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Practitioner Inquiry Communities: Re-Mediating Language Ideologies

By

ANTHONY MIRANDA
DISSERTATION

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Practitioner Inquiry Communities: Re-Mediating Language Ideologies

Abstract

*English Learners in secondary school settings often face discrepancies in opportunities and outcomes. Methods to address these discrepancies are grounded in an instrumental approach to instruction, wherein educational practitioners are understood to require methodological intervention in the form of professional development by a more experienced expert. However, repositioning practitioners as knowledge generators who understand their contexts as potential sites of inquiry is seen as a more humanizing and democratic approach to professional learning. This qualitative Practitioner Inquiry study explored the language ideologies articulated and embodied within the context of a Practitioner Inquiry Community by practitioners supporting *English Learners at a Northern California high school. It also sought to understand how participation in a Practitioner Inquiry Community mediates language ideologies. This study utilized Cultural-historical activity theory, critical post-structural sociolinguistics, ideology-in-pieces, and *inquiry as stance* as frameworks for analyzing data. Findings demonstrated that practitioners draw on language ideologies across a continuum ranging from hegemonic to more counterhegemonic throughout their participation in an inquiry community. This study concludes that participation in a practitioner inquiry can mediate language ideologies and conceptualizations of support for *English Learners.

Keywords: language ideologies, inquiry as stance, Practitioner Inquiry, English Learners

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my son, Mercer, and my wife, Jens.

Mercer, every word is a hope and challenge to a system that might see you more fully.

Jens, every word is a product of your patience, labor, and love.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

***English Learners' Opportunities and Outcomes**

Over two million students in California's K-12 system speak a language other than English in their homes, representing nearly 40 percent of California's total enrollment (California Department of Education, 2023). Almost half of these students are designated English Learners, representing the largest population of English Learners in the United States (California Department of Education, 2023). Within public schools, students designated as English Learners are woven into a skein of additional supports and barriers. The tension between services and disservice begins when schools define English Learners through educational deficit thinking—that is, by defining the English Learner designation as a lack of English proficiency (Valencia, 2010). The California Department of Education (CDE) states that an English Learner is:

a student who enrolls in a California school beginning in any grade level, transitional kindergarten through grade twelve, has a language other than English identified on the Home Language Survey, and upon assessment, obtained a level of English proficiency that indicates programs and services are necessary. (California Department of Education, 2023)

Critiques have been leveled against using the terms “English Language Learner,” “limited English proficient,” and “English Learner” for perpetuating an idealized monolingual norm (Flores & Rosa, 2015; García, 2009; Martínez, 2018). These terms also reinforce the perception of linguistically minoritized students as lacking English, as opposed to recognizing the linguistic assets they bring to schooling. García (2009) proposed the term “emergent bilingual” to center “children's potential in developing their bilingualism” (p. 322). Ramírez (2018) argued for using

the term “multilingual learner” to honor the fact that many linguistically minoritized students speak more than two named languages. The terms used have important implications for how students view themselves and how linguistically minoritized students and their caregivers are viewed by practitioners, educational policymakers, and society (García, 2009). Despite these critiques and alternatives proposed, the terms “English Learner” and “limited English proficient” are entrenched in institutions of schooling and woven into both state policy and federal law.

Entering school and being designated as an English Learner (*EL¹) impacts how students and practitioners see and believe in their academic abilities (Pettit, 2011). At the same time, this designation allows districts to receive additional funding to provide services and support for *ELs. In the case of this study, my position as an Instructional Coach for *English Learners is a byproduct of the designation. It is an instance of how the concept can be powerfully productive in that it creates and substantiates additional apparatus that reifies the notion itself. While the additional services seek to address the inequitable opportunities and outcomes of *ELs, much of how supports are conceptualized and implemented perpetuates standard language ideologies (Lippi-Green, 2012), raciolinguistic ideologies (Rosa & Flores, 2017), and white linguistic hegemony (Baker-Bell, 2020).

By almost every academic outcome measure, discrepancies exist between *ELs, English Only (EO) students, and students who have been reclassified as fluent English proficient (RFEP). On traditional measures of academic proficiency—including the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment in English Language Arts/Literacy—11.3% of *ELs met or exceeded standards compared to 57.4% of EO students (California Department of Education, 2023). Moreover, while

¹ Throughout this research project, I will utilize an asterisk to certain terms in an effort to draw attention to the processes and construction of the notion of an English Learner. This use builds from Lippi-Green’s (2012) use of “*standard American English” to indicate the mythical and constructed-ness of a standard, uniform English that is an aspect of constructing the English Learner designation.

only 38.1% of EO students met or exceeded standards on the Math portion of SBAC, only 8.4% of *ELs did the same (California Department of Education, 2023). Recent California Department of Education data from the 2020–2021 school year demonstrate the disproportionate impact of the continued COVID-19 pandemic on *ELs as the persistent differences in outcomes are exacerbated (California Department of Education, 2023). Kanno and Kangas (2014) showed that *ELs who do perform well on traditional academic measures tend to face additional barriers, such as course tracking policies that perpetuate unequal access to advanced coursework; the absence of support that would allow for better access to college preparatory coursework; and lack of access to social capital networks that could aid in navigating the college-going and -choice processes. Without access to advanced coursework, *ELs deemed “high-performing” are tracked into courses with inferior content, which sustain and exacerbate stigmatizations linguistically minoritized students already endure in academic settings (Thompson, 2017).

The discrepancies in outcomes extend beyond the K-12 experience and persist as *ELs move from secondary schooling into higher education. While the overall four-year high school graduation rate for *ELs has increased over the last decade, the 2021–2022 four-year cohort high school graduation rate for English learners was 67.1% compared to 86.1% for non-*ELs (California Department of Education, 2023). For *ELs that graduate high school, the college-going rate ranks lowest among student groups. *ELs are also significantly more likely to attend California Community Colleges (CCC) which are often touted as a less expensive route, but the stop-out rates are high—particularly for *ELs—and the net cost of attending CCC is often prohibitive (Hopkins et al., 2022).

Beyond academic proficiency and success measures, *ELs’ experiences in schooling can also impact their perceptions of self and language, social relationships, and conceptions of

academic success. Students from linguistically minoritized backgrounds—particularly students of color—are constantly “navigating and negotiating language ... impacted by the interlocking systems and structures of linguisticism, racism, classism which are interrelated and continuously shaping one another” (Baker-Bell, 2020, p. 16). While Baker-Bell (2020) directs attention specifically to the experience of Black Language-speakers, hers remains a generative framing for the unique experiences of other linguistically minoritized groups, including *ELs. In powerful ways, these interlocking systems manifest and impact *ELs through the language ideologies enacted in schooling that reproduce linguistic hegemony, where language associated with whiteness becomes the standard against which other ways of using language are compared (Wiley & Lukes, 1996). This imagined language use has been articulated as *standard American English (Banes et al., 2016), Mainstream Academic English (Souto-Manning, 2013), Standardized English (Mallinson & Charity Hudley, 2010), and White Mainstream English (Alim & Smitherman, 2012; Baker-Bell, 2020). Regardless of its appellation, this use is not understood as an objective, empirical form of language, but an ideological construction and a byproduct of white supremacy.

*ELs and speakers of non-dominant varieties of English are inundated with and internalize ideas of academic success and competency as being “linguistically indexed by proficiency in Mainstream American English” (Souto-Manning, 2013, p.11). This internalization results in language-speakers holding both affirming and dismissive views about their own linguistic practices, which Smitherman (2006) terms linguistic push-pull. Martínez (2013) found that Latinx adolescent *ELs expressed both deficit language ideologies as well as pride in and an aesthetic preference for their use of *Spanglish*. *ELs also communicated feeling that their home languages impeded and influenced “the social relationships they developed (or didn’t) and the

affinity groups of which they could become members (regardless of their interest and knowledge)” (Souto-Manning, 2013, p. 11). These ambivalent views of their language can be partly attributed to messages received in schooling—particularly the story told and retold that home languages are valid and valuable but that in academic spaces, so-called *Academic English is the target language. This story has been framed as an appropriateness argument (Flores & Rosa, 2015), a dominant school language narrative (Metz & Knight, 2021), and an essential aspect of Respectability Pedagogy (Baker-Bell, 2020). *ELs’ experiences of schooling represent a complex set of inequities for educational institutions to address and require thoughtful, critically reflective designs to promote more equitable access and outcomes.

As a middle school educator, I often found the complexity of providing support for ELs’ to be a source of great tension and an area of deep reflection that I connected back to my own experiences in schooling. Growing up, I straddled what felt like two different worlds. While with my mother, who is white, I had a mostly mainstream, albeit rural and isolated, childhood in Northern California. Her father was Columbian and spoke Spanish, however, he was mostly absent from our lives. But the times I spent with my father, who is Mexican American and lived in California’s Central Valley, I was woven into a way of being a family that sang and danced to songs in a different language. I would hear my grandparents speak Spanish like a secret code or a cherished heirloom in a hidden drawer. I would wonder why it was their secret and not shared with us all. I came to understand the role of institutions, like schooling, that reproduced powerfully limiting conceptualizations about language and I dreamt of entering the classroom as a teacher who could make a change.

I came to teaching wanting to pursue more equitable educational outcomes, and I held the belief that I could play a role in leading that pursuit. As an educator and teacher-leader, I worked

to navigate the tension in communicating to students the value of their home language and the dominant messages of schooling that said they need *Academic language to navigate schooling for future success. Ultimately, this unresolved tension turned into a perplexing series of questions: How do we get students to value their language and understand the ways that it is devalued? How can I and fellow educators examine our perspectives on language and shift practice? How do we collectively destabilize and dismantle top-down initiatives that perpetuate assimilationist perspectives? What is our role in creating new notions of academic success that don't rely on knowing particular ways with words that share affinities with white, middle-class linguistic and cultural norms? Early iterations of these questions stemmed from my participation and co-facilitation of the Northern California Writing Project's Summer Institute. It was there that I experienced professional development that felt humanizing and centered inquiry. These questions and the contradictions within them continue to form the foundation of both my work as an Instructional Coach for *English Learners and this research project.

Approaches to Addressing Discrepancies in *EL Outcomes

Often, methods for addressing these inequities begin and end with seeking to alter the student and are grounded in problematic conceptions of remediation. They do not generally critique or challenge the ideologies, practices, and policies that construct the white gaze, through which *ELs' cultural and linguistic lifeways are seen and "heard" (Flores & Rosa, 2015). For cultural-historical activity theorists such as Engeström (1987), student's learning must be understood within contexts of development that are influenced by sociohistorical factors. This understanding entails a shift in the onus of change from student to activity, and is captured by the concept of re-mediation, which "involves the reorganization of instruction, learning, social relationships, and artefacts, all the features that help influence, shape, and emerge in socially

mediated interaction” (Gutiérrez et al., 2009, p. 236). Calling into question and seeking to alter the contexts in which students are situated rather than proposing that *ELs’ linguistic practices need to be altered represents an important shift in constructing equity in education. Research that builds from an acknowledgment of institutional inequity imagines policy-level, site-based, and pedagogical shifts that may contribute to the creation of conditions for *ELs to achieve more equitable outcomes, academic and otherwise.

Several policy recommendations seek to address the many ways the public education system fails to support *ELs, including: redesigning inequitable district reclassification policies; challenging restrictive language-of-instruction policy; and evaluating *EL scheduling or placement practices to provide access to core content (Robinson-Cimpian et al., 2016). Statewide policy recommendations include investing and creating a state database that can collect information from cradle to career, as well as “refine the metrics/measures within the College/Career Indicator to ensure consistency, accuracy, accessibility, and transparency for all stakeholder groups” (Murillo & Lavadenz, 2022, p. 7). Institutional policy regarding practitioner assignments could reverse the trend of courses with *ELs and Designated ELD classes being assigned at higher rates to less qualified practitioners with less experience (Dabach, 2015; Gándara et al., 2003). These policy, systemic, and school-based shifts would represent significant steps in addressing the inequities that *ELs experience.

In 2017, the California State Board of Education approved and adopted the California English Learner Roadmap as a policy document that “serves to, provide guidance to local educational agencies (LEAs) on welcoming, understanding, and educating the diverse population of students who are English learners attending California public schools” (California Department of Education, 2023). The policy document set out four guiding principles for LEAs to utilize in

designing supports and services for *ELs, from creating inclusive classrooms to cohesive supports across entire school systems. The first principle—Assets-Oriented and Needs-Responsive Schools—asserts that educational institutions should recognize that:

The languages and cultures ELs bring to their education are assets for their own learning and are important contributions to our learning communities. These assets are valued and built upon in culturally responsive curriculum and instruction and in programs that support, wherever possible, the development of proficiency in multiple languages. (California Department of Education, 2023)

This document outlines laudable systemic goals and guidance for more equitable opportunities and outcomes for *ELs in California. The work of marshaling change and dismantling linguistic racism at the policy and institutional levels remains a puzzle of matching espoused commitments and values to actions. In addition to recommendations and conceptual commitments to address these institutional and systemwide issues, practitioners' instructional practices and ideologies are seen as crucial leverage points for increasing *ELs' opportunities and outcomes.

Language Ideologies as Levers for Change

Imagining ways to redress persistent discrepancies in opportunities and outcomes for *ELs often couches these approaches in purely methodological terms, as though inequitable outcomes would cease to exist if practitioners just had the right strategies and enacted them with fidelity. This generalization results in the provision of problematic forms of professional development for practitioners. Of course, practitioners do need opportunities to develop their strategies in supporting *ELs. Research points to practitioners' needs for support in providing grade-level content to *ELs (Gándara et al., 2005). *EL support may also be improved when practitioners are given opportunities to interrogate the lowered expectations they may hold for

*ELs and to examine how this can lead to coverage of less content and inferior instruction (Blanchard & Muller, 2015; García-Nevarez et al., 2005). Additionally, educators should be offered support in distinguishing students' needs contingent on the *EL subgroup or typology (Murillo & Lavadenz, 2022). Apart from these instructional needs, supporting the development of practitioners' ideological beliefs is also important given the influential role educator beliefs play in pedagogy (Fang, 1996).

