools. Rosa described her experience in taking on the role of designated ELD teacher as "isolating" because "nobody knows anything about how to [implement ELD]". Others suggested that there was insufficient infrastructure for building ELD expertise, such as when Christina shared the following:

> Well, I got zero training and I didn't get anything other than "here's the online [curriculum] that you're supposed to use, here's your students. Good luck." So yeah, I mean, I don't feel like I really got much. Yeah I really didn't get much at all. And so, I definitely would say that with our [newer] teacher...I've definitely tried to be a lot more supportive and like, you

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[11] See Appendix D for more information about the distribution of EL-classified students across the state.

know, we talk a lot about stuff like what to do and how to do it. You know, we need a support group.

On the contrary, others felt that they had strong mentors and collaborators for implementing ELD close to their practice. Sofia, for example, talked about working "really closely with" her Multi-Tiered Systems of Support[12] "site rep" and her principal on advocating for EL-classified students. Kiera also expressed that she and her colleagues were "for the most part, they're aligned, and we're on the same page" in terms of implementing ELD and supporting EL-classified students across her school. Tracy was working in a district who had recently committed to overhauling their ELD implementation, and she felt that in her role in this effort was well-supported by district administrators who she described as approaching district organization with an "EL lens". Similarly, Kiera and Kenneth emphasized that their schools' administrators were supportive in frequently sending the ELD specialists and mainstream teachers to relevant professional development opportunities, while also giving them the space to experiment with what they learned in their classrooms.

Finally, educators like Cassidy and Julieta described encountering differing orientations toward EL-classified students and ELD instruction among newer and veteran teachers, with Julieta sharing:

> I would say about 60% of our teachers are first second year teachers, and the rest are veteran teachers who are reluctant with change and believe that they should stay teaching the way they did 30 years ago. So there's a big separation between our first second year teachers and our veteran teachers.

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[12] MTSS is a framework for organizing intervention and instructional resources: https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/ri/

These examples demonstrate the range of experiences that participating educators had in their school and district organizations.

Racial, Ethnic, and Linguistic Backgrounds

Prior literature has highlighted how teachers of color and otherwise marginalized teachers might have frameworks for understanding education that are different than teachers from dominant backgrounds based on their own experiences in schools (Kohli, 2019; Watson, 2017). In the 2018-2019 school year, 60.5% of teachers were white, and 21.5% were Hispanic/Latinx. The demographics of the counties in which educators in this study worked specifically, the demographics in that same school year were nearly the same, with 56.1% identifying as white and

Table 3.2. Participant Demographic Representativeness

	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Pacific Islander	Filipino	Hispanic	African American	White	Two or More Races
State	0.5%	5.7%	0.3%	1.6%	21.5%	4.3%	60.5%	1.0%
Sample Counties	0.4%	6.4%	0.3%	1.7%	24.7%	4.8%	56.1%	1.0%
Participants	0.0%	3.8%	3.8%	0.0%	61.5%	0.0%	26.9%	3.8%

Note. Racial/ethnic categories here are those that are defined by the California Department of Education so that every category is "non-Hispanic" except for "Hispanic". Participant breakdown thus reflects these categories, rather than the categories available on the screener survey which allowed participants to select racial and ethnic identity.

24.7% as Hispanic/Latinx. On the other hand, of the educators in this study, 62% identified as Hispanic/Latinx and 35% as white – nearly the reverse of the statewide teacher population, but much more closely mirroring the California student population. Furthermore, 15% of the educators in this study identified as Asian or Asian American, while only 6% of the teacher population in 2018-19 school year was identified as Asian. Many educators in this study (particularly those at the secondary levels) described selecting or being pushed into ELD specifically because their linguistic and ethnic identity might be a closer match to EL-classified students, which could mean that these educators are more representative of ELD educators, even though they are so different from the teaching force overall.

Though the survey did not ask educators to define their linguistic repertoires, many did identify their linguistic resources through our interviews as they discussed how they supported EL-classified students. Nine of the 26 educators I interviewed were former EL-classified themselves, with varied experiences of the label. Ms. M talked about relating to some of the parents of her EL-classified students having grown up "in the 90s, when we were told you can't speak Spanish." Beatriz shared that while she attended a private school and thus was not subjected to the same kind of structures that are required for supporting EL-classified students in public schools, she still understood "what it means to have an accent or people ask you like, 'what are you saying?'" Kenneth also spoke about how his prior experience being classified as an EL and seeing his friends getting stuck in the label made him hesitant to take on the ELD coach, coordinator, and teacher positions that he held at the time of our interview. He shared: "I'll admit, even for me when I first thought about taking EL lead, I was like, 'I don't know if I want to be the EL person.' Right? Even I still had this residual stigma from growing up." In Elena's experience, she found that having prior experience being classified as EL was sometimes an impediment to educators' ability to see past ideologies in ELD:

...teachers who were former ELs themselves, and maybe have this idea that "well, I was able to succeed, despite being an English learner, how come they can't?" Believe it or not, we get that more and more and more than I would like to hear. But really also shifting their mindset into like, we were privileged to see success despite being English learners, but that's not the case for everyone. And how are we going to support our ELs so that they have more opportunities to succeed like we did?

While these prior labeled experiences clearly played a role in educators sensemaking about ELD and strategies for navigating ELD policy, they were not predictive of how educators responded to the complexities of implementing ELD.

Not all of the educators who spoke languages other than English had prior experiences classified as ELs. Rather, they had diverse experiences of language learning. Two of the teachers – Kiera and Maddie – both described past experiences of learning Spanish in school that had sparked their interest in language learning and helped them connect with some of the students in their ELD classrooms. Furthermore, while most of the educators who spoke a language other than English spoke Spanish as their additional language, three spoke other languages: French, Portuguese, and Fijian. Even if they did not share languages with their EL-classified students, these educators generally reported that their experience of multilingualism and/or language learning informed their understanding of students' experiences.

Preparation for ELD

On the screener survey, I also elicited their years of experience in teaching and the type of institution from which they received their credential. Educators' historical experiences of policy can influence their interpretation of contemporary policy, and their preparation (Dobbs & Leider, 2021; D. C. Johnson, 2011). Additionally, educational and experiential backgrounds have been shown to have some relationship with teachers' confidence and skills in their practice, especially

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with EL-classified students (Santibañez & Gándara, 2018). In the 2018-19 school year, teachers in the state had an average of 14 years of experience.[13] Given that many of the educators in this study and in my own experience as a teacher educator describe disproportionate turnover in ELD teaching, which is likely to have been exacerbated given post-2020 staffing challenges, this could be over-estimated for ELD educators. The participants in this study had an average of 11.35 years of experience, with the fewest being 3 years and the most being 27 years. Some had worked in the same district and even the same school for most of their career, which offered them strong examples with which they could compare their recent experiences. For example, Ariana described that while her district currently struggled with meeting the needs of newcomer EL-classified students, there had been a strong and thriving newcomer program when she first began teaching ELD with the district. Making these kinds of comparisons were important to how educators came to see ELD policy through ideological clarity as policy sensemaking.

Many participants described somewhat unintentionally falling into the role of ELD educators because their administrators believed that they were well-suited for the job. For example, Beatriz shared that although she had earned a bilingual teaching credential, she had never imagined she would teach ELD to middle- and high-school students. Rosa had worked with enrichment programs for EL-classified students in her district before becoming an ELD teacher, but her credential was in science teaching. Even for educators who worked in elementary schools – where all teachers can expect that they will likely have to teach designated ELD at some point – participants like Maddie described feeling surprised that they knew so little about ELD policy and practice as they encountered ELD requirements.

Other participants described having actively sought the position of ELD educator. Christina

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[13] https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/ad/ssctop.asp

and Damian, for example, both had master's degrees in teaching English to speakers of other languages, and Ariana chose to teach ELD in a specialized newcomer program in her district when she was offered two options at the time of her hire. Still, Rosa noted that intentionally choosing to teach ELD could have consequences for teachers given the nature of the constantly shifting EL-classified student population:

> ...a teacher can go through their teacher education program and get specifically an ELD credential...But the problem is that that's all you can teach...So, the problem with the ELD teachers is they would get to teach four classes of ELD, and they could do one English, but the problem is that then if the population size diminishes, how do they count or justify their class size?...It's empowering because then you're an expert, but it's limiting because then what if the campus can't do it? So, you only have a 60% assignment, and if you get a 60% assignment, that means that you don't get full medical. You're only part-time. So, there's these long life-changing decisions that are associated to it. But it should almost be like ELA/ELD. You can specialize with both. That would be more fair.

Though this organizational context and limitations of an ELD credential might not have been the rationale for some of these educators choosing not to seek out this specific line of work, the context likely contributes to what many described as a somewhat disorganized and unstable discipline across many educational organizations.

Participant Recruitment

To understand variation in the experience of navigating ELD policy, I recruited participants who represented a range of prior experiences, social and organizational contexts, and roles in ELD, and continued to recruit and interview participants until I felt that I had reached "saturation" (Ravitch & Carl, 2016; Small, 2009). This approach was appropriate because I was looking to unearth potentially relevant conditions and elements for engaging in ideological clarity as policy

sensemaking and navigating ELD policy (Yin, 2014). Eligible participants were those who were currently teaching designated ELD for at least part of their instructional day, ELD coordinators, and ELD instructional coaches in California K-12 public schools. These are the educators who are at the frontlines of ELD policy implementation and have an important impact on how students experience this policy ecology (Abril-Gonzalez & Shannon, 2021; Hopkins et al., 2022). To ensure that my participants would be likely to demonstrate a degree of critical reflection on their practice and be concerned about equity for EL-classified students, I developed a screener survey that asked potential participants to reflect on their reflective practice (Larrivee, 2008). I distributed this survey via a recruitment flyer through teacher education programs in the state, and principals at schools in targeted districts. Here, I detail the contents of the screener survey and the process of its development. I then describe how the survey was distributed, attending to patterns that I found in responses to my recruitment efforts.

Development of the Screener Survey

I developed the screener survey as a way to capture basic information about participants, help me target ongoing recruitment to ensure organizational and geographical diversity, and ensure that participants reported some degree of reflectiveness on their practice before inviting them to interview. Multiple sources informed the development of this screener survey. Questions that asked for information about individual demographics and their teaching contexts were taken or adapted from the National Teacher and Principal Survey. The survey started with a question to ensure that educators taught or worked closely on the support of designated ELD teaching. The questions focused on reflective practice immediately followed this weeder question. The survey then concluded with demographic information questions including asking participants to identify (1) their race and/or ethnicity, (2) the type of institution where they earned their credential, (3) the county in which they currently taught, (4) the number of years that they had working with EL-

classified students in K-12 settings, and (5) the grade levels they currently taught or supported. They then provided their name and email if they were still willing to participate in a follow up interview. I used these demographic and context items to help direct continued recruitment, seeking some variation in grade level, geographic location, and racial and ethnic identity.

The portion of the screener survey that probes teachers' reflective practice was developed through three main activities. First, I conducted a meta-synthesis of the qualitative research (Timulak, 2014) that develops and explores the concept of ideological clarity. Then, guided by existing surveys intended to assess teachers' reflective practices (Larrivee, 2008) and literature that examines the role of ideologies in educational policy and practice for EL-classified students (Bartolomé, 2008b; Flores & Rosa, 2015), I drafted a set of items intended to capture educators' reflection on their practice and the underlying ideological assumptions of their practice. After constructing this initial draft, I elicited feedback from experts in survey methods and teacher education, and then conducted five cognitive interviews with educators currently working with EL-classified students at multiple grade levels, making revisions to the survey between each interview (Groves et al., 2009).

These survey items served as an indication that educators considered themselves to be reflective about particular ideological issues in the teaching of EL-classified students. For example, one survey item stated: "I think about how my own biases impact how I judge what my ELs need and are able to do." Participants were asked to indicate how often they engaged in each of these items when they plan for their ELD instruction or support. I then selected participants who indicated that they engaged at least "sometimes" in that thinking – the middle frequency on a five item Likert scale – for at least half of the survey items.

Accurate assessments of reflection could be considered flawed in the sense that they rely on individuals' ability to reflect or introspect in the first place (Koole et al., 2011), so I did not

consider survey responses themselves as evidence that educators regularly engaged in ideological clarity. I will offer the examples of two survey respondents who illustrate this. Lakshmi indicated that she "always" engaged in every item asking about reflection on practice – the highest frequency. However, I found it difficult to elicit examples of her critical reflection and engagement in ideological clarity through our interview, including when I asked her to elaborate on her responses on the survey. Though this does not necessarily confirm that she rarely engages in ideological clarity, it did suggest to me that she may not have been introspective in filling out the survey. On the other hand, Ruth indicated "rarely" and "sometimes" on every item. In her interview, Ruth's responses generally mirrored her self-reporting. This was an example of how I saw critiques of surveys of reflective practice (Koole et al., 2011) bear out in this recruitment process. I attended to this potential disparity in survey responses and actual engagement in ideological clarity by probing educator's survey responses in our interviews. The survey items and each participants' responses to them can be found in Appendix A.

Recruitment Reach

I recruited participants by distributing a recruitment flyer through two main channels. First, I sent the recruitment flyer to teacher preparation programs, requesting that they distribute the flyer through their alumni lists. In each of the past five years, the state's colleges and universities have prepared between 95-96% of teachers who earn their credential through an in-state entity (Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2022).[14] The other 4-5% are prepared through local educational agencies (LEAs). Of the 84 universities that were on the Commission on Teacher Credentialing's list, I excluded 6 because of technical difficulties contacting the programs, such as

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[14] There are also a proportion of teachers who earn their credential through out-of-state programs each year, ranging from 14-25% of the total credentials issued each year. These numbers have been decreasing over the past five years. The in-state IHEs still consistently prepare more than 70% of the new credentialed teachers each year.

incorrect email addresses. I excluded another 8, because their websites suggested that they did not prepare teachers who would fit the criteria that I was looking for. For example, one university only prepared teachers for Jewish Day Schools, which are not public schools. Finally, of the universities that I did contact, 26% of the programs that I reached out to agreed to share the flyer with some portion of their alumni. For example, one program shared the flyer through their alumni Facebook page, others sent it out through a listserv, and others passed the flyer to their school-based partners (e.g. mentor teachers).

I also distributed the flyer through school principals in the 18 counties with the highest proportions of the state's EL-classified students. Within these counties, I identified districts where at least 19% of their students were EL-classified (the state average in the 2022-23 school year).[15] Given that most EL-classified students reclassify to fluent English proficient before they reach middle school, there were some principals within the districts I reached out to whose schools had fewer than 19% EL-classified students. I sent recruitment emails to about 1,200 principals asking them to pass along my flyer to any educators in their school who they felt fit my criteria,[16] of which about 5% responded, agreeing to distribute the flyer to all or a portion of the educators in their schools.

Through both of these channels, I encountered responses that reflected a lack of knowledge about ELD in the state and in some cases, a de-prioritization of EL-classified students. For example, two directors from teacher preparation programs told me that they had very few alumni who taught designated ELD, despite being located in two of the top 3 counties in terms of the proportion of EL-classified student enrollment at public TK-12 schools. Moreover, many TK-

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[15] https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sg/englishlearner.asp

[16] Recruitment materials can be found in Appendix C

5 teachers teach designated ELD as part of their daily class schedule given that all educators prepared since 2006 are supposed to be prepared to teach ELD through their credential program and schools are required to provide EL-classified students with designated ELD instruction.[17] Other directors informed me that they would forward my request to the "multicultural and multilingual" faculty, reinforcing the othering of EL-classified students by framing only multilingual teachers as responsible for supporting these students. Finally, one of the principals who responded shared that:

> As a district, yes we have a high number of EL students, however, [our school] is an outlier. We only have 48 EL students. Other schools in our district would be more appropriate.

At this school with just over 500 students, this would mean that EL-classified students made up nearly 10% of the population, which this principal deemed not enough to reasonably expect that educators working at the school would be interested or able to participate in these interviews.

These responses are not necessarily surprising and align with research that suggests that educators who think of themselves as "mainstream" may not feel that they are responsible or equipped to be responsible for EL-classified students (English, 2009; Reeves, 2006). This could have meant that my sample was more likely to include educators who worked at schools where EL-classified students were more of a focus and potentially seen as more of a shared responsibility among educators, but that did not seem to ultimately be true. Multiple educators who participated in interviews indicated that they felt their schools undermined their practice and de-prioritized EL-classified students. One teacher, for example, shared her frustration that educators in her school

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[17] https://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/english-learner-auth-clad-certificate-(cl-628c)

community, including her administrators, engaged in a similar downplaying of a need to serve their EL-classified student population as the principal quoted above:

> what [the admin have] been doing instead is that my campus will say, "but there's only 20 [kids], so why are we going to focus on supporting 20?" But that's because they're using the number of the [newcomer] population, which is 20, instead of remembering that all their ELs, including LTELs, which have been in the US for a long time, are also still needing these supports. So, they're refusing to acknowledge it.

In this way, while a resistance on the part of school admin and directors of teacher preparation programs to think of their organizations as serving EL-classified students might have limited my reach in recruiting participants, it certainly did not seem to have limited my participants to only those whose schools were supportive of EL-classified students.

Data Collection and Analysis

I collected data through in-depth interviewing (Levitt, 2021). In-depth interviews are adaptive so as to capture data central to the research questions as well as explore themes that were unimagined by the researcher. The adaptivity of this approach does not preclude use of an interview protocol, but requires open-ended questions that allow the researcher to probe ideas and processes that participants themselves surface as integral to their experience (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). In this way, the interview protocol served as a tool for maintaining focus in an interview while also encouraging agency on the part of the interviewee.

For example, opening questions included: *Tell me about how you came to be an ELD teacher/coach/coordinator.* The purpose of opening questions is to ease participants into the interview, while also revealing elements they believe are important to their identity and practice as educators. Intermediate questions probed what participants shared initially, and included questions such as: *Can you describe a notable moment that raised your awareness about how students*

experience (some ELD artifact mentioned previously)? In this portion of the interview, I also asked educators about their survey responses, requesting that they elaborate on their thinking in their response and provide examples. Together with the opening questions, these intermediate questions surfaced (1) educators' perspective on what counts as ELD policy in the norms and tools they choose to highlight in their answers, and (2) the events and processes through which they develop their understanding of policy and their responses to it. Final questions then bring closure for the participant in their interviewing experience and ask them to make connections between the ideas that have surfaced. I had two closing questions: *What is something you have seen recently that made you think "I am doing a good job" or "we are doing a good job" with EL students?* And, *if you could redesign your ideal set of EL policies, what is something you might redesign, replace, or add?* An example of a full interview protocol can be found in Appendix B. Interviews were transcribed using automatic transcription services, which I then edited for errors.

I analyzed interview data using the constant comparative method. This analytic method is characterized by the identification of "small moments" within an interview to begin to identify salient concepts, and then the comparison of those nascent concepts to continuously emerging data. Small moments in an interview might be functions of the interviewee's response itself, such as expressing or justifying an opinion, or an activity in their educational practice that they describe, such advocating for EL-classified students (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021). I began analysis after the first interview, with line-by-line process coding to capture activity and in vivo coding to capture the particular context of activity that participants described (Saldaña, 2021). This granular approach is a strategy for noticing nuance in educators' interviews that I might not have noticed had I been examining the data more holistically (Charmaz, 2012; Saldaña, 2021).

After initial coding for the first five interviews, I began axial coding: an approach to "reassembling" the data and identifying categories that would form the basis for the development

of a conceptual framework (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Saldaña, 2021). By continuously disassembling and reassembling the data, I explored multiple patterns of engaging in ideological clarity as ELD policy sensemaking, and the relationship between these processes and educators' strategies for navigating ELD policy. Furthermore, this ongoing analysis allowed me to probe conclusions I was drawing in revised questions as I continued to recruit and interview educators. For example, I came to see educators' decisions about which colleagues to interact with as playing an important role in their ELD practice and began to probe these decisions more explicitly in our interviews.

Layers of Coding

Throughout analysis, I was engaged in layered cycles of coding informed by my research questions. It was these layers of coding that I continuously revised and remade throughout data collection until I reached saturation as was no longer making substantive changes. In order to understand how engaging in ideological clarity served educators' ELD policy sensemaking, I first had to establish how I would concretize definitions of ideological clarity that have been described in prior literature. After identifying moments of ideological clarity, I then determined how that process was related to ELD policy sensemaking through a second layer of coding. Finally, I sought to identify and understand patterns of the strategies that educators engaged in to navigate ELD policy in their implementation, which constituted the third and final layer of coding. Here, I define each of these layers and conclude this section with Table 3.2, which demonstrates how I applied these layers to one excerpt.

Identifying Ideological Clarity

Ideology is a widely shared schema that justifies existing social hierarchies of power (Bartolomé, 2008b; Gerring, 1997). Ideologies are the assumptions that individuals and social groups make about who people are and why they experience particular opportunities and success, or do not. I

offered multiple examples of ideologies and how they show up in the process of policy

implementation in Chapters I and II of this dissertation including raciolinguistic and monoglossic

ideologies, ideologies of languagelessness and semilingualism, all of which exist within the broad

category of deficit ideologies.

Drawing on prior research on ideological clarity, I identified educators' ideological clarity

in their interviews by first looking for moments that they expressed frustration, feeling that they saw

something unfair or unjust, or feeling that they had a disagreement with an individual or an artifact

that they had to engage with. In some of these moments, educators were expressing what I found

to be a more technical rather than ideological frustration. For example, many times that educators

complained about the curricula they were supposed to use, their complaints were about not having

enough professional development to understand the curriculum or feeling that they did not have

enough material in the curriculum to fill all of their instructional time (or vice versa). While these

problems might be undergirded by ideologies – i.e. ideologies of standardization make the

curriculum unusable with a given population of students – the educator's primary focus was on the

technical struggles, not their quibbles with the underlying theory. I did not code these moments as

examples of ideological clarity.

On the other hand, when educators expressed frustration and grappled with underlying

theories and assumptions that were problematic or misaligned with their own beliefs, I considered

these excerpts to be evidence that they were engaged in ideological clarity in the moment of the

interview and potentially in an ongoing manner in their practice.[18] Importantly, it was not their

stances themselves, but their questioning and juxtaposing that I took as evidence of ideological

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[18] Because ideological clarity is an internal process, it has to be identified through discursive markers such as what I've described here. *And* these discursive markers are clues but not guarantees that an educator engages in ideological clarity with any regularity.

clarity. For coding and analysis, this meant that when educators identified frameworks that reflect ideologies *without* describing those frameworks as subjective and potentially harmful, I did *not* count this as evidence of ideological clarity. The following excerpt from an interview with a middle school ELD teacher provides an example and non-example of ideological clarity. In this excerpt, the teacher discusses her colleagues' refusal to change their practices:

> And so, I think that there's a lot of older veteran teachers who just don't either know how they're stuck in their ways...they're like, "well, they need to be learning English, plain and simple. I shouldn't have to change my style if I've been successful for X amount of years. They are here. They need to be learning in English." Whereas people in my generation and below have really been taught the whole, like universal design for learning of where every student in the classroom needs to be provided for. And we have such an influx of students who speak another language that there's become more of a concentration on how to teach them and what best practices are for those students. So, I mean, I've heard teachers say, "well, they're here. They should be learning our language." Okay, I'm not disagreeing with you. However, you cannot be doing the same things you've been doing.

As this teacher showed concern about her colleagues' practices, she first demonstrated ideological clarity by contrasting veteran educators' resistance to differentiating with what her generation of educators has internalized. Though she does not explicitly name an ideology, she is suggesting that historically dominant ideologies of standardization can be seen in her colleagues' resistance to modifying their practice for diverse student needs. At the same time, she identifies the underlying assumption that these students have to learn English because they are in the U.S., *but* reinforces this assumption as objective and true, thereby not demonstrating ideological clarity in that thinking. On the other hand, another educator could point out that San Diego county, where she works, is highly multilingual and that focusing only on English proficiency is harmful to the linguistic and

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academic identities of multilingual or otherwise linguistically marginalized students (Sah & Uysal, 2022). If the teacher had taken issue with this belief, contrasted it to her own beliefs about language hierarchies and teaching, or highlighted the potential harms of this kind of assimilationist thinking, this portion of the excerpt would also be an example of ideological clarity.

In Chapter IV, I offer more examples of educators engaging in ideological clarity and patterns in the relationship between this thinking and their sensemaking about ELD policy. Here, I share how I used the framework that I presented at the end of Chapter II (p. 63) – Elements of Ideological Clarity as Policy Sensemaking – to make sense of how educators engaged in ideological clarity as ELD policy sensemaking.

Elements of Ideological Clarity as Policy Sensemaking

In early stages of coding and analysis, I began to identify ELD policy artifacts – such as curricula, routines, and messaging – that educators were attending to when they were engaging in ideological clarity. Through multiple rounds of coding and re-coding, I developed categories of these artifacts which, along with existing literature on language policy sensemaking and implementation, informed my development of the framework I use to represent the relationship between the elements that educators attend to when engaged in ideological clarity as policy sensemaking (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1. Simplified Elements of Ideological Clarity as Policy Sensemaking
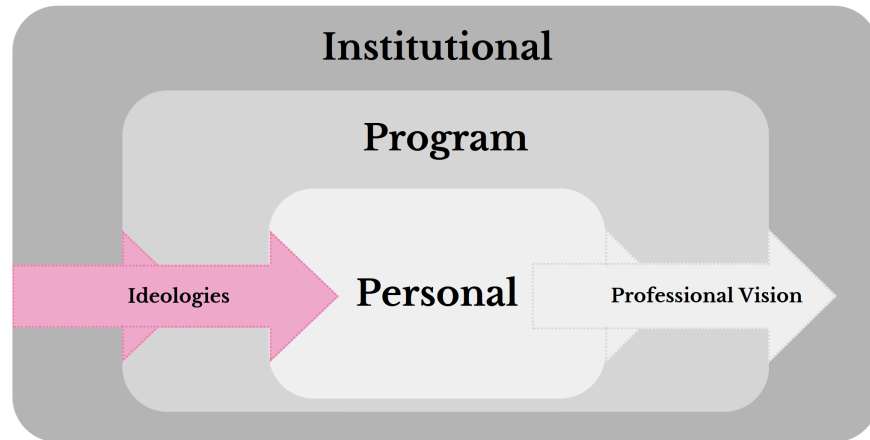
This framework served my ongoing analysis through which I identified ways that educators were attending to ideology and elements of ELD policy. I used this framework of institutional, program, personal, and professional vision as a second layer of coding, in the sense that I examined the excerpts I had coded as ideological clarity for policy discourses and enactments across these organizational layers.