For practitioners who support *ELs, language ideologies—that is, beliefs and attitudes about how language operates in society (Kroskrity, 2004) as well as the “everyday practices in which such notions are enacted” (Gal, 1992, p. 446)—represent an important area of professional learning. Practitioners appropriate and internalize the language ideologies they embody in practice. Practitioners hold and enact multiple, often contradictory language ideologies (Kroskrity, 2004). These ideologies exist on a spectrum that includes hegemonic language ideologies and counterhegemonic language ideologies. Sustaining a system that holds White Mainstream English as the standard to which *ELs should aspire is an example of a hegemonic language ideology. Metz (2019) describes counterhegemonic language ideologies, meanwhile, as “a range of contrasting beliefs such as embracing linguistic pluralism and acknowledging the linguistic equality of multiple languages and language varieties” and a taking up of a “descriptive, rather than prescriptive, view of language” (p.3). How practitioners interrogate these multiple language ideologies, destabilize those that are hegemonic, and seek to increase the salience of counterhegemonic language ideologies is among this study's central concerns.

Much professional learning, which “refers to the construction of practitioner knowledge and skills,” takes place through professional development, meaning the activities that aim for “changes in practitioner's practice and practitioner's understanding of practice” (Karen, 2019,

pp. 362–363). Professional learning opportunities are developed and implemented on tacit conceptualizations of teaching, practitioner learning, and professional practice. Despite calls from professional organizations like the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) to provide practitioners with opportunities for participatory, collaborative, and inquiry-driven examinations of instructional practice, most of what practitioners experience as professional development do not exemplify these calls (Cabusao et al., 2019; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). The COVID-19 pandemic created additional complications in providing practitioners with professional development in California.

COVID-19 has also exacerbated the ongoing statewide teacher shortage. One result of this has been a lack of substitute teachers, who are imperative in allowing practitioners to be released to attend professional development. The inability to offer release days for in-person training has meant that professional development is more often held in online formats and after practitioners' contract hours. The professional development often offered to practitioners—whether in-person or in synchronous online spaces—takes the form of short, one-off workshops that focus primarily on addressing instructional methodology (Rotermund et al., 2017). These practitioner learning spaces build on unspoken ideas of skilled practitioners as though they are able to adeptly and intrinsically put knowledge into practice that experts have deliberately generated through empirical research; but that information must be imparted to practitioners through learning (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999).

Instructional leaders designing professional development for practitioners in how to interrogate and develop instructional strategies and counterhegemonic language ideologies should ground their design process in counterhegemonic approaches to practitioner knowledge construction. For Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999), practitioner inquiry communities hold the

potential for professional learning that builds on counterhegemonic formations of what practitioner knowledge and practice are, what it means to be a teacher, what teaching entails, how best to support teacher learning, and the roles teachers have in educational change. Inquiry communities can be offered as professional learning experiences where practitioners are re-positioned as “co-constructors of knowledge, creators of curriculum, theorizers, activists, and school leaders” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999, p. 276). This study employs this alternative epistemology of professional learning and how it conceptualizes the process of practitioner knowledge construction as woven into intentional, situated, and collaborative inquiry. This framing of professional learning seeks not only to problematize current instructional methodology but also to center an examination of practitioners’ articulated and embodied language ideologies which are inseparable from practice.

This study postulates that practitioner participation in a collaborative inquiry community that centers the contradictions inherent in the dominant language narrative could engender nascent expansive language ideologies. These emerging ideologies could, in turn, increase in salience with support, and hegemonic attitudes and beliefs about language may consequentially decrease in prominence. By facilitating an *English Learner Inquiry Community Community with in-service secondary practitioners of *English Learners, this project attends to Borko’s (2004) call to develop educational research projects that examine practitioners learning in professional development. This can be accomplished through both “Near-vision prescription,” a psychological conceptual framework to focus on the individual practitioner, and “Distant-vision prescription,” or sociocultural theories that allow for an analysis of professional development and the forms of participation.

Unfortunately, little research extends beyond the articulated and embodied language ideologies of individual in-service practitioners. Findings do exist on socially shared ideologies articulated by practitioners and perpetuated by dominant institutions (Lemmi et al., 2019; Metz, 2019; Metz & Knight, 2021). In addition, some findings that speak to the change in individual practitioners' language ideologies (Bacon, 2020; Schieble et al., 2022). However, these studies provide neither an explanation of how professional learning occurs nor how or what aspects of professional development mediated in-service practitioners' language ideologies. This study sought to extend beyond identifying and tracing the language ideologies of individual in-service practitioners, focusing instead on ideological articulation, embodiment, and potential transformation of an activity system.

Research Questions

In this research project, I explore practitioners' articulated and embodied language ideologies. To do this, I derived data from a practitioner inquiry community facilitated by myself with the aim of examining what expansive learning results from radical reimaginings of how more equitable outcomes can be pursued for *English Learners (*ELs). These reimaginings may include broadened notions of which languages are considered acceptable in schools. In this dissertation, I sought to understand:

1. What language ideologies do practitioners who support *English Learners articulate and embody in a practitioner inquiry community?
2. How does participation in a practitioner inquiry community mediate the language ideologies of high school practitioners who support *English Learners?

The following four chapters of this dissertation are organized as follows: Chapter 2 provides an overview of relevant literature on the articulated and embodied language ideologies of

practitioners who support *English Learners. It also presents relevant literature regarding the design and efficacy of professional learning spaces for practitioners. Chapter 3 introduces the four theoretical lenses and essential constructs through which this research project was designed, carried out, and analyzed. Chapter 4 discusses the specific setting, participants, and methodology used for this research project. Chapter 4 also includes contextualizing sketches of the four *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community sessions which made up the specific activity system research for this project. Chapter 5 presents and explicates the four themes that arose through analysis of the data. Finally, Chapter 6 discusses the findings, their relationship to the prior research, as well as implications for future policy and practice.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

This literature review presents research on educational practitioners’ articulated and embodied language ideologies, and the factors that give rise to practitioners’ language ideologies. Next, research regarding practitioners’ professional learning experiences and the efficacy of professional development aimed at supporting *ELs is reviewed. Then, research on practitioners’ participation in classroom inquiry communities as an alternative model of professional development is examined. Finally, research is presented on attempts to destabilize hegemonic language ideologies that practitioners hold about *ELs through professional learning.

In-Service Practitioners’ Articulated and Embodied Language Ideologies

Practitioners enter educational spaces with tacit beliefs and attitudes that shape their instructional practice (Fang, 1996; Pajares, 1992). Language ideologies—that is, beliefs and attitudes about language and how language operates in society (Kroskrity, 2004), as well as the “everyday practices in which such notions are enacted” (Gal, 1992, p. 446)—represent an important area for research, particularly for educators of *ELs and the impact they have on instruction. Henderson (2017) differentiates between articulated language ideologies—used in spoken forms of communication—and embodied language ideologies used in practice. Practitioners articulate and embody language ideologies with the capacity to create validating and expansive learning environments or perpetuate deficit educational thinking (Valencia, 2010) that shape *ELs’ educational experiences in damaging and marginalizing ways.

Metz (2019) found in his survey of 310 Missouri English teachers that “as a whole, English teachers hold counter-hegemonic beliefs about language users,” and that English teachers felt that others in society held more “hegemonic, judgmental views” (p. 10). Metz and

Knight (2021) further explored practitioners' beliefs about language by conducting semi-structured interviews with 27 Missouri teachers. Clusters, or components, of practitioners' language ideologies were deduced, including: beliefs about language users; beliefs about societal perceptions; beliefs about language in school; and beliefs about the English teacher's role. Where beliefs about societal perceptions were concerned, 100% of interviewed teachers spoke to the negative judgments others make—including about how kind, moral, or intelligent students are perceived to be—based on the language they use (Metz & Knight, 2021). For practitioners who support *ELs, language ideologies can serve to reinforce White linguistic hegemony (Baker-Bell, 2020) or to position students as “agential holders of knowledge whose rich repertoires of communicative features and practices must be called upon to display their ever-evolving knowledge” (Souto-Manning et al., 2022, p. 109), with many other possibilities in between.

Practitioners report holding more counterhegemonic beliefs about linguistically minoritized students; however, “when considering language in the context of schooling, teachers expressed a hegemonic view—upholding the status quo with all of the existing social, racial and linguistic hierarchies and inequities” (Metz & Knight, 2021, p. 242). In a large survey study, there was general agreement with the claim that “English teachers should teach students the value of multiple dialects of English and to use multiple dialects for a range of purposes” (Metz, 2019, p. 10). In a study of 14 high school math teachers undergoing professional learning on translanguaging pedagogies, Marshall et al. (2023) reported that: “Teachers resisted the idea of the school being responsible for sustaining student languaging practices, instead focusing on developing students' proficiency in academic English as an essential element for future success” (p. 7). These hegemonic language ideologies are an aspect of what Metz (2019) termed the dominant school narrative, which includes a rationale where practitioners acknowledge that

*Standardized English is not the only correct form of English but go on to include the caveat that they must support students' proficiency with *Standardized English or *Academic English, as its use is tied to success in both school and workplace settings.

An additional complication is the application of *Academic English in inconsistent and often ill-defined ways. Lemmi et al. (2019) found that secondary science teachers used the term "academic language" in ways that "seemed to be interchangeable with science terminology, or vocabulary" (p. 865). One practitioner shared while examining a student writing sample that "she just sounded like, more academic, how she presented it" (Lemmi et al., 2019 p. 865). The inconsistent conceptualizations of what constitutes academic language are unsurprising, given that academic language is understood as an "idealized notion of the kinds of language valued in schools" and "not a set of empirically observable linguistic features" (Martínez & Mejía, 2020, p. 1). These findings point to the complex set of beliefs and attitudes that practitioners articulate and embody in supporting *ELs and the ways of using language that index academic success.

Practitioners embody inconsistent language ideologies in practice and professional learning. In a mixed-methods study of pre-and in-service practitioners' language ideologies, Bacon (2020) analyzed participants' language autobiographies, survey data, and written essays before a course on Sheltered English Immersion and found that practitioners expressed contrasting language ideologies. This contrast could be characterized as contradictory, but may be better understood as "shifting in response to contextual incentives" (p.185). Similarly, Lemmi et al. (2019) conducted focus group interviews and found that high school science teachers drew from language-inclusive and language-exclusive ideologies while evaluating student work samples. When science teachers in this study were provided student writing samples, they identified "notions of clarity, appropriateness, use of terminology, and formality of language" as

aspects of evaluating student work; yet, interestingly, they additionally sought out whether students were “getting the point across” rather than whether the “proper” language was used (Lemmi et al., 2018, p. 867). This represents a tension in ideologies: “appropriateness” and propriety were judged important evaluation criteria at times and disregarded at others.

Teachers also make meaning of other teachers’ pedagogical practices through the complex use of multiple, divergent language ideologies. Schieble et al. (2022) conducted an analysis of a multi-year English Language Arts practitioner inquiry group wherein practitioners exchanged lesson feedback encouraging translingual pedagogical shifts that would “focus more on students’ flexible use of their full linguistic repertoire” (p. 104). In the process, practitioners also “upheld notions of linguistic separatism in their talk by suggesting students use their preferred languages in small groups, and then use English during whole class discussion” (p. 104). These practitioners employed seemingly contradictory language ideologies to make sense of their instructional practices and student work samples. These findings are in line with Kroskrity’s (2004) identification of five overlapping layers of significance in the construct of language ideologies, one of which is multiplicity, where “language ideologies are profitably conceived as multiple because of the plurality of meaning social divisions (class, gender, clan, elites, generations, and so on) within sociocultural groups that have the potential to produce divergent perspectives expressed as indices of group membership” (p. 503).

These studies capture that multiple, context-dependent language ideologies shape visions of academic success, assessment practices, and participation in professional learning experiences. The findings also provide an understanding of the processes for destabilizing, dismantling, and rearticulating more expansive language ideologies.

Factors Influencing Practitioners' Language Ideologies

While practitioners' language ideologies are shaped by several predictors, it is imperative to acknowledge that language ideologies are never monolithic, nor are they simply reproduced deterministically. Rather, they are always subject to resistance, contestation, and negotiation (Razfar & Rumenapp, 2011). Furthermore, though practitioners may articulate and embody contrasting language ideologies across a range of contexts, it may remain possible to identify a more cohesive language ideological stance when language ideologies are analyzed through a study of "the system of related meaning making resources toward the goal, or object" of an activity system (Razfar & Rumenapp, 2011, p. 250).

Practitioners' educational experiences have been found to influence articulated and embodied language ideologies. For example, practitioners who had not taken foreign language classes or taken multicultural education courses evidenced more negative attitudes toward teaching *ELs (Lee & Oxelson, 2010). Practitioners often "cast students' bilingualism only as a deficit in English" instead of understanding *ELs' native languages as key resources for developing additional languages (Pettit, 2011, p.133). However, educators that did take a foreign language or multicultural education course were "significantly more likely to implement practices that encouraged and affirmed students' home language and cultures in the classrooms" (Lee & Oxelson, 2010, p.464). In addition, having taken a linguistics class was also predictive of the belief that "society is more judgmental of people based on language use than teachers who had not taken a linguistics class" (Metz, 2019, p. 26). Practitioner education experiences play an essential role in crafting the beliefs, attitudes, and actions of practitioners.

Teachers with very few *ELs seemed to have the most negative attitudes (Pettit, 2011). These practitioners tend to attribute academic difficulties to "laziness or lack of effort" or simply

believe *ELs cannot master the required curriculum (Penfield as cited in Pettit, 2011, p. 130). Even some well-meaning educators use this belief to justify lowering expectations for students instead of shifting practice to afford equitable access to the content. Practitioners have also been found to hold deficit conceptualizations of multilingualism and powerful misconceptions about Second Language Acquisition that influence classroom practice. Reeves (2006) found that teachers held the belief that after arriving in the United States, *ELs acquire English within two years and that second language acquisition is impeded when students do not speak English at home. Furthermore, practitioners held beliefs that allowing named languages other than English interferes with English language development (Reeves, 2006).

Practitioners resisted the idea that practitioners should design learning spaces that allow students opportunities to use their full linguistic repertoires to make meaning. One cited reason for this resistance was a “concern for students’ success on standardized mathematics assessments” (Marshall et al., 2023 p. 8). This belief is shaped and reinforced by internalized pressures originating from “principals, district, and federal accountability policy” that reinforces ideas that the purpose of schooling is solely about academic success, which is best measured by standardized assessments such as the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium test (SBAC) and the SAT.

An additional predictor of practitioners’ language ideologies is geographic location and exposure to language diversity. Populations of linguistically diverse students vary across states, and more positive attitudes about linguistic diversity are related to increased exposure to different languages (Walker et al., 2004). Practitioners’ own linguistic backgrounds also seem to have some impact on the views they hold about *ELs. For example, practitioners that reported using a language variety besides *Standardized English also reported holding more

counterhegemonic beliefs about *ELs' language use (Metz, 2019). However, in Metz's (2019) survey study, the predictive value of practitioners using non-dominant language varieties and espousing counterhegemonic views was mitigated by the dominant school narrative. In other words, the story practitioners hear and tell about language use in school can amount to an appropriateness argument (Flores & Rosa, 2015) or Respectability Pedagogy (Baker-Bell, 2020) that reproduces hegemonic language ideologies.

Another factor in practitioners' language ideologies is found in years of experience. Mantero and McVicker (2006) found that practitioners with the most positive attitudes tended to have less than 10 years of experience. Metz, meanwhile, found that "more experienced teachers have a distinctly more traditional hegemonic view of the English teacher's role in teaching about language" (Metz, 2019, p. 15). However, Metz (2019) also found that years of experience as a predictive value were once again mitigated when the dominant school narrative was included in the multiple regression model. This speaks to the Institution of schooling—and White linguistic hegemony under the guise of Respectability Pedagogies—as a powerful authorizing and ideological site (Baker-Bell, 2020; Silverstein, 1998).

Practitioners' seemingly contradicting articulated and embodied language ideologies should be understood in the context of larger policy and institutional forces that shape and are shaped by practitioners' participation in them. In an in-depth case study of two bilingual teachers in Texas that sought to explore language ideologies and enactment of local language policy in their classrooms, Henderson (2017) found that practitioners articulated and embodied both assimilationist and pluralist language ideologies in surveys, interviews, and classroom observations. The findings indicated clearly that practitioner "language ideologies mediate language policy" (Henderson, 2017, p. 31). Indeed, participants found opportunities to exert

agency in the implementation of external policy mandates regarding practitioner and student language use; however, dominant language ideologies woven into “the district program and school language policies constrained and shaped agency” (Henderson, 2017, p. 31). Henderson (2017) also argued that pluralist language ideologies articulated and embodied by a particular participant must also be understood as an aspect of that practitioner’s experience as a White, native English speaker who had not experienced the linguistic discrimination of others—particularly from his students and colleagues of color, who would potentially face discrimination or be otherwise penalized for espousing similar language ideological stances. This final point is crucial in understanding that the articulation and embodiment of language ideologies is a way of indexing macro-level historical, political, social, and cultural relations.

Practitioners’ educational backgrounds, geographic locations, professional experiences, personal language histories, and complex contexts of schooling are many—but certainly not all—of the avenues through which practitioners develop beliefs and attitudes about students’ language. These same factors may offer the avenues through which linguistic forms can be developed in academic settings.

Practitioner Professional Learning

There is evidence that professional learning opportunities can result in the development of instructional strategies and student learning outcomes. This established, “there is a need to better understand exactly what and how teachers learn from professional development, or about the impact of teacher change on students” (Borko, 2004, p. 3). In identifying the need to study strong professional learning communities, Borko (2004) used the analogy of corrective vision prescriptions to capture both the individual practitioner’s participation in professional learning and the involvement of the professional development community writ large. Borko used the

“Near-vision prescription” of a psychological conceptual framework to focus on the individual practitioner, while the “Distant-vision prescription” of a sociocultural conceptual framework focuses on the professional development community—this, “to collect and analyze data on norms of communication and patterns of participation in professional development activities” (p.8). In creating and studying an *English Learner Inquiry Community, this study aims to understand practitioners’ individually articulated and embodied language ideologies. It also explores how a learning community can mediate the transformation of language ideologies to design student interactions that acknowledge and extend students’ full linguistic repertoires.

Virtually all practitioners participate in some form of professional development each year, but the format, length, and focus of professional development vary widely (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). Professional learning is most efficacious when it focuses on specific content; is grounded in activities and their specific context; incorporates opportunities for active learning; and includes “collective participation of practitioners from the same school, subject, or grade; and includes administrative support for planning and implementing change” (Rotermund et al., 2017, p. 2). To have the desired effects on practitioner practice and student learning, professional development should be sustained for 20–100 hours over 6–12 months (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). However, most of what teachers experience as professional development comes in the form of episodic workshops that are “package approaches” and are “prescriptive, uncritical, and prosaic,” usually lasting less than a day (Gebhard, 2010, p. 201). This research project seeks to move toward professional learning experiences that center practitioners’ capacity to guide their own learning within spaces that are designed to catalyze collaborative inquiry. However, due in part to the limited time and typical structure of professional development that

most practitioners experience, there are limited opportunities for practitioners to engage in inquiry and to apply and reflect on the content taught.

In 2011–2012, two-thirds of practitioners who participated in professional development aimed at supporting *ELs reported that they received 8 hours or less of training (Rotermund et al., 2017). There is increasing recognition of the complexity of needs that exist for *ELs because of the diverse range of students categorized under the term *EL (e.g., recently arrived students, Long-Term *ELs, *ELs with special education identification, *ELs with limited or interrupted formal education, *ELs from different linguistic and national origin backgrounds, *ELs who are undocumented and/or unaccompanied minors, *ELs who are refugees, etc.). Despite this complexity, professional development for practitioners often perpetuates a monolithic view of an *EL and touts strategies to address the needs of *ELs as defined through this monolithic lens. For *EL-focused professional development, the content must extend beyond “best practices” and include opportunities to identify the specific language needs of *ELs, focus on specific content areas, and provide scaffolds contingent on *ELs at different English proficiency levels (Von Esch, 2021). In addition, *EL-focused professional learning should provide opportunities for practitioners to make explicit their tacit beliefs about the languages seen as “better” or “more academic” in classroom spaces; promote understanding of the relationship between language, identity, and culture; and address practitioners’ language ideologies about *ELs in the classroom (Wortham as cited in Banes et al., 2016, p.171).

Practitioners are inundated with messages about the importance of the language of schooling or *Academic English throughout their professional lives. MacSwan (2020) argues that one factor among many that influences practitioners’ language ideologies “has been an over-emphasis in teaching and practitioner education curricula on the nature of school language,

generally called Standard English or Academic English, and an inadequate focus on the nature of children's home language as a linguistic asset" (p. 31). One common aspect of professional learning targeted at educators of *ELs is the development of instructional strategies that attend to the now-classic hierarchical dichotomy between Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive-Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), as created by Cummins (1981). This idea has in part functioned to spur a study of the language of schooling that has reified the claim that "the essential aspect of academic language proficiency [is] the ability to make complex meanings explicit in either oral or written modalities by means of language itself rather than by means of contextual or paralinguistic cues such as gestures and intonations" (Cummins, 2000, p. 59). This claim reifies the belief that the language of schooling—*Academic English—is intrinsically more advanced, more complex, and the marker of success in schooling. As such, *Academic English functions as a Standard Language Ideology: "a bias toward an abstracted, idealized, homogenous spoken language which is imposed and maintained by dominant bloc institutions which names as its model the written language by which is drawn primarily from the speech of the upper middle class" (Lippi-Green, 2012, p. 67). This language ideology is taken up and perpetuated even by well-meaning practitioners who seek ways to create more equitable outcomes for linguistically minoritized students. However, this set of attitudes, beliefs, and practices about language in schooling turns hegemonic when it stratifies students based on linguistic proficiencies with *Academic English, and subordinates *ELs who arrive at schools with equally complex linguistic repertoires but who are perceived by the White listening subject as lacking the language of schooling (Flores & Rosa, 2015).

Professional Development to Destabilize Language Ideologies

Opportunities to problematize and further develop language ideologies—and the instructional practices they are inextricably linked to—should be considered within the purview of practitioners’ ongoing professional learning. Bacon (2020) found that participants in a sheltered instruction course demonstrated a “move towards monolingual ideologies” despite the course not being intentionally designed to destabilize or sustain particular language ideologies (p. 179). This points to the ways in which ideological transformation is performed regardless of intent.

Practitioners make conceptual and ideological transformations when their articulated and embodied ideologies are shown to be insufficient in explaining or making sense of a particular context. However, this is not likely to happen unless there is a safe, collaborative space that where challenges and the work of appropriating increasingly salient beliefs and attitudes into pedagogy can be sustained. Cobb et al. (2009) offer a productive distinction between “groups” of practitioners working together and “communities” of practitioners working with: shared purpose; collective understanding of reasoning with artifacts; and shared participation norms. Designs with the goal of mediating language ideologies “must require [practitioners] to make their preexisting personal beliefs explicit; it must challenge the adequacy of those beliefs, and it must give novices extended opportunities to examine, elaborate, and integrate new information in their existing belief systems” (Kagan, 1992, p. 77). Practitioners should be provided time and resources to support ongoing reflection. Philip (2011) further complicates the process of ideological transformation and practice shifts by reminding us that “learning must occur over time and across many contexts” (p. 327). This is because “learning to use a concept in a particular context entails recognizing relevant features and making meaningful inferences in that

context” (Philip, 2011, pp. 305–306). Destabilizing and rearticulating language ideologies should be considered an ongoing process of development that requires prolonged, collaborative communities (Cobb, 2009).

Professional learning opportunities that target *ELs often tout reductive, one-size-fits-all best practices that both are born out of and lead to overgeneralizations about the complexities of *ELs’ cultural and racial backgrounds. Generic forms of support based on generalized understandings of complex student populations catalyze deficit assumptions that sustain and maintain white linguistic hegemony. Furthermore, because of the complexity of the experiences and identities of *ELs, practitioners need ongoing support in considering the varied ways that linguistic discrimination and racism manifest for students with “different racial, ethnic, regional, and gendered linguistic backgrounds in varied contexts” (Metz & Knight, 2021, p.252). It is thus imperative that this work not be understood as the mastery of a defined set of competencies, but an expanding, ongoing (un)learning. This process calls for an inquiry approach to the historical antecedents of current instantiations of language and power in schooling, in tandem with practitioners engaging in a self-reflexive study of the historically and socially shaped language ideologies they articulate and embody in practice with *ELs. Not only is practitioners’ professional learning often inadequate in duration and intent, but the instructional models guiding the design and delivery of professional learning are often likewise inadequate.

Individual and collective destabilization and rearticulation of language ideologies may find a generative starting point with practitioners in an inquiry community committed to de-privatizing instructional practice and conducting inquiry toward the development of new practice.

Practitioner Inquiry

For Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009), practitioner inquiry is an umbrella term that captures many different genres of inquiry, including what Carr and Kemmis (1986) have termed action research; what Stigler & Hiebert (2009) have termed Japanese lesson study; what Schieble et al. (2022) have termed inquiry groups; and what Gallimore et al. (2009) have termed learning teams. Conducting a scoping review, DeLuca et al. (2015) identified typical features of inquiry, which included dialogical sharing, action-taking, and reflecting. For Cochran-Smith & Lytle (2009), the commonalities between different forms of practitioner inquiry extend beyond structural elements and offer these additional eight features:

practitioners as researchers; assumed links among knowledge, knowers and knowing; professional contexts as sites for study; emphasis on communities, networks, and other forms of collaboration as the central social structure that fosters and sustains inquiry; blurred boundaries between inquiry and practice; new conceptions of validity and generalizability; systematicity in terms of data collections and analysis; and efforts to make the work public and open to the critique of a larger community (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p. 118).

While genres of inquiry share these characteristics, they differ in how the role of the practitioner is conceptualized and the ultimate goals of practitioner research.

In a review of the development of the practitioner-researcher field, Cochran-Smith & Lytle (1999) identified three conceptual frameworks that captured different practitioner positioning in inquiry communities. The first conceptual framework—practitioner research as practical inquiry—is guided by the understanding that the practical knowledge generated by practitioners is essential to developing and enhancing classroom change. Practitioner inquiry pushes against the formal knowledge-practical knowledge distinction in that it envisions the

knowledge generated by practitioners as valuable and essential in developing practices. However, this form of practitioner research can be fit into existing school reform initiatives that seek only to make classrooms *as currently imagined* run more effectively, rather than problematizing, interrogating, and ultimately changing underlying assumptions and current instantiations of best practices (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999). This version of practitioner research is seen as a time- and place-bounded sequence of steps thought of as a way to demonstrate the professional skill of lifelong learning, solving classroom problems, or improving an instructional strategy.

A second professional framework is practitioner research as ways of knowing within communities. This framework seeks to emphasize the capacity of practitioners as agents of change at the classroom and school levels. Inquiry communities that fit into this attempt to blur “boundaries of research and practice and on conceptualizing practice as a critical and theory-building process” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999, p. 18). This push against the theory-practice split—coupled with the aim of changing the current conditions of classrooms and schools—means that practitioner practice in this version of practitioner research is best understood through the lens of the Freirean construct of praxis, or “the idea that teaching involves a dialectical relationship between critical theorizing and action” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999, p. 21).