Strategies and Agency in Navigating ELD Policy

For the final layer of coding, I examined interviews holistically to code for ways that educators were responding to what they were making sense of in ELD policy. To do this, I would locate the excerpts coded for ideological clarity and policy sensemaking within an interview transcript and ask myself: "given that they noticed and were thinking about X in this way, how did they choose to respond?" In some cases, educators described their response to their ideological clarity as policy sensemaking within that same excerpt. In others, I had to follow my line of follow up questioning in the interview to understand how educators responded to this thinking as they navigated ELD policy. As I continuously revised and regrouped codes, I ultimately identified the four navigating strategies that I describe in more detail in Chapter IV: *ally building, buffering, building student and family agency*, and *reframing*. I also coded instances of these strategies in terms of the components of agency – habit, imagination, and judgment – to consider patterns in why and how educators

were engaged in these strategies. Table 3.3 shows an example of one excerpt and how I coded it through this layered process.

Table 3.3. Sample Coded Excerpt

Excerpt	Code
...I also need you to survive in P.E. I need you to survive by yourself **in science class where these teachers could give two Fs about you and are not gonna see you**...how do I get you to survive? What are those words? What is the phrases?...So it's like, okay, what about the rules and what about the, you know, and then also what are the survival things? And then as you get into that, then it gets into, I want you to know like that your la- your first language is amazing. How do we now incorporate, or how do you feel good about, um, using this language? And actually, one of our main drivers in my class is using their home language in order, um, to just learn content, navigate content. Like the concept of translanguaging is, is everything to me, um, in my classroom. And so, again, just ensuring that layered on those things, survival versus rules that other teachers will hold you accountable to and blah, blah, blah. **Then it's also, how can I continue to empower your growth and your literacy in your, you know, home language,**	1: **Ideological Clarity**

you know. And to see, you see that as a tool and not a deficit. And you know that that's getting pounded in their head by other, other teachers.

...I also need you to survive in P.E. I need you to survive by yourself in science class where these teachers could give two Fs about you and are not gonna see you...how do I get you to survive? What are those words? What is the phrases?...So it's like, okay, what about the rules and what about the, you know, and then also what are the survival things? And then as you get into that, then it gets into, I want you to know like that your la- your first language is amazing. How do we now incorporate, or how do you feel good about, um, using this language? And actually, one of our main drivers in my class is using their home language in order, um, to just learn content, navigate content. Like the concept of translanguaging is, is everything to me, um, in my classroom. And so, again, just ensuring that layered on those things, survival versus rules that other teachers will hold you accountable to and blah, blah, blah. Then it's also, how can I continue to empower your growth and your literacy in your, you know, home language, you know. And to see, you see that as a tool and not a deficit. And you know that that's getting pounded in their head by other, other teachers.

...I also need you to survive in P.E. I need you to survive by yourself in science class where these teachers could give two Fs about you and are not gonna see you...how do I get you to survive? What are those words? What is the phrases?...So it's like, okay, what about the rules and what about the, you know, and then also what are the survival things? And then as you get into that, then it

2:

Program

&

Personal

3:

Strategy 2

Buffering

&

gets into, I want you to know like that your la- your first language is amazing.	Agency
How do we now incorporate, or how do you feel good about, um, using this	Judgment
language? And actually, one of our main drivers in my class is using their home	
language in order, um, to just learn content, navigate content. Like the concept of	
translanguaging is, is everything to me, um, in my classroom. <u>And so, again, just</u>	
<u>ensuring that layered on those things, survival versus rules that other teachers will</u>	
<u>hold you accountable to and blah, blah, blah. Then it's also, how can I continue</u>	
<u>to empower your growth and your literacy in your, you know, home language,</u>	
<u>you know. And to see, you see that as a tool and not a deficit. And you know that</u>	
<u>that's getting pounded in their head by other, other teachers.</u>	

Note. Layers and codes were consistently made and remade through constant comparative analysis. This table represents the final form of this layered coding process.

Summary

I recruited ELD teachers, coaches, and coordinators for this study by distributing a recruitment flyer and screener survey through teacher education programs across California and directly through principals in targeted districts. I used in-depth interviews to explore ideological clarity as policy sensemaking and understand the strategies that educators engage in to navigate ELD policy. Interviews were automatically transcribed, corrected for errors, and then analyzed through the constant comparative method of iterative coding and analysis. This ongoing analysis conducted concurrently with data collection also allowed me to probe my assumptions through continued recruitment and interviewing. Ultimately, I established three layers of coding that supported my analysis of the data in order to respond to my guiding research questions: (1) identifying moments

of ideological clarity, (2) tying ideological clarity to elements of policy, and (3) considering policy

navigating strategies and their implications in terms of educators' agency.

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

In this chapter, I share my findings in response to my two research questions:

RQ1: What is the relationship between the processes of policy sensemaking and

ideological clarity?

RQ2: How do educators navigate ELD policy when they engage in ideological clarity?

I identified evidence of educators' engagement in ideological clarity when they expressed

frustration in feeling that they observed something unjust, attempted to define the theories

underlying their observations, and compared or contrasted them to other theories that they held or

had been exposed to previously. It is the processes of defining and juxtaposing that I took as

evidence of ideological clarity, rather than a given perspective or stance itself. Educators

incorporated the process of ideological clarity into their policy sensemaking when they were

examining how ideology is represented and reproduced through policy across various

organizational levels. That is, educators were making comparisons and connections between when

and how ideologies were undergirding discourse and practice across the institutional, program, and

personal layers of ELD policy. Furthermore, educators who were engaged in critical reflection on

their own professional vision were also generally more open to experimenting with strategies for

navigating ELD policy in their practice, which allowed them to probe their agency within their

unique ELD policy context. I call this self-in-systems inquiry.

Finally, I identified four categories of strategies that educators engaged in to navigate their

implementation of ELD. The first is *ally building*, through which educators attempted to inspire

changed discourse and changed practice in their program context. The second is *buffering*,

through which educators created safe spaces within their personal policy-driven practice as a way to

shield students from what they saw as harmful institutional and program policy implementation.

Third, educators worked to *build student and family agency* to support their navigation of the often

obscure norms and routines that constitute their schooling context. Finally, the fourth is *reframing*, through which educators engaged in imagining by themselves or with students to reframe what ELD and its associated artifacts *could* mean.

In what follows, I describe these findings in greater detail. I first attend to RQ1 (What is the relationship between the processes of policy sensemaking and ideological clarity?) with examples of educators connecting ideology expressed through discourse and enactment across organizational layers of policy implementation. In these examples, educators illuminate how engaging in ideological clarity can be useful for deepening their awareness of how policy meaning is created across multiple organizational layers. I describe patterns in this ideological clarity as policy sensemaking that I call vertical, horizontal, and contained juxtapositions. I then expand on the notion of self-in-systems inquiry to bridge RQ1 and RQ2 (How do educators navigate ELD policy when they engage in ideological clarity?), connecting examples of this practice to prior work on ideological clarity and literature that theorizes teacher agency. Finally, I take up each navigating strategy in turn, providing examples of how educators described employing these strategies, their perceptions of how they developed these strategies, and how the juxtapositions that educators engaged in and their organizational roles facilitated these strategies.

The Intersection of Ideological Clarity and Policy Sensemaking

In the conclusion of Chapter II, I presented Figure 2.1 that represents the relationship between ideology, policy, and individuals' practice, to illustrate the elements upon which educators reflect when they are engaged in ideological clarity as policy sensemaking. In Chapter III, I described how this framework was developed through initial phases of analysis, and how it was used for ongoing analysis. In what follows here, I bring this framework to life through excerpts from ELD educators whom I interviewed for this study, and highlight the analytic affordances that it provides. I show how this figure helped me to make sense of the variation with which educators were engaging in

ideological clarity as policy sensemaking. In doing so, I also illustrate how this framework is flexible enough to capture the experiences of educators in various organizational roles, including teachers in the classroom, and coaches and coordinators working in school or district leadership positions. For example, a teacher might describe institutionalized norms and routines as something that lives in and is perpetuated through the district offices, while an educator who works at the district level might understand institutionalized norms and routines as rooted in the profession more broadly. In the following examples, I highlight three dimensions that characterized how this intersection of engaging in ideological clarity and policy sensemaking took place, which I call making vertical, horizontal, and contained juxtapositions.

Vertical juxtapositions are characterized by educators juxtaposing policy discourses or enactments across layers of policy sensemaking in a current context in which they worked. Policy discourses are narratives about what a policy is supposed to mean in a given context. Ideology can be identified in discourse through the use of particular terminology and through silences in discourse. Policy enactments are more tangible and observable manifestations of these discourses, such as curricular materials and written policy handed down from the state or district. Dominant ideologies can be recognized in artifacts when they privilege dominant cultural and linguistic norms. Vertical juxtaposing is valuable because it is a marker of educators gaining a deeper understanding of what policy means and *how* these particular meanings are produced within the context in which they work. This kind of deep understanding of one's policy context has been represented as important knowledge that allows educators to find space for more transformative practice, whether or not they occupy organizational positions that grant them authority to determine policy meaning more broadly (Hornberger, 2005; Mavrogordato & White, 2020; Urrieta, 2010).

When educators juxtaposed their personal beliefs (personal layer) with those of their colleagues (program layer), or their professional community's ELD practice (program layer) with the framework of ELD that the district was trying to push forward (institutional layer), for example, I considered this a vertical comparison. It is vertical in the sense that they are connecting inner and outer layers of policy through their engagement in ideological clarity. This was the most common pattern in how educators incorporated their engagement in ideological clarity into policy sensemaking.

Ana, a third grade dual language teacher, expressed her frustration with the English/Spanish language arts curriculum that she had been asked to use, as an example of an earlier assertion that curricula broadly were not representative of her EL-classified students' identities and constituted a kind of monoglossic policy. She discussed the representation of ideology in the curriculum, saying:

Like, what's culturally relevant doesn't necessarily mean okay, like we're always using tacos and tamales and our math problems or in stories or whatever, but it's also like referencing like the video games they're playing or the shows they're watching or the games they're playing in the playground, or like the friends are interacting with. And I think that's where [the curriculum] may have dropped the ball is that like, they took it too literal, in the sense that like, let's combine this with like a history lesson or something. But it's like if the student can connect with that, and that's not their history, then it's not going to be as effective. And I think just going back, like making it culturally relevant is also like making it relevant to the abilities the kids have at the moment as well, you know, and using scaffolds to make it accessible because, their abilities also affect our culture, and what they can engage with.

When Ana said that the curriculum "dropped the ball" and is not representative of students' identities, she was expressing a tension in her implementation of this curriculum that she was

pressured to use through district and school-site professional developments. She discussed the curriculum as part of the dominant representations of language that influenced how her EL-classified students experienced and perceived the language of schooling, which mattered for what she then felt that they needed from designated and integrated ELD instruction. Furthermore, Ana contrasted the definition of culture as primarily historical that she saw represented in the curriculum, with her own understanding of culture as something that is perpetually recreated through daily practice. Culture as a settled, historical entity represents a monoglossic lens in the sense that it becomes a static concept that can mark contemporary culture as invalid. This is an example of Ana tethering her own belief, or personal discourse about cultural relevancy in designated ELD instruction, to her reflection on ideology in the tangible curricula, or enactment of language policy, that define the purpose of language development in her school.

The following excerpt from Julieta, an ELD coach, is an example of an educator vertically juxtaposing discourses across the institutional and program layers. Here, she described multiple policy discourses around a newcomer program for EL-classified students in the district that provided designated ELD and a broader range of wraparound supports to recently arrived students:

> So, our newcomer program targets our first- or second-year students who recently arrived from a foreign country, and they specifically put them in one ELD classroom for them to be with students at their current level. And I will get complaints left and right from ELD teachers that are not in that ELD program classroom just from different ELD classrooms. And there'll be complaints of, "oh, I think this student should be in that classroom because he doesn't do any work" or "she doesn't speak English well enough to be in my classroom. They should really be considered to be thrown in that classroom" kind of thing. And so I

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get a little bit of pushback on that, but I have to remind them that our newcomer program

is only designed for first and second year students.

Julieta first described the institutional discourse of the newcomer program as a resource targeted

for "first- or second-year students who recently arrived from a foreign country", which she then

contrasted with the program level discourse, where educators thought of EL-classified students as

not their responsibility, expressing a kind of understanding of designated ELD as an othering

policy that separates EL-classified students out of the mainstream classroom. This vertical

contrasting allowed her to clarify that the othering ideologies that defined this policy at the program

level did not represent the discourse of the newcomer program as a safe space to land at the

institutional layer of implementation. Her recognition of this disconnect between the discourses at

the institutional and program layers represents an example of her engagement in ideological clarity

as she makes sense of how the purpose of designated ELD is understood by the teachers she is

meant to support.

This vertical juxtaposing is useful because it can allow educators to recognize where there is

space for remaking policy at or across given layers (Hornberger, 2005; Urrieta, 2010). For

example, when Ana contrasted her definition of culture to the enactment of culturally relevant

content that is represented in the curricula she was asked to use, she is clear about what features of

culture the curriculum does attend to (history) and what it is missing (ongoing creation of culture).

Through this clarity, she could, in theory, also experiment with supplementing or modifying the

curriculum to augment what it offers and serve her students in a way more aligned with her

personal understanding of what language policy should be. For Julieta, recognizing the disparities

in the discourses of newcomer ELD policy as othering in the program layer allowed her to

consider her own messaging for the teachers whom she coaches. That is, she drew on the authority

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of the discourse of newcomer ELD in the institutional layer to take action on this erroneous understanding at the program layer.

Horizontal juxtapositions, on the other hand, were characterized by educators making connections across physical and/or temporal instances of these layers. An example of this would be comparing ELD at a current school to one that a teacher worked in previously, or comparing how a district used to define ELD to how it currently does. Horizontal juxtapositions may allow educators to access a broader range of possible discourses and enactments that they can draw on to make sense of ELD beyond those that are dominant in their immediate contexts. Having access to a broader range of discourses supports educators in recognizing the subjectivities of policy discourses (Katznelson & Bernstein, 2017). However, while educators may be more likely to find new ideas when they look outside of their immediate context, that learning might be more difficult to integrate into their personal policy within that context (Baker-Doyle, 2012).

Horizontal juxtapositions were generally something that educators with more years in the profession demonstrated, given that they were more likely to have experiences across multiple contexts or recognize shifts in their district or school over time. However, given that some teachers had moved schools or districts because of negative experiences in their early years on the job, this was something that teachers with various years of experience engaged in. Tracy, an ELD coordinator at the district level discussed the beliefs that teachers expressed about EL-classified students in a recent professional development that she had given to help educators in the district understand culturally relevant strategies:

> Alright, so I've noticed a lot, I know I always back up - is there's a lot of the "students are being rude, they don't care, they're lazy", and they're talking about a particular culture and just kind of like, "I've done everything I could. I already implement strategies and nothing is getting through to all of them, so they all get F's", that kind of thing. At least in the

secondary where I used to work, I would hear that kind of message all over the place, particularly in single subject classes like science and math. I feel like the ELA teacher, social studies teachers were a little bit more informed on those strategies. So I felt like there might've been a lack of EL strategies, they just didn't know what to do. But there was also some sort of blaming...And so during that PD, I remember there were some with arms crosses. They did not want to talk about it and they wanted to stay with their stance on "the students are lazy, their home life is terrible, that's why they're giving us a hard time" and things like that. And I didn't see this in the previous district. I mean, I only worked in the one school, but we were not having that kind. It's very culturally different. It feels where I am now. So yeah, I feel like there's a lot of work that needs to be done around that. And I'm just new to this position. I got to figure out how to have a support with a shift where we're all working together. And right now I don't know how to do it. I'm trying to figure it out.

Tracy expressed feeling frustrated with this attitude that educators in her district blamed students for their poor academic outcomes and behaviors defining ELD as a kind of deficit policy meant to fix unteachable kids. Though not all of these educators would teach designated ELD, they would ideally be supporting EL-classified students through integrated ELD, which worried Tracy given that this dominant discourse that reflected a deficit ideology. In making the horizontal juxtaposition to her former district, Tracy was able to highlight that this discourse is *not* inevitable, but something that she believed could ultimately be changed, particularly through her role as a district ELD coordinator.

In another example, Adelio, a high school designated ELD teacher and coordinator, frequently compared their own prior experiences as a student to those of their current EL-classified students. This was related to a question on the screener survey that had asked educators

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to indicate how often they compared their own K-12 experiences with the experiences of their current EL-classified students, which I had probed Adelio about in our interview. When I asked them to clarify their answer of "always" and provide an example, they shared how this contrasting led them to recognize the deficit policy enactment in their current context:

> I went to school in [Southern California]. And I feel like I had a pretty rich education. I thought it was standard. But I guess it's not. And I think about my ELD students and it's like, night and day. They're expected to do things like just know English on the spot, but at the same time, just like not expected to do well in any other classes. It seems like the resistance that I hear from teachers about having ELD students in their classes with native speakers, it's almost like they don't even give them a chance to attempt English or even attempt to work. Like there's no entry point, no access point. Whereas I remember for me if I needed help, I'd just be like, "Yeah, I need help. I don't get it." But the students here - the ELD students - it seems like, they feel like they don't have a voice. Or that if they like if they do need help, it's something that they shouldn't need.

When Adelio expressed that they felt that students "don't have a voice," they demonstrated a feeling of tension with the enactment of integrated ELD in their program context. In this case, it seemed that they were suggesting students feel that they don't have a voice because of an underlying monoglossic ideology where students were "expected to...just like know English on the spot," leaving little space for linguistic heterogeneity. To articulate this tension, they then contrasted this deficit enactment with a prior experience where, as a student, they could ask for and receive help when they need it. This is thus a horizontal juxtaposition in the sense that Adelio contrasts (across both temporal and physical space) the enactment of ELD in their current school and in the school that they attended as a student.

These horizontal juxtapositions are valuable because they help educators recognize that there are a range of policy discourses and enactments that are potentially possible (Katznelson & Bernstein, 2017; Mavrogordato & White, 2020), and that their current experiences are not neutral states of ELD policy. Tracy, for example, seemed to be sustaining her hope in her current work with teachers who have deficit perspectives of EL-classified students by her experience in a prior context that was very "culturally different". In her excerpt above, she suggested that through the professional development she provided in her current district, she was in a sense trying to remake discourses that she had seen before. For Adelio, having their affirming prior experiences as a K-12 student helped them notice the deficit and monoglossic discourses surrounding the support of EL-classified students at their current school. Later in their interview, Adelio also described a variety of professional development and community building initiatives that they were planning in an attempt to remake these relationships among teachers and EL-classified students in their school.

Finally, *contained juxtapositions* describe educators grappling with ideology in discourse *and* enactment *within* a given implementational layer. This could mean that an educator identified an ideological discourse related to ELD policy at the program layer and then also described how that ideology manifested itself in enactment at that layer. These kinds of juxtapositions may be useful for intentionally interpreting the meaning of language that gets communicated for policy implementation, and thus resisting the kind of misinterpretation of policy language that Hill (2001) described in a district's implementation of standards reforms. Furthermore, juxtaposing discourse and enactment might be particularly useful in the context of policies that seek to make schooling more equitable, where language can be appropriated to conceal potentially contradictory intentions, and where dimensions of equity that are the focus of policy are not always made explicit (Citrin et al., 2017; Cochran-Smith et al., 2016; H. C. Hill, 2001).

For some educators, contained juxtapositions were explicitly prompted by my questioning, though I could not always get educators to express these kinds of comparisons through explicit questioning in our interview. In other cases, educators brought up these connections on their own to emphasize their frustration with discourses that did not always align with enactments. For example, Ariana, a high school designated ELD teacher, expressed tension that policy discourses at the institutional layer did not always reflect the institutionalized norms that represented policy enactments. Early on in our interview interview, Ariana had described her district as district being "hostile" and "discriminatory" toward EL-classified students, and that individuals who might have the power to change their experience on a systemic level were afraid of losing their job if they went against this grain. When I asked her to clarify where she believed blame lay for that hostile environment given this sentiment, she shared:

> All of the levels from the superintendent to her cabinet to the way that they, um, the lack of genuineness when they talk about anti-racist practices. The way that they're not – that the way that they govern is just very opposite ways of – like the leadership and the actions of the leadership is not reflective in the words that they're saying. And so, it's at every level, right? And then, what hurts the most, or where students get hurt, is in the classroom, right? So, can we switch out and fire every superintendent, associate superintendent? Sure. Teachers are still gonna remain in a certain head space unless there is leadership that can help them make those transitions. Like literally, it's like a brain shift. It's like a, you know, a paradigm shift that some people are having to make in order to get to a space where they see everybody valuable enough to put in maximum effort. And so, you know, it starts, it's at every level. So, I think, you know, that's where it's located, unfortunately. It's, it's like, white supremacy. It's not the shark, it's the water, you know? And it's the area, it's the city, it's the past practices, it's traditions, it's everything.

In this example, Ariana discussed the relationship between discourse and enactment at the institutional level, highlighting that regardless of the promising discourses of anti-racism, the enactment of ELD represented a deficit policy model where some students were seen as less "valuable" than others. The whole excerpt references the tension that she expressed throughout her interview with how deficit policy had been institutionalized throughout her district. In an example she had given earlier in the interview, Ariana described how district leadership had shut down a thriving newcomer program because the superintendent and the director of that program had not seen eye to eye. Thus, I understand this excerpt to be an example of how she made sense of the disconnect between discourse and enactment. Ariana demonstrated contained juxtaposing by contrasting "the words that [leadership] is saying" to express commitments in the district with "the way that they govern" and provide resources for EL-classified students and their teachers. In sum, Ariana was highlighting how "assets" language that has been so popularized in the field can be reappropriated to reify historically dominant hierarchies that deprioritize EL-classified students.

Another way that educators made connections across discourse and enactment within a policy layer was by articulating how a discourse that they noticed played out through practice. This contrasts with the prior example where Ariana discussed the *disconnect* between discourse and enactment. In the following excerpt, Ana, a third grade dual language teacher, compared policy discourses at the school she taught at the year previously, with the discourses at the school where she was teaching at the time of our interview (an example of horizontal juxtaposing):

> I definitely felt it more intensely at my last school, because my last school was much more driven by test scores. And that's understandable because they were a small school that share their campus with a charter school and so I understand how access to funding may have reflected on that. Whereas here because it is a pilot school, and the mission is to completely celebrate the kids' language abilities and learning abilities and their cultural

backgrounds. I feel like the test scores are kind of just used as like a data point, but there's

a much more holistic view on the student.

Ana highlighted these horizontal contrasts of discourses around data to contextualize how she

thought about differentiation and meeting her EL-classified students' needs through ELD

instruction. In her former school, discourses around data use were more characteristic of a policy

of standardization whereas in her current school, data were thought of within a more "holistic"

narrative of students. Ana then connected these discourses at the program layers to enactments in

these two settings, emphasizing how these enactments reflected the differing discourses:

I remember in PDs last year, like we would talk about students as like student number one,

student number two. Even the language we were using to talk about them. Whereas here,

it's like we're using their first name, you know, we're looking at them like with the whole

lens rather than just a microscope on one certain area.

Here, she described the specific routines around data discussions in professional development

activities in each school that reflected the discourses she had described earlier. For example, she

tied the standardization policy discourse to the enactment where students became numbers in

community data discussions. By making these contained juxtapositions within the context of

horizontal juxtapositions, Ana deepened her understanding of how these contexts differed and *why*

her experience of ELD enactment was so different in her new school.

Contained juxtapositions are particularly important in my view because the language of

equity and assets is at the forefront of policy and professional development in this moment, but

language can paper over crucial distinctions in practice (Citrin et al., 2017; Flores, 2013; H. C. Hill,

2001). That is, surface policy discourses might focus on the assets of EL-classified students and

providing equitable instruction through ELD, but these discourses could conceal the persistence of

deficit policy enactments. For example, in identifying the disconnect between the institutional

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policy discourses in her district that focus on anti-racism with the policy enactments that seem to contradict this discourse, Ariana understood the systemic nature of what needed to change in her district for it to become a more equitable context for EL-classified students. Similarly, Ana's contained juxtaposing in partnership with her horizontal juxtaposing allowed her to deepen her understanding of her experience. This was useful because she was able to recognize how data-driven instruction can mean very different things in the context of her support for EL-classified students, and allowed her to make more intentional decisions about how she used and responded to data in her personal layer of ELD implementation.

Navigating Policy: Self-In-Systems Inquiry

To bridge RQ1 and RQ2, I now describe what I call self-in-systems inquiry. Self-in-systems inquiry describes a critical reflection on one's own professional vision that sparks experimentation in practice, which allowed educators to probe their agency within their unique ELD policy context (Figure 4.1). Part of my practical interest in understanding the intersection of ideological clarity and policy implementation, is that in my experience and in the literature, educators may understand that ideologies undergird dominant practices in their context and want to practice in ways that reflect equity orientations that take into account power and identity, but may also feel that they cannot take action because of organizational norms around teaching EL-classified students (the discursive and enacted constraints of language policies). For this reason, I sought insight into why some educators felt that they could take action that is informed by their engagement in ideological clarity, while others feel more hopeless. While their organizational position (i.e. teacher, coach, coordinator) played some role in the ELD policy navigating strategies they took up, which I expand on in more detail later, I also found that self-in-systems inquiry also mattered for whether and how educators attempted to spark micro-institutional change. Figure 4.1, nearly the same as Figure 2.1, represents the foci of educators' reflection when they engage in self-in-systems inquiry,

emphasizing that educators attend to their own professional vision in a similar way that they attend to ideologies in their engagement in ideological clarity. I illuminate the qualities of self-in-systems inquiry that were useful for encouraging educators to take sociopolitical action in response to their engagement in ideological clarity as they made sense of ELD policy.