Finally, Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) identify practitioner research as social inquiry as a last conceptual framework that captures practitioner inquiry projects seeking “social change ... [and] emphasizing its role in the creation of a more just and democratic society” (p. 18). The goals of these final two conceptual frameworks for practitioner inquiry extend beyond solving classroom problems or producing findings, instead seeking to mediate practitioners’ critical habits of mind that encompass more than a single inquiry cycle and “identify levers for needed

change in people, institutions, and systems” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p. 142). Also within these final two conceptualizations of practitioner inquiry is the analytical construct of *inquiry as stance*, which embodies “the idea that education practice is not simply instrumental in the sense of figuring out how to get things done, but also and more importantly, it is social and political in the sense of deliberating about what to get done, why to get it done, who decides, and whose interests are served” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p.121). These conceptualizations of the different types of practitioner research point to the importance of elucidating the oft-unspoken ways practitioners are positioned as tacticians or generators of local practice knowledge to shape the design of professional development.

Outcomes of Practitioner Inquiry

The reimagining of a practitioner as a researcher leads to an entirely different model of professional development that supports the development of productive shifts in practitioners’ attitudes, beliefs, and practices. Systematic reviews about practitioners in inquiry communities have identified different ways that action research has mediated: practitioner learning and changes in conceptions of professional practice; increased feelings of self-worth; increased practitioner awareness of classroom events; dispositions towards reflection; awareness of held beliefs about education; and broadening views of the connections between schooling and society (Noffke and Zeichner, 1987). In addition, practitioners’ participation resulted in increased confidence in their ability to promote student learning; the development of habits of inquiring beyond the formal inquiry; increased enthusiasm for teaching; and feeling more affirmed in their understanding of the value of the teaching profession (Zeichner, 2003).

Often, practitioner inquiry is presented as though the inquiry process itself is simply a time-bounded series of steps. However, research has also demonstrated that the inquiry process

can develop more extensive habits of mind surrounding inquiry and its connection to what it means to be a practitioner. Ermeling's (2010) study focused on "collaborative practitioner inquiry aimed at solving instructional problems in the classroom" found that practitioners' participation led to changes in instructional practices that they attributed to the inquiry process (p. 378). Mertler (2021) found that practitioners participating in an inquiry community made sense of their classroom practice as research, which "in turn, bolstered their self-perceptions as professional educators, as well as researchers. Educators often discussed the fact that involvement in the practitioner inquiry process helped them to redefine their own practice in new ways" (p.8). This finding speaks to the ability of practitioner inquiry communities to support practice shifts beyond solving a single problem of practice; they can also develop critical habits of mind that extend beyond a single cycle of inquiry.

Furthermore, Philip (2011) describes one practitioner's rearticulation of concepts over the course of a collaborative teacher research group where secondary math and science practitioners reflected on and interrogated their classrooms through social and racial justice lenses. Philip (2011) elucidated the change in racialized sensemaking and the ideological transformation of one participant over the course of the practitioner research group's meetings, characterizing this change as an "ability to increasingly see the 'big picture' of racial and class inequity in the context of his research question" (p. 323). However, Philip cautions against concluding that this conceptual change and ideological transformation is static and applicable across contexts. Instead, he understands this participant's ideological transformation as gradually extending "the span of situations in which a concept is perceived as applicable" (Wagner, 2006, p. 10 as cited in Philip, 2011, p. 324). This instance of practitioner inquiry began with a single cycle around a problem of practice, extended to the development of critical habits of mind regarding inquiry,

and mediated ideological sensemaking that allowed for educational inequities to be seen in relationship to larger racial and class-based oppression.

Designs for professional development carry tacit understandings of what it means to be a practitioner, practitioner learning, and what a practitioner's role in educational change entails. Practitioner inquiry communities are one design for professional development that seeks to position practitioners as agentive. The aims of professional learning extend beyond methodological approaches to addressing educational inequities. Instead, practitioner inquiry using the *inquiry as stance* framework seeks to engage practitioners in problematization of practice through critical reflection, and to develop larger conceptual shifts that extend beyond the inquiry itself.

Chapter 3

Theoretical Framework

Introduction

The theory of change that this research project explores is that, through participation in a collaborative practitioner inquiry community that centers the contradictions inherent in the dominant language narrative, the emergence of nascent expansive language ideologies can increase in salience. As a result, hegemonic attitudes and beliefs about language may decrease in prominence. Utilizing these complementary frameworks, this project attends to Borko's (2004) call to develop educational research projects that examine practitioners' learning through both "Near-vision prescription," which focuses on the individual practitioner, in this study ideology in pieces, and a "Distant-vision prescription," or sociocultural theories that allow for an analysis of the contexts of professional development and the forms of participation, in this case, cultural historical activity theory.

In seeking to investigate how practitioner inquiry can re-mediate the beliefs about student language as drawn on, articulated, and embodied by practitioners, this study weaves together theories and frameworks regarding expansive language ideologies, *inquiry as stance*, and ideological transformation. This study is grounded in the understanding that practitioners' language ideologies are powerful conceptions embodied in praxis and mediated through participation in professional development. The construct of language ideologies is used to frame the beliefs and attitudes expressed by practitioners about language. In addition, cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) is used to conceptualize expansive language ideologies and guide the design of cultivating expansivity. Exploring the conditions for cultivating expansive language ideologies entails focusing on the professional learning environments designed for practitioners of *ELs. For this, I turn to practitioner inquiry—more specifically to Cochran-Smith and Lytle's

construct of *inquiry as stance* in conceptualizing practitioner inquiry communities as sites of ideological transformation (1999). Finally, this study utilizes Phillip's (2011) theory of ideological sensemaking and transformation—which he has described as “ideology in pieces”—to understand the shifts in language ideologies of practitioner participants in practitioner inquiry. Together, these theories represent the framework that guides the conceptualization of the problem, design of research, and analysis and interpretation of findings.

Critical Poststructural Sociolinguistics

This study focuses on practitioner language ideologies, which are embodied in praxis and partially mediated by professional learning experiences. The construct of language ideologies exists within critical poststructural sociolinguistics: an interdisciplinary field that looks to understand “language in society and society in language” (García et al., 2017 p. 1). Critical poststructural sociolinguistics explores the ways societies have developed their understandings of language and, conversely, how individuals and groups situated within those societies appropriate, resist, or dismantle the dominant beliefs and attitudes about language. Researchers from this paradigm approach the subject through a range of methodologies and seek to generate more compelling and complex interpretations of the role language plays in producing and maintaining subject positions, as well as the implications of these subject positions (García et al., 2017). The construct of language ideologies is particularly important for this study as educators have the potential to challenge and/or maintain linguistic hegemony that we articulate and embody in practice.

Research focusing on language ideologies brings light to the ways linguistically-minoritized groups endure inequities in part because of their use of non-standardized languages and language varieties. In centering language ideologies of practitioners, research looks to

understand the implicit and explicit ideas indexed through the pedagogical practices of individuals and groups. Language ideologies inquiry can aid in understanding these ideas as socially situated and historically constructed. Research focused on language ideologies also offers conceptual and methodological tools for making sense of language's role in identity construction and allows researchers to take up these ideas reflexively and interrogate their practice and discipline (García et al., 2017).

Research also functions to highlight the process of reproducing language ideologies, especially in ways that maintain and sustain dominant language ideologies. One such example is imagined standard language ideologies, which Lippi-Green (2012) defines as “a bias toward an abstracted, idealized, homogenous spoken language which is imposed and maintained by dominant bloc institutions which name as its model the written language by which is drawn primarily from the speech of the upper middle class” (p. 67). This reproduction of oppressive language ideologies is an aspect of linguistic hegemony—that is, “when dominant groups create a consensus by convincing others to accept their language norms and usage as standard” (Wiley, 2000, p. 125). Practitioners’ enactment of multiple, often seemingly contradictory language ideologies can function to sustain White linguistic hegemony (Baker-Bell, 2020) or position students as “agential holders of knowledge whose rich repertoires of communicative features and practices must be called upon to display their ever-evolving knowledge” (Souto-Manning et al., 2022, p. 109).

Practitioners’ language ideologies include and extend beyond systemic “ideas, cultural constructions, commonsense notions,” and likewise include the practices where this underlying thinking manifests (Gal, 1992, p. 445). These beliefs and attitudes are enacted in classroom practice and have implications for linguistically diverse students’ experiences and learning. Metz

(2019) demonstrated the power and presence of what he terms the dominant school narrative, which is conceived as a collection of language ideologies that essentially amount to a justification for Respectability pedagogies (Baker-Bell, 2020). The dominant school narrative can take the form of a story practitioners tell themselves, such as, “While I, the teacher, understand that there are many correct ways of using English, the rest of the world expects Standard English. I need to prepare my students for the world, and I need to protect them from discrimination. So, it is my job and my responsibility to make sure they use Standard English” (Metz, 2019 p. 251). This dominant school language narrative, which imagines proficiency with *Academic English as an essential aspect to overcoming inequities, has powerful implications for how educators design and implement instruction.

However, the dominant school language narrative and the language ideologies undergirding it place the onus of change on linguistically minoritized students. They are asked to conform their linguistic practices to appease a White listening subject that “hears and interprets the linguistic practices of language-minoritized populations as deviant based on their racial positioning in society as opposed to any objective characteristics of their language use” (Flores & Rosa, 2015, p. 151). Metz (2019) has argued that this prepares students to accommodate linguistic prejudice, which reifies the very linguistic hegemony that results in linguistic discrimination in academic settings. An expansive school language narrative could engender a shift away from asking students to change and towards an interrogation and dismantlement of the White listening subject (Rosa & Flores, 2017). This shift has the potential to deconstruct and eradicate raciolinguistic ideologies that perpetuate erroneous notions that *Academic English is based on an empirical definition and that it is necessary for communicating complex ideas, and become a means for achieving social, economic, and racial justice.

The White listening subject and the racially hegemonic perceptions through which it hears can manifest in various ways throughout the learning ecology. This includes in human and nonhuman artifacts, institutions, and policies. Though the White listening subject is enacted by whiteness, this subject may be better understood as a “historical and contemporary subject position that can be situationally inhabited both by individuals recognized as white and nonwhite” (Rosa & Flores, 2017, p. 628). Cultural-historical activity theorists (e.g., Engeström, 1987) echo calls from critical poststructural sociolinguistics for a shift in attention beyond individual learners and onto activity systems in which subjects are situated. The construct of remediation in CHAT “involves the reorganization of instruction, learning, social relationships, and artefacts, all the features that help influence, shape, and emerge in socially mediated interaction” (Gutiérrez et al., 2009, p. 236). CHAT benefits an understanding of the construction, maintenance, and destabilization of language ideologies by establishing the notion of individuals-in-activity, who learn and unlearn through a mediated process.

Cultural-Historical Activity Theory: Expansive Learning

Cultural-historical activity theory’s roots are grounded in the work of Vygotsky in the 1920s, who articulated that the notion of mediation. This was represented in a triangular model composed of a subject (engaged in production in the activity system), object (motivating, future-oriented purpose of an activity), and mediating artifact (which might include physical, cognitive, or symbolic tools) (Vygotsky, 1978). Leont’ev expanded Vygotsky’s ideas in the 1970s and 1980s, and began to shift the primary unit of analysis from an individual to an activity system. Such a system focuses on complex interrelations between the subject and the community in which they are situated. Second generation CHAT scholars, including Leont’ev and Engeström, re-represented subjects as bound up in even more complex systems, which was represented in a

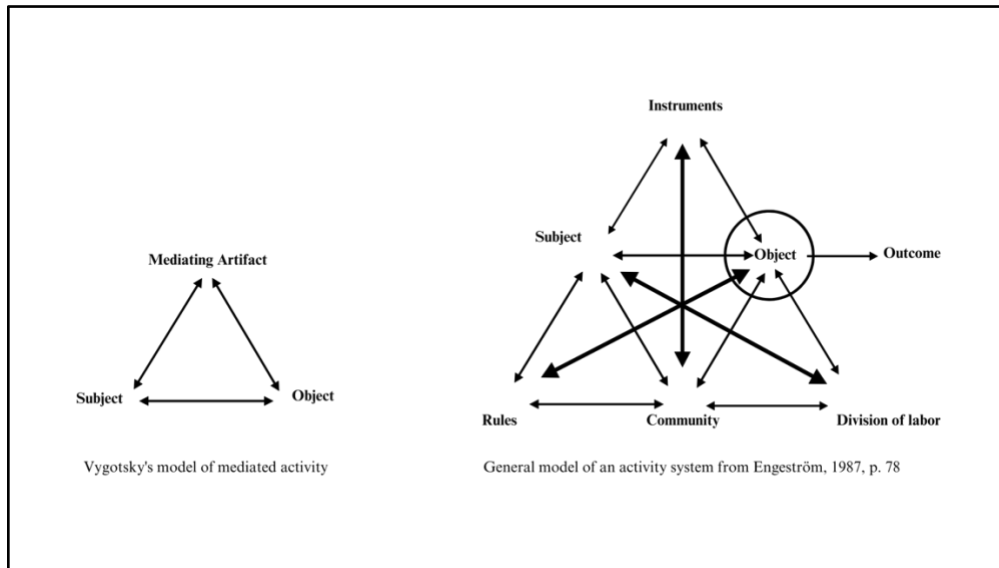
model that included division of labor (the distribution of tasks within the activity system), rules (stated or implied expectations of acceptable interactions with other subjects and acceptable participation within the activity system), and community (the social group subjects attribute their membership to thorough participation within the activity system) (Figure 1).

Within this model, Engeström further differentiates between a generalized object of a “historically evolving activity system” and the specific object that is contingent on a certain subject’s perception at a particular moment in action (2016, p. 45). Scholars have since continued to elucidate how subject and object are mediated within activity. Moll (2013) argued that mediation can take many forms, including: social mediation in the form of actions taken by groups to inculcate a subject into shared cultural practices; tool mediation, that is, the use of tools to engage in practice; semiotic mediation, which includes symbols and symbol systems; anatomical mediation, which is the using of our bodies to manipulate the environment or situate oneself in social life; and individual mediation, which is a subject’s agency directing learning. Furthermore, Hasan (2002) suggested a helpful distinction of visible mediation as “deliberate and relatively more clearly focused on some specific concept or problem,” whereas invisible mediation happens when “interactants are aware of neither the practitioner nor the learning of any concept in particular” (p. 113).

Cultural historical activity theory offers an analytical methodology that centers the activity system as a unit of analysis that “offers a way to examine learning beyond the individual without losing sight of the learners as individual subject” (Engeström & Greeno, 2014, p. 137). This research project understands the mediational aspects contributing to the potential language ideological transformation of practitioners by examining collaborative inquiry as a way to center the interconnections between nodes of an activity system.

Figure 1

First-Generation and Second-Generation CHAT Models of Activity Systems



Within the cultural-historical activity framework, Engeström developed a theory of expansive learning—that is, the development that leads to the “formation of new expanded object and pattern of activity oriented to the object” (2016, p. 47). The process of expansive learning involves the articulation and resolution of successively evolving contradictions, which can include primary contradictions within nodes of the activity systems; secondary contradictions between two or more nodes; tertiary contradictions that exist between newly established mode of activity and remnants of the previous mode of activity; and quaternary contradictions that arise between newly reorganized activity and its neighboring activity systems (Engeström, 2016, p. 46).

The goal of transforming an expansive language framework that sustains and validates the full linguistic repertoires is in a double bind with the goal to inculcate *Academic English proficiency into students. Engeström describes this double bind as an “essential dilemma which cannot be resolved through separate individual actions alone—but in which joint co-operative

actions can push a historically new form of activity into emergence” (1987, p. 165). This contradiction does not merely reside within the subject and object nodes of the activity system, but includes material artifacts (e.g., curricula, grading rubrics, texts) and cognitive artifacts (e.g., language ideologies, purposes of schooling, visions of academic success, etc.). This tension is further evidenced in the rules node in that there are particular ways of being a practitioner—including lesson design and instructional strategies—that demonstrate proficiency in supporting *ELs in developing *Academic English. These ways of adhering to explicit and implicit rules situate a practitioner in a community of practitioners that seeks to support more equitable opportunities and outcomes for *ELs. Even if a generalized or specific object of sustaining students’ full linguistic repertoires is taken up by a practitioner, professional learning community, or schoolwide system, remnants of the activity systems that sought to eradicate students’ languages through prior artifacts, rules of participation, and distribution of labor are still present. The contradictions between the newly formed activity and the old represent tertiary contradictions. Finally, newly formed activities—that is, tools, objects, rules, community, and division of labor that work towards actualizing expansive language ideologies honoring and extending students’ full linguistic repertoires—come up against the reality of activity systems that have not yet made that expansive transformation. For instance, though a practitioner may strive to support full student linguistic repertoires, a department in a school district that supports schools districtwide may still hold *EL English proficiency as measured by federally mandated standardized assessments as its standard for success. The existence of a double bind between a new activity system and its neighboring activity systems represents a quaternary contradiction.

While Engeström and Sannino (2010) describes “qualitative transformation of all components of the activity system” as the result of successful expansive learning, this study

seeks to understand and trace the potential expansive transformation of practitioners' language ideologies—that is, mental tools or instruments, located at the top node of Engeström's activity system representation (p.8). For practitioners of *ELs, the historically new object of activity that results from seeking to resolve these contradictions could be a new expansive school language narrative which could be conceived as a collection of expansive language ideologies. Banes et al. (2016) state that expansive language ideologies widen “what is treated as acceptable language for schooling” (p. 169). Additionally, practitioners may embody these expansive ideologies in instructional design practices to support students' use of their full linguistic repertoires and rules for participating in the community of practitioners that seek to support *ELs.

The collective shifts within and between activity systems can be understood through a conception of the zone of proximal development, which Vygotsky initially articulated as “the distance between the actual developmental level as a determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (1978, p. 86). This definition takes the individual in activity as the unit of analysis. However, this initial articulation was expounded upon by Engeström (1987) to account for learning at the level of activity. The zone of proximal development was redefined as “the distance between the present everyday actions of the individuals and the historically new form of the societal activity that can be collectively generated as a solution to the double bind potentially embedded in the everyday actions” (p. 174).

This reconceptualization of expansivity at the level of activity “offers a way to examine learning beyond the individual without losing sight of the learners as individual subject” (Engeström & Greeno, 2014, p. 137). Engeström and Greeno (2014) offer three concepts for how

a focus on activity systems can be utilized to explain how learning is happening. The first is top-down learning, in which an individual is said to be learning in activity as an outcome of the “properties and processes within the activity system” (Engeström & Greeno, 2014, p. 150). The second is called bottom-up learning, where “the activity system as a whole learns, and that learning is explained in terms of mental representations and behaviors of the participating individuals” (Engeström & Greeno, 2014, p. 150). Finally, horizontal learning is where the activity system as a whole is said to learn as “practices evolve, or interactional routines change” (Engeström & Greeno, 2014, p. 150).

The activity system studied herein is an *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community that constitutes a potential ideological site (Silverstein, 1998, p. 136). Sites of ideological production are conceived as “sites of social practice as both object and modality of ideological expression” (Silverstein, 1998, p. 136). Furthermore, multiple forms of ideological sites exist, but “sites of ideological production are not necessarily sites of metapragmatic commentary, and it is only the latter which both requires and demonstrates the discursive consciousness of speakers” (Philips as cited in Krosrity, 2004, p. 506). Ultimately, raising discursive consciousness and critical awareness of language ideologies is the aim of the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community and may lead to expansive language ideologies. While this may be the aim and intention of the practitioner inquiry communities, it is not uncommon and is indeed expected that “participants take over the leading role in the intervention process, rejecting and reformulating tasks and performing actions that change the plans of the interventionist” (Engeström, 2016, p. 57). The practitioner inquiry community is designed to provide opportunities for practitioners of *ELs to be (re)positioned as agentive with collective potential “to make consequential changes ... in the

lives of students and in the social and intellectual climate of schools and schooling” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999, p. 295).

Inquiry As Stance

The goals of practitioner inquiry extend beyond practitioners acquiring certain instructional methodologies deemed “best practices” by experts. Practitioner inquiry built from the *inquiry as stance* framework seeks to support shifts that are “perspectival and conceptual—a worldview, a critical habit of mind, a dynamic and fluid way of knowing and being in the world of educational practice that carries across professional careers and educational settings” which requires a different approach than inquiry as a time- and place-bound sequence of steps (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p. 120). For practitioners that support *ELs, practitioner inquiry represents a potential site of collaborative interrogation of practice and generation of expansive language ideologies that can result in “collective meaning that challenge social forms of power” (Philip, 2011, p. 301). *Inquiry as stance* focuses on practitioner learning as the ongoing, collaborative, and collective project of making “tacit knowledge more visible, call[ing] into question assumptions about common practices, and generat[ing] data that make possible the consideration of alternatives” to current conceptions of schooling (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999, p. 295). *Inquiry as stance* is a crucial concept that represents a counterhegemonic formulation of a professional development goal that guided the designs of the EL* Practitioner Inquiry Community that served as the activity system this study focused on.

Practitioner inquiry built from the *inquiry as stance* framework imagines a future of professional learning that moves beyond hegemonic conceptions of professional development, which perpetuates the expert-novice, formal-local knowledge, and practice-theory distinctions (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999). Instead, *inquiry as stance* offers an aim and analytical

framework for understanding “how inquiry produces knowledge, how inquiry relates to practices, and what teachers learn from inquiry within communities” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999, p. 250). Similarly, for Engeström (2016), participants in Change Laboratories—which are a series of facilitated sessions that bring together practitioner teams “to accelerate and intensify the expansive learning process by introducing successive tasks that require specific expansive learning actions”—can result in the construction of a new object of collective activity and the implementation of this in practice (Engeström, 2016, p. 57). Engeström (2016) details an ideal cycle through which Change Laboratories progress, but adds that rarely does expansive learning progress in such an ideal way. Much like Cochran-Smith and Lytle’s conception of *inquiry as stance*, the facilitators of inquiry communities and Change Laboratories aim at “provoking and sustaining an expansive transformation process led and owned by the practitioners” (Engeström, 2016, p. 64). Furthermore, Cochran-Smith and Lytle conceptualize *inquiry as stance* building from and extending the image of a practitioner as an agent of change at the classroom and school level; much the same, Change Laboratories are grounded in a similar image of practitioners and understand the enactment of agency and change as requiring, “the formation of new shared tools, rules, and divisions of labor” (Engeström, 2016, p. 65).

Philip’s Ideology in Pieces is a final complementary theory utilized in this research project that sees ideological sensemaking as a “socially shared way of gaining knowledge about the world” (Philip, 2011, p. 303). The socially shared and constructed nature of ideological sensemaking is particularly important for exploring how participation in a practitioner inquiry community mediates in-service practitioners’ language ideologies. Additionally, the term “community” is used specifically, entailing the development of a shared way of utilizing tools and artifacts to support reasoning, shared rules for participation, and a shared purpose (Cobb et

al., 2009). Without these minimum criteria, Cobb et al. (2009) characterize practitioners as groups, but that essential in moving from “group” to “community” is the “de-privatization of teachers’ instructional practice” (Cobb et al., 2009, p. 183). The destabilization and increasing salience of expansive language ideologies may occur to a greater extent in “communities,” as this process entails a great deal of critically reflective interrogation of current practice.

Ideology in Pieces

Philip (2011) presented a framework for understanding practitioners’ racialized sensemaking that synthesized a theories of ideology and conceptual change. Philip termed this framework Ideology in Pieces, which “provides an analytical lens to understand elements of ideological sensemaking and the process of ideological transformation” (2011, p. 297). Hall defines ideology as the “mental frameworks—the languages, the concepts, the categories, imagery of thought, and the systems of representations—which different classes and social groups deploy to make sense of, define, figure out and render intelligible the way society works” (Hall, 1996, p. 26 as cited in Philips, 2011, p. 300). Through Philip’s framework, people are understood to make sense of society through the heavy reliance on “naturalized axioms,” or socially constructed, shared, and taken-for-granted assumptions that can function to “stabilize a particular form of power and domination” (Hall, 1996, p. 27 as cited in Philip, 2011, p. 300). These naturalized axioms are context dependent and are therefore seen as being multiple and applied inconsistently across different contexts. This understanding shares similarities with Kroskrity’s (2004) identification of multiplicity as an overlapping layer of significance in language ideologies. It also shares a direct connection to how certain language ideologies can function hegemonically—that is, when beliefs and attitudes about language created by dominant groups are appropriated by others as the norm, and function to stratify students based on

proficiencies in White Mainstream English and reinscribe language hierarchies (Wiley & Lukes, 1996). *Ideology in Pieces*, and many of the constructs within this framework that will be detailed below, represent an important addition to the theoretical framework not just for understanding the articulated and embodied language ideologies, but also for understanding the destabilization and rearticulation (or of language ideologies within the EL* Practitioner Inquiry Community).

The movement from a dominant school language narrative (Metz, 2021) to a more expansive one entails an ideological transformation and a conceptual change. The pervasiveness of the dominant school language narrative gives the impression of commonsense or self-evident language use in academic contexts, but it should be considered a naturalized axiom—a socially constructed assumption that has become hegemonic (Philip, 2011). Conceptual change from a dominant to a more expansive school language narrative requires a rearticulation wherein “many of the commonsensical meanings and associations of words, concepts, images, anecdotes, and so on are broken and an association of new meanings is established” (Philip, 2011, p. 301).

There is a great deal of congruence between the framework of expansive learning and *Ideology in Pieces*. For Cultural-historical activity theory, “expansive learning is a process of concept formation” (Engeström, 2016, p. 74). Within an activity system, a concept is considered distributed across both the social and material environment in that a concept is shared among subjects as well as imbued in both the ideal and material artifacts (Cole, 1999). Hall and Green (2008) state that a CHAT framework understands that “concepts and their meanings develop and evolve in settings of practice and are maintained in practices because they are useful in conducting the community’s activities” (p. 218). This understanding of concepts situates the distributed conceptual understandings, as well as their maintenance and change, within an activity system. Philip (2011) adds that the process of concept formation is demonstrated through

a reorganization of the naturalized axiom's salience. This conceptual salience is demonstrated in turn as individuals-in-activity make sense of more and more situations that afford the use of a concept. Engeström summarizes this similar sentiment in stating the “general idea of expansive learning, as the range of situations in which a concept can be applied expands” (Engeström & Greeno, 2014 p. 143). This process can be “gradual, intermittent, and sometimes regressive” (Philip, 2011, p. 300). Engeström echoes this claim in stating that “the formation and change of concepts involves confrontation and contestation as well as negotiation and blending” (2016, p. 75). This speaks to the expectation that conceptual understandings evolve not based on linear, lock-step stages or a smooth progression, but rather in complex and seemingly contradictory processes of expanding situations of application of a concept over time.

For second-generation CHAT scholars, the primary unit of analysis is the activity system in which subjects are embedded. Also for these scholars, “an expansive transformation is accomplished when the object and motive of the activity are reconceptualized to embrace a radically wider horizon of possibilities than in the previous mode of the activity” (Engeström, 2016, p. 137). This definition speaks to socially shared motives that are mediated in part by ideal artifacts, including language ideologies. Similarly, from an Ideology in Pieces perspective, “Collectively rearticulated meaning shapes how individuals make sense of their social world. In turn, it is from changes in individuals' sensemaking that collectively rearticulated meanings emerge” (Philip, 2011, p. 302).