In self-in-systems inquiry, educators were not only engaged in reflecting on the manifestation of ideologies in discourse and practice, but also were engaged in critical reflection on their own professional vision, explicitly considering how their own beliefs and prior experiences shaped their policy sensemaking. Professional vision refers to the socially-situated schema through

Figure 4.1. Self-In-Systems Inquiry
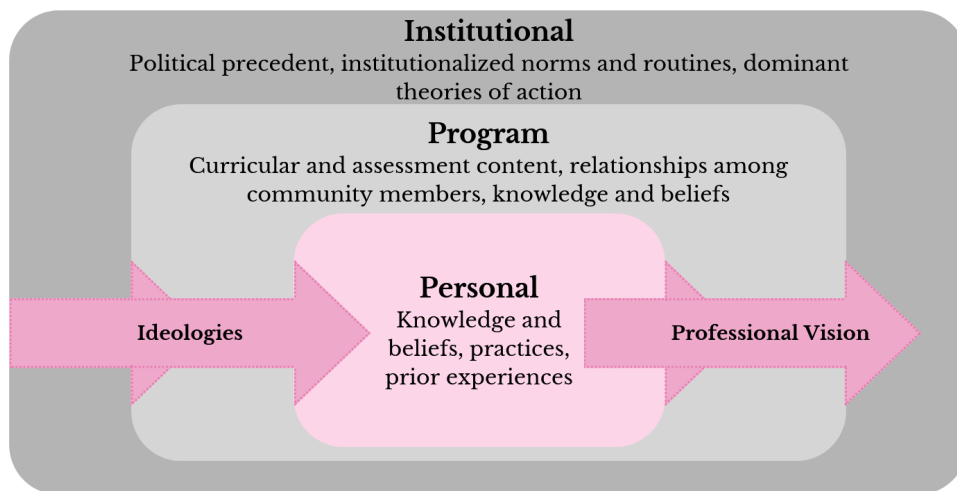
which individuals understand the purpose of their work (Goodwin, 1994). For teachers, professional vision refers to the connection between what they understand to be the purpose of education, what they notice while they teach, and how they interpret and decide how to respond to what they notice (Sherin et al., 2008). Professional visions refer to the lenses that individuals look through to understand policy enactments and discourses. Thus, it is important that educators focus not only on ideology as it exists across the layers of policy represented in the figures I presented in chapters II-IV, but also as it is influencing what they are noticing and how they are choosing to

respond to what they notice. This is important so that educators may learn to see when their own practice is reflecting the ideologies in their surrounding context and when their sensemaking is privileging these dominant frameworks. Indeed, this is an important component of ideological clarity that has received scant attention in the literature, as I discussed in Chapter II.

There were two signals of educators' self-in-systems inquiry. The first was a kind of productive self-doubt, where educators were describing areas of their knowledge that they were unsatisfied with or had been unsatisfied with in the past before learning something new. In these examples, I understood educators' reflection to be focused primarily on their personal policy context, challenging their own discourses and enactments of language instruction. The second signal was when educators described the kinds of reflective questions that they would ask themselves or frameworks that they intentionally developed for decision-making about their practice, to clarify their own assumptions in their ongoing planning and practice. This was an example of educators explicitly grappling with their professional vision, and trying to shape or question the lens through which they understood policy. In each of these strands of self-in-systems inquiry, I saw that this questioning led educators to treat the contexts of their work as systems with interwoven elements and characteristics in which they had agency to notice and act (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2018).

In the following excerpt, Rosa, a high school designated ELD teacher discussed part of her experience that led to the personal policy enactments she was describing in our interview. She shared:

Early on in my teaching career, when I was a young 27-year-old, I was thinking about my classroom practices, and I didn't like lecturing the whole time. I just didn't think it was fair, and I didn't think it was effective. I was teaching in Oakland, so because I was teaching in Oakland and my population was, I had a migrant population in there, I'm like, okay, they

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have a large disconnect because they're out of their classrooms for so long. So I wanted to

think about how the hell do I help these kids, any student? How do I help my students

process their thinking?

Rosa shared this moment from earlier on in her career where she reflected on and began to doubt

that the practices she was engaged in were serving her students' needs. In doing so, she was

defining her students and defining frequent lecturing as an ineffective practice for this particular

population of students, because it was not taking into account their migrant status which meant that

they were in and out of classrooms. This is an example of Rosa focusing critical reflection on her

personal policy context and its relationship to the broader social experiences of her students. She

then discussed her response to this reflection:

And then I found out that WestEd does that exactly through literacy. We need literacy

everywhere. So, then they do metacognitive thinking maps, all kinds of metacognitive. So, I

essentially did a training that does that through literacy, and then I brought it into my

classroom...I like the metacognitive thinking processes and scaffolds and structuring

because it helps students process their learning and why they learned it that way. And that's

been a really powerful tool for newcomer students because it's not about language, it's

about them.

Here, Rosa clarified how she responded to her critical reflection on her personal layer of ELD

implementation by seeking out guidance for finding a different paradigm for instruction through

WestEd, a research and professional development organization in California. For this reason, I call

this kind of self-in-systems inquiry *productive* self-doubt, because it is not just educators expressing

confusion or frustration with their own practice, but also acting on those feelings.

In another example, Sofia, an elementary ELD coach considered her personal implementation of ELD policy as part of a team in the district. She reflected on a recent visit from the state to help her district evaluate their support of EL-classified students.

> I wasn't too involved in it. Although the meeting was held in my office. I did kind of hear some of the things and one of the things that one of the state people said was "you're meeting what we're asking for, like you're meeting this, you brought us this, you gave us this paper, but no one aims for the bottom. No one aims to barely meet. You should be aiming way above. And so even though, yeah, you're meeting check, check, check, check. You brought us all of this. Now you shouldn't be aiming for this." And that really, like made me think of how many of our things are we aiming just to meet? Where can we go above and beyond like we were not - I've never considered our district to be one that just barely meets. And so if that's not the case, if we're not that district, then what should we be doing? That that's just something that like a question that I've been thinking about.

This is an important example because while the state came into her district to critique the district overall, perhaps the institutional and program layers of their ELD implementation, Sofia also took this as a moment to identify with that program layer, rather than allowing herself to be free of culpability. She understood that her own actions and policy sensemaking as an individual played a role in perpetuating the use of the routines and tools that allowed her district to aim for "barely meeting". Given that she had shared this story in the context of her description of why and how she was working with colleagues to improve designated and integrated ELD, I considered this again an example of productive self-doubt.

This productive self-doubt is reminiscent of Gutiérrez's "mirror test", which she defines as "the ability to look oneself in the mirror everyday and say, 'I'm doing what I said I was going to do when I entered the profession of [teaching]'" (R. Gutiérrez, 2015, p. 681). Insofar as the mirror

test is a tool for holding oneself accountable, her theory is that this kind of self-evaluation is what gives teachers the courage to take risks in their pursuit of more equitable educational experiences for marginalized students. Reflection on one's own practice is useful for educators as it encourages them to be more aware of and intentional in decision making within the complex systems of education (Farrell, 2012; König et al., 2022; Munzer & Van Es, 2024; Sherin & van Es, 2009; Van Es & Sherin, 2021). For both Rosa and Sofia, this productive self-doubt acted as a catalyst for examining the systems that they were contributing to through their practice and considering how their practice could create different structures for their EL-classified students in and around designated ELD.

The second indication of educators' self-in-systems inquiry was their question posing and intentional framework building around their professional vision. This was an example of educators' critical reflection on their professional vision, the theories of action undergirding their practice, and similarly to productive self doubt, their consideration of the systems around their practice. Maddie, a fifth grade teacher, provided one example of this. In our interview, Maddie had expressed multiple times that the "system" of ELD was "unjust" and something that she felt she had to support her students in navigating. When I asked her to clarify what she meant when she referred to ELD as a system, she shared:

> I think I come back to this question of who is this for? And if the answer is for the adults, then that's part of the system. If the answer is for the kids, it's probably not part of the system. So right now, posting standards on the board, who is that for? That's for the adults. Or posting a rubric on a bulletin board? That's for the adults. Or making sure that kids are doing these worksheets and they're all done on the same page at the same time? That's for the adults, that's not for the kids. So that's probably a symptom of the bigger system because that's just for the adults. It's for compliance, it's for the principal, it's for the district

person who might do an impromptu visit so that they can check off boxes. But if the answer to those questions is "it's for the kid", then it's probably not part of the system. So why am I choosing this text? Oh, because my kids are super interested in basketball. Great. It's for the kids.

Maddie presented a heuristic framework for making decisions through this simple question that she asked herself: is this for the kids or the adults? By creating this framework for her practice, she had created a tool that helped her to hold herself accountable to her stances as she navigated the broader system in which she works. In asking whether her practice was for the adults or for the kids, she was foregrounding her own assumptions about what she should do in her classroom and considering whether and how she was perpetuating the unjust aspects of the system of ELD.

Other educators engaged in this critical reflection on their professional vision when they explicitly connected the theories or experiences that informed their professional vision. This was more than stating how their professional vision conflicted with the ideologies they noticed through their incorporation of ideological clarity into their policy sensemaking. In the following example, for instance, Damian discussed in detail the theories that informed his professional vision and the specific points of conflict with standardized language assessments:

...Celce-Murcia...was talking about linguistic competence. And she made it a construct with like, I don't know four domains, five domains...she made room for like social linguistic competence, like the pragmatics...Her 2007 one talked about unanalyzed chunks – so sometimes you can just learn: "I'm fine. Thanks for asking." And you don't need to know what all those things are, you just need to know when someone says this, this is what you say. So, there's unanalyzed chunks, and eventually, at a certain level of proficiency, if the student needs it, they might analyze it and be able to move that around and do interesting stuff with it. She talked about actionable competence, which she says is like some kind of

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like, rhetorical devices and writing, but it's for speech. So being able to make an apology, give thanks, ask for clarification, and all this kind of stuff. So can they initiate and can they understand and respond to all this kind of stuff. And she offered developmental sequences where possible and places to start and some strategies. So, she's - I totally buy into this is a great way to think about communicative competence. Because it has the social domain, it has, you know, sound domain, it has syntax domain, all these things kind of wrapped up and ways to approach it. And then with the [standardized assessments], I'm not the best at this, but you define a domain, set some criteria they either hit it, or they don't. And then if they're over a certain: proficient. And if they're under a certain cutoff: they need a little bit more development. And that's so different...And I think like, if you think about reading a graph that's tested on, well, then that's somebody who I think probably comes from an education background, who's thinking about figures and textbooks and all this kind of stuff. And to define that as something related to linguistic competence is totally different than how I think about it...And when I make a test and I'm helping people develop a meta language - so here's subject, it's also a noun. Here's the verb that's di-transitive. And they just need to start looking at these constituents in a sentence. So, I can use that language to teach them more complicated stuff later on. That reflects my idea that they need to have the meta-language and a little command of it before we can build that complex stuff later on. So even my assessment, I think the way that I go about assessment reflects my beliefs about how language works, too. Because I think it's development I'm sold - it's development. You can't get it perfect the first time.

Here, Damian articulated how his own theory of action for language assessment represents a fundamentally different understanding of what linguistic competence means. He was clear in attributing his perspective to a well-known applied linguist, Celce-Murcia, the need for students to

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develop "actionable competence", and how this differs from the perspectives in the broader field of education that think of linguistic competence primarily in terms of what students might encounter in a textbook. In doing so, he expressed frustration that this second perspective is what is primarily represented on high-stakes assessments, but also frames it as "different" rather than inherently incorrect. In this sense, he was able to recognize how he has developed his professional vision, and how his professional vision shapes his frustration with assessments as an ELD policy enactment. This also meant that he could be more intentional and strategic in developing a practice that attended to this dominant theory of proficiency while also incorporating activities that aligned with his own, thereby being intentional in preparing students themselves to navigate the system of ELD.

Being able to engage in reflexivity in this way represents a deeper awareness than simply being able to state the theories of one's professional vision, because they represent educators' ongoing curiosity about new situations that they encounter (Cramer et al., 2023; Feucht et al., 2017; K. D. Gutiérrez & Vossoughi, 2010). That is, it is evidence that educators considered their own knowledge to be unsettled such that they continuously tested and were open to revising or refining their theories as they encountered new policy discourses and enactments. In the context of EL-classified students' education where policies have been shown to perpetuate assimilationist, deficit, and raciolinguistic ideologies even when they appear on the surface to be drastically different than what came before (Citrin et al., 2017; Katznelson & Bernstein, 2017), this kind of openness to challenging oneself and one's understanding of policy across layers of implementation is important for educators' continued ability to engage in ideological clarity.

Finally, there were also moments where educators explicitly talked about the need to engage in this kind of reflexivity where they considered their role within the systems of ELD and their educational organizations more broadly. For example, Ana shared:

Yeah, so I feel like teachers, we always have to like, reflect upon our positionality because our positionality will always be changing. And so, I know that my experiences as a student here in this country, are worlds different from what my students are experiencing right now. Though I am Latina, and I have a similar cultural background as my students – it's still like, we're culturally similar in a sense of where our parents come from, but we're not culturally similar in the sense of how we experienced this country. And so, I have to reflect upon that, and really put myself in their shoes a lot, to try to understand how it would be like, to be a newcomer in this country and be learning a new language. I feel that if I were an English learner, if my experience included that, it would be a lot easier for me to be able to connect. But because I am not, I do have that responsibility to constantly reevaluate.

Similarly, Ariana shared this same kind of sentiment, saying that this critical reflection on one's own professional vision and how it influences interactions with community members and broader systems.

...we also need to recognize that – I guess deal with our own internal issues too. So, I talk a lot about, um, really doing the work in terms of who are you comfortable around or like, really having my pre-service teachers ask "who do you spend most of your time with? What neighborhood do you live in? What stores do you go to?" Like, "who are the people that you're most around?" Because brain science says that when a person is approaching you, who you look a lot alike, let's say, or your similar features, your body kind of stays in a more comfortable stamp and position, right? But if it's a person who looks maybe very different from you or you know, not from an experience that you've been normalized in or whatever, you know, your body tenses up, right? Well, that transfers into teachers into every human interaction, right? And so again, as teachers, we know, we're not exempt from that, right? And so again, it's like, okay, how can we check ourselves, so that we know like

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who we tighten up - just as general, like, not even if it's a personal thing, but just in general, who we tighten up against versus who we, we are relaxed among. So that when your students come in, they never feel like they're on guard or that they're being judged or they're being looked at. So that's kind of a stance like that I teach with, I guess. I teach the students through the modeling of my own interpersonal interactions with them.

Additionally, multiple educators expressed gratitude at the end of our interviews together for having the space to explicitly reflect and be questioned about their decisions. For example, Julieta shared:

I just wanted to say thank you. The reason why I did this was because I really did want to get challenged in that sense of thinking about my EL students because it's so easy to say, "oh yeah, I'll think about it." But then with all the amount of tasks that I have throughout the day, I just don't do it. And so, taking this time to reflect on it, it's kind of like teacher therapy. Yeah, it really is. It's teacher therapy, so I'm like, I get to reflect back on my EL practices. That's good. So, thank you for the time too.

In each of these three final examples, educators described this kind of reflection on their personal policy implementation and professional vision as an important part of their ability to balance dimensions of equity for their EL-classified students in ELD. Furthermore, in these statements educators talked about reflecting on their perceptions of students themselves, but also discussed the importance of reflecting on the systems around them and the contexts that shape their students' experiences and their own practice. This matters because reframing who EL-classified students are (discourse) without also considering how deficit ideologies are perpetuated through practice (enactment) limits the impact of critical reflection on students' systemic experiences.

Indeed, being able to see the systems around one's practice is about more than just recognizing outcomes or individual routines. Rather, it is about understanding the

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interconnectedness of routines, relationships and resources that produce the outcomes that are experienced and observed (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2015, 2018; Bryk et al., 2015). When these educators reflect on their professional vision and their personal policy implementation in such a way that connects these elements of their practice to the systems in which they live and work, they are also demonstrating some awareness of how their own sensemaking and ideological clarity construct a particular experience for themselves and their students. Thus, self-in-systems inquiry allowed educators to deepen their reflection on ELD policy, and respond in ways that were more aligned with notions of agency as imagination and judgement. This was important for how they engaged in the strategies for navigating ELD policy that I describe below.

Specifically, I found four overarching strategies that educators engaged in to navigate the demands and tensions of ELD. The first strategy is *building allies*. This strategy characterizes how educators worked to impact the policy discourses and enactments in the program layer of policy, by providing official and unofficial professional development, advocating to administrators and other school staff with organizational authority, and seeking mentorship from trusted colleagues. When they were engaged in building a community of allies, educators drew on juxtapositions to consider what else might be possible, and work toward creating different paradigms of ELD by influencing the community around them. The second strategy is *buffering*. I understood educators to be engaging in this strategy, when they described how they attempted to create safe and affirming spaces for students at their personal layer of policy that they framed as protecting students from harmful policy discourses and enactments at the program layer. Buffering seemed to be educators' response to feeling that they had no control over the broader layers of ELD policy and thus they could only attempt to soften the impact of the discourses and enactments of outer layers. For buffering, educators were often engaged in vertical juxtaposing of policy layers to consider the relationships of policy implementation across them. The third strategy also relied primarily on

educators' vertical juxtapositions: *building student and family agency* to create pathways within the system of ELD. The practices educators reported that I included in this category were examples of how they worked to empower students and their parents so that they could more effectively navigate the program and institutional layers of ELD. Finally, the fourth strategy is *reframing* elements of the ELD systems. This strategy is primarily aligned with the notion of imaginative agency, and is characterized by educators' attempts to reimagine what exists, sometimes communicating these other possible paradigms to others, but primarily using imagining to cope with their frustrations. For this strategy, educators were primarily responding to the institutional layer of ELD policy implementation and making contained juxtapositions. In what follows, I describe these strategies that educators reported engaging in to navigate ELD policy, drawing connections to self-in-systems inquiry and the horizontal, vertical, and contained juxtapositions of ideological clarity as policy sensemaking when useful.

Navigating Strategy 1: Building Allies

The first strategy that I will define here is building allies, where educators attempted to change the dominant discourses and enactments in the program layer of ELD policy. Educators who engaged in this strategy most often were also those with more organizational authority as ELD coaches and coordinators. That is, influencing practice in their school or district was part of the purpose of their position. Through this strategy, educators attempted to ensure that they would have allies with whom they could work toward shared goals in and around designated ELD, even if those allies were not in perfect philosophical alignment (Baker-Doyle, 2012; Hayes et al., 2023). In building an allied community, educators were bringing together imagination and judgement to remake dominant paradigms of ELD within their program context. This was facilitated by their horizontal juxtaposing in that they sought out examples of other possibilities, sometimes through mentorship, that could help them understand how they might move those possibilities into their schools and

districts. Other times, this was facilitated by their vertical juxtaposing which allowed them to identify discourses and enactments which might already feel more familiar to their colleagues, even if they were not dominant in the program layer.

One way that educators worked to influence their colleagues' ELD practice, was by making their own practices visible as a way to prove that something else could be possible and effective. While designated ELD teachers and other educators with specialized pedagogical language knowledge often engage in official and unofficial leadership activities within their schools (English, 2009; Hopkins et al., 2019; Hopkins & Schutz, 2019), it can be difficult for designated ELD teachers to make their practice visible because institutionalized structures often do not allow for it (Hopkins et al., 2022). To this end, it was particularly notable that engaging in this kind of peer-to-peer learning was something that educators engaged in ideological clarity as sensemaking chose to do.

One way that these educators facilitated peer-to-peer learning, particularly when they were in a role such as coach or coordinator, was to create professional connections among colleagues who had not necessarily engaged in collective sensemaking about ELD in the past. Adelio, a high school ELD teacher and coordinator shared their efforts to counter the pervasive deficit discourses that they had grown aware of in their program layer:

> ...addressing really gnarly biases from other teachers, which is – I just started a project last week where we sought out 10 teachers and now we have an EL cohort where we're going to, every month, like learn an engagement strategy that is framed as being for ELD students, but it's literally solid for any because that's what that is. And then learn that. Do a pre-observation together as a group, and then like every single period, go to a different class and see how they decide to implement that strategy. And then do a group post-observation and have like a teacher-to-teacher thing instead of like, district and like department chair

tells you what to do. The teachers can chit chat, reflect, reflect! So that's a new thing. We

just got the approval last week. And that's gonna start in February.

This effort was a response to Adelio's vertical juxtaposing, where they contrasted practices that are

dominant across mainstream and designated ELD classrooms at their high school with their own

enactments of ELD instruction. Furthermore, Adelio described this professional learning

community as a new kind of routine in their school. In sharing how they initiated this effort, Adelio

said:

...we also like, made like, "who, what when, where" like a little information thing with like

our observation cycle dates. Because at our school, hooh-wee, they just be asking people to

do stuff willy nilly with no information! Or like, they'll just approach you in the middle of

class and be like, "Hey, do you want to be the ELD department chair?" And I'll be like,

"Can I think about it on a day?" and they're like, "Well, you have until tomorrow. And

there's no one else that wants to do it." So, it's kind of like that usually. So, we were like,

let's give them what they want. Let's give teachers the information they deserve. And we also

approached them in person. So, I think that really like influenced the tone of the mission.

It's really like, "Hey, how are you? And we were hoping to invite you to this cohort. This is

what we're going to be doing. Do you have any questions? Or do you have any, like, hang

ups or things you would want to change? And also, you'd get paid for it." So that's how we

approached it. Trying to not add more stress to the teachers and be like, as supportive as

possible and caring so that they could see that they can trust us and they could see that it's

not just like, some district appointed thing, and that it was truly a teacher effort.

In changing the institutionalized routines of professional learning in their school, Adelio and a

trusted colleague endeavored to build an allied community by intentionally changing those

dynamics in the program context. They did so in an effort to gain buy in around this focus of weeding out the "gnarly biases" pervasive in the program layer of ELD at their school.

In the following excerpt, Kiera, a second and fifth grade designated ELD teacher for newcomer students shared about how she responded when she felt that the ELD curriculum she was given was insufficiently challenging for her students:

I was stepping into a program that my partner and another partner teacher essentially built from scratch. And so, they've pieced it together, and they've worked really hard on it. And I was someone new. And so, I came in, and they had all these wonderful things. But there was also some components that I disagreed with. And so, for example, a lot of the curriculum at the beginning of the year was primarily focused on the foundations on like, colors, and shapes, and numbers and all these things. And there was a long time spent on colors and a long time spent on shapes. And I had many conversations with my partner teacher about: "I don't think there needs to be this long of time. I feel like they're ready for more. I feel like the writing needs to be pushed a little bit more." So, it almost felt, in my perception, it felt like they had lower expectations for the ELs. And I was like, "I hear you and I understand why they need this, and they're gonna get some of it. But also, I want to push them a little bit more. They're going to be writing and it's going to be messy, and it's not going to be perfect. And they're gonna struggle, and we're gonna struggle. But I know that they can do it." Like I've had newcomers in my first grade class who, by January, they're able to write to the best of their ability. And so, I feel like kind of that pushback about pacing and expectations.

Kiera demonstrated vertical juxtaposing in this excerpt when she compared the content and structure of the curriculum at the program layer with her expectations about the kind of language instruction structure that EL-classified *could* engage in. She described the curriculum as "focused

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on foundations", which she contrasted with her belief that students also need "to be pushed a little bit more" to produce longer and more complex writing. In this excerpt, she described gently trying to influence the practice of her partner with at least two moves. First, she made her discourse and her practice visible by sharing an example of her experience as data at the end of this excerpt where she says "I've had newcomers in my first grade class who, by January, they're able to write to the best of their ability." In doing so, she added some authority to her perspective by positioning it as something that she herself has already begun to put to the test. She also affirmed the value of what her colleague had produced in the curriculum thus far, stating "I hear you and I understand why they need this..." In doing so, she positioned her feedback on the curriculum as constructive, acting as an ally rather than critic herself by building on what she framed as a valuable effort that her colleagues created.

The way that Kiera affirmed her colleagues' work as she also tried to influence her thinking and practice of designated ELD is characteristic of the caution that educators described leaning into when they were engaged in the strategy of building an allied community. This caution builds on findings in prior literature that educators, especially when they are new or otherwise in positions that lack more organizational authority, are putting themselves at risk when they speak up against the norms of their program environment (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2006; Acosta et al., 2018; R. Gutiérrez, 2015). Indeed, some spaces may be safer to speak up in than others, such as with a colleague as Kiera described, while it can be more difficult to go against individuals in more authoritative roles in the program context, in part because those individuals are also under pressure from their own supervisors (Heineke, 2015).

Multiple educators in this study described prior experiences where they or their colleagues had ended up with a target on their back after speaking up to advocate for students. For example, when I asked Damian about how he had responded when a new literacy coach set goals for

designated ELD that he felt were not aligned with his students' needs, he shared that because he was new at his school site, "it's not something that I would challenge directly right now, because I don't know who this person is. And if she's receptive to that kind of pushback yet." When I asked him to expand on this thinking, he shared the experience of colleagues in his prior school who had spoken out against a policy changed and experienced "intimidation" by their administrators. The way that Damian describes this cautious approach also suggests that self-in-systems inquiry can play a role in educators' work toward building an allied community. That is, Damian was careful to not make assumptions about the beliefs and dispositions of this literacy coach, which represents a kind of questioning of his professional vision and understanding the policy space around him.

In Damian's case, he described not yet engaging in building an allied community because he felt that, as a new teacher in the community, he did not yet know enough to be able to do this cautiously. In this sense, many of these educators highlighted how a deep knowledge of their community was important to their ability to incorporate caution into their ally building strategy. Furthermore, they often described these cautious strategies as something that they had to learn on the job, and were not prepared for through their teacher credentialling. For example, Isabel, a high school ELD coordinator described often advocating for students to the counselors at her school:

> So, like I always end up with a couple of "project kids" that I support. Their senior year, I make sure I'm their advocate. I make sure they have all the classes they need for graduation, and I make sure they check in with their counselors...So, they get overlooked a lot. They're not the priority. They're not the football team players. They're not, you know, they're only important when [Federal Program Monitoring] is out doing their walkthroughs or whatever. If [the accreditation organization] is out, all of a sudden English learners are a hot topic. But, unless there's somebody there watching them, they're not a priority. But I am the one who is constantly questioning things and I know I am...challenging some

people's behaviors...So, it's a fine dance that I'm learning. Because I don't want to step on

people's toes, but I do want to support my students. So, there's some counselors that I can

definitely work with, and they know that I'm not questioning their job. I'm just there to

support the kids.