Running through each theory and framework detailed in this chapter is a critical, counterhegemonic stance. When applied together they represent a powerful conceptualization of practitioners, practitioner learning, and the central role that practitioner agency and collaboration play in educational change. Each lens presented in this chapter served to guide the design,

facilitation, and analysis of data collected in this research project. The design and process are presented in the following chapter.

Chapter 4

Methodology

This research project explored secondary, in-service practitioners' articulated and embodied language ideologies as they participated in a practitioner inquiry community focused on supporting *English Learners. The practitioner inquiry community was grounded in Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (2009) definition of practitioner inquiry, which involves an understanding that "working from and with an inquiry stance ... involves a continual process of making current arrangements problematic; questioning the ways knowledge and practice are constructed, evaluated, and used; and assuming that part of the work of practitioners individually and collectively is to participate in educational and social change" (p. 121). The EL* Practitioner Inquiry Community was convened over four 90-minute sessions at Willowbrook High School in Northern California. There was a total of 12 participants who represented a broad range of teaching experience, identities, and subject areas taught. The study was conducted using a qualitative approach. Qualitative researchers are primarily interested in "*understanding the meaning people have constructed*; that is, how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 15; emphasis in original). Furthermore, this study utilized a Practitioner Inquiry approach, which Cochran-Smith and Lytle describe as "a research genre with multiple forms that have grown out of different historical and epistemological traditions but share a view of the teacher as a knowledge generator and agent for change" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p. 118). This study holds an "image" of practitioners and professional learning that identifies those who support linguistically minoritized students as essential in addressing the inequities those students face. This entails that practitioners engage in learning "by challenging their own assumptions; identifying salient issues of practice; posing problems; studying their own students, classrooms, and schools; constructing and reconstructing

curriculum; and taking on roles of leadership and activism in efforts to transform classrooms, schools, and societies” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999, p. 278).

This chapter will provide details of the study regarding the setting, participants, validity, and my own positionality. It concludes with four sketches—contextualizing vignettes—of the EL* Practitioner Inquiry Community that I facilitated and participated in alongside other practitioners at Willowbrook that this study focused on.

Setting

This research was conducted in a large district in California. The district serves over 60,000 students speaking 129 different languages. The percentage of *EL students in the student body varies greatly from campus to campus. For instance, while one high school may have 30% of students who are designated *ELs, another campus may have less than 10% of students designated *ELs. The variability in student population means that different supports—including additional funding, course offerings, and personnel—vary across the schools within the district. Regardless of the variability, all sites and *ELs are held to the same criteria for students to be Reclassified as Fluent English Proficient (RFEP), which means they no longer receive designated *EL instruction. In secondary sites within the district, *EL courses take the place of an elective. The exit criteria for the school district studied herein was based on the four criteria listed in *Education Code (EC) Sections 313 (f)*.

Table 1

District Reclassification Criteria

District English Learner Exit Criteria	
1. Assessment of English Language Proficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Overall Level 4 (K-12)
2. Comparison of Performance in Basic Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. CAASPP or Interim ELA Assessments <p><i>Student needs to meet on of the following:</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. CAASPP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Standard nearly met (2) or higher c. Interim ELA Assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Qualifying score dependent on trimester and grade level
<p>3. Practitioner Evaluation: Curriculum Mastery (last report card)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Student received satisfactory (“PASS”, C- or better in ELA grades 1st -12th or S for K)
<p>4. Parent/Guardian Opinion and Consultation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide parent with information about the process and student results, ensuring meaningful participation in their child’s reclassification process

The specific high school site was selected because I support it in my role as an Instructional Coach for *English Learners. Willowbrook High School is a large school with a student population of over 2,000. At the time of study, nearly a quarter of students in attendance spoke a language other than English and nearly 100 were designated *ELs, receiving additional services in the form of Designated English Language Development courses. The primary language spoken other than English at Willowbrook High School was Spanish, but the total number of languages spoken by students at Willowbrook High School was 40. The school’s master schedule was structured to limit the *EL students in any given class at 33%; however, *EL students are placed in “cluster” class sections that have *EL overrepresentation compared to other content area courses. In addition, Willowbrook High ran a Newcomer Math 1 course exclusively for *ELs who had been in the United States for 3 years or less and had English proficiency levels that schools interpreted as justifying designated language support (California Department of Education, 2023).

Table 2

Willowbrook High School Student Demographics

Total Student Enrollment	Multilingual Students	Students Designated as *English Learners	Number of Languages Spoken	Predominant Languages Other Than English
2160	576	99	40	Spanish Cantonese Vietnamese Filipino

In my role as an Instructional Coach for *English Learners at Willowbrook High School, an essential part of my work is designing and carrying out professional development. One aspect of actualizing this work is the creation and maintenance of a *English Learner Professional Learning Community (*EL PLC) that centers the needs of linguistically minoritized students. Participants of this *EL PLC are practitioners across various disciplines who have *ELs in their classes. The *EL PLC meets approximately monthly at Willowbrook High School. This *EL PLC communicates important information regarding *MLs and provides opportunities for collaboration around a shared problem of practice: supporting student talk at Willowbrook High School. I was an active participant, presenter, and organizer of Willowbrook High School *EL PLC. It was from this *EL PLC that I recruited participants for *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community.

Participants

The participants in this research project were in-service secondary practitioners. Purposeful sampling was conducted. As this study was designed to gain insight into the language ideologies of practitioners who work with *ELs, purposeful sampling aligned with the intent since it “is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 96). My goal was to recruit between four and eight participants from the *EL PLC meetings; ultimately, twelve practitioners registered. At the first *EL PLC meeting, I presented an overview of the structure, content, and compensation options offered through the district for the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community.

Table 3

Practitioner Demographic Data

Participant	Speaker of a language other than English or a non-dominant variety of English	Role/Subject	Years of Experience	Gender/Gender Identity	Race
Daniel	No	English (EL Intensive/AP Language and Composition)	15	Man	American Indian or Alaskan Native Latino/a/x
Gordon	Yes	Math	32	Man	White/Caucasian
Elena	Yes	US History and World Geography	4	Woman	Latino/a/x
Angela	No	Math	8	Woman	Black or African American
Cindy	No	English 9, College & Career Writing 1	2	Woman	Asian
Stacey	No	World Geography, Economics, Ethnic Studies	2.5	Woman	Black or African American
Adrienne	No	English 9 & AP Literature	3	Woman	White/Caucasian
Anthony	No	Instructional Coach for *ELs	9	Man	White/Caucasian Latino/a/x
Liz	No	AP World History, You and the Law, American Government	20	Woman	White/Caucasian
April	No	English 10 & 11	3	Woman	Black or African American
Hannah	No	English Intensive 3, Film as Lit, Exploring Modern Issues in Text	17	Woman	White/Caucasian
Rebecca	No	AP Research/AP Lang	13	Woman	White/Caucasian

Data Collection

The data collection process consisted of multiple components, including audio recordings of each *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community session, practitioner-generated documents used

during the Inquiry Community, and culminating inquiry narratives produced by all participants. This research project took place during October and November of 2023–2024. The *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community consisted of four 90-minute sessions that met weekly. Prior to the first session of the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community, I sent a survey that allowed me to gather background and demographic data as well as information regarding educational attainment, years of experience, language background, and content area taught (Appendix A). I audio-recorded each session of the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community. Verbatim transcripts were created for each session. Within the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community sessions, various documents were collected, including practitioner-generated artifacts, exit slips, and inquiry planning tools used during the sessions. The reflective narrative that participants produced as a culminating document was also collected. Additionally, because the facilitation of the Practitioner Inquiry Community was designed to be responsive to the needs of the participants, I collected any researcher-generated documents or “documents prepared by the researcher or for the researcher by participants after the study has begun. The specific purpose for generating documents is to learn more about the situation, person, or event being investigated” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 173).

Table 4

Data Sources and Analytical Activity

Research Question	Data Sources	Analytical Activity
What language ideologies do practitioners who support *English Learners articulate and embody in a practitioner inquiry community?	Audio-Recordings Teacher and Researcher Generated Artifacts	Identifying articulated and embodied language ideologies. Drawing on critical post structural sociolinguistics. Coding for a range of language ideologies indexed in participation

		(e.g. expansive, raciolinguistic, hegemonic).
How does participation in a practitioner inquiry community mediate the language ideologies of high school practitioners who support *English Learners?	Audio-Recordings Culminating Inquiry Narratives	Identifying changes in participation, practice, and language ideologies. Drawing on cultural historical activity theory (Engeström, 1987). Coding for destabilization or maintenance of language ideologies (e.g. articulations of respectability, dominant school narrative) and contradictions within the activity system (e.g. a new goal of sustaining students' full linguistic repertoire [object] and how teachers typically demonstrate being an advocate for *ELs [rules]).

Data collected during this research project were compiled and stored on a password-protected network drive. Data that were gathered on paper were scanned and saved to the same password-protected network drive and then destroyed with a paper shredder or returned to the participants. Pseudonyms were used for sites and participants throughout the research projects, including in the data collection phase, data analysis phase, and while writing the final report.

Data Analysis

This research project utilized a thematic coding process to analyze the collected data (Saldaña, 2021). Collected data included descriptive-analytic memos, transcripts of *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community sessions, and practitioner-generated documents, including individual participants' Culminating Inquiry Narrative.

Following each *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community session, I wrote up detailed analytical memos that captured my immediate thoughts and reflections on my observations during each session. I created analytical memos as one aspect of meeting the objective of researcher reflexivity. In constructing analytical memos, I included but went beyond

summarization of the data and incorporated “feelings, reactions, hunches, initial interrelations, speculations, and working hypotheses” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 151). Additionally, Saldaña (2021) suggests that during this stage of data collection and analysis, analytical memos ought to include recollection and describe how interactions occur between participants, what relationships emerge, and how participation routines develop.

The data was initially chunked into unlabeled units. At this stage, I also created analytical memos about the process of chunking, as well as my initial ideas that were taking shape. Saldaña (2021) suggests that analytical memos at this stage ought to include a descriptive summary of the data as well as initial intuitions, understandings, and explanations. After initial units were constructed, I clustered units into broader categories—that is, “conceptual elements that ‘cover’ or span many individual examples (or bits or units of the data you previously identified) of the category” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 206). During this second stage of analysis, I provided initial descriptive labels for each category that were responsive to the purpose of the research: exhaustive, mutually exclusive, sensitizing, and conceptually congruent (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 213). These category names were created by myself, derived from participants’ words or from sources in the literature. In other words, I utilized a combination of emergent, In Vivo, and a priori labels. While analysis was primarily conducted through an inductive approach, the literature established that there would likely be articulations and embodiments of language ideologies that are both hegemonic (Lippi-Green, 2012) and expansive (Banes et al., 2016). It was expected that participants would evidence various stances toward the processes and practices of inquiry as suggested by Cochran-Smith & Lytle’s *inquiry as stance* framework (2009). These expected codes did emerge during this analytical stage, and I wrote about the process of clustering as well as the code choices, emergent patterns, categories, and propositions (Table 5).

Finally, I noted patterns across categories and analyzed these based on methodology and conceptual framework to construct themes. At that phase of analysis, I continued to create analytical memos with a focus on the links and connections among codes, patterns, and themes as well as how those emergent propositions related to theory and the literature. I reread memos throughout the analysis process and create meta-memos that reflected on the overall process of analysis (Saldaña, 2021).

Table 5

Codes and Definitions

Code	Definition
Hegemonic language ideologies	“those [language ideologies] that have become successfully ‘naturalized’ by the majority group” and are reproduced by dominant groups that function to “create a consensus by convincing others to accept their language norms and usage as standard” (Kroskrity, 2004, p. 523; Wiley, 2000 p. 125).
Raciolinguistic Ideologies	Language ideologies “grounded in the erroneous assumption that language of racialized students will be heard objectively [that] ignor[e] the reality that ‘racialized speaking subjects are constructed as linguistically deviant even when engaging in linguistic practices positioned as normative or innovative when produced by privileged white subjects’” (Rosa & Flores, 2015, p. 2).
English language as more important	“Everyone needs to learn English necessary for getting a job or accruing economic or social capital” (Henderson, 2017, p. 24).
Dominant school narrative	Includes a rationale where teachers acknowledge that *Standardized English is not the only correct form of English but then go on to include the caveat that they have to support students’ proficiency with *Standardized English, as its use is tied to success in both school and workplace settings (Metz & Knight, 2021).
Counterhegemonic language ideologies	“A range of contrasting beliefs such as embracing linguistic pluralism and acknowledging the linguistic equality of multiple languages and language varieties ... descriptive, rather than prescriptive, view of language” (Metz, 2019, p. 21)

Language as a set of practices	“Language is context-dependent. Language is a complex construct with varying forms that are situationally governed. Bilingualism is beneficial” (Henderson, 2017, p. 24)
Language variation as normal	“Language variation is common. Language mixing and hybridity is something that bilingual people do.” (Henderson, 2017, p. 17).
Expansive language ideologies	Expansive language ideologies widen “what is treated as acceptable language for schooling” (Banes et al., 2016, p. 169).
Inquiry as stance	“A worldview, a critical habit of mind, a dynamic and fluid way of knowing and being in the world of educational practice that carries across professional careers and educational settings” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p. 120).

Trustworthiness

For Maxwell, validity is defined as “the correctness or credibility of a description, conclusion, explanation, interpretation, or other sort of account” (2013, p. 122). The term “validity” does not imply an objective truth, but Maxwell (2013) argues that the philosophical objective truth is not actually an essential aspect of trustworthiness that is useful for researchers who want ways to differentiate between conclusions that are credible and those that are not. For practitioner inquiry, Newton and Burgess argue that how validity is conceptualized should be responsive to the aims of the research project (Newton & Burgess, 2008). Berg (2001) outlined three modes of research that would fall under three different modes of action research, the last of which is “emancipating/enhancing/critical science mode.” This mode’s aims include “assist[ing] practitioners in lifting their veil of clouded understandings and help[ing] them to better understand fundamental problems by raising their collective consciousness” (Berg, 2001, p.187). Of the three, this mode’s aims best align with the aims of practitioner inquiry as outlined by Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999).