In this example, Isabel engaged in some horizontal juxtaposition across time, contrasting the effort

put into the experience of EL-classified students in moments when their school is being observed

versus when it is not. As she said, "unless there's somebody there watching them, [EL's] are not a

priority." In her efforts to change how counselors interacted with EL-classified students, making

sure that they are on track for graduation (which, when students are in designated ELD often takes

some navigating to make sure they meet their a-g credits), Isabel described engaging in a "fine

dance". When I asked her to elaborate more on this "fine dance", what she thinks it means and

how she learned it, Isabel said:

I've learned that if I have conversations with people and I make them feel like it is their

idea to support English learners, then they're going to do it because it makes them look

good. If I call it my own and say "This is what I want." Then there's a lot of pushback. So

I'm learning to navigate that. And I'm learning that, through [a statewide EL advocacy

community] as well, that we need to take baby steps. We can't go in and threaten people

with: "I'm gonna contact [so and so] because you're doing this and they're entitled to this."

They know that already. So, it's a fine line and I need to make my focus the students.

This additional insight is useful because it illustrates that Isabel engaged in self-in-systems inquiry to

understand how to tread lightly and that a community outside of her immediate program context

helped her learned how to do this. This is an example of self-in-systems inquiry because she

described how navigating this fine line required that she take care in considering when, how, and

with whom she should attempt to engage in ally building. She understood that she did not need

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policy discourse and enactment in the program layer to be molded in the perfect image of her personal layer for her efforts to be successful. Her last line also highlighted how she might pick her battles, always ensuring that her efforts worked to benefit students, similarly to Maddie's self-in-system guiding question: who is this for, the kids or the adults?

This sense of caution, particularly as Isabel described it, is perhaps a response to the role that school and district leadership play in authorizing or restricting policy discourses and enactments (Coburn, 2005; Mavrogordato & White, 2020). For example, when I asked Ms. M, a kindergarten teacher, about what she had done to act on her frustration with language policy at the program layer in her school, she said, "I'm just a teacher. It needs to come from the administration...We ask. That's all we can do." Her experience is a reminder that classroom teachers can face greater barriers to engaging in this strategy of building allies than coaches and coordinators because their organizational role does not grant them authority over the program layer.

Even for educators with more organizational authority like Isabel, engagement in self-in-systems inquiry helped them consider how they might be strategic in the work of building an allied community. Indeed, educators who engaged in self-in-systems inquiry *and* building allies were also more likely to share that their outspokenness about EL-classified students in their program layer led to their being placed in positions of greater organizational authority. While educators noted that they had to be careful with their advocacy to ensure that they would not become an enemy to their school and district leadership, when they were cautious in examining and responding to their program layer through self-in-systems inquiry, their advocacy could become something that was valued by leadership. Isabel, for example, described how she had become the ELD coordinator in her school:

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I'm part of the ELD world because I came from the EL Department and I'm an EL

student and I advocate for them. And I want to make sure that their experience in high

school is better. The title was given to me because I was supporting. But I didn't - It's not

something that I applied for. It's something that was indirectly given to me...

This kind of recruitment to the ELD leadership position based on one's advocacy was also

expressed by Beatriz, a middle and high school ELD coach who shared:

...and then this opportunity to be an ELD coach came up and I definitely didn't feel, I

didn't feel like I would have ever applied for it, but it was sort of brought on a platter to

me...I think my colleagues thought..."we do value you as an ELD teacher, even if you don't

think you're that great..." And so I took it. Because I thought, okay, well I'll try my best...

Beatriz also demonstrated self-in-systems inquiry here through her productive self-doubt of feeling

that her colleagues saw more promise in her practice than she saw herself, and committed to try

her best to live up to their expectations. This experience was also shared by Maddie, a fifth grade

teacher, who discussed becoming the ELD coordinator at her school:

Um, and then in terms of coordinating, it...fell into my lap mid-year because our Title I

coordinator moved to a different school in December and we needed to have an ELPAC

coordinator in order to be in compliance, in order to have our students able to take the

assessment and all of these things. And I was chosen to do that because I have been

outspoken about ELD and supporting our students on my staff. And so, they reached out

to me to do it.

The experiences of these educators, and others who told similar stories, highlights that while the

visibility of engaging in building an allied community as a strategy for navigating ELD brings risks, it

can also lead to opportunities for having greater authorized input in the program layer of ELD,

particularly when educators exercise caution in doing so. I provided an example of how Isabel

engaged in self-in-systems inquiry in order to exercise caution in her advocacy, and that Beatriz's productive self-doubt meant that she did not take this elevated position for granted. Furthermore, when I asked Maddie to expand on how she was outspoken in her school community, she shared:

> I have never really been fought back against [by colleagues] cause I feel like I won't speak up unless I think like it's a more popularized idea, if that makes sense. At least not in a big meeting. I will go to my principal on a one-to-one basis and have that conversation. I feel much more comfortable doing that. But if I am going to speak up in a staff meeting, I'm only gonna do so with what I feel are like safer kind of pushbacks or safer topics.

Similar to Isabel, Maddie demonstrated that she has a sort of framework for determining when, how, and with whom she should share her professional vision through ally building. This carefulness through critical reflection on one's professional vision and personal layer of ELD policy was valuable for her ability to protect herself from the risks of making herself visible as she worked to influence the program discourses and enactments of ELD.

Building allies is a strategy for educators to try to bring the program layer of ELD into greater alignment with the personal layer. This strategy is characterized by educators' efforts to influence their colleagues and administrators such that they have an impact on the ELD policy discourses and enactments of the program layer. They do this by making their practice visible, speaking up for EL-classified students and ELD practice in various social settings, and bringing together colleagues who may not have collaborated previously.

The examples that I have shared to illustrate this strategy show how educators engage in vertical juxtaposing which allows them to identify elements that are not aligned across these layers, and horizontal juxtaposing as a way to prove to themselves and their colleagues that other discourses and enactments of ELD are possible. The tensions that educators described vertically across layers of ELD policy have been documented elsewhere in prior research (see for example

Flores & Schissel, 2014; Hernandez, 2017; Leo, 2023) and it seems that educators' engagement in ideological clarity as policy sensemaking allowed them to be quite specific in why these tensions were arising. For example, when Kiera expressed frustration with the curriculum that she had been given for designated ELD, she was able to identify portions that she could build on, and what elements might still be missing. Furthermore, their self-in-systems inquiry allowed educators pull their perspective back from discrete elements of the broader ELD system, to consider how elements were interconnected across policy layers, and where they might have more control to make changes in their program context. Additionally, their contained juxtaposing allowed educators to be careful to understand their colleagues as they tried to build allied relationships with them. For example, when Maddie described how she chose to speak up for EL-classified students, she demonstrated that she considered the social dynamics of various spaces and the allies that she needed to build for specific ends. This highlights how a deep understanding of organizational context and one's place within that context could be an essential tool for engaging in risky policy navigation strategies.

However, the strategy of building allies was something that educators recognized as difficult and an effort that would not solve the ideological harms of the institutional and program layers of ELD overnight. Furthermore, the educators who engaged in the strategy of building allies most often were those with more organizational authority as ELD coaches and coordinators. Educators who only taught ELD, either as their sole instructional task, in addition to other subjects, or in an elementary classroom, were more likely to find less visible avenues for their policy navigation. Thus, educators also engaged in subversive policy navigating strategies that they believed could create more equitable ELD experiences for their EL-classified students, even without the buy in of the broader community. These subversive strategies are navigating strategies two: buffering, and three: building student and family agency.

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Navigating Strategy 2: Buffering

Buffering as a navigating strategy captures educators' reported practices of trying to ensure that their students would have access to protected spaces where they could thrive within broader program contexts that they believed perpetuate harmful policy discourses and enactments. In this strategy, educators were working to understand their program and institutional layers of ELD policy. Instead of trying to change those contexts, educators were finding ways to soften the impact of those layers of ELD within their classroom or other spaces of practice. In this way, they were working to validate their EL-classified students' assets in their personal ELD policy enactments, while also trying to ensure that students would be able to "survive", in the words of multiple participants, in their broader program layer. It could be said that here, they were working along the identity, access, and achievement dimensions of equity, though doing little to attend to power (see R. Gutiérrez, 2012).

What I call buffering is reflective of strategies that have been described in prior literature focused on activist practice in the context of institutions. For example, in his study of K-16 educators who identified themselves as Chicanx/a/o activisits, Urrieta's (2010) participants described their buffering efforts as "playing the game without selling out" (p. 121). Urrieta emphasized that it is important to be able to recognize this kind of strategy along a spectrum – rather than dichotomy – of resistance and reproduction. That is, he argued that being unable to engage in action that is clearly transformative does not mean that one's practices are only reproducing dominant norms, and that these small acts of resistance are also important for adding up to broader change (see also Bridwell-Mitchell, 2018). This is in line with many language policy and planning (LPP) scholars who describe individual teachers' agency in terms of their ability to "pry open" space within top down policy (Hornberger, 2005, p. 606).

One way that educators engaged in buffering, was by concealing their personal ELD implementation from enforcement mechanisms at the program and institutional layers. When I asked Antonio, a Kindergarten and first grade teacher, to clarify his response on his screener survey that he compares his current students' experiences to his own K-12 experiences, he offered this perspective on what buffering can mean:

> Well, I was an EL student. And I kinda feel things were better when I was a student in terms of, I'm looking back and being in this position, I don't feel like my teachers in Elementary were as restricted as we are in terms of like, "you have to teach this." I feel like they had a better ability of making a more rich experience for us. And this is usually in elementary but not just in elementary. But I feel like we have to be sneaky about it. Go around. I don't feel like they did. I felt like our teachers had more freedom.

Multiple educators described some version of feeling that they had to "be sneaky" in order to engage in practices that were aligned with their professional vision. In this excerpt, Antonio demonstrates a horizontal juxtaposition of the institutional layer of ELD (or its equivalent) that existed when he was a student, and the institutional layer in which he works currently. In doing so, he suggested that there are more intense mechanisms for control of teachers' practice currently than there had been in the past. Rather than using this juxtaposing to engage in imaginative agency, however, Antonio suggests that he has little agency and thus perpetuates (habit) while also trying to supplement (judgment) what already exists.

In some cases, educators engaged in the sneaky strategy of buffering by balancing competing goals between layers of ELD policy implementation. In the prior section, I shared Damian's trepidation to go against a new literacy coach in his school before he understood better how she might respond to attempts to engage in ally building. Because he felt that he could not yet push back on the instructional goal that this coach had set for his designated ELD practice,

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Damian found a way to meet that goal, while also working towards others that he saw as more rigorous:

> And my partner – my department chair – seems to say, "let's just go with it, and watch, because we can hit that goal and still do what we know is best for the kids anyway." So, we're done with the goal. We've probably already knocked the goal out of the park. And in the meantime, we're developing some syntax by pushing production. So, you know, they can do basic sentences. Some of the ones who are really taking off can do complex sentences with "and" already. They don't know they're doing it, but they can do it. They can sound out words. Sometimes they don't do it, you know, correctly with the spelling, but it's an attempt, which means the sounds are mapping onto the letters just fine...So I'm seeing all this development happening anyway. And so basically, that [goal] was not a threat to the work we had to do in the classroom. So, we're gonna let it go.

This thinking built on Damian's vertical juxtaposition in the earlier excerpt, where he was identifying discrepancies in how he thought of language development and the discourses and enactments of language development at the program and institutional layers. Furthermore, this demonstrates how, in his reluctance to engage in the strategy of building allies until he better understood his program context through contained juxtaposing, he turned instead to buffering, where he found ways to make sure his students could meet the program layer goal *and* his more "complex" language goals for his classroom.

These are examples of educators responding to curriculum and goals that surround their personal layer. Buffering was also a strategy that educators drew on to respond to the standardized assessments that have an ever-present impact on EL-classified students' experiences and the work of designated ELD (Estrada & Wang, 2018; Hernandez, 2017). In this sense, buffering is a strategy that allowed educators to work across multiple dimensions of equity, finding ways to meet access

and achievement goals while also incorporating identity and power. Indeed, though the routines and content of standardized assessments are something that most of these educators wished could change in order to allow them to engage in more meaningful designated ELD enactments, they could not halt the use of these assessments, and turned instead to buffering to respond. Christina, a middle school ELD teacher and coordinator, explained how she had come to learn about the ELPAC well enough that she felt she could navigate it in her practice:

> Because there were so many kids that I couldn't understand why they weren't reclassified yet. And then I saw the test and I'm like, well that's why. The test is horrible. And my fully English speakers [wouldn't be able to] pass this listening section. So, I just realized that we have to do something different about it. We're gonna have to switch the way that we're preparing them because just them knowing English isn't cutting it. And so, I just created the packet, found a bunch of resources and, and compiled them. And then I just share that with the other teachers and yeah, no, it's worked. It worked, it worked really, really well...So all of our English department are also having the kids do that. And so they're getting that practice across, you know, in multiple classes and that's helped a lot.

In this excerpt, Christina demonstrated the vertical juxtaposition of considering her instruction in contrast to the language that students are expected to perform on the ELPAC. Because of her position as ELD coordinator, Christina was also able to spread this buffering across her program context – part of the strategy of ally building – so that students in other designated ELD classrooms would also be prepared to pass this assessment that was impacting their access to other courses.

Buffering was characteristic of what Maddie, a fifth grade teacher, called a "yes, and" approach to ELD. Important to Maddie's ability to find balance in this "yes, and" approach was learning more about the program and institutional layers of ELD policy. She told a story about one student in her first year as a teacher who she realized did not speak any language other than

English, yet was EL-classified because his parents primarily spoke Spanish. In response, she said that she:

> ...went right to my EL coordinator about that. We had a Title I EL coordinator and I went to him and was like," what are our options? Because this is clearly like not serving the student. What can we do here? Cause this is not working." And that was what made me end up doing my master's inquiry on this topic, was this student in particular where I was just like, "what is happening here?" That we have students just kind of like sectioned into these different categories with very little or with a lot of barriers in the way for them to get out of them or to prove themselves otherwise.

The thinking that Maddie described here is characteristic of vertical juxtapositions, where she contrasted program enactments of ELD with the experience of a specific student in her classroom. This pattern of ideological clarity as policy sensemaking was coupled with self-in-systems inquiry, where Maddie came to question her agency within ELD and if this students' experience was a mistake or a feature of ELD, which encouraged her to pursue a deeper understanding of what did and did not seem possible at the program layer.

In engaging in these buffering strategies, educators described finding ways to construct a personal layer of policy enactment that would allow them to respond, or in some cases pretend that they were responding, to demands of the program and institutional layers (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2015; Gitlin & Margonis, 1995; Mavrogordato & White, 2020), reflective of agency as habit and judgement (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). While this strategy did not directly change the ELD system in which they work, it does highlight that educators are able to offer something to their students other than what is dominant, even when they are not able to make more fundamental change in the program and institutional layers.

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Another way that educators worked to counteract what they saw as harmful practices in their school communities was by emphasizing love, care, and empathy in their instruction. This practice was reflective of what others have called humanizing pedagogies, where educators focus first and foremost on validating their students as uniquely knowledgeable and always valuable beyond their student identities (Bartolomé, 1994, 2008a). Humanizing approaches are important for marginalized students in particular because they work to counter the deficit messages that these students may be receiving from their broader social and educational contexts (Abril-Gonzalez & Shannon, 2021; Cabral, 2022).

Kenneth, a high school ELD teacher, coach, and coordinator described how humanizing students in this way could be thought of as an explicit response to the dominance of standardized assessment scores in the program and institutional layers of ELD policy.

> ...we rely so heavily on the - at least our district, and I'm sure plenty do - the quantitative data. Like what does this mean? It's like, okay, we're looking at the data, but we don't know what it's telling us. So, I'm flipping inwards. Okay, let's see what our students themselves are telling us. And I didn't tell them, write your deepest, darkest sorrows. Just write about something that's important to you right now about who you are. And a lot of them chose to like put it out there. So, it's like this is right under the surface. And it's one of those things that looking at the student, okay, if we're going to look at data, and going to spend 1000s of dollars on data systems - which are useful in many points - So we can't only rely on that...But not using the data exclusively from evaluation, or from our ELPAC, or [reading inventory], or Lexile scores, but what is the data that our students are giving us? What is that telling us as well? And I think that, you know, we need to be open to all forms of information, including what the students themselves are telling us.

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In this example, Kenneth demonstrated vertical juxtaposing across institutional and personal policy layers, highlighting how what his students shared with him in his personal enactment of ELD helped him to augment what he could learn from the data use norms at the institutional layer. That is, he added to the "evaluation" data, with information that he gathered by asking students to show him "who you are" within his classroom. Furthermore, what he described as "flipping inwards" is an indication that he was engaged in self-in-systems inquiry, suggesting that it is in questioning his own perception of the evaluation data that encouraged him to look for other "data" sources for understanding his students.

Kenneth ultimately also shared that he took this buffering practice to his colleagues in a professional development that he was tasked with offering given his positions as ELD coach and coordinator in addition to teacher. This is similar to what Christina shared above about sharing the materials she had made to support her students in passing the ELPAC with the rest of her school community. I consider this to be an example of how educators engage in multiple policy navigation strategies at once: because Christina and Kenneth are both also engaged in the work of building a community of allies, they have gained trust from (at least some of) their colleagues and are thus able to extend their buffering beyond their personal practice into the program layer of ELD as well. Notably, it was these educators with greater organizational authority given their role as coaches and coordinators that were engaged in *extending* the buffering strategy.

Still, all educators considered their colleagues' beliefs and practices in the program context, even if they did not believe that they would be able to change them. Expertise and beliefs are important factors in who educators choose to interact with around questions of instruction and policy sensemaking in their schools and districts (Baker-Doyle, 2012; Hopkins et al., 2019). While the careful selecting of professional connections given these characteristics is often framed as a way

that educators learn about policy and practice (Moolenaar, 2012), I also saw that this knowledge allowed educators to also protect and conceal their buffering strategies.

For example, even though Christina felt that she was able to spread some of her buffering strategies to her colleagues, she also continued to encounter resistance from some. When I asked her how she thought about responding to this resistance, she responded:

> I know this sounds horrible, but I do try to not have my students in their classes. I try to just avoid them because either that or else - like one particular that drove me insane. She was very supportive of me doing what I wanted to do. She wasn't gonna necessarily change anything in her classroom, but I did say to her, "okay, they're gonna take all their tests with me because they can't read, so I need to be able to read the test out loud to them...and she was totally supportive of that. So also finding what that teacher will be supportive of...

In response to her understanding that not all of her colleagues in the program context would be willing to shift their ELD practices, Christina identified two ways that understanding them was useful to her buffering. First, it allowed her to think about how to assign students to courses such that they could "avoid" those teachers. Given her role as coordinator, this was something that Christina had some control over. It also meant that she was able to find specific adjustments that "the teacher will be supportive of," meaning that she might have been able be able to spread some of her buffering strategies even if she was not able to fully bring colleagues into her ideal allied community.

Rosa, a high school ELD teacher, described how distancing herself from colleagues in her program context with harmful views was also a way that she protected her students. As a new ELD teacher, she expressed frustration that she had yet to find a community with whom she could make sense of ELD policy. In recounting her experience at a district professional learning community for ELD teachers, she shared:

Well, there was a few teachers that said stuff like, "well, I have four different languages, so we're all going to use English all the time no matter what". And I immediately was like, "well, that's not fair". But just didn't think it would be fair for [students] to try to make sense of what they're doing if they couldn't even discuss it. But in that person's mind, they felt that because they had four different languages that they couldn't communicate with each other, which in my classroom is that if you provided the opportunity, they would use it...At this point, my Turkish students are also learning Spanish. They'll turn to another kid and they'll say, "me puedes ayudar?" which means "can you help me?"...So, I just didn't like that her class was ran like that, so I didn't feel that whatever she was going to share is equitable to reach out to her. And then other teachers who have said things like, "that's too hard for them. You can't give them work like that". I just didn't think it was fair. Actually, I've had a conversation about this topic with other people recently, I felt like they didn't believe in their students. And so, I don't like having to work with a person who doesn't believe in their students because then I have to not only work through my processing and learning, but then I also have to counter their constant negativity. And I just didn't think that was something that I needed to do as well. I'm not there to change their mindset. I'm there to learn. And once I feel more comfortable in this position and I have a better understanding what it looks like and what doing and what we should be doing, then I'll be happy to do that. But right now, I'm not in a place where I can.

In this excerpt, Rosa framed choosing *not* to engage in building allies as a decision that buffered for her students by protecting herself from distractions. Rosa described trying to "change their mindset" as something that would distract from her own "processing and learning" to be a strong ELD teacher. Identifying non-allies is thus protective not just for buffering students from the

program and institutional layers of ELD implementation, but also for educators to protect their own energy so that they can direct it toward their personal practice.

In summary, buffering was a policy navigating strategy that educators engaged in when they felt that they did not have agency to change elements of the program or institutional layers of ELD. Buffering included finding the "yes, and", incorporating love and empathy into personal practice, and identifying non-allies to protect safe spaces. Though not transformative in isolation, these small (and larger) acts *were* resistance and not solely reproduction (Urrieta, 2010), were meaningful to educators, and were meaningful to the experiences of their students too.

The examples here have shown that engaging in vertical and contained juxtaposing allowed educators to recognize elements of those outer layers that they did not want students to encounter. In understanding these outer layers, educators were also able to be tactful, or "sneaky", in their buffering practices, to protect themselves and persist. Though some educators were able to also spread their buffering strategies into the program layer of ELD at their schools or in their districts, others simply found this to be a more satisfying response to elements of ELD that they felt they had no control over – such as routines of standardized assessments – than simply acquiescing to those elements. Furthermore, engaging in buffering was seen as an opportunity to navigate what educators saw as less meaningful requirements of ELD, by refocusing their attention on empathetic and humanizing pedagogies. In this way, buffering was a way to sustain hope, particularly in moments when educators felt that they lacked power.

In the following section, I describe another strategy – building student and family agency – which I see as another version of buffering. However, where buffering largely did not address broader issues of power in ELD systems, building student and family agency was seen as a way to expand one's influence by empowering other participants in the educational organization who, like teachers, often lack broad authority.

Navigating Strategy 3: Building Student and Family Agency

Another strategy that educators engaged in to find agency in their response to the program layer of ELD was building student and family agency. This refers to educators' efforts to provide students and their families with knowledge about the system of ELD to encourage them to take up advocacy for themselves. This strategy was similar to buffering, in that it was informed by educators' vertical juxtapositions – considering contrasting elements in their personal discourses and enactments of ELD policy and those that they identified at the program and institutional layers. It was also similar to buffering in that educators felt it was a strategy that they could pursue when they felt that their attempts at ally building went unheard. However, building student and parent agency was different from buffering, in that while buffering was protective, helping students survive within the system of ELD, building agency was about trying to impact discourse and enactment through student and parent advocacy. By engaging in this strategy, educators were attempting to tap into the power dimension of equity, redistributing expertise in the context of ELD, so that students' and their parents', families' and caregivers' may be given more privilege in sensemaking of ELD policy.

Distributing expertise and being exposed to new ideas in heterogeneous communities is important for meaningful organizational change, though it can also be difficult to bring together and act on knowledge that comes from dispersed communities of practice (Baker-Doyle, 2012; Spillane, Shirrell, et al., 2018; Zeichner et al., 2016). However, outside of program and institutional layer change, empowering students and their families to advocate for themselves can be valuable for their well-being and sense of belonging in itself (Cioè-Peña, 2021; M. Wang et al., 2004). Indeed, institutional persistence occurs when new ideas are unable to surface or are interpreted through dominant frameworks (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2015; H. C. Hill, 2001). For this reason, educators' careful integration of student and family voice into their personal layer of ELD policy,

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and as a tool for navigating the program and institutional layers is a valuable strategy for navigating ideological tensions of ELD policy.

One way that educators engaged in this strategy was by drawing on their knowledge of resource structures in and around schools to encourage students and their families to take advantage of those resources. For example, Ariana, a high school ELD teacher discussed how she had pivoted when she has felt that administrators were unresponsive to her advocacy:

Well, it's equipping myself and the student of all of his or her options. So essentially saying, okay, like the district isn't willing to help you, or willing to move, or willing to see beyond blah, blah, blah. But here are your rights. Here is what is possible. So, you can ask for this or you can, you know. Or again, it is talking to families. In the past we had, kind of like a more of a direct line to like the local imam of the mosque here. And like different ways of like, okay, this is how we're seeing this population get kind of like undermined, can you let the families know that when doing X to say "this" or to, you know, assert "this" or whatever? So it's like kind of, again, educating our families on ways that they can best advocate on their own...

In this instance, Ariana was describing this strategy as a response to her contained juxtaposing, recognizing that her district's espoused commitment to anti-racism did not bear out in their actions. She then drew on vertical juxtaposing, considering how her personal practice might counteract enactments at the institutional layer. As she considered how she could equip herself and her students with more options, she worked to extend her personal discourses and enactments into the program layer *through* the knowledge that she was working to build in families.

In Ariana's case, connecting with these students who spoke languages other than English or Spanish – the languages that Ariana spoke – required drawing on resources in the broader community to support her personal implementation of ELD. Others found that their existing

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linguistic and cultural resources were sufficient for connecting with many of their students' families as well. For example, Isabel, a high school ELD coordinator discussed how she used an existing institutional routine – the English learner advisory committee (ELAC) – as a space for building families' systemic knowledge:

> If I make my focus the students, and through ELAC if I tell parents "Hey, what you guys don't realize is that the district works for you. The principals work for you. The teachers work for your kids. We have a job because we need students. We need the students so that we can get paid. We don't have the students, we don't get paid, so just remember that. Don't let people scare you away from the district, from the school just because they tell you to come back later because they don't speak your language. They can't do that. They need to call the language line. They need to find an interpreter for you. You have the right to receive those services." But I have to say that in such a way that that I'm giving them information. But it's not coming out, as "Miss Isabel" told me that I can do this and I'm entitled to this because the minute they throw my name out there, ohh. I've already been told "you're kind of feisty." I'm like, "yeah, little bit." <chuckles>

Here, Isabel described working to make the vertical structure of families' experiences clear to them, attempting to make explicit their power in the broader institutional context of the school. She used this vertical juxtaposition where the discourse of the institutional context – schools serve families – contrasts with the enactments in the program contexts – families get turned away due to language – as a strategy for empowering families to push the program layer of ELD into alignment with their own needs. While families might go to the school for a variety of reasons, this is related to the implementation of ELD because Isabel was specifically speaking to the families of EL-classified students through ELAC who often are less aware of or feel less empowered to speak up about their needs (Ishimaru & Takahashi, 2017).

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Another way that educators built up families' expertise was through conversations about the purpose of language instruction in the classroom including and around designated ELD. Lilia, a fourth grade dual language teacher described how her own experience as a parent of an EL-classified student served as a tool for communicating with the families of students in her class:

...I looked at it from a different lens because it was a bit confusing information [about being EL-classified] that was sent to me. And as a parent, I thought, how are the parents in our district interpreting the information that's sent through them in the mail or conferences or whatever forms they're given? And I think specifically for [dual language immersion], it's confusing because then students, parents, this is what they always say at conferences when they meet with me: "Oh, so they're English language learners so then they shouldn't be in [dual language immersion] because they need to practice their English so that they can pass this test." And so then it just creates this whole conversation and the parents are like, "no, I don't want them in the program anymore..." And so I them of the goals of the program, which is for them to be biliterate and to obtain their seal of biliteracy and that this is something that's going to help them in the long run their careers college. And then I talk about how I always tell them, as long as we work on their Spanish and we make sure that they're reading at grade level, then that's going to transfer. And I show them examples...we look at graphs. I always show them graphs and visuals, and I just remind them of the end goal and that them being in this program is the best thing that they can do for their child, but it always happens each year.

Lilia demonstrated a vertical juxtaposition here that allowed her to identify how the institutional layer of ELD policy, which sorts students into the EL classification, also conflicted with the program and personal layer of dual language instruction, where ELD is supposed to serve the broader goal of students' development of biliteracy. By informing families of the motivations for a

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dual language program, Lilia empowered them to remain in a program that affirmed and sustained their students' existing linguistic resources. In other words, she helped families reconcile the contradictory messages that they were hearing from the institutional and program layers policy.

Building on and creating pathways for families to exercise their aspirations for their students is particularly important for families who are part of marginalized communities and may be less familiar or feel less welcomed into traditional structures of schooling (Ishimaru & Takahashi, 2017; Zeichner et al., 2016). These families are often left out of educational decision-making. However, when these educators found themselves frustrated with ELD policy implementation, this strategy of building families' agency allowed them to navigate around their feelings that they may not have the agency to make the changes that they would hope for. In doing so, they were attempting to share their professional vision, but also were doing so in a way that would allow families themselves to adapt, rather than only imposing their perspective and thus disrupting some of the traditional hierarchies of power in schools as institutions (Peña, 1998; M. Wang et al., 2004).

This notion that educators were not only trying to impose their professional vision as the correct way to pursue equity in ELD was explicitly stated by a few educators, who expressed a desire to let students and families lead. Maddie, a fifth grade teacher, emphasized that while she did attempt to navigate her frustrations with ELD through ally building, she also felt that her "role is in my classroom, my role is my students." However, she also thought of building students' agency to navigate the ELD system as one way that she could fulfill this role:

I think there's a lot of power in informing my 10- and 11-year-olds of what's happening and what's going on and why this is happening. And I also think helping them to navigate these systems as well – that's something that I always talk about with my students during ELD time. We do like advocacy projects every year during ELD time because they need to

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know their voices matter because this system doesn't necessarily validate that to them. So what I can do in my role in dismantling these systems is through what I can do from my group of kids in my classroom. I of course do speak up at staff meetings and I do all of these things. But, being a classroom teacher, I feel my duty is to my classroom and my students in my classroom more than it can be to getting other teachers to do whatever. The principal to make changes. Or the coordinators to make changes. Because they're all just doing what the district is having them do. And so I can do what I can do for my students and who I have in front of me on the day to day.

What Maddie described here draws on a vertical juxtaposition: she considered the role that her personal policy implementation played in the broader ELD policy context, framing her discourses and enactments as having relatively little impact. Yet it is by engaging in imaginative agency in collaboration with her students that she saw herself as being able to make change "through" the development of their own systemic wisdom.

Indeed, many educators emphasize the value of student voice as they frame building student agency as a strategy for navigating their own perceived lack of agency within the program and institutional layers of ELD policy. For example, when I asked Beatriz, a middle and high school ELD coach, about what would need to change in the ELD system to make it more equitable, she paused, and then responded:

Yeah, that's like a, a loaded question because is that given, like, our society is still structured the way it is? So just schooling is not structured the way it is? So the school, we're like envisioning the schooling, but there's still, like the outside forces, capitalism is still in place? So that, so I'm thinking about all of that, right? Mm-hmm. Because in a different society that would look different...so I think I know how to answer this question and, and it's gonna be simple. But we need to, um, one thing that's not really done, we always say we need to

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talk to teachers. We need to get their perspectives. But we also need to talk to students. We need to talk to students who went through the systems, right? And we need to validate what they need or what they needed. I mean, who better than someone who went through these institutions? So, I would approach new policies based on the knowledge and importance that we're giving our students and their experiences...

As she emphasized that students who have recently been through the system are also uniquely positioned to speak on what their experience of ELD is and how it did or did not serve them, Beatriz added:

And so how do we, how do we honor what they need? Because oftentimes we impose our visions of like a, whatever utopian society we have, right? Like, it's my vision. But what is a vision that, or what is the need and the wants that my students have? And how do I honor those even if they're not so aligned with mine? And that is a hard thing to do, but that's ultimately my role to prepare them for, to prepare them for the world that they want to live in. And they, you know, and thrive...

Beatriz demonstrated imaginative agency here, narrating how listening to student voice could lead to the reconstruction of ELD such that it would better serve students' aspirations. Moreover, these excerpts show a vertical juxtaposition, where Beatriz drew connections and contrasts between broad structures of society that inform the institutional layer of schooling (such as capitalism) and the program layer enactments (as implied in her references to students' experiences in ELD). Furthermore, Beatriz demonstrated self-in-systems inquiry here by grappling with the subjectivity of her own perspectives, and how students with recent experiences of ELD might be able to offer a more grounded interpretation of what they need out of ELD to make it equitable.

Similarly to Beatriz and Maddie's thinking about the value of student voice in navigating ELD policy, Damian described incorporating student input into his personal implementation of

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ELD as a way to modify curriculum that was part of program layer enactments. He framed this empowering of students by asking for their input as a way to supplement blind spots in his own professional vision.

> So let me take a second. I do have a story first. So one time, I was working at a program of intensive English...and I had a group of students from China that I was working with. And I was doing a supplemental reading class. And I just had a workbook reading...But one text, no one looked at it, I was doing my graduate student thing. So, I didn't look at it, I just kind of went in blind that day, which maybe isn't the best. But it was a reading about China. And it was so anti-China bias in there...they were saying something like they built this dam on one of the most important rivers in China. And the article was claiming it destroyed the ecosystem and displaced all these things. And how thoughtless was the Chinese government? Aren't you glad we don't do that here? Right. And so my kids were outraged. They were like, "No, that's not how it went. This was so good for all these reasons, this powered, like five cities, and all this kind of stuff." And so, one example right here, where sometimes you don't even think about it You've got a pacing guide, or something to put out there. And you have no idea how the person on the other end of that is internalizing it, or how they're going to react to it or any of that kind of stuff. So since then, it was it was kind of a blessing. Because, you know, I have that story in the back of my mind when I think about these kinds of things from time to time...And we have this curriculum [at my current school] that's bought with some readings that have quizzes built in, and all this kind of stuff. So I use the curriculum. And since it's my first year using it, I'm listening to the kids about which ones they like and which ones they don't care for. So that will inform what I do next year.

In giving his students voice in evaluating the curriculum that he used, Damian worked to support his students' agency within his personal layer of ELD. By saying that he may have "no idea how the person on the other end of [the curriculum] is internalizing it", Damian demonstrated a self-doubt that he makes productive by turning to his students to learn how they internalized the curriculum that he used. Thus, this incorporation of student feedback to inform his enactment of program layer ELD enactments (curriculum) into his personal layer of ELD practice, was a way that Damian uplifted students' voice and empowered them to influence students' experiences of ELD into the future.

Educators worked to build student and family agency as a conduit for impacting the program layer of ELD, but they also built their agency in such a way that allowed students and their families to impact educators' personal ELD implementation. To this end, students and their families were treated as collaborators rather than symbolic community members in making sense of ELD, resisting more traditional family-school relationships (K. D. Gutiérrez et al., 1999; Ishimaru & Takahashi, 2017; Peña, 1998). For example, Ariana, Lilia, and Maddie described teaching their families and students about the system of ELD and structures around in in such a way that they would be able to take action toward their own imagined futures. Furthermore, Beatriz and Damian demonstrated how engaging in self-in-systems inquiry also allowed them to create space for students' agency to impact their immediate classroom contexts.

Both buffering and building student and family agency are valuable responses to educators' feelings that they do not have agency in the vertical layering of ELD policy in which they practice. However, while buffering is more about protection and care, building agency seems to rely more on educators' ability to engage in self-in-systems inquiry and look for areas where their personal implementation of ELD and the lens of their professional vision might fall short for meeting students' needs. Thus, I understand buffering to be more focused on identity, access, and

achievement, where building agency also incorporates the power dimension of equity into ELD implementation. Furthermore, while these strategies were informed by educators' understanding of the institutional layer of ELD policy, they were attempting to impact discourses and enactments in the program and personal layers of ELD policy. Navigating strategy 4, reframing, refers to educators' attempts to navigate the institutional layer of ELD policy.

Navigating Strategy 4: Reframing

The main strategy for educators' response to the institutional layer of ELD discourse and enactment was through reframing. Reframing describes when educators attempted to contextualize and reimagine the expectations at the furthest layer of policy from their practice. While educators expressed that they had the least control over the institutional layer of policy, they were frequently engaged in imaginative agency as they responded to what they found objectionable at this layer. Prior literature has highlighted this kind of theoretical subversion as an important component of agency for educators to engage in (Keisler et al., 2024; Leo, 2023), though it is not always clear how this kind of reframing is distinct from concepts such as ideological clarity and critical consciousness. I came to see reframing as an opportunity to continuously remind oneself that there are other possibilities for policy-driven practice than what is dominant, fostering hope through horizontal and contained juxtapositions.

Engaging in this hopeful imaginative agency sometimes led educators to consider what might be happening elsewhere and where they might seek other models for ELD. For example, Adelio, who had just started as their school's ELD coordinator at the beginning of the year in which I interviewed them, expressed a desire to seek out ELD colleagues at other schools in the district:

> I want to like, reach out to the other ELD department chairs and the other schools. And I
> also really feel we're doing a disservice because this district acts like there haven't been

ELD successes in other schools. And it's not like we have to like reinvent something. Like

we could go and we can literally talk to other schools and improve...

Adelio engaged in contained juxtaposing, highlighting how they believed that the discourse about

there being only one way for ELD to be implemented was contradicted by the reality of ELD

enactment in their district. By contrasting this narrative about designated ELD with their belief

about what could be, Adelio remained optimistic that there would be mentors to be found

elsewhere in the district. Adelio was thus imagining a kind of horizontal juxtaposition, even though

they might not be able to confirm this contrast yet. This highlighted their resistance to the

inevitability of this one instance of ELD at the program layer that they had experienced.

In a similar move, Julieta, a middle and high school ELD coach, identified silences in the

discourses of ELD in her school and district, and in the profession more broadly. In reflecting on

how she thought about who was prepared to work in ELD, Julieta discussed the role of identity in

language policy, planning, and implementation:

I don't think it's just that our school, but I just think in general there is a lack of Latino

representation in the secondary level subjects. I mean, even from my experience, I can tell

you that I had very limited experiences with high school teachers that represented who I

was. If anything, that was one or two, and I always wanted to get their classroom and I just

never did. So, I think in general, there is a lack of representation. But then also, I am

working at a school district that's very, very conservative and wealthy. So just the

demographics there speaks for itself where a lot of our working migrant families, or just our

working families do attend those schools, but they're living under these very wealthy

landlords who just give them a space to rent to put their trailer in and you'll take care of my

home kind of thing. So yeah, it's just the dynamics of where we are located...I would say

they're very influential. The few are very influential because they attend board meetings,

they attend school site meetings. And without the Latino voice or without, basically without the Latino voice there's no changes being made because our parents are not being heard. And yeah, I mean it's ran by the few.

Though not referring explicitly to ELD policy for the bulk of this excerpt, Julieta made an important point here about the source of discourses in her institutional context and how this mattered for what was enacted within schools and classrooms. She understood that the absence of "Latino voice" when most of her EL-classified students were Latino meant that there was a lack of representation in policy sensemaking that she believed had an impact on the inner layers of policy implementation. However, rather than focusing only on these silences, Julieta spoke often of her colleagues and new teachers who were representative of the population of students in ELD. When discussing one second year teacher that she had been coaching, Julieta shared:

She grew up in the area, she was a migrant student herself, became a teacher...So with her taking on that classroom, I really do feel like there's going to be a lot stronger connections between the teacher and the students, and hopefully there's going to be more effective, there's more positive results out of that classroom than there was last year because of the challenges that there were. The last year school teacher, great with teaching. Great with teaching her content, but there was no relationships built because she could not connect with them. And that's what caused a lot of behavioral issues.

Here, she drew on horizontal juxtaposition of the program layer of ELD from the prior year to the expertise of the teacher who took on the classroom in the current year. By doing so, Julieta challenged the inevitability of deficit experiences through imagination, just as Adelio had.

For Adelio and Julieta, reframing was important because they were both tasked with some amount of ELD teacher mentorship and professional development, and this strategy impacted the focus of those activities. Leadership plays an important role in creating expectations about what is

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and is not possible within the context of policy (Coburn, 2005; Heineke, 2015; Mavrogordato & White, 2020) and, while their roles are not the highest leadership positions, Adelio and Julieta do act as leaders in the space of ELD.

To distinguish reframing from ideological clarity as policy sensemaking *without* reframing, I provide an example from Ian, a fifth grade special education teacher, who expressed significant frustration with institutional and program contexts that he could not change. When discussing data use to plan for ELD instruction, for example, he shared:

Ian: I think, cynically, I think that the administration has given up on both population and ELD population, because every time you know, I have never been in a group in a meeting, in 20 some odd years, where you look at the data from your school, and it says, "Oh, look, our ELs are doing great." Or those "Look, our kids are doing great." No, that's not happening. And so on testing...that's just the expectation of what's gonna be...it's like, well, of course. Standard low of course, the ELs are low...There are never there are never victories that are celebrated among our ELs.

Olivia: And I guess like, if there is a teacher that they say, "Oh, look, well, this teacher is making progress." Is there ever like "let's see what they're doing. Let's get training from them?" Is there any kind of that?

Ian: You know, sort of cursory like, you're in a staff meeting you go, "Oh, Mrs. So and So. How do you account for this?" Which is always nonsense, because it's generally what they're comparing it to year to year, which is a completely different set of kids. Not science in any way. But they just, "oh, well, I shall say I did daily journals" And everybody goes "Oh, great." And then that's it. No follow up to any substantive procedures, really anything. The whole data driven, buzzword system that we've developed, it's just either it's not well understood, or it's being cynically used against kids, I think...Because you get data, but you

don't use that data to go back in and help the kid. You press on to the next objective. You just know that he failed. And so, he did not get dividing by fractions pressing on now we know that. Why is that a value? It's just a way to say that he's bad.

In this excerpt, Ian was engaged in contained juxtaposing, highlighting how the discourse of data-driven practice as something that allows educators to "go back in and help the kid" was not reflected in the enactment of data use for instructional planning and instead, the program layer engaged in business as usual when "the ELs are low." However, Ian also expressed in various moments throughout our interview that he did not feel as though there were avenues for him to take action, and did not tie imagined or actual horizontal juxtapositions to this noticing. To this end, it seems that contained juxtaposition without attempts to also engage in horizontal juxtaposing and imaginative agency might be one reason that educators are unable to foster hope through their engagement in ideological clarity as policy sensemaking.

Educators also engaged in reframing around an aspect of ELD that has been contested often in the literature focused on ideology in the education of EL-classified students: how we should identify who EL-classified students are and what they are capable of linguistically (Cabral, 2022; Rosa, 2016; Rosa & Flores, 2017). Various educators addressed this tension in response to my final question of our interviews: if you could change anything about ELD policies, what would you change? Sofia, an elementary ELD coach shared a sentiment that many others echoed as well:

I think that I would recognize that if you are assessing ELD it means that the child is multilingual. And so really, recognizing that in policy, and not just looking at it through a deficit mindset of like they're lacking English but these kids are multilingual. Being multilingual is difficult. It's really hard learning another language. So, recognizing that piece of it. I wouldn't want the kids to be tested to death but really, like acknowledging, okay,

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you're really strong in this other language. And how do we then navigate this bilingualism in your life?

Sofia here implicitly engaged in contained juxtaposing by saying that students being assessed for their English proficiency should also be paired with a discourse that those students are able to speak and/or write in multiple languages, suggesting that currently, assessment is associated with a discourse of deficit. Though she did not explicitly share a horizontal juxtaposition here, she imagined that this other discourse-enactment pairing could be possible.

Reframing was often an implicit strategy that seemed to inform educators' engagement in building allies, buffering, and building student and family agency. The imaginative agency that characterized reframing was something that educators tended to describe finding ways to act on through judgement as agency, which follows with the framework that judgement is the enactment of habit and imagination (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). To this end, it seems important that when ELD educators engage in ideological clarity as ELD policy sensemaking, they are not just engaged in critique, but also actively engaged in imagining other possibilities for ELD.

Constraints and Affordances for Navigating Strategies

There were some conditions that made it easier and more difficult for educators to engage in these navigating strategies. I have noted them in the findings above but restate them here for clarity. Most of the conditions that I mention here were also part of educators' responses to our final interview question: if you could change anything about ELD or EL policy, what would you remove, redesign, or add?

Educators frequently mentioned assessments as a barrier to their ability to practice in ways that reflected the identity and power dimensions of equity, but also surprisingly the access and achievement dimensions. For example, many highlighted that the content of the ELPAC was not developmentally appropriate, asking young students to engage in tasks that would not reflect

effective classroom instruction, or older students to rely too much on content knowledge to be able to demonstrate their English proficiency. They also described the assessment regimes that their EL-classified students had to participate in as disruptive to the flow of their instruction which made it difficult to engage in rigorous learning, and disruptive to their efforts to create more linguistically diverse spaces, especially in dual language programs.

Poorly designed resources and ongoing support impeded educators' ability to engage in equitable practice for their students along all dimensions. Many described, for example, that the curricula they were given were too sparse to be considered a robust structure of language development or that they were difficult to differentiate for EL-classified students, seemingly having been created with literacy for English only students in mind. Compounding their frustration with these tangible resources, educators described their frustration that professional development that they were offered often reflected the "banking model" of teaching (Freire, 2009), which they found especially frustrating in professional development about differentiating instruction for their students. This is important because while policy seems to often propose offering *more* resources and *more* guidance for districts, schools, and educators to develop equitable support for EL-classified students, it seems that there is insufficient attention to whether those resources are being provided in ways that render them usable, or simply end up as another stack of textbooks in a teacher's closet.

Finally, many of these educators described frequent deprioritization of ELD across the contexts in which they worked. Some of this deprioritization seemed to be the result of too many policy initiatives and too few ELD experts. For example, both Tracy and Elena described being recent hires at districts where ELD had been largely ignored for many years. This also mirrors what I encountered in my recruitment for this study, where there seemed to be a belief that only

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some educators were supposed to support EL-classified students, even though legislation in the past two decades has required that *all* educators be prepared for these students.

At other times, the deprioritization felt more malicious. For example, Ariana had witnessed a fraught history in her district that informed her thinking about how she approached navigating ELD. Ariana shared that she worked to change ELD discourse and enactment in her program context through the top down approach of statewide advocacy, building and prioritizing allies outside of her immediate context. This was unusual, however she described feeling that this was her only option given the history of her district where:

> ...we got a new superintendent at the time who was just...for whatever reason, there was just a grudge that like...so our, one of our head founders, was always kind of vocal in the community and speaking out against some of the ills in a sense that the district would do or not do in regards to the advancement of English learners. And even though she's on the side of right, we are on the side of right, um, we would join like, uh, certain organizations that would help advance teacher voice in legislation. And we would work through the correct channels to help...and trying to be like, okay, district, if you don't listen to us or wanna do this, basically we know the people and the players who will, and we're gonna hit you at that level...And I think, because in a sense we were continuing to prevail or not stop a fight, she just became very vengeful and went after and targeted that that person, the other co-founder, basically drove, drove her off. Essentially like bought her out of her contract.

Though highly critical of ELD policy, Ariana, and others, were also adamant that there was some level of mandates that were necessary to ensure that districts, schools, and individual educators could not ignore the need for equity for EL-classified students. Appendix E provides all 26 educators' responses to our final interview question which was some version of: if you could change anything about ELD or EL policy, what would you remove, redesign, or add?

Summary

In this chapter, I presented findings that help to respond to my two research questions:

> **RQ1:** What is the relationship between the processes of policy sensemaking and ideological clarity?

> **RQ2:** How do educators navigate ELD policy when they engage in ideological clarity?

I found that educators juxtapose across and within what I call the institutional, program and personal layers of ELD policy as they engage in ideological clarity as policy sensemaking. I described these juxtapositions as *vertical* when they contrast discourses and enactments across these layers within a given social and temporal context, *horizontal* when they contrast discourses and enactments across social and temporal contexts of ELD, and *contained* when they contrasted discourses and enactments within a given layer of ELD policy. These juxtapositions allowed them to deepen their understanding of the historical and contemporary demands of ELD policy, which ultimately informed the strategies that they engaged in to navigate these demands in their own implementation of ELD. Moreover, educators further deepened this understanding and their motivation to engage in strategies that allowed them to pursue equity, when they engaged in self-in-systems inquiry, the term that I use to describe their critical reflection on their professional vision. Finally, I defined and offered examples of how educators navigated ELD through ally building, buffering, building student and parent agency, and reframing. In the following chapter, I draw implications from these findings for educators, policymakers, teacher educators, and researchers.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Throughout this study, I was acutely aware of how generous educators were with their energy and vulnerability. Various participants said something to the effect of our interview together being "like teacher therapy" for them, in that they had the opportunity to articulate their frustrations and their successes in ELD. I also felt gratitude for them. Each of these educators was thoughtful about their practice and cared deeply for EL-classified students, and many were critical of themselves, acknowledging that they still had blind spots. Furthermore, though some expressed feeling more hopelessness than hopefulness, many also described how working through the ideological tensions that surfaced for them and engaging in navigating strategies around ELD had helped them find space for practice that was meaningful and brought them joy.

When I was nearing the end of my interviewing and was developing my findings, I attended a panel for pre-service and first-year teachers focuses on teacher advocacy. The intention of this panel was to highlight stories of resistance and transformation in schools and show these educators possibilities for their own work. What struck me the most while I was watching this panel, was that only one of the educators focused on the *strategy* of the advocacy that she engaged in and called out a need for caution in doing so. I share this because I am concerned that when scholars and teacher educators encourage educators to be radical, to not just be a "good" teacher in their classroom but to think about how they are also pursuing systemic change, these teachers are being asked to do so without sufficient guidance and support. I share this small story to recenter my reader for these concluding thoughts and reassert that it while individual educators play a role in pursuing greater equity for EL-classified students, scholars and practitioners of teacher education must consider how they are taking seriously the systemic political and social constraints that these educators come up against. To this end, I invite my reader to think of engaging in ideological clarity and navigating ELD served as an opportunity for these educators to pursue joy in their

practice. While I cannot make claims about how this joy impact their students' experiences beyond their own reports, it is clear that this joy mattered for educators' decisions to persist in the profession of teaching, and in the discipline of ELD. This is not to say that students' joy does not also matter, but that I intend to center educators' joy in this dissertation, emphasizing that for movements to be successful, we need to consider the stability of a movement community (Hayes et al., 2023). Considering stability in the movement toward more equitable schools requires that we take seriously retaining educators who are capable of remaining hopeful about their work.

In this final chapter, I summarize my findings that respond to my research questions: (RQ1) What is the relationship between the processes of policy sensemaking and ideological clarity? (RQ2) How do educators navigate ELD policy when they engage in ideological clarity? Following these summaries, I then emphasize two limitations of this study. Finally, I conclude with what I believe are important implications of these findings for teacher educators; policymakers; researchers; and ELD teachers, coaches, and coordinators.

Findings in Response to RQ1: Framing Ideological Clarity as Policy Sensemaking

Ideological clarity has been defined as process through which educators identify assumptions that undergird ongoing educational practice and justify existing hierarchies of knowledge and power (Bartolomé, 2004; Bartolomé & Balderrama, 2001). Policy sensemaking describes the process by which individuals create frameworks of meaning from the demands on their practice so that they can make decisions about how to integrate policy artifacts into their practice (Coburn, 2001; Weick, 1995). Educators in this study illuminated how the process of ideological clarity can be seen as a process through which they engage in ELD policy sensemaking. Educators engaged in ideological clarity as policy sensemaking demonstrated what I called vertical, horizontal, and contained juxtapositions. Through these juxtapositions, educators identified ideologies wrapped up in ELD policy, and deepened their understanding of how those ideologies produced norms across

organizational layers of ELD policy implementation. Educators were juxtaposing vertically when they were contrasting the discourses and enactments of ELD through the organizational of their current context. For example, comparing the discourses of district intentions for an ELD curriculum or newcomer program to colleagues' perception of that curriculum or program in schools. Horizontal juxtapositions were characterized by educators contrasting discourses and enactments of ELD policy across social or temporal contexts. Juxtaposing horizontally across social contexts was demonstrated when educators contrasted institutionalized discourses about EL-classified students in a prior district they worked for and their current district in which they worked. Educators were juxtaposing horizontally across temporal contexts when they contrasted how ELD was implemented in the past with how it was currently being implemented. Finally, educators demonstrated contained juxtapositions when they compared discourse and enactment within a given layer, calling out disconnects or highlighting sources of inequitable practice.

Scholarship focused on ideological clarity has rarely been situated in the context of specific discipline areas and the policies that guide them. One exception to this was Blevins, Magill, and Salinas (2019) who examined the role of ideological clarity in history teaching and found that educators' pedagogical knowledge was necessary for their ability to bring their reflections of ideological clarity into their instructional practice. Examining ideological clarity without explicitly attending to specific language policies that educators have described as imposing pressures for their instructional practice (Flores & Schissel, 2014; Hernandez, 2017) limits understanding of the implications of engaging in ideological clarity as a process, because it decontextualizes educators' instructional responses to their engagement in ideological clarity. On the other hand, scholarship on policy sensemaking has emphasized individual and collective aspects of this process (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2015; Coburn, 2001) that help to explain when, why, and how educators feel that they can act agentively within the context of policy implementation. In bringing together the frameworks

of ideological clarity and policy sensemaking to examine the experiences of ELD educators, I have highlighted how treating ideological clarity as a quality of policy sensemaking allowed me to ground educators' instructional responses to their noticing through ideological clarity within the specific policy demands of ELD as a discipline.