Building on Berg's (2001) three modes of action research, Anderson and Herr (1999) developed four validity criteria for the evaluation of knowledge claims. These include democratic validity, or "the extent to which research is done in collaboration with all parties"; catalytic validity, or the efficacy of the process in mediating participants' understanding and action; process validity, which explores "what counts as 'evidence' to sustain assertions"; dialogic validity, which examines the extent to which "practitioner researchers participate in critical and reflective dialogue with other practitioner researchers"; and outcome validity, which refers to the degree that "outcomes of the research match the intended purposes" (p. 16). While Anderson and Herr claim that each of these criteria are in constant flux, Newton and Burgess (2008) argue that democratic and catalytic should be considered primary validity criteria, and secondary criteria should include process and outcome validity.

In this research project, multiple steps were taken to ensure trustworthiness of the data analysis. This included centering democratic and catalytic validity criteria, as these were most responsive to the aims of practitioner inquiry. Dialogic, outcome, and process validity were considered secondary validity criteria. Prolonged engagement also served as a validity strategy as this study took place over 6 weeks that included both in-person *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community sessions as well as one-on-one additional meetings with a number of participants. The corpus of data included audio-recording of each session, ongoing analytical memos, practitioner generated artifacts, as well as Culminating Inquiry Narratives for each participant. All of this data allowed for triangulation. Additional steps included the recognition and ongoing reflection of my positionality and biases as a White, heterosexual, English-speaking, able-bodied, and cisgender male, whose experiences and ways of sensemaking differ from both the participants of this study and the multilingual students central to the larger aims of this research

project. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) undergird the importance of investigators explaining “their biases, dispositions, and assumptions regarding the research to be undertaken” (p. 249). This is important not because it represents an attempt to eliminate researcher subjectivities in pursuit of objective truth. I engaged in naming and contending with my positionality throughout the research process, as “qualitative research is concerned with understanding how a particular researcher’s values and expectations influenced the conduct and conclusions of the study” (Maxwell, 2013, p. 124). It is because of researcher positionality, that respondent validation, which includes “taking the final report or specific description or themes back to participants and determining whether these participants feel that they are accurate” is imperative (Creswell & Creswell, 2023, p. 213). The caveat here is that the feedback participants provide is still subject to validity threats, so the feedback will be viewed of as evidence of validity, not validity itself (Maxwell, 2013). Furthermore, the process of peer review that takes place through feedback provided by the dissertation committee will serve as an additional validity strategy.

In addition to the identities enumerated above, I am also an instructional coach for *ELs. I have been placed in a position of educational leadership within the district. There was a degree of reactivity expected, which is “the influence of the researcher on the setting or individuals studied” (Maxwell, 2013, p. 124). The inclusion of open-ended questions during sessions was one strategy to mitigate the researcher’s influence on participant responses. The goal was not to completely eliminate the influence of the researcher, as this is impossible to do, but to address and understand how this influence affects the validity of the researcher’s inferences. This reflexivity also incorporates strategies that allow for a greater degree of trustworthiness (Maxwell, 2013).

Positionality

Qualitative research acknowledges that it is the research holds “the researcher as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis” (Yin, 2002, p. 13). This entails a reckoning with the fact that there is an “influence the researcher has on what is being studied and, simultaneously, of how the research process affects the researcher” (Probst & Berenson, 2014, p. 814 as cited in Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 64). This influence is inevitable, but not detrimental to the trustworthiness of this research project. Instead of seeking to ignore or account for every bias, I strive to understand and interrogate “the tension inherent in [my] own interests and power in relation to the people and communities under study” (Milner, 2007, p. 395). Reflecting on my positionality, I recognize that as an instructional coach and researcher-practitioner, I enter spaces and am afforded unearned privilege because I am White, cisgender, heterosexual, English-speaking, and able-bodied. These aspects of my identity have deeply shaped my experiences, values, and beliefs that will inevitably be brought to bear on my research.

My cultural heritage—both my understanding of it and relationship to it—is born out of lived experience. I grew up in a White household in rural northern California as well as a Mexican household in the Central Valley. My grandparents spoke Spanish but decided not to teach their children their native language. Within the context of my grandparents’ household (and, by extension, the household in which my father grew up), dynamics of colorism as well as classism played out. My grandfather’s experiences of education and treatment from my grandmother’s family were shaped by his complexion; meanwhile, my grandmother, father, and aunt experienced privileges because of their own lighter complexions. Seeing, hearing, and feeling this dynamic shaped my understanding of how I move through the world, as White and monolingual, in ways that differ from the experiences of others. While each household was

different, in many ways both households embraced (or passively accepted) an assimilationist perspective—in other words, there was a striving towards whiteness. My cultural identity now is syncretic, but within these identities is also an internalized hierarchy of language that requires diligence in critical reflection.

As an educator, these experiences and understandings have influenced my practice greatly. I have at times sought ways to support *English Learners to develop the capacity to navigate a schooling system that is not designed for them. At other times, I have focused my energy on disrupting and dismantling institutional practices that perpetuate the need for the linguistic capital necessary for navigating schooling. These represent conflicting language ideologies. Both justifications for continuing in this profession are value-laden and have a direct influence on the methodology and aims of this research project.

As an Instructional Coach for *English Learners who supports staff at Willowbrook, I entered into the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community being seen as an instructional leader having a degree of expertise that warranted my position. As the facilitator of the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community, I also had a great deal of power in shaping the aims and activities within each session. Given my positionality, it was important for me to utilize the Practitioner Inquiry framework that seeks to disrupt the typical, hegemonic configurations of professional learning. The overarching aim was to empower practitioners to be re-positioned as generators of knowledge and to support participation in ways that acknowledges their importance in education change. Within each session there were opportunities for choice and voice as will be described in the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community Sketches later in this chapter. By recognizing my positionality and utilizing a Practitioner Inquiry framework, I worked to engage with fellow

practitioners as an “insider in collaboration with other insiders” seeking to cultivate collaboration in support of serving *ELs at Willowbrook.

As a researcher and scholar-practitioner, I am very much shaped by an understanding of schooling as subtractive (Valenzuela, 2010). I am also very much shaped by the understanding that schooling as an institution plays a role in perpetuating assimilationist perspectives of language. However, I believe deeply in the emancipatory potential of education, and I strive to hold these two contradictory ideas at once while as a teacher-leader and researcher-practitioner. I also realize that as a White, English-speaking person, my place as an educational leader around this issue is contentious, to say the least. In so many ways, because I am steeped in Whiteness, I am an outsider. Milner (2007) states, “I do not believe that researchers must come from the racial or cultural community under study to conduct research in, with, and about that community. It seems that researchers instead should be actively engaged, thoughtful, and forthright regarding tensions that can surface when conducting research where issues of race and culture are concerned” (p. 388). This was an area of deep reflection over the course of my study and continues to require ongoing interrogation of my role and intentions as a White, English-speaking researcher, who seeks to support practitioners in centering language and literacy practices that are not my own.

Sketches: *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community Sessions

Before presenting findings and analysis that address the research questions, I offer sketches—contextualizing vignettes—of each of the four sessions of the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community. The *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community was held as four 90-minute sessions across consecutive weeks in the second quarter of the 2023–2024 school year. The district-approved course description read:

This EL Inquiry Community will support practitioners in problematizing, destabilizing, and interrupting the oppressive functions of schooling experienced by multilingual learners. Participants will engage in collaborative inquiry that strives towards affirming and elevating the assets of multilingual learners. This aim is built on the acknowledgment that the disparities in opportunities and outcomes of speakers of non-dominant languages and non-dominant language varieties are products of historical marginalization.

Participants will engage in collaborative work to design, implement, assess, and adjust practice in response to the question: How can designs for student interactions honor and extend multilingual learners’ full linguistic repertoires?

The *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community was created in part as a professional development opportunity that would satisfy a district-wide, seven-hour DEI training mandate for the 2023–2024 school year for all certificated staff. However, additional compensation options were offered, including a salary credit option or an hourly rate option. Twelve participants registered (Table 3); eight chose to use the training to satisfy the DEI training mandate, and four opted for salary credit. Participants represented a range of subject areas, though—apart from myself as an instructional coach—all participants were classroom teachers. Participants emerging inquiries and final inquiry questions from throughout the sessions are captured below (Table 6).

Table 6

Practitioner Inquiry Question(s) Development

Participant	Initial Inquiry Question(s)	Final Inquiry Question(s)
Daniel	How do we get practitioners to care? How do we get practitioners to change? How do we get practitioners to reflect on faulty practices?	How does a student’s perspective of their own success and skills in an English class transfer to other curricula?

Gordon	Does my language of interaction with students matter? I.e., if I speak Spanish, does that positively or negatively affect my Spanish-speaking students' interactions?	Would translating my Welcoming Inclusion Activity prompts elicit linguistically richer responses from [focal student]?"
Elena		How can rewarding students with 5 Star points in class increase the engagement in class discussions, group work and participation?
Angela	How do our low status student engage in the curriculum? Do my students feel like I'm supporting their learning? Do tests always show student understanding? Do my current strategies work? What do I do when they don't?	How does group work in my classroom support student learning of my MLL students?
Cindy	How can I best honor and extend cultural backgrounds of my students while still maintaining classroom management?	What methods can be implemented in my [Designated-ELD] class that will make the class engaging enough to motivate students to take ownership of their learning?
Stacey	I need these kids to increase their active listening skills. That's the problem.	How do I get students to engage in active listening skills in class?"
Adrienne	How to incorporate multicultural practices/other languages w/o spotlighting kids so it feels awkward. What can I do to make them talk?	How do I make some very silent students actually speak?
Anthony	How does including sustaining language in a Road to Reclassification lesson disrupt student perceptions of heritage language?	How does including sustaining language in a Road to Reclassification lesson disrupt student and practitioner perceptions of heritage language?
Liz	How do I really support them [*ELs] while taking care of everyone else?"	How do I motivate this kid, not just now but for the future. What's going to motivate you to work hard and apply your skills to life?
April		How does providing not just her, but all of my students with sentence frames and word bank specific to the text, we're going to be reading increase engagement from this beginning EL student?
Hannah	What does academic talk look like that values students' cultures?	How do I get more diverse voices into my small classroom?" And "Is having my students talking with other classes going to be valuable for them?
Rebecca	How can I help support MLLs in other practitioners courses, while supporting the practitioners—but without being able to <u>tell</u> practitioners to be different?	

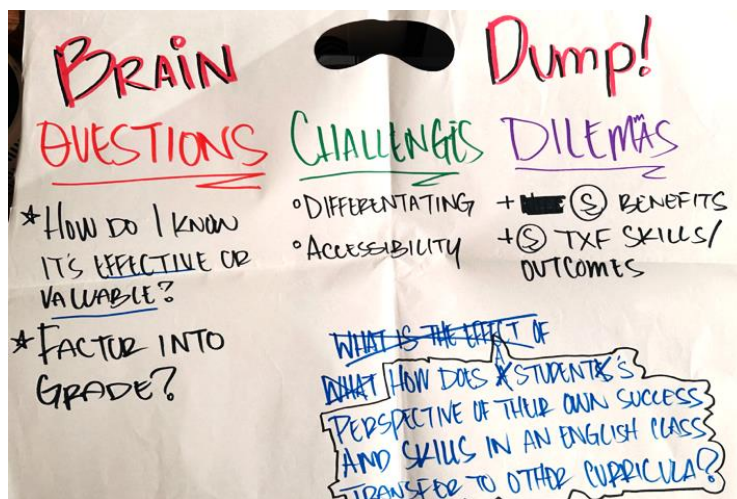
Daniel

Daniel has been an educator for 15 years. He is Latino and American Indian, and he does not speak a language other than English. He is an English educator who teaches a Designated-

ELD course for Newcomer students as well as Advanced Placement Language and Composition. In addition to this, Daniel is an English Department Chair and splits responsibilities as *English Learner Program Coordinator. His initial designs for inquiry included questions such as, “How do we get practitioners to care? How do we get practitioners to change? How do we get practitioners to reflect on faulty practices?” In addition to wonderings that focused on the practice of other practitioners, he also posed a question during his initial brainstorming directed at his own practice, “How do I know it’s effective or valuable?”

Figure 2

Daniel’s Inquiry Brainstorming, California (own photo).



Ultimately, he arrived at an inquiry question centered on a specific student, whose participation he had noticed was shifting as the student received one-on-one support in developing foundational literacy in English. While Daniel initially wondered about the transfer of skills developed in his class to others courses. He honed this to better understand the effects of the one-on-one support his student was receiving and the student’s “performance and confidence” in the Designated English Language Development course he taught. During a conversation about his inquiry question and data collection plan, we discussed how he might

arrange to check in with math, science, and history practitioners to gather information about transferability, and he revised his plan by stating, “Well, how about I just make it more focused to me because this is actually born out of what I was seeing. So would it be more literacy, basic literacy and its effect on his performance or his confidence in English class?” The inquiry aims shifted from seeking to change other practitioners to looking at the impacts of his instruction on other classrooms to focusing on a student’s changes in participation in his own classroom.