Findings in Response to RQ2: Navigating ELD Policy

Educators who engaged in self-in-systems inquiry were more likely to report a sense of experimentation and hopefulness around their implementation of ELD. Self-in-systems inquiry describes educators' practice of engaging in critical reflection on their own personal implementation of ELD and their professional vision. In engaging in this reflection, educators were grappling with their own subjectivities and agency in how they developed their practice and made sense of outer layers of implementation. Though this reflection was marked by some degree of self-doubt, it did not have to mean that educators' experiences lacked joyfulness. Rather, educators found ways to lean into this self-doubt, making it productive, and opening up new possibilities for their practice. When educators described engaging in this critical reflexivity alongside their engagement in ideological clarity as sensemaking, they were also more likely to express engaging in ally building and generally felt that their navigation of ELD policy was more reflective of imagination and judgement as agency, the two components of agency that are particularly important for institutional change (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2015; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). This was important because it allowed educators to see themselves as agentive actors within, rather than victims of, ELD policy.

Regardless of whether or not they engaged in self-in-systems inquiry, all educators demonstrated some common strategies for navigating the demands of ELD implementation in their practice. Educators engaged in ally building were focused on gaining credibility among their colleagues in order to change the dominant discourses in the program layer of ELD policy. This is

similar to advocacy strategies that are often documented in scholarship on justice-focused educators (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2006; R. Gutiérrez, 2015; Mavrogordato & White, 2020). One reason that educators might have been more likely to engage in this strategy when they were also engaged in self-in-systems inquiry, was that in allowing themselves to be fallible through this critical reflexivity, they might have also felt more comfortable de-centering their perspectives and engaging with others who were not perfect mirrors of their values (Hayes et al., 2023; Popielarz, 2022). Furthermore, while some who made their advocacy visible through efforts to build allies gained official organizational roles in supporting ELD – such as Beatriz who was asked to be an ELD coach, and Adelio and Maddie who were asked to be ELD coordinators – others found that they were targeted and their advocacy was rejected by colleagues or administrators. Approaches within ally building that educators described being useful for mitigating the risks of this strategy included targeting newly hired teachers who were not yet enmeshed in the program layer discourses and choosing their battles so as to slowly but steadily win over colleagues and administrators with organizational authority. On the other hand, others leaned into the risk, attempting to go above their administrators' authority to the institutional layer through state level policy advocacy and legal action. In each case, many educators emphasized that their cautious approaches to ally-building had been learned through painful prior experiences, begging the question of if or how we (teacher educators) are preparing educators to learn caution before they are put into such vulnerable positions.

When educators felt that they could not engage in ally building, they found ways to move under the radar through the strategies of buffering and building student and family agency. The former may be thought of as more balanced between the habit and judgment components of agency (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998), in that educators perpetuated the dominant implementations of ELD policy at the institutional and program layers (habit), while engaging in subversive counter-

messaging and instruction at their personal layer to soften what they understood to be the harmful impacts of ELD policy at those layers on students (judgment). The latter, building student and family agency, was more reflective only of judgment where educators sought to teach students and families about aspects of the program and institutional layers of ELD so that there would be a broader range of options available to them within those layers. In this sense, buffering was more of a strategy for working within the system, while building agency was a strategy for changing the system through grassroots efforts that pushed back on dominant norms at the program layer in particular. These strategies were both reflective of prior scholarship that has highlighted how educators engage in more covert resistance through their practice (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2015; Urrieta, 2010). In distinguishing between these types of covert advocacy, however, I intend to highlight that this kind of strategy can have different implications for organizational change given variation in the components of agency that educators lean on.

Finally, educators engaged in reframing, a strategy of contextualizing and reimagining ELD, particularly the discourses and enactments of ELD at the institutional layer. In this strategy, educators were balanced in drawing on habit and imagination components of agency, though this strategy lacked the kind of action associated with agency as judgment. This kind of reframing has been described in prior literature as educators' resistance to dominant ideologies and norms in educational contexts (Keisler et al., 2024; Leo, 2023). What is, in my view, important about naming this as a strategy is that it helps to distinguish the process of recognizing ideologies through ideological clarity, from imagining other possibilities. While both of these are valuable, the latter may be important for educators to persist in their hopefulness about their ability to have an impact on equity for EL-classified and other marginalized student populations (Hayes et al., 2023).

Limitations

This study was limited by not gathering more data about educators' specific school and district contexts. Though I asked educators what county they worked in, I only learned the name of their school if they shared it during our interviews. My intention in doing this was to first and foremost to ensure that educators would feel comfortable enough being vulnerable and honest about their experiences in their school communities, without the risk of being exposed to colleagues. Additionally, I was focused on ELD broadly and not on writing a critique of any one context, which I believe also allowed educators to be more open with me. Still, through off-handed comments naming or providing very specific details about their district or school, I realized that two of my participants worked at the same school, and two others worked in the same district. What I found most compelling about this, was that these pairs of educators described noticing some very different – though not contradictory – aspects of their contexts, which speaks to how much one's professional vision can influence how they experience the ELD policy context. Had I asked participating educators to name their schools and districts, I might have been able to draw out more analysis focused on this phenomenon, however, I also strongly believe that some of the educators would not have been so candid in what they shared.

Another limitation was that I did not collect observational data to triangulate what educators reported in their interviews. This limitation was necessary to capture experiences across such a broad geographical area given limited time and resources. Furthermore, many of the experiences that these educators recounted occurred over many years, such that observations over the short time period of this study would still not have been able to capture the breadth of experiences that informed how these educators engaged in ideological clarity and navigated ELD policy. Finally, ideological clarity is largely an internal process of reflection, such that educators' own narratives of their reflection and responses to their reflection were valuable even without observational data. Still, future research might focus in more intensively on a few educators within

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a given context to be able to be more precise and nuanced in discussions of when, where, and how educators are able to engage in these strategies through their ideological clarity as policy sensemaking.

Practical Implications

As a teacher educator, one of my primary motivations for this study was to consider how I am preparing educators who are capable of developing equitable practice for EL-classified students while also protecting themselves from burnout and organizational targeting if they should decide to push back on dominant norms in the community. These personal and professional risks are not equal across identities and social settings. I recently spoke to a colleague in teacher education who told me that she was grappling with trying to figure out how to prepare critical, justice-oriented teachers, given that she had seen some of their graduates lose their positions because of their advocacy for students. Indeed, while advocacy is important for educators to engage in when they work with marginalized student populations, I believe that as teacher educators, we have the responsibility to ensure that we are preparing our students to advocate along a continuum (Urrieta, 2010) that allows them to respond to the variety of social and political pressures that they will encounter throughout their career.

At the same time, I want to explicitly reject the idea that educational inequities could be remediated if teachers only knew how to do better. In conducting research that focuses on how educators learn to navigate systems, there are important takeaways for how we can support educators in learning to advocate in these ways, but it is also important to be clear that it is ultimately the systems that need to change. These strategies are a survival tactic, but they should not be the only takeaway from this research. Thus, I focus my discussion of the implications of my findings here in regard to what teacher educators, policymakers, researchers, and finally, teachers themselves, might take away.

For teacher educators

The findings of this study have various implications for teacher educators. First, I urge our field to consider how, when we are working toward more equitable systems for EL-classified students, we are also caring for their teachers, taking their joy and wellbeing seriously as well. Activists and organizers have already illuminated lessons for how to build sustainable and joyful movements, that are also reflected in the wisdom of educators in this study. This includes preparing educators to engage in contained juxtaposing, so that they can take care in understanding their colleagues; indeed, learning to *listen* by attending to discourse and action is crucial for growing movements and building allies (Hayes et al., 2023; Popielarz, 2022). Indeed, most of the educators in this study described this kind of caution in ally building being something that they painfully had to learn on the job. Engaging in contained and, in some cases, horizontal juxtapositions allowed educators in this study to protect their joy as they tread carefully in ally building.

Taking educators' joy seriously in their preparation also requires fostering vulnerability. It is important that when supporting teacher candidates to engage in the critical reflection characteristic of ideological clarity, that they also have space to be vulnerable (Mendoza et al., 2021; Munzer & Van Es, 2024) as they apply these critical lenses to their own orientations and practices as well. While this is good practice for fostering an inquiry mindset in the profession (Cochran-Smith & Keefe, 2022), it is also important to note that educators in this study who described engaging in self-in-systems inquiry were more likely to navigate ELD policy implementation in ways reflective of agency as judgment and imagination. Thus growing more comfortable with vulnerability may support educators' more intentional navigation of ELD policy contexts, and thus support their ability to practice in ways that are meaningful to them.

Finally, while equity-focused educators may feel urgency in changing the policy layers of ELD, teacher educators should help them in understanding the risks and approaches across a

spectrum of advocacy (Urrieta, 2010), so that they can work through these possibilities and foster agency within the complex demands on their practice. There are many roles to take on within broader movements toward social and institutional change (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2015; Hayes et al., 2023), such that every teacher does not have to take on every role. When educators understand that there are multiple options for navigating ideologically objectionable policy contexts, there are more options for them to experiment with their responses to their engagement in ideological clarity.

For policymakers

For policymakers, I return to the words of educators who articulated clearly the structures and routines that constrain their more equitable practice. Their insight reflects existing literature on teachers of EL-classified students, and echoes calls for some specific policy changes that have been consistently made over time. By policymakers, I refer to those who are tasked with creating regulations at the state level, but also those at the district and sometimes school level who have agency to interpret policy in ways that make allowances for equitable practices focused that take into account the power and identity dimensions (Mavrogordato & White, 2020). I organize these takeaways into three categories: (1) teacher professional development and credentialling, (2) assessment, and (3) definitions of EL-classified students and their rights.

In terms of assessment, educators described the institutionalized norms around assessment to be a barrier to their equitable practice, in the sense that their content and administration do not always reflect developmentally-appropriate measures of learning across age groups, and their use does not reflect what we know about how multilingual individuals in particular develop language proficiency (Ascenzi-Moreno & Seltzer, 2021; Hakuta, 2020; Hinkel, 2014). Though policies are flexible to allow for districts to implement assessment in ways that they feel work for their unique settings (L. Hill et al., 2021), the perpetual message that EL-classified students get from

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standardized assessments and their use in schools (Flores et al., 2015; M. G. Lee & Soland, 2023) seems to do more harm than actually hold educational organizations accountable. Educators acknowledged that existing assessments are useful as a crude starting point when they first encounter new EL-classified students, but are frustrated that they are often overemphasized as a settled "diagnosis" particularly by school and district leaders.

There were important implications in terms of teacher professional development that I found through data collection and analysis, but also through my process of recruitment. Many of the educators in this study expressed feeling that they had little to no preparation to teach ELD, attributing this to the nature of both pre- and in-service training. For example, Rosa shared that getting an ELD specific credential was not tenable, given that the security of one's position in ELD is dependent on the proportion of EL-classified students remaining somewhat constant or growing. Given that the EL-classified student population in California is decreasing,[19] this means that such a specific credential may not be a wise investment, especially for new educators. While Rosa suggested that merging an ELA and ELD credential might be one resolution to this, she and Adelio both emphasized that world language credentials might be a sensible partner as well. Rosa shared that ELD used to be part of the world language department in her school, and Adelio highlighted how the skills that they had developed as a Spanish and French teacher were useful for their ELD teaching as well.

The lack of preparedness to teach ELD was even expressed by BCLAD educators, who had felt that they had been prepared to teach content in multiple languages, but were left unsure about how to teach language itself. Two educators who had master's degrees in TESOL (teaching English to speakers of other languages) – Damian and Christina – demonstrated how explicit

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[19] https://transformschools.ucla.edu/research/the-landscape-of-language-learners-in-californias-mtss-who-are-californias-english-language-learners/

preparation to teach language is useful practically and in terms of educators ability to engage in self-in-systems inquiry. That is, while many educators expressed frustration feeling that assessments did not reflect what students were able to do with language, these two educators were explicit in grappling with how their conceptualizations of language diverged from conceptualizations of language in curricula and assessments in both subtle and extreme ways. Thus, the experiences of these educators on the whole suggests that the mandate that all newly credentialled educators in California be prepared to teach EL-classified students should be revisited, to ensure that educators are prepared in ways that help them recognize the variety of theories of language and language development. That is, by explicitly presenting educators with these theories, they may come to see that these theories are objects that they can challenge through ongoing engagement in ideological clarity and self-in-systems inquiry as they implement language policy.

Furthermore, educators also felt that the *in-service* support they received for implementing ELD was insufficient either because it was completely deprioritized or not differentiated in such a way that would allow them to apply what they learned into the unique contexts of their practice (Hopkins et al., 2022; Santibañez & Gándara, 2018). Recent policy changes have aimed to provide districts with more guidance and funding for supporting newcomer students.[20] Though not referring specifically to this policy, the educators in this study have asked that state and district leaders be more intentional in crafting ongoing and differentiated professional support, rather than simply distributing resources or providing one-off professional development opportunities.

Together, addressing these shortcomings in the preparation of educators to teach designated ELD, and EL-classified students in general, may be useful for clarifying the purpose of ELD and breaking down the conceptualization of ELD as only a remedial space. Moreover, while

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[20] https://legiscan.com/CA/text/AB714/id/2696355

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engaging in ideological clarity may help educators recognize when and how harmful ideologies permeate ELD, they may not have strong ideas about what to do instead. Explicit knowledge of what it means to teach language and support language development was useful for educators to respond to the question that can arise from engaging in ideological clarity: what do I do instead? That is, better preparing educators to think about their own theories of language and language development is essential for preparing them to more deeply understand policy and more intentionally craft their practice.

Finally, these educators have argued that dominant interpretations of the EL classification and the rights that this category of students has misunderstand the experience of EL-classified students and their educators. Indeed, though the classification may be useful for tracking overarching patterns in these students' outcomes, these educators felt that it is at best, of little practical use and at worst, a hinderance to providing students with more equitable experiences across multiple dimensions of equity. Similarly to prior research, for example, educators emphasize that the label sends undesirable messages to students and their families, especially in dual language programs (Hernandez, 2017), and reinforces dominant discourses about these students needing to assimilate into a monoglossic norm (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Of note, these educators these educators were not necessarily asking for another revision of the language of the label (e.g. limited English proficient, English learner, emergent bilingual), but to the way that the *processes* around the label other these students.

For researchers

Researchers also play an important role in perpetuating or interrupting discourses about the experiences of EL-classified students and their educators. The way that researchers frame problems of inequity as rooted in the practices of individual teachers, the routines of EL-classified student support, and the discourses of language and education in public schools matters for how

others respond to ongoing inequities for these students both in research and practice. Findings in this study illuminate important aspects of ELD that should be considered in research on language equity in schools. Specifically, the experiences of these teachers help to emphasize that it does not always feel possible to "do better" even if one is aware of the potential harms of practices informed by dominant ideologies. Even educators who felt confident in their ally building described needing caution in order to sustain themselves through this, for example. For this reason, I encourage scholars to resist simplified categorization of educators as more or less critical, without exploring and acknowledging systemic and individual factors that might make it difficult for them to make their criticality seen. Indeed, instead of requiring educators to be willing to take personal and professional risks, research that helps educational leaders advocate for better conditions that make acting on criticality less risky (for example Orellana, 2016; Santibañez & Gándara, 2018; Valdés, 2020) might do more for making education more equitable for EL-classified students.

The framework of vertical, horizontal, and contained juxtapositions can help scholars resist the kind of either-or thinking about how educators' criticality. Distinguishing these patterns in how educators were noticing and thinking about aspects of their context helped to explain why they might have noticed different ideologies and grappled with different artifacts of ELD policy (discourses and enactments) as they were navigating this policy context. For example, an educator who had not had prior experiences of a program layer rife with explicitly deficit discourses, might be less inclined to notice when these discourses are expressed more subtly in their current context. When, as researchers, we are able to recognize what experiences and knowledge educators have available for making juxtapositions, we may more accurately assess whether and how they are engaging in ideological clarity. Noticing what ideologies educators do *not* notice through this framing then could allow scholars to focus on conclusions about what experiences or contexts educators do not have available to them, and how we might ensure that they gain those experiences

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as a resource for their engagement in ideological clarity. In this sense the framework of vertical, horizontal, and contained juxtapositions can also serve as a set of look fors when scholars are identifying participants and studying ideological clarity.

Additionally, for researchers specifically exploring ideological clarity, the range of practices in which these educators engage suggests that it is important to find ways to identify ideological clarity without relying only on visible instructional practices that might be most easily deemed equitable or justice-oriented. Some researchers already have begun to offer some insight in this vein when they study ideological clarity within the context of teacher preparation (Assaf & Dooley, 2010), though even in some of these studies, teacher educators focus primarily on students who they deem exemplary in their ability to engage in ideological clarity (for example Alfaro, 2008). Expanding this scholarship could deepen our thinking about what it means to engage in ideological clarity, and better understand how this kind of critical reflection matters for classroom practice and organizational change.

For ELD teachers, coaches, and coordinators

For ELD teachers, coaches, and coordinators working to navigate ELD policy, there is useful insight here for protecting oneself from retaliation, while also finding ways to practice that are aligned with visions of equity that take seriously the dimensions of identity and power. Advocacy does not have to be painful. Rather, when approached with intention and caution, it can be an opportunity to create more joyful spaces for practice. First, educators who engaged in ally building, perhaps the most disruptive strategy of the four, were often careful to examine their social contexts in order to pick their battles. Both Damian and Rosa, for example, both described taking a step back from ELD discourses and enactments that they found unjust so that they could better understand their colleagues and their practice before starting to engage in efforts to change the program layer of ELD policy. Furthermore, in their examination of their colleagues, educators

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focused on learning about their prior experiences, their current practices, and the rationale for those practices. Each of these elements are important for identifying those colleagues who may be more and less open to efforts to change their practices and beliefs. They are also valuable for targeting advocacy to address the specific dynamics of one's context.

Additionally, finding ways to connect with and influence the beliefs of admin is a particularly high-leverage approach, as it can ultimately lead to educators being put into positions that afford them more organizational authority for ELD policy implementation at the program level. Maddie and Sofia both described convincing administrators of their expertise via quantifiable student outcomes, while other such as Isabel, Adelio, and Christina seemed to win their administrators over through their demonstrated subject-area knowledge (former district employee, world language teacher, and ELD-specific master's level training, respectively). At the same time, professional credentials and observable student outcomes will not always be enough, such as for Ariana who found that earning a doctorate and having helped lead an award winning newcomer program was not enough to earn respect in her district.

Furthermore, it is important to recognize that there are also ways to navigate ideologically difficult structures, such as those set up by ELD policy, that are much less personally and professionally risky. Buffering and reimagining, for example, are useful for neutralizing the harmful messages that students might receive from other educators in a school community. They are an opportunity to (re)build students' confidence and self-worth, by identifying and building on their assets. Building student and family agency is also a useful strategy that presents lower risk than building allies. However, it is important to ensure that when engaging in this strategy, it is undertaken with the intention of offering students and families more options. That is, while there are often efforts to educate students and families so that they can assimilate more effectively into schooling systems, the educators engaged in building student and family agency in this study were

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focused on supporting these community members in wedging open spaces for other possibilities. For many educators, this kind of agency building was easier to do with students, because it was easier to connect with students. Those who seemed successful in doing this with families as well certainly found it useful when they shared language with the families, which facilitated cross-cultural meaning building. However, Ariana described how connecting with community resources outside of the school – mosques – helped her to connect with families with whom she did not share language, and get them more information about how they might advocate for themselves.

These skills for navigating policy through ally building, buffering, and building student and family agency may not always be explicitly taught in teacher preparation. Educators in this study found support for engaging in these strategies by looking beyond their school buildings for affirming educator spaces, including statewide advocacy groups such as the English Learner Leadership and Legacy Initiative (ELLLI)[21] and professional development for improving instruction and adapting curricula such as the Cal States' Expository Reading and Writing Curriculum trainings.[22] Others found that returning to trusted faculty or peers from their teacher preparation experience led them to more mentorship and support for navigating ELD (Baker-Doyle, 2012).

Finally, when engaging in justice-oriented work, it is important to always humanize oneself through critical reflexivity (Assaf & Dooley, 2010; K. D. Gutiérrez & Vossoughi, 2010; Lucas & Villegas, 2013). Educators who engaged more often in critical reflection on their own lens through which they made sense of the policy demands on their practice also seemed to gain more clarity about and confidence in their agency within the ELD policy system.

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[21] https://californianstogether.org/what-we-do/our-initiatives/english-learner-leadership-legacy-initiative/

[22] https://www.calstate.edu/impact-of-the-csu/teacher-education/CARW/Pages/erwc.aspx

APPENDIX A: Screener Survey and Responses

Presented in Five Sets

Participant number	1	2	3	4	5
Pseudonym	Beatriz	Maddie	Lakshmi	Ariana	Christina
How many school years have you worked with ELs in a K-12 setting? (Including the current school year)	5	4	10	17	5
Which grade level(s) do you currently teach or support? (Mark all that apply?)	6th ,7th ,8th ,9th ,10th ,11th ,12th	5th	K ,1st ,2nd ,3rd ,4th ,5th ,6th	9th ,10th ,11th ,12th	6th ,7th ,8th
Please select any of the following that apply to your current work with ELs.	I am an EL/ELD instructional coach (or similar role).	I teach designated ELD for part of the day.,I am an ELD coordinator (or similar role).	I teach designated ELD for part of the day.	I only teach designated ELD.	I teach designated ELD for part of the day.,I am an ELD coordinator (or similar role).
What is your race or ethnicity? (Mark all that apply)	Hispanic or Latinx	White	Asian or Asian American	Hispanic or Latinx	White
Where did you earn your teaching credential?	At a University of California (UC)	At a University of California (UC)	At a California State University (CSU)	At a California State University (CSU)	Outside of California
In what county do you currently teach?	Los Angeles	Los Angeles	Stanislaus	Stanislaus	Ventura
Participants were then asked to consider how often they engage in the following reflective practices when they were planning for ELD instruction.					
I compare my beliefs about teaching ELs to my colleagues' or administrators' beliefs.	I frequently do this.	I frequently do this.	I frequently do this.	I frequently do this.	I frequently do this.
I think about how instructional materials (like readings and assessments) reflect their	I frequently think about this.	I sometimes think about this.	I frequently think about this.	I always think about this.	I frequently think about this.

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creators' beliefs about language learning.					
I can explain why I choose to teach language the way that I do.	I can frequently do this.	I can frequently do this.	I can always do this.	I can frequently do this.	I can always do this.
When I am opposed to something I am expected to do for my ELs, I have a clear explanation for why I am opposed.	I sometimes have a clear explanation.	I frequently have a clear explanation.	I always have a clear explanation.	I always have a clear explanation.	I frequently have a clear explanation.
I consider how my own experiences as a K-12 student compare to the experiences of my ELs.	I always think about this.	I sometimes think about this.	I always think about this.	I always think about this.	I frequently think about this.
I think about what I do and do not have the power to change in my ELs' experiences at school.	I frequently think about this.	I frequently think about this.	I always think about this.	I always think about this.	I always think about this.
I consider how my teaching might impact how my ELs see their identity outside of my classroom.	I frequently consider this.	I frequently consider this.	I always consider this.	I always consider this.	I always consider this.
I think about how my own biases impact how I judge what my ELs need and are able to do.	I frequently think about this.	I frequently think about this.	I frequently think about this.	I always think about this.	I always think about this.
I am careful about the language I use to describe my ELs when I talk about them with my colleagues.	I am always careful about this.	I am always careful about this.	I am always careful about this.	I am always careful about this.	I am always careful about this.
I try to plan lessons that will help my ELs challenge status quo assumptions about what they are capable of.	I always consider this when planning.	I frequently consider this when planning.	I always consider this when planning.	I always consider this when planning.	I frequently consider this when planning.
I question whose values are reflected in the learning goals set for my students.	I frequently question this.	I frequently question this.	I always question this.	I always question this.	I frequently question this.

Participant number	6	7	8	9	10	11
Pseudonym	Liliana	Rosa	Kiera	Julieta	Tracy	Isabel
How many school years have you worked with ELs in a K-12 setting? (Including the current school year)	5	16	5	4	18	15
Which grade level(s) do you currently teach or support? (Mark all that apply?)	4th	9th ,10th ,11th ,12th	2nd ,5th	6th ,7th ,8th ,9th ,10th ,11th ,12th	K ,1st ,2nd ,3rd ,4th ,5th ,6th ,7th ,8th ,9th ,10th ,11th ,12th	9th ,10th ,11th ,12th
Please select any of the following that apply to your current work with ELs.	I teach designated ELD for part of the day.	I teach designated ELD for part of the day.	I only teach designated ELD.	I am an EL/ELD instructional coach (or similar role).	I am an EL/ELD instructional coach (or similar role).	I am an ELD coordinator (or similar role).
What is your race or ethnicity? (Mark all that apply)	Hispanic or Latinx	Hispanic or Latinx	White	Hispanic or Latinx	White	Hispanic or Latinx
Where did you earn your teaching credential?	At another/private institution in California	At another/private institution in California	At a California State University (CSU)	At a California State University (CSU)	At a California State University (CSU)	At another/private institution in California
In what county do you currently teach?	Santa Barbara	Orange	Sacramento	San Diego	Santa Clara	Sacramento
Participants were then asked to consider how often they engage in the following reflective practices when they were planning for ELD instruction.						
I compare my beliefs about teaching ELs to my colleagues' or administrators' beliefs.	I sometimes do this.	I frequently do this.	I sometimes do this.	I sometimes do this.	I frequently do this.	I rarely do this.
I think about how instructional materials (like readings and assessments) reflect their creators' beliefs about language learning.	I sometimes think about this.	I frequently think about this.	I frequently think about this.	I sometimes think about this.	I frequently think about this.	I frequently think about this.

I can explain why I choose to teach language the way that I do.	I can sometimes do this.	I can frequently do this.	I can always do this.	I can frequently do this.	I can frequently do this.	I can always do this.
When I am opposed to something I am expected to do for my ELs, I have a clear explanation for why I am opposed.	I sometimes have a clear explanation	I sometimes have a clear explanation	I always have a clear explanation	I frequently have a clear explanation	I always have a clear explanation	I always have a clear explanation
I consider how my own experiences as a K-12 student compare to the experiences of my ELs.	I frequently think about this.	I always think about this.	I frequently think about this.	I always think about this.	I always think about this.	I always think about this.
I think about what I do and do not have the power to change in my ELs' experiences at school.	I sometimes think about this.	I frequently think about this.	I frequently think about this.	I always think about this.	I frequently think about this.	I always think about this.
I consider how my teaching might impact how my ELs see their identity outside of my classroom.	I sometimes consider this.	I always consider this.	I frequently consider this.	I always consider this.	I frequently consider this.	I always consider this.
I think about how my own biases impact how I judge what my ELs need and are able to do.	I sometimes think about this.	I always think about this.	I frequently think about this.	I sometimes think about this.	I frequently think about this.	I sometimes think about this.
I am careful about the language I use to describe my ELs when I talk about them with my colleagues.	I am frequently careful about this.	I am frequently careful about this.	I am frequently careful about this.	I am frequently careful about this.	I am frequently careful about this.	I am always careful about this.
I try to plan lessons that will help my ELs challenge status quo assumptions about what they are capable of.	I rarely consider this when planning.	I frequently consider this when planning.	I sometimes consider this when planning.	I frequently consider this when planning.	I frequently consider this when planning.	I always consider this when planning.
I question whose values are reflected in the learning goals set for my students.	I sometimes question this.	I frequently question this.	I sometimes question this.	I sometimes question this.	I frequently question this.	I always question this.

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Participant number	12	13	14	15	16
Pseudonym	Ms. M	Damian	Adelio	Antonio	Ana
How many school years have you worked with ELs in a K-12 setting? (Including the current school year)	18	4	2	17	3
Which grade level(s) do you currently teach or support? (Mark all that apply?)	K	9th ,10th ,11th ,12th	9th ,10th ,11th ,12th	K ,1st	2nd ,3rd
Please select any of the following that apply to your current work with ELs.	I teach designated ELD for part of the day.	I only teach designated ELD.	I teach designated ELD for part of the day.	I teach designated ELD for part of the day.	I teach designated ELD for part of the day.
What is your race or ethnicity? (Mark all that apply)	Hispanic or Latinx	Hispanic or Latinx	Asian or Asian American ,Hispanic or Latinx	Hispanic or Latinx	Hispanic or Latinx
Where did you earn your teaching credential?	At a California State University (CSU)	Outside of California	At a University of California (UC)	At a University of California (UC)	At a University of California (UC)
In what county do you currently teach?	Los Angeles	Sacramento	Solano	Los Angeles	Los Angeles
Participants were then asked to consider how often they engage in the following reflective practices when they were planning for ELD instruction.					
I compare my beliefs about teaching ELs to my colleagues' or administrators' beliefs.	I rarely do this.	I sometimes do this.	I frequently do this.	I never do this.	I sometimes do this.
I think about how instructional materials (like readings and assessments) reflect their creators' beliefs about language learning.	I always think about this.	I sometimes think about this.	I frequently think about this.	I frequently think about this.	I frequently think about this.
I can explain why I choose to teach language the way that I do.	I can sometimes do this.	I can frequently do this.	I can frequently do this.	I can always do this.	I can sometimes do this.

When I am opposed to something I am expected to do for my ELs, I have a clear explanation for why I am opposed.	I always have a clear explanation.	I frequently have a clear explanation.	I frequently have a clear explanation.	I never have a clear explanation.	I always have a clear explanation.
I consider how my own experiences as a K-12 student compare to the experiences of my ELs.	I always think about this.	I sometimes think about this.	I always think about this.	I always think about this.	I always think about this.
I think about what I do and do not have the power to change in my ELs' experiences at school.	I frequently think about this.	I frequently think about this.	I frequently think about this.	I always think about this.	I frequently think about this.
I consider how my teaching might impact how my ELs see their identity outside of my classroom.	I always consider this.	I sometimes consider this.	I always consider this.	I always consider this.	I always consider this.
I think about how my own biases impact how I judge what my ELs need and are able to do.	I frequently think about this.	I sometimes think about this.	I always think about this.	I always think about this.	I always think about this.
I am careful about the language I use to describe my ELs when I talk about them with my colleagues.	I am frequently careful about this.	I am frequently careful about this.	I am always careful about this.	I am always careful about this.	I am always careful about this.
I try to plan lessons that will help my ELs challenge status quo assumptions about what they are capable of.	I always consider this when planning.	I frequently consider this when planning.	I always consider this when planning.	I always consider this when planning.	I frequently consider this when planning.
I question whose values are reflected in the learning goals set for my students.	I frequently question this.	I frequently question this.	I always question this.	I always question this.	I frequently question this.

Participant number	17	18	19	20	21
Pseudonym	Kenneth	Elena	Cassidy	Sofia	Christine
How many school years have you worked with ELs in a K-12 setting? (Including the current school year)	9	16	5	16	15
Which grade level(s) do you currently teach or support? (Mark all that apply?)	9th ,10th ,11th	ETK/TK ,K ,1st ,2nd ,3rd ,4th ,5th ,6th ,7th ,8th ,9th ,10th ,11th ,12th	6th	ETK/TK ,K ,1st ,2nd ,3rd ,4th ,5th	3rd ,4th ,5th
Please select any of the following that apply to your current work with ELs.	I teach designated ELD for part of the day.,I am an EL/ELD instructional coach (or similar role).,I am an ELD coordinator (or similar role).	I am an EL/ELD instructional coach (or similar role).	I teach designated ELD for part of the day.	I am an EL/ELD instructional coach (or similar role).	I teach designated ELD for part of the day.
What is your race or ethnicity? (Mark all that apply)	Hispanic or Latinx	Hispanic or Latinx	Hispanic or Latinx ,White	Hispanic or Latinx	White
Where did you earn your teaching credential?	At a University of California (UC)	At a University of California (UC)	Outside of California	At another/private institution in California	At another/private institution in California
In what county do you currently teach?	Los Angeles	Stanislaus	San Diego	Los Angeles	San Diego

Participants were then asked to consider how often they engage in the following reflective practices when they were planning for ELD instruction.

I compare my beliefs about teaching ELs to my colleagues' or administrators' beliefs.	I sometimes do this.	I always do this.	I sometimes do this.	I frequently do this.	I sometimes do this.
I think about how instructional materials (like readings and assessments) reflect their creators' beliefs about language learning.	I sometimes think about this.	I frequently think about this.	I sometimes think about this.	I always think about this.	I frequently think about this.
I can explain why I choose to teach language the way that I do.	I can frequently do this.	I can always do this.	I can rarely do this.	I can always do this.	I can always do this.
When I am opposed to something I am expected to do for my ELs, I have a clear explanation for why I am opposed.	I frequently have a clear explanation.	I frequently have a clear explanation.	I sometimes have a clear explanation.	I always have a clear explanation.	I sometimes have a clear explanation.
I consider how my own experiences as a K-12 student compare to the experiences of my ELs.	I always think about this.	I always think about this.	I never think about this.	I always think about this.	I always think about this.
I think about what I do and do not have the power to change in my ELs' experiences at school.	I always think about this.	I always think about this.	I rarely think about this.	I frequently think about this.	I sometimes think about this.
I consider how my teaching might impact how my ELs see their identity outside of my classroom.	I always consider this.	I always consider this.	I frequently consider this.	I always consider this.	I sometimes consider this.
I think about how my own biases impact how I judge	I always think about this.	I sometimes think about this.	I rarely think about this.	I always think about this.	I rarely think about this.

what my ELs need and are able to do.					
I am careful about the language I use to describe my ELs when I talk about them with my colleagues.	I am frequently careful about this.	I am always careful about this.	I am frequently careful about this.	I am always careful about this.	I am frequently careful about this.
I try to plan lessons that will help my ELs challenge status quo assumptions about what they are capable of.	I frequently consider this when planning.	I sometimes consider this when planning.	I sometimes consider this when planning.	I always consider this when planning.	I sometimes consider this when planning.
I question whose values are reflected in the learning goals set for my students.	I frequently question this.	I frequently question this.	I rarely question this.	I always question this.	I rarely question this.

Participant number	22	23	24	25	26
Pseudonym	Elise	Ian	Brian	Jasmine	Jimena
How many school years have you worked with ELs in a K-12 setting? (Including the current school year)	16	25	4	11	27
Which grade level(s) do you currently teach or support? (Mark all that apply?)	4th	5th	9th ,10th ,11th ,12th	K	ETK/TK ,K ,1st ,2nd ,3rd ,4th ,5th ,6th ,7th ,8th
Please select any of the following that apply to your current work with ELs.	I teach designated ELD for part of the day.	I teach designated ELD for part of the day.	I teach designated ELD for part of the day.	I teach designated ELD for part of the day.	I am an EL/ELD instructional coach (or similar role).
What is your race or ethnicity? (Mark all that apply)	Asian or Asian American	White	Asian or Asian American ,White	White	Hispanic or Latinx
Where did you earn your teaching credential?	At another/private institution in California	At a California State University (CSU)	At a California State University (CSU)	At a California State University (CSU)	At a California State University (CSU)
In what county do you currently teach?	Monterey	Monterey	Fresno	Merced	Merced
Participants were then asked to consider how often they engage in the following reflective practices when they were planning for ELD instruction.					
I compare my beliefs about teaching ELs to my colleagues' or administrators' beliefs.	I sometimes do this.	I frequently do this.	I frequently do this.	I sometimes do this.	I never do this.
I think about how instructional materials (like readings and assessments) reflect their creators' beliefs about language learning.	I sometimes think about this.	I always think about this.	I always think about this.	I sometimes think about this.	I frequently think about this.

I can explain why I choose to teach language the way that I do.	I can sometimes do this.	I can frequently do this.	I can always do this.	I can frequently do this.	I can frequently do this.
When I am opposed to something I am expected to do for my ELs, I have a clear explanation for why I am opposed.	I sometimes have a clear explanation.	I always have a clear explanation.	I frequently have a clear explanation.	I sometimes have a clear explanation.	I always have a clear explanation.
I consider how my own experiences as a K-12 student compare to the experiences of my ELs.	I frequently think about this.	I always think about this.	I always think about this.	I sometimes think about this.	I always think about this.
I think about what I do and do not have the power to change in my ELs' experiences at school.	I frequently think about this.	I frequently think about this.	I sometimes think about this.	I frequently think about this.	I frequently think about this.
I consider how my teaching might impact how my ELs see their identity outside of my classroom.	I sometimes consider this.	I always consider this.	I always consider this.	I frequently consider this.	I always consider this.
I think about how my own biases impact how I judge what my ELs need and are able to do.	I frequently think about this.	I always think about this.	I always think about this.	I frequently think about this.	I never think about this.
I am careful about the language I use to describe my ELs when I talk about them with my colleagues.	I am frequently careful about this.	I am always careful about this.	I am sometimes careful about this.	I am frequently careful about this.	I am always careful about this.
I try to plan lessons that will help my ELs challenge status quo assumptions about what they are capable of.	I frequently consider this when planning.	I frequently consider this when planning.	I always consider this when planning.	I sometimes consider this when planning.	I always consider this when planning.

I question whose values are reflected in the learning goals set for my students.	I frequently question this.	I always question this.	I always question this.	I sometimes question this.	I rarely question this.

Introduction: I am currently a doctoral candidate at UCLA and this interview today is part of my dissertation, where I'm exploring how educators learn to implement and navigate ELD. I am a language teacher, currently teach ESL at a community college and am in my fifth year working as field support for first year dual language teachers for UCLA's TEP. This topic has been really driven by my own experiences teaching language and working in teacher preparation, and seeing how we navigate feeling hopeful and sometimes hopeless at the same time in the context of schools.

And I share all this partly to also say that during the interview I'm going to be asking some questions that I might think I already know the answer to given my experience, but I need to ask them to make sure I'm less likely to misinterpret or misrepresent your experiences.

Before we start, I want to make sure that you've had the opportunity to review the study information sheet that I sent to you via email? [share screen and walk through the sheet if not]. The most important things I want to reiterate before we start are that your participation is completely voluntary. Your identity and the identities of anyone you mention in the interview will be protected. Please also use pseudonyms for your school, students, and colleagues throughout the interview. If you want to skip any questions you are free to do so. You can also withdraw from the study at any time, including after you've completed the interview. Do you have any questions about me or the study before we begin the interview?

And can I ask for your consent to record this interview?

This is Olivia Obeso and Teacher with survey number XX-XX-XX. The date is MM DD YYYY.

Opening Questions

1. So, to start, tell me about your experience teaching ELD. Share anything that you think is relevant or important and I will follow up with more specific questions as we go.

Intermediate Questions
Understanding Policy

1. Tell me about the curriculum or other instructional resources that you use in your teaching.
2. What is your opinion of the curriculum?
3. How does your opinion of [some policy/organizational demand] play a role in how you plan for ELD?
4. I know that there is a lot of talk about the ELPAC and what it's useful for, or for some people, whether it's useful at all. What are your thoughts?

Related survey questions:

   a. Q4: I think about how instructional materials (like readings and assessments) reflect their creators' beliefs about language learning. (frequently)[23]
   b. Q5: I can explain why I choose to teach language the way that I do. (frequently)

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[23] I noted the participant's survey responses in these parentheses.

    c.   Q14: I question whose values are reflected in the learning goals set for my students. (rarely)

Cultural Border Crossing
1. Tell me more about your EL-labeled students and their experiences at your school.
2. Can you describe a notable moment that raised your awareness about how students experience ELD?
3. How has your approach to ELD changed over time?
    a.   What motivated you to make those changes?
    b.   What do you notice about how that has changed your EL students' experiences?

Related survey questions:
    a.   Q7: I consider how my own experiences as a K-12 student compare to the experiences of my ELs. (always)
    b.   Q10: I consider how my teaching might impact how my ELs see their identity outside of my classroom. (always)
    c.   Q11: I think about how my own biases impact how I judge what my ELs need and are able to do. (never)

Caution
1. Can you tell me about a time that you advocated or felt you should advocate for your EL students?
2. When you disagree with your administrators or other colleagues, how do you respond?
3. Who do you think of as being part of your community as an ELD teacher?
    a.   Who do you turn to when you are making sense of your practice?
    b.   Who are your allies in this work?

Related survey questions:
    a.   Q3: I compare my beliefs about teaching ELs to my colleagues' or administrators' beliefs. (never)
    b.   Q6: When I am opposed to something I am expected to do for my ELs, I have a clear explanation for why I am opposed. (always)
    c.   Q8: I think about what I do and do not have the power to change in my ELs' experiences at school. (frequently)

Buffering
1. What do you think students need from you as a teacher/coach/coordinator and how do you think about making sure they get that?
2. What do you believe is your role in the overall support of EL students at your school/in your district?
3. Is there anything you do as a **coach/coordinator** that you feel is in response to the experiences you had as an ELD teacher?

Related survey questions:
    a.   Q12: I am careful about the language I use to describe my ELs when I talk about them with my colleagues. (always)
    b.   Q13: I try to plan lessons that will help my ELs challenge status quo assumptions about what they are capable of. (always)

Final Questions

1. If you could design your ideal set of EL/ELD policies, what is something you might redesign, replace, or add?
   a. How would your teaching/support of ELs look the same or different in that context?
2. I know working in schools have a lot of ups and downs, can you think of anything you've seen or that has happened that made you think "okay, I'm doing a good job. We're doing a good job"?

Thank you so much for your time! Those are all of my questions, given everything that we've talked about, would you like to clarify or add anything?

Housekeeping
And then for confidentiality purposes I don't use your name when storing or writing about what you've shared here – is there a pseudonym you'd like me to use for you or do you want me to pick one for you?

Email for Teacher Education Programs:
Dear XXXX,

My name is Olivia Obeso, and I am a doctoral candidate in the School of Education and Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. I am currently recruiting interview participants for my dissertation study, which examines the role of reflection in educators' implementation of designated English Language Development (ELD). Any current teachers of designated ELD, ELD instructional coaches, and ELD coordinators or educators in similar positions in California are eligible to participate. Would you be willing to send out the attached recruitment flyer to (alumni from this preparation program/any appropriate listservs)? Please let me know if there is someone else I should send this to or if you have any questions before sending it out.

Sincerely,

[recruitment flyer attached]

Email for School Principals
Hello {{ Mail Merge }}

My name is Olivia Obeso. I am a PhD candidate in Education at UCLA, as well as a teacher educator and community college ESL instructor.

I am currently recruiting teachers to interview for my dissertation study that is focused on K-12 designated English language development teaching in the state of California. Any current teachers of designated ELD (including teachers who only teach designated ELD for a portion of the day), ELD instructional coaches, and ELD coordinators or educators in similar positions in California public schools are eligible to participate.

I am reaching out to you, because your school is in a district that has a high proportion of EL students, so you may have teachers and other staff who are focused on and passionate about serving these students. Given that, I'm wondering if you would be willing to pass along my dissertation recruitment flyer with my contact information to any educators at your school.

Please let me know if you have any questions before you decide whether or not you'd be able to share it.

Sincerely,

Email for Educators who Filled Out the Survey
Dear XXXX,

My name is Olivia Obeso, and I am a doctoral student in the School of Education and Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. You recently filled out the screening survey for my dissertation study which examines the role of reflection in educators' implementation of designated English language development (ELD).

Based on your responses, I would like to invite you to participate in an interview. Your interview would take between 60-90 minutes and would be conducted over Zoom. I am attaching the study information sheet to this email with more information. If you have any other questions or concerns before scheduling your interview, please let me know and I will happily answer them over email or the phone!

If you are ready to schedule your interview now, please use the Calendly link below to find a time that works for you. If there is not an available time/date that works for your schedule, please propose two-three times/dates when you would be available, and I will see which works for me.

[calendly link]

Sincerely,

[information sheet attached]

County	Proportion of EL-classified in the state	Proportion of Study Participants from County
Los Angeles	21.97%	26.92% (7)
Orange	8.51%	3.85% (1)
San Diego	8.03%	11.54% (3)
Riverside	6.58%	3.85% (1)
San Bernardino	5.49%	0
Santa Clara	4.81%	3.85% (1)
Alameda	3.82%	0
Sacramento	3.76%	11.54% (3)
Fresno	3.47%	3.85% (1)
Kern	3.24%	0
San Joaquin	2.74%	0
Contra Costa	2.49%	0
Ventura	2.47%	3.85% (1)
Monterey	2.43%	7.69% (2)
Stanislaus	2.35%	11.54% (3)
Tulare	2.26%	0
San Mateo	1.63%	0
Santa Barbara	1.57%	3.85% (1)
Imperial	1.33%	0
Merced	1.32%	3.85% (1)
Solano*	0.71%	3.85% (1)

* Solano county is not in the top 20 counties in terms of the proportion of the state's EL-classified student population they serve.

Pseudonym, Experience, *Role*	Response
Adelio 5 years *9th-12th teacher & coach*	I would like there to be some standard for being a qualified ELD teacher. So, I'm thinking about in France, they have like an entire sector dedicated to French as a foreign language. And we do have like certificate programs for ESL, but we don't have like, you know, this big, vast bank of knowledge and like, a whole degree dedicated to it. There's usually not like a whole teacher that's for ELD. It's just like whoever is around. And it ends up being just some little like note from one class you took in your program. And I'm like, "Bro, what's that gonna do?" So that would be, I guess like, CSET, experience, all that stuff like the best teacher training you could have to be an ELD teacher. Maybe even have like a whole whole office just like we have like science, English, history, like a whole thing for ELD dedicated to welcoming in the students and their parents and like, working with employment opportunities and all those things. Internships. So yeah, something standard directed like throughout the nation. That is like, you have to have certain credentials to be an ELD teacher. That would be my biggest first thing. ...Now here's another one. Maybe like some sort of financial part of that, where like a certain percentage of money is required to be dedicated to ELD...I wish there was like, a defined amount dedicated for ELD students and that could be like for transportation. Like assisting people with finding housing and legitimate tutors, training and all that stuff. I think those are my two I think also my two main ones... ...It would be cool if there was some - I don't know how - but if there was some way that like...Oh, that'd be like really bad...I'm thinking if there's some way that like - I've been to some schools that have like seven students in their ELD class, but then like, at my school, there's like, hundreds. There's like a lot of ELD students. I wish there was some way to is the word mitigate? I don't know I wish there was some way to manage that. But also it could be really bad cuz there's a reason why there's a big difference in the amount of a student's learning English in a particular school district. So that could also be a bad thing. I don't know.
Ana 3 years *2nd/3rd dual language teacher*	...from the two years I have as a teacher, I'd say that the ELD curriculum does have to be culturally relevant, and celebratory of the backgrounds of these students. And it doesn't have to encourage assimilation. But accommodation. So I think it's more of an issue of content being taught than otherwise, I think. I'd also want to require like a screening for intervention for every ELD student coming in. Just so that - because I've seen it in these past two years, where like, some of these kids are falling through the cracks, and it's because they weren't screened early enough. And so that way, we could just address it as quickly as

we can. Cuz sometimes, you know, there are these assumptions that like because they're not learning English, in the fastest way that we would expect them to, that it's an issue of a learning disability, when really, it's just an issue of like, well, how long ago has it been since they've been in school? You know, whereas sometimes it is an issue of a learning disability and we think, "Oh, well, because they've been in school since they were born and they've always been in an English setting that it's not, it can't possibly be a learning disability." And so I think I'd require screeners and I know there's controversy behind that as well. But I feel like it gives us a good launching point on what to do. I think and I know this depends on like the community of the school. But I think also just like educating parents on what it means to be an English learner is.

And then providing resources for parents as well because usually if the kids in English learner, the parent is an English learner as well. So providing resources that are not like shaming but empowering to them, I think would be a good start as well. I don't know how that would look like. Like, I don't know if it would be like, you know, a workshop that like helps them learn like basic vocab together. Or, maybe a packet of like, activities they could do at home together. I don't know. But I feel like it's also important to engage family because you know, you only have them for six hours a day. The rest of the time they have it you know, with them. And so even 10 minutes after school with their parent could do a lot and I think could have a huge impact.

Antonio 17 years *Kindergarten teacher*	Well, if I could, in an ideal world: more freedom for teachers in terms of designing ELD instruction with the appropriate resources...If anything, that's actually the number one complaint we all had. Is the resources are not there. Again, not that we want to read out of a script, but we want to have the appropriate resources to teach ELD. Because [the district's ELD curriculum] is only like 15 days. And then after that, what do we do? And even that people are not crazy about it either. So, yeah, basically just something in terms of the ability to have resources that are aligned to what we feel we should be teaching to our ELs...Ultimately be more fun and the students will be more engaged and we could integrate those conversation skills in a more developmentally appropriate manner.
Ariana 17 years *9ᵗʰ-12ᵗʰ newcomer teacher*	I think one of the things...the amount of time a newcomer, um, student had to education. Um, so again, if you are a 17, 18 year old coming from the mountains of Afghanistan and have not had the opportunity to go to school, and all you wanna do is go to school, but you're coming at 18 and the school's saying when you're 19, you're gone. And, and there are no other options for you for work in this new country. Like, we need to think of how we operate time and the allowance of time. We give students, um, or new newcomers, you know, here to access language and literacy and get themselves at a point where after secondary post-secondary options, it could be a plethora of things that're we're giving them the tools to thrive in our society that they've come to. Um, so somehow or another, you know, making sure that happens. A part of that is,

again, the age legislation. So, I wanna say federally maybe, I always get this mixed up, but I know that every LEA has a discretion in terms of like when they, you know, cut the brakes on allowing students in. But then federally has like a different 21 marker, I think, and stuff like that. And so it's like, okay, how can we line up, you know, match everything? So we're at least all at the, at level of 21, right? So, because that at least would allow a student in high school to have the time, um, you know, working that way. The definition of a newcomer really needs to be spelled out. So our district only treats a newcomer for one year after the one year they say you're no longer a newcomer, and they kick them out of my class, let's say, even if they are not ready. Um, and so other people have three years. So again, it's really defining that, that what, what a newcomer looks like.

Also I would say even trying to ensure that bilingual strategies across the board in every California classroom, um, be a common practice. For a minute due to legislation back in 99, with the clad and the cross-linguistic, students or teachers had to re certified to get this part put in their credential, so that they can properly educate English learners. Well, there was a certain time in California, or at least some of the CSUs took that program out and whatever. So there's a group of people that don't have even the strategies. So it's like, how can we then collectively get one more time California, federally or, you know, reeducate ourselves with the strategies. But the, the knowledge and the, again, the paradigm shift to allow for multilingualism in our classroom. To allow for the use of non-traditional tools to be seen as valuable if it is something that a student can use in order to access content, access knowledge be able to express themselves.

So again, it's yeah, mentality, like paradigm shifts, again, the rethinking how we language rethinking what standardized English and standardized languages look like in general. Rethinking how we approach our students literally physically on a daily basis. I thought that also plays into EL stuff. So it would be like, again, it seems like with those, it's like a close monitoring, like, ah! But in a way it's like, you know, we have to train our bodies. Like we can't just do exercise for a day and then expect that we're gonna have muscles or get skinny. So it's almost like with like legislation that can mandate like people to be good people. It's almost like, okay, like let me box you in so that you can like, get in the form of being a good teacher so that you don't just fall the jello the minute that these things are gone. You know, it's almost like you have, we have to re-practice our education, how we deliver education.

<div style="margin-left: 2em">
Beatriz
5 years

9ᵗʰ-12ᵗʰ coach
</div>

Yeah, that's like a, a loaded question because is that given, like, our society is still structured the way it is? So just schooling is not structured the way it is? So, we're like envisioning the schooling, but there's still, like the outside forces, capitalism is still in place? <laugh>. So, I'm thinking about all of that, right? Because in a different society that would look different. But if we're still under the forces of the one that we live in, you know, what [would] the policies [be]?...

So, I think I know how to answer this question and it's gonna be simple. But we need to – one thing that's not really done, we always say we need to talk to teachers. We need to get their perspectives. [But] we also need to talk to students. We need to talk to students who went through the systems, right? And we need to validate what they need or what they needed. I mean, who better than someone who went through these institutions? So, I would approach new policies based on the knowledge and importance that we're giving our students and their experiences. Because even I, you know, don't know exactly what my students need. They probably know better. Especially once they face the real world out there. What would they have liked their schooling experience to be? And I think that is most important and one that I would like, wanna investigate, you know?

...And so how do we honor what they need? Because oftentimes we impose our visions of whatever utopian society we have, right? Like, it's my vision. But what is a vision that, or what is the need and the wants that my students have? And how do I honor those even if they're not so aligned with mine? And that is a hard thing to do, but that's ultimately my role to prepare them for the world that they want to live in. And they, you know, and thrive in. So ultimately, revisiting with like, graduated students and students in the classroom and letting them know. And, I say students who have already like maybe left the, the school 'cause [they] could be more reflective about, okay, this is what I'm dealing with now. What do I actually now know I needed from this education?

Brian
4 years

9ᵗʰ-12ᵗʰ
teacher

It's tough because there's a lot but do I know that effective? Not really, like I would prompt for lower level – I would probably emphasize phonics a lot more. Like phonetic awareness goes a long way. And like when you can, I'm a big fan of chunking. So, when you're chunking, an actual word into its pieces. It's just easier. Like I hated phonics as a kid. I hated it. I hated it. But like it's probably why I can speak the way that I speak. And it's probably why I can read the way that I read. So maybe trying to like, emphasize more phonics like at the lower levels, the higher level of ideally like, mandatory like bilingual support like at the lower levels too, like if I can, if I can have my way all the way across. At the higher levels, like more vertical alignment. Like, more emphasis on full form essays. Instead of these, like, tiny little narratives. Like, narratives are cool, but how often do we write about ourselves, like past the college admission or like a job interview? So, narratives have its purpose but it should be more about expository and argument.

I'm a writing teacher. So always more emphasis on writing. The writing test and the ELPAC in my opinion is the hardest. It gives you no help. Like your level one questions usually have at least two errors. So students are great at picking out one but they suck at picking out two but in my opinion, the writing test is what pulls most ELD students down because there's too many partial credit questions like it's not clear on what you really have to do. Like if you're not

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reading every single word and understanding every single word. So, more emphasis on writing all the way across the board.

Cassidy
5 years

6th teacher

I would just say like, start with the "how to", to begin with. Because, you know, very rarely have we sat down and actually been like, "this is how you teach an EL student." And there's no there's no videos for us to watch. There's no you know, again, I did get my Master's in this however, I didn't find it as extremely useful just because I didn't actually get to put it into practice. And again, I'm a visual person. So, I think that for new teachers, for teachers in general who don't have an ELD background or anything like that, you need to start with how to even do it first. And I think that so many schools and above in the government all that they just throw this out here saying you need to do it, but there's no guidance on how to do it necessarily. And it's like we're always being tasked with, "you have to have lessons for every single kind of learner in your classroom." But there's never that for teachers. It's just "read this and have to go figure it out." It's like no, that doesn't work for everybody. So, if I were to design something that had to do with the teaching of my EL students, I would have like a document that has you know, videos and written instructions and resources. That's another thing. Where are my resources to help these kids? What can I even use to help them I'm a sixth grade classroom. I don't have books that are kindergarten level to sit down and work with my students are like we should be given solid ELD materials to use if that's what they're requiring us to do. Not some book that says here's why you should do it. Actual materials.

...And that's something I've noticed in every school I've been in. It's not one particular it's every school I've subbed in, I've taught in, there's never been "here you go." Or no there's always been a "Here you go" but not a "here's how to do this." And if they do a "here's how to do this." It's how to do it with adults. That doesn't help anybody. We're adults. I can't act like a kid I can but like it's not. It's not...

Christina
5 years

6th-8th teacher
&
coordinator

I don't even know. We have seen some change in our district. So in our district, in order to reclassify they had to pass the ELPAC, every section they had to pass and like every subsection they had to pass and then a certain [Scholastic Reading Inventory] score and then passing every class...Which was a lot. And this last year they said, you know what, actually they just need to pass every section, but they can have a subsection that's like a three instead of a four. So that is one example. I feel that was a good policy change because oftentimes that's just, that's just too strict and you're holding kids back that are fine.

A another change: a problem we've had in the past is our students who are also in the special education program, were never reclassified. I'm like, there's just no reason for these students not to be reclassified. And so this year again, we made some change, um, that we were able to reclassify students that really should have been reclassified.

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And so those are some examples of good policy changes. I just feel like they can't be – sometimes those policies can be too strict and I feel like if you are going to ask your everybody in your district to do this one curriculum, you need to know that that's actually a good curriculum and, and not give us a curriculum that's not research based, that doesn't cover and really doesn't give you a full, a full program, but expect us to use our full-time on it. You know, if you want me to use that for one little piece for their reading and writing or something. Okay. But it's not a full curriculum so you can't spend all your time on that.

Christine
15 years

*3ʳᵈ-5ᵗʰ
intervention
teacher*

Maybe a little more time for ELD? I mean, there's just not enough time in the day to take extra time for ELD, but our ELD is now only a half hour per day, used to be an hour, and it's hard to get enough done in that time. I think I could hit more skills and expand on skills more with a block taken out, but the day is getting eaten up. And teachers are already complaining they can't get everything done that they need to. Because right now a big focus is adding enrichment. So we brought in dance and art and that which is all important, but the balance is all out of whack while they get this going. So, I don't know where it's gonna go. This is the first year of it, but there's just, we don't have enough time to work with the kids. If they're not getting support outside it's, how do you do the best you can within the amount of time? So, more time would be nice, you know that that 45 minute or hour block would be much more beneficial. I can't think of anything else. Maybe. I think as more studies are being done with ELD like you're doing and we understand language acquisition and the movement towards achieving academically I think we'll see better curriculums and more, you know, better supports for the classroom. Yeah, I'm hoping that there'll be changes to, but I don't know what this would, I have no idea what they'd look like.

Damian
4 years

*9ᵗʰ-12ᵗʰ
teacher*

Okay, so for me, it would be a placement test that is sensitive to motivation and proficiency. So, I could have high motivation newcomer group, and a highly academic motivated newcomer group and a newcomer group that just wants to learn conversational English. And I could do so much with that. Rather than having that blend and having to bounce back and forth between the two groups and constantly get buy in and all that kind of stuff. So something that was sensitive to motivation and proficiency would be fantastic. And forget about how long they've been in the program. Because I don't think that really matches up to needs, as well as these other two considerations. And so once we had those similar needs, then I think prep would get so much easier. And I think we could, with the two teachers we have, we could actually tackle that pretty easily. Yeah, so a little bit more homogenous groupings, to make prep a little bit easier for those groups would be...So if you could do that, please do that. Yeah. *chuckles*

Elena
16 years

I firmly believe that if we taught ELD within the context of a bilingual or dual language setting, we would see a lot more growth. I firmly believe that as a EL student who went through a bilingual setting, I felt like my primary language was

TK-12ᵗʰ valued, was honored, and was an asset. And it only made me want to learn
coach & English more. So that's what I would say. I would definitely say let's make all the
coordinator schools dual language schools. Let's honor our students' primary language and
use that to help them.

Elise ELD is like, something that needs to be done whether it's integrated or
16 years designated. But I think for our kids that are on that higher end, like I think if
they're able to feel successful in the classroom, like, I wish they could exit easier
4ᵗʰ teacher and we could focus more time on those kids who are new, or you know, haven't
quite grasped the tools that they need to be successful with, you know, the
reading and writing of English. I think that's where our focus shouldn't be more.

...Um, I think we would do more of like the basic grammar and just identifying
different things, like objects or things in the classroom and just getting them to
like practice more with the speaking and hearing it. versus, you know, like, oh, if
you would have just written a little more details here, you could have done
better. I think that, you know, just kind of going through those basics to get
them ready and just feeling successful with the language.

Ian First of all, I wouldn't be talking out of my ***. If I really had this to do I would
25 years want research, which I don't have. But, my daughter finished a dual language
program. And I feel like maybe I don't know exactly. But what if we spoke
5ᵗʰ teacher Spanish for half an hour in the class? That'd be helpful. Like and I don't know.
(special It's part of the problem. I feel like it's - I haven't really seen anything that really is
education) like, here's the magic bullet, you're gonna be able to, this is the thing.

But one thing would be more time. More time for conversation, and more
basics. In a lot of the - again, the speed of the curriculum. The problem of
having a big system is that you have to have a one size fits all suit that you can
give to everybody. But that can give everybody something, but it doesn't. And
the things that it lacks, are time and practice on basic stuff that are assumptions.
You know, like I started kindergarten knowing how to read. But my students,
that's not the case for them. At all. And so what do they need? Well, they need
practice with language. How do you get practice with language? The first thing is
receptive, right? And then then you produce language and then you start doing
the academic things. And they don't get that, they don't have it. So, you need to
be able to do what they need to be able to sit around and talk to each other and
maybe about academic topics or whatever. But with the expressed focus of
language development, which I think is generally being - because of the because
of identification of everything, that they're trying to remove all of the benefit of
studying language away from it.

You read this stuff, and it's just so dead. It's awful. When I read stories in
school, I liked them. They were good stories. You know, you could get into it, it
would make sense to you. And then you could involve yourself and that would
be part of the pull through in terms of the motivation to be involved with

literature at all. Is because you got something out of it...The curriculum spends too much time on things that we count and not enough time on things that are on substance in development is the obvious development of language acquisition.

Isabel	Um, something I've been thinking about with our like new immigrant students,
15 years	because we have a lot of students from Afghanistan. And through the California
	Department of Ed I was doing some reading and stuff like that. In another
9ᵗʰ-12ᵗʰ	countries, they have like, a six month period of assimilation, where they learn
coordinator	how to use a computer, they learn how to just – learn the culture. Because

Isabel
15 years

9ᵗʰ-12ᵗʰ
coordinator

Um, something I've been thinking about with our like new immigrant students, because we have a lot of students from Afghanistan. And through the California Department of Ed I was doing some reading and stuff like that. In another countries, they have like, a six month period of assimilation, where they learn how to use a computer, they learn how to just – learn the culture. Because they're learning culture. They're learning language, they're learning technology, they're learning so many things, that if we had a six month period or wherever, whatever month amount of time, but just like a period of getting to know the culture, expectations, technology, just prepare them to be in the classroom, instead of just shoving them into a classroom. Because they need to have some sense of community and they feel they belong, they're going to be more willing to engage and do better. So, I would love to have something like that.

And then have a curriculum support class where they can maybe check in and check out or maybe meet once a week or every as they need to be successful in their classroom throughout their academic day. There shouldn't be something after school because a lot of kids, especially when they're from immigrant families and big families, they have to go home they have to help with cooking, cleaning, childcare, and all this other stuff. I had to do all of that. I didn't get to play sports in high school because I was the oldest in my home. So, people forget that our kids have different obligations in the home. And it's not fair. And they should be kids and they should be able to do all this other stuff. But the reality is that it's not. So, I would like to have something like that available because our English only students, they're able to get out of their classroom and go to the library and write an essay and stuff like that. Our EL students are learning that they can do that, but they're not using their time effectively. They're just getting out of classroom because they don't understand that. The other thing is that teachers allow them to listen to music, watch videos, so long as they're just not being disruptive, they can do whatever they want, but they're not learning anything. Even during ELAC I had parents say "will you only speak English to my student. I don't want you trying to speak the language." I'm like, "No, the reason I do it is because I want to make sure they understand what I'm asking them to do. So, if they understand what I'm asking them to do, they're gonna do it if I do it all in English, they're not going to get it." So I tried my best.

And then also, if teachers took more classes that would like prepare them culturally. Like this year, there was this whole professional development day or two on our Afghan culture. And people came over and as the math department, we didn't get to participate because they wanted us in the district talking about the scope and sequence which is important as well. But when do we get to make up that training? We didn't get to make up that training. And it's no longer

available to us. So I think I would start there. Because then, you know, you're supporting and nurturing the students and you're supporting and nurturing that teachers.

Jasmine
11 years

Kindergarten teacher

One thing that I think gets messed up a lot is in how, like, parents fill out their initial forms. We've talked about that a lot this year. Students who – because I mean, I've seen it written on registration forms the same way at lots of different schools. Schools I've worked at schools that my own children went to. We've pulled other forms to compare. It's always the same, like, you know, "what language is spoken in the home?" And, you know, some people have a grandma who's living with them, or some people might have another family member who happens to speak one language. And so, if you write English and Spanish, you're automatically designated as a language learner and that's really not an assessment. Even use that as a factor to determine. You know, that didn't even ask a question about the student. So those initial questions I would redo I don't know what I would say though. The time with the team to figure out how we're going to do this with the kid first. And it shouldn't just be you know, students who don't speak English, it should just be everybody. I think that would serve us a lot. Better. Yeah.

...Well, [ELD] would definitely kind of always be integrated. And then just making your groups based on the students' assessments, rather than being like, oh, well, here's an EL group. And this is a higher EL group. And here's a lower EO group. It's like we all need to learn these things here. And these students are ready to move on and maybe do a little bit more with writing.

Jimena
27 years

TK-8th coach

It's a funny you say that because right now I'm working on a big project that I feel it's like a big project for me. But it's going to give the teachers a sense – those that want to – a sense of seeing how the standards are so aligned and everything. So, I think my ideal school would be where the teachers are able to see how related everything comes, you know, when everything is used together and the proper way that one will be successful. The artists, students, the English learners, their proficiency level will be great. And we – actually the one district I do follow along and look at all their resources, and they're big on designated ELD. So, I have learned a lot from what they offer in their district. And it is it is amazing, like they celebrate culture and nothing and nobody is seen as "Oh, you teach them Oh, I don't want it." You know, it's not a burden. It's a privilege.

Julieta
4 years

6th-12th coach

I was going to say the who teaches ELD. If I had the power to hire a really great ELD teacher wherever there are in the world, if I had the power to hire them and say, I'll sign you off a contract, but teach our kids. Who's passionate to do it, then I feel like I'd do that. The relationships really do matter. And so yeah, our students really need someone who believes in them, they need a champion. And I would say just finding that champion that will be there for our students.

Kenneth
9 years

I'll start with low hanging fruit. I definitely think ELPAC is a hindrance to students being able to actually reclassify. I think they're, even if there was like,

9ᵗʰ-11ᵗʰ teacher, coach, & coordinator

another data point [instead of] ELPAC and /or... and whether that's SBAC. Whether that's some form of a portfolio or just something else. And I know that - I'm not saying ELPAC is bad, because I think that it has a place. I just think I've seen too many students that, in every other sense of the word are academically ready to do other courses. But that one element of the test. Or if it's like, okay, they get a four ninth grade year, in reading, they don't have to retake the reading part, they only have to do the part that they haven't met. But what happens is, there's students that come super close, and after we take the whole test the next year. And, so now it's really discouraging, versus, "hey, if I meet the requirements in this, I only..." You know, I think that would be like just a starting point that would make it easier to not only test but to get kids encouraged about reclassifying. Okay, they meet the benchmark - it's kind of like [Reading Inventory] testing, where we've seen students that hit a certain number, they'll take the test later, and it's lower. But we don't say all of a sudden, they forgot how to read. It's like, no, for whatever reason, they just didn't hit that, but we know they've hit the higher mark. I think that one small change can go a long way and help these students reclassify or at least pass ELPAC because once you we can book it in, for this, you don't have to get there again.

Kiera 5 years

2ⁿᵈ & 5ᵗʰ teacher

Yeah. I mean, yeah, there's so many big things that I would change. I feel like, I don't know. I mean, just the first thing that comes to mind is the standardized testing. Like that expectation on our ELs, I feel like is a lot of pressure. And they put a lot of pressure on themselves, and it's very overwhelming and very anxiety inducing. So, if that element could be taken away. With the knowledge that yeah, it takes a long time to acquire language, and we can't assess you on your social studies skills and your math skills in your second language, which is a language heavy test, that would be fabulous.

I also feel like if I - I know, it's in the title, like "English language development". But, if we could place less emphasis on English and more: what literacy skills do they have in their home language? And how can we develop that? And then transfer it to English and transfer it to their L2 in the same way that high school students have a language requirement? Like, how can we kind of model it a little bit more after that. I mean, I'd love if all classrooms could be dual immersion with all your teachers that speak the home language, and all those fabulous things would be amazing if I'm dreaming big. And just kind of de-emphasizing that English is the only goal of, of school. Like, there's so many other important aspects to an education system, and having multiple languages is part of that. So if we can be like, "hey, English is one of the things right, but there's all these different other ways that we can assess and see where you're successful. That's not steeped in this language." I know that's a big dream that requires a lot of bilingual people, and a lot of retention for bilingual educators. And that's a nationwide issue. But if we could treat it more like some other countries do, where it's like, this is one of the languages, you know, you got that option. But you can also show success and have the skills outside of learning English.

...I mean, I think it would look different just on a from a systems issue. Like it, would affect my day to day because maybe I'd be teaching in Spanish. Maybe I would need to be that bilingual educator or I would need to take a support staff role. Maybe I would need to be the bilingual IA that speaks English. It would change my power dynamic and the school in a way that would be interesting to see. Because it would need to be...we'd need to have more bilingual educators. So either I'd have to step up and do that, or I'd have to take a different role that may be, quote, less, less powerful. But as far as in the ELD day, it would be be a lot less English. It would be you know, maybe 15 minutes of the two hours, you know, so it would it would change it in a big way.

Lakshmi 10 years *TK-5th intervention teacher*	ELD structure like for me, I would say having a corner where there is a word bank. Weekly word list. And having a visual with some of the harder words. You know like having some visuals like commonly used. Having a graphic organizer where [you] teach the students how to use a graphic organize. Pre-teaching vocabulary. Having multiple and different passages on different topics. Having like, you know, a survey at the beginning of the year. Asking the students what topics, something that is on their interest. So kind of having those books. Having books you know, something they can read. Having a little corner so where everybody's interest in books are there. Some like dinosaurs, some like airplanes. Whatever they really like you have some kind of books. That will inspire them to read.
Lilia 5 years *4th dual language teacher*	Maybe the way that they're assessed, and I just want to, whatever assessment they are given, just making sure that they're properly assessed on their language proficiency. And that the assessment process is just fair, kind of unbiased. And I know it's through computer and I know you're using headphones, but they don't receive any type of feedback, like I said, until the following year. And I haven't done my research on who's behind, who's creating the ELPAC. I know it's the state. And then just my experience with the SOLOM, when the first grade teacher was administering that, that just felt more authentic. It was being recorded, it was the teacher, someone that the student is familiar with. When students in our class take the ELPAC, they're not in our class. They're pulled for the ELPAC with another teacher and with other students. So just the environment that they're in and just making sure that they're aligned with current best practices and that they really meet the needs of our students. And I feel like they're not really provided with clear information about the assessment itself. I mean, I've gone out my way and we talk about the ELPAC, but that's not something the whole school does. So, students just know they take this test every year and they're pulled from the class. So, I feel that's where there needs to be some sort of a change or improvement.
Maddie 4 years	That's a big question <laugh>. Um, I definitely think that reclassification should be treated similar to an IEP where the teacher presents evidence and the family

5th teacher presents evidence and then the best decision is made for the child. Rather than being based on test scores. Because there are students who are going to need two or three years to acquire the language and there are others who might need one year. And so, I don't think that having it be like okay, everybody's in it for this amount of time or until they can pass this test necessarily makes sense. But having a teacher and validating the teacher's expertise as a professional to be able to make that recommendation that "hey this student is performing just like their monolingual peers on these tasks. They are ready to exit this system of support." Very similar to what we see at least in my transition IEPs for my kids going into middle school. Whether they need a period of resource or whether they can just move into push in support. Where are they at and what's most suitable for them? So I would love to see reclassification look much more like an IEP meeting where all the stakeholders are there, everybody presents evidence, it's a collaborative decision. I definitely think that once the kid reaches fourth grade they should be involved in the decision. That's something I advocate for all the time. I love when my kids are involved in their IEP meetings. Depends on the admin, whether they'll let it happen. And I would love to have a kid involved in their reclassification meeting and what do they think they need and if they think they're ready that holds weight to me. So I would definitely love to see your classification look like that.

In terms of an actual structure, I think it would be great if we could have like an English learner specialist like on campus and similar again to I guess not super similar to resource. I don't want the kids to feel othered all the time but like, having them get that support where it's not a teacher teaching five kids while the rest are in the room still doing something else because they're not getting high quality instruction. So either clustering them into a classroom which we're supposed to do but doesn't always happen. Or giving them some type of out of the classroom time where they can build community amongst one another and where they can get that support where it's not a teacher trying to teach two things at one time I think would be much more effective.

Um, and I think having their teachers be more trained in their native language. Cuz that's the one thing that I notice is different about my classroom to other classrooms on campus. Cause we don't have any other Spanish speaking teachers on staff right now even though our population is primarily Spanish speaking. That's another situation. But um, that's one difference that I do notice about my classroom versus the other classrooms is that my students have access to somebody who can translate for them, have access to somebody who can switch into their native language if they need it in that moment and also have access to somebody who has the knowledge base to make that English learning a little bit more balanced and fluid. So, I think it would be great for teachers to even just be given a training on like English Spanish cognates or English Spanish verb forms or something like that so that they at least have something and can see the assets that their students are coming in with. So, it can just be a much more positive experience for everybody. Because in this perfect system the only

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people who are English learners are people who are learning English <laugh>. So it would be great if we could have increased or like build capacity and teachers to be able to be familiar with whatever their school's population has as their native language.

Ms. M
18 years

Kindergarten teacher

Okay, I'm gonna be from a critical perspective...Get rid of the assessments. I think they are long overdue. I think the assessments really don't prove anything. Because I'm pretty sure that if you give that ELD assessment to an EO student that's in kindergarten, and you're asking that higher level thinking, probably they won't pass it. Imagine junior high, where they're reading and analyzing, it's harder. So I would say, probably redesign it, if they truly want to keep something you know, that's more formative. We're designing and say - I was thinking about this question, because I have something like that in my dissertation to kind of like adjusting okay, this student has been in the country one year, this is level one-year English that they should know. Two years, three years, five years, oh, no, sweetheart by five years, you need to x y, z, kind of adapted. That's what I would do. But my preference, get rid of it. We don't need it. It just stigmatizes students and their self esteem when they're older. And like I mentioned previously, our Latino kids drop out, because they're like, "oh, I have that extra class. And I can't take the credits that I need. Now I have to go to continuation school adult school." And for what you're speaking the language you're working in the community using the language. Or redesign it.

Rosa
16 years

9ᵗʰ-12ᵗʰ newcomer teacher

Lemme think. Oh, so, I don't even know if it's possible, but I guess I'll just say it. I feel like teachers are evaluated in a manner that is not authentic. And because of that, it has made certain aspects of teaching performative. And it's also taken away a teacher's drive, desire to challenge their ways - It's taken away that ongoing reflective. And maybe it's also teachers themselves, that they're not reflective. It's a problem in education. And so, I would almost like to change the way that we do this and that. I guess almost like national boards, how they do that ongoing reflective component process. And if we could change coaching models being more like that, where teachers are being more reflective of their teaching and supporting student learning. And one of the highlights would be how do you support emergent bilingual students in your class? And challenging monolingual perspectives, because everything in the United States, the push is like, well, you can't succeed if you don't have English. And I want to say that I've been able to navigate certain systems of oppression because I had multiple languages, and it's also strengthened my community and it's also strengthened my identity. And I think that the way that we need to approach intersectionality needs to be reviewed so that people see language as an asset.

In Europe, it's definitely showcased. I guess one big thing is when the freaking Princess in England, Charlotte, when she was learning language, when she was like three years old, everyone's like, "oh my God, she is so great! She's learning French and Spanish and English!" And it's like, so I have a kid in my class who speaks Persian, Pashto, learning Arabic and English. Where's his crown? And

everyone gets to celebrate it like that. But then they flip it to deficit mindset for our ELD students. Why aren't we also like, oh my gosh, you speak Pashto and English? Like, wow, that's a superpower.

So, then I guess if I could change anything, it would be the way that teacher education programs approach languaging and then supporting identity, building learner communities that celebrate language. And then I would also love to change the way that teacher evaluation is currently done in my district, in that it's very intentional in making sure that teachers are actually being reflective of how they teach students who are not considered English proficient and what scaffolds they're taking to do that. Because I'm a content specialist. If you ask me anything about biology right now, I can teach the hell out of it. But when you asked me to teach reading in science to my students, I could not do that for you. I couldn't. I had no idea where do I even start. And so what I had to do is - because I wanted to do it - I was reflective of my own practices. I said to myself, "no, you need to find something that teaches you how to do this". And I think that if we were evaluated in a different way where a teacher would set a goal, like "this year I'm going to challenge the way that I bring literacy into my classroom", and it would be like that and it would be a coaching model. I feel that it'd be more intentional and it'd be genuine. And those change practices, even if they did it at the surface level initially, it's still something that they created. And we're lazy. So if I made a whole thing on literacy, I'm not going to change it the next year. I'm going to keep using it. And so through some magical, lazy way, they will keep doing the good practice, even though they didn't initially want to.

Sofia 16 years *TK-5ᵗʰ coach*	I think that I would recognize that if you are assessing ELD it means that the child is multilingual. And so really, recognizing that in policy, and not just looking at it through a deficit mindset of like they're lacking English but these kids are multilingual. Being multilingual is difficult. It's really hard learning another language. So recognizing that piece of it. I wouldn't want the kids to be tested to death but really, like acknowledging, okay, you're really strong in this other language. And how do we then navigate this bilingualism in your life? I would. If we're talking about EL policy, like supporting in their in their home language, some sort of policy about home language support so that they're able to really develop the second language for all students, not just the students in dual programs. I'm adding I mean, I just talked about special ed, but we're also having special ed see that these students are multilingual. I also think for a lot of times, students that are ELs they'll be like, "oh, let's wait a year or two before we really assess for special ed because it might be the language." And again, I feel like that's looking at language as a deficit mindset and so changing that, I don't know if it's part of policy or if it's just mindset, but how do we reward things to honor that other language because anyone who is being assessed as an EL means that they speak another language and so really honoring that in some way.

Tracy 18 years *TK-12*[th] *coach &* *coordinator*	What I'd like to change is that just because academics is seen as the higher priority versus the whole child with that culturally responsive way of doing things that that's not seen as a back burner kind of thing. I feel like it needs to be together with the curriculum, that it's not just like...look, I can see a lot of people shoving that to the side. "No, no, I'm kind, I'm kind to my students". And I feel like there's a lot more than that. Teachers need to look within themselves and look for their biases so that they can then effectively implement a better way for the students. If there's something that I feel like would change? So that's what I feel like I would like to happen.

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