Gordon

Gordon is a veteran practitioner who has taught for 32 years, 14 of which have been at Willowbrook High School. While he currently teaches in the Math Department including a Math 1 course specifically for Newcomers, his teaching background also includes time spent as a reading specialist for Spanish-speaking first graders. He is Multilingual speaking both English and Spanish. He shared that “As a privileged white male who flourished in an English-only educational context,” his focus was on ELs because he saw them as the “most marginalized members of our educational community.” In Session Two he wondered about the affordances and limitations of leveraging his own linguistic repertoire in the classroom and asked, “Does my language of interaction with students matter? I.e., if I speak Spanish, does that positively or negatively affect my Spanish-speaking students’ interactions?” His initial articulation of the inquiry question was focused on the inclusion of Spanish, he continued thinking about how he was “a practitioner of students from many cultures and languages” both within his Newcomer Math 1 class and noted the insights this inquiry might provide for other courses taught. While his inquiry sought to explore the impacts of translation of “Welcomer Inclusion Activity prompts” that were designed to help students “connect personally,” on his focal student in the hopes that it would “lower her affective filter and elicit linguistically richer responses,” he also provided

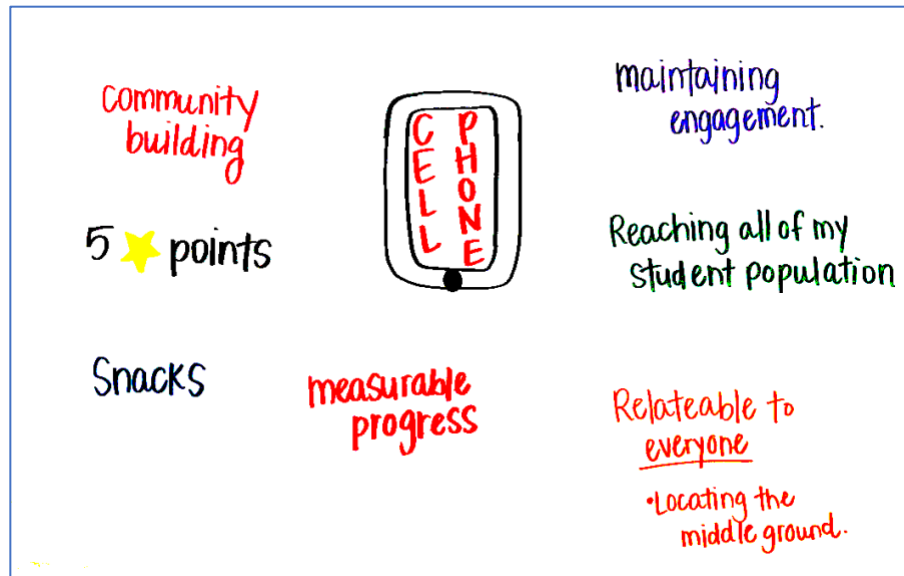
translations of prompts for each of his students' heritage languages that included Spanish, Vietnamese, and Chinese. Ultimately, he expressed his inquiry question as, "Would translating my Welcoming Inclusion Activity prompts elicit linguistically richer responses from [focal student]?"

Elena

Elena is a First-Generation Latina and speaks Spanish and English. She is in her fourth year of teaching, and this is her second year at Willowbrook High School. Elena teaches World Geography, US History, and an elective titled Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID). During the initial brainstorming in Session One, Elena focused on engagement in the classroom. Of significant concern was "cell phone usage during instruction, group work and class discussions." The issue of engagement was understood as a lack of motivation, and Elena sought to explore the implementation of an extrinsic reward system for maintaining and increasing engagement. Ultimately, Elena expressed their inquiry as "How can rewarding students with 5 Star points in class increase the engagement in class discussions, group work and participation?" 5 Star points are a schoolwide reward system initiative. Elena stated that she hoped to "explore the discussions and interactions that my students can have without the constant distractors."

Figure 3

Elena's Inquiry Brainstorming, California (own photo).



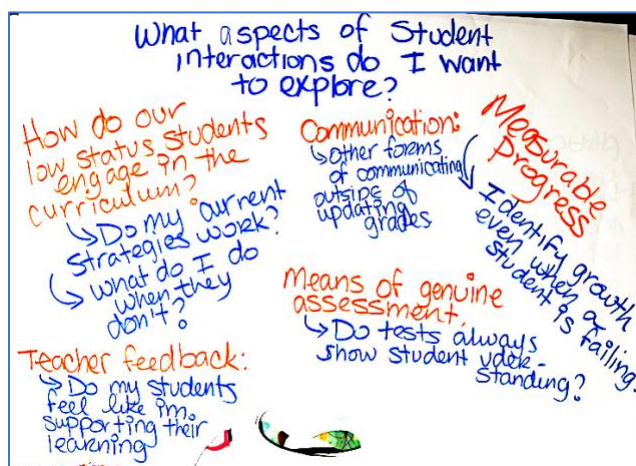
Angela

Angela has been an educator for eight years, two of which have been at Willowbrook High School. Angela is a Black female math teacher who speaks no other language than English. Angela attended three of the four *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community Sessions. In Session One, Angela stated that she had earned “a master’s degree in practitioner education with an emphasis on social justice” and that she had spent a lot of time with “culturally sustainable pedagogy, culturally responsive teaching methods and things like that.” Her participation throughout the sessions spoke to how she understood her role in a “system built to oppress.” As a reflective practitioner, she posed the following questions to the group during Session One: “What are we doing in our microcosm in our space to mitigate those oppressive things that are happening in the classroom? And what can we do on a larger scale to kind of mitigate those things that happen in education in general?” Her aim for seeking out support for *ELs is grounded in a stated imperative to provide “equitable access to hopefully minimize and close the achievement gap in the curriculum I teach.”

Angela articulated several potential areas to explore regarding supporting *ELs, but ultimately decided to utilize a focal student to explore: “How does group work in my classroom support student learning of my MLL students?” She stated, “I chose this student specifically. I had him last year, so it kind of gives me an insight as to where he’s growing and how he’s improving based on where he was last year.” While Angela chose to focus on this particular student, she also spoke to the fact that it was a focus for her supporting *ELs in general.

Figure 4

Angela’s Inquiry Brainstorming, California (own photo).



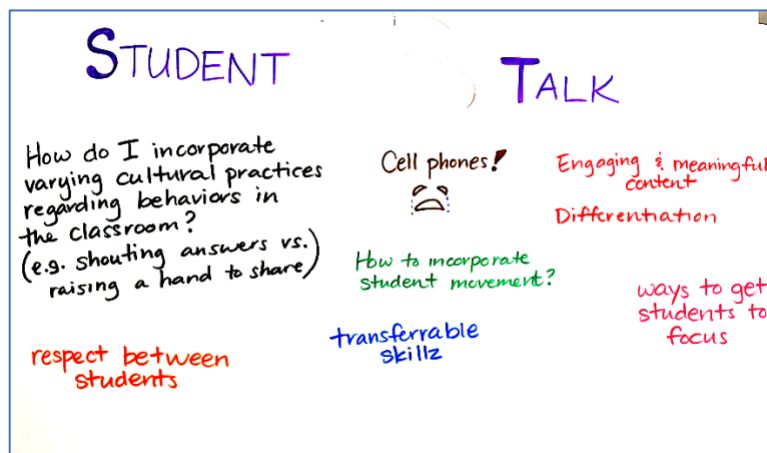
Cindy

Cindy is an Asian woman who speaks no other language than English. She is a second-year teacher, and both years have been spent at Willowbrook High School. Currently, she teaches English 9 courses as well as a Designated English Language Development course designed to primarily serve students nearing reclassification or who are *Long Term English Learners (LTELs). A consistent tension that Cindy reflected on, which was shared by other participants, was the recognition of the competing demands felt between schooling’s monolingual ideologies and the expansive language ideologies presented in the texts throughout the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community. At the end of Session One, she asked, “How can I best

honor and extend cultural backgrounds of my students while still maintaining classroom management?” Cindy honed her thinking and design for inquiry and stated that she wanted, “more engagement and academic talk than social.” After further discussion, she stated that she felt student ownership and agency may lead to more engagement. She wondered about strategies she could use. She decided to start with a survey regarding when students had felt engaged in courses.

Figure 5

Cindy’s Inquiry Brainstorming, California (own photo).



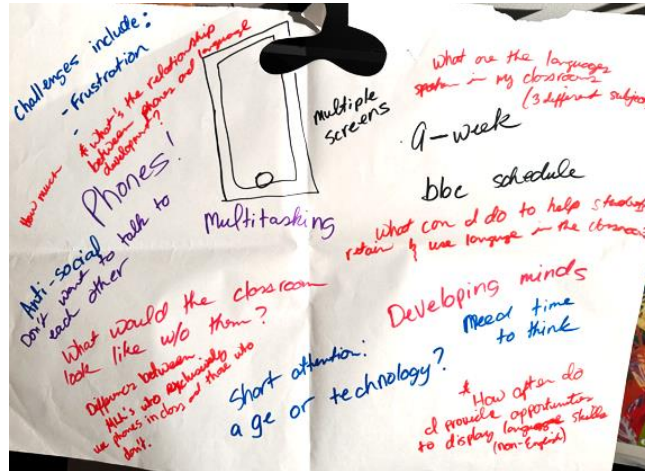
Stacey

Stacey is a Black educator in her third year of teaching. At the time of the study, she taught multiple history courses, including World Geography, Ethnic Studies, and Economics. Stacey expressed a critical stance towards schooling throughout the sessions that included both a critique and a hope for the liberatory aspects of schooling. She expressed her interest in her inquiry topic of engagement early in the sessions. While the focus was honed on active listening through conversations, feedback, reflection, the intention to develop active listening was always connected with a desire for increasing student engagement. Ultimately, Stacey honed her inquiry focus from engagement to active listening, as an aspect of engagement, and asked, “How do I get

students to engage in active listening skills in class?” She went on to clarify that she wanted to use the inquiry process as an opportunity to “think about the impact of active listening on language development.”

Figure 6

Stacey’s Inquiry Brainstorming, California (own photo).



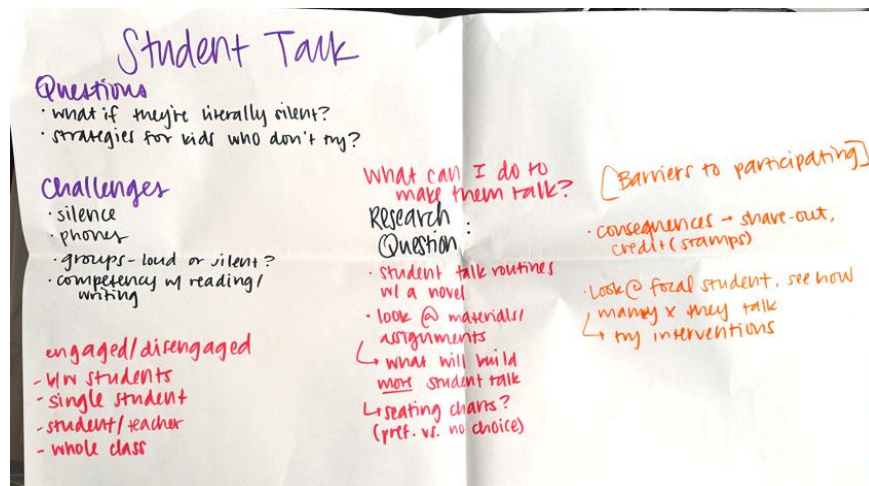
Adrienne

During the study, Adrienne was in her third year of teaching. She had taught at Willowbrook High School for two years and was teaching ninth-grade English and AP Literature. Adrienne is a White female who only speaks English. In Session Two, her initial inquiry question was, “How to incorporate multicultural practices/other languages w/o spotlighting kids so it feels awkward.” While she reflected on this tension of honoring without “spotlighting” during the initial Sessions, as we moved further into developing our inquiries, an additional focus emerged for Adrienne. The final focus of her inquiry stemmed from conversations where she noted, “This term, my kids are super silent, and they seem to be doing their work, but they're pretty quiet. So that's more of the immediate tension is like, what can I do to make you talk to each other more?” She shared many community-building strategies that she had implemented throughout the quarter, but stated, “We're in week Four, And you're still

silent.” Adrienne stated that her impetus for supporting student talk was the recognition that “Sometimes they’re just really quiet and they’re still doing stuff. They’re getting it done,” but she worried. “The kids who aren’t going to do it, that talk is when they get their information from hearing their group, and they’re not going to get that.” While Adrienne brought up concerns across multiple courses, she decided to center her inquiry on a focal student from her English 9 class, who “has generally been getting lower grades than his peers on writing assignments.” Her inquiry question was articulated as, “How do I make some very silent students actually speak?” However, her larger aim was to “examine the effect of group work and discussion on writing.”

Figure 7

Adrienne’s Inquiry Brainstorming, California (own photo).



Anthony

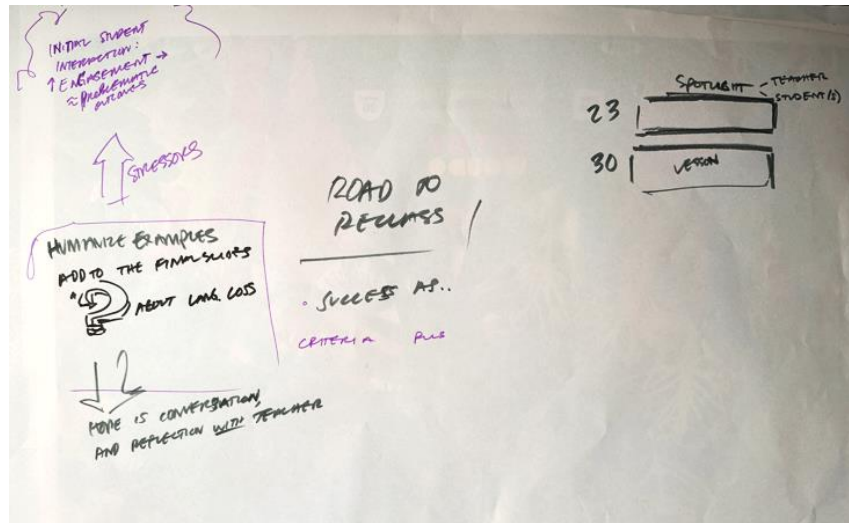
I am a White male speaker of English and no other languages. While I was a classroom educator for seven years, this is my second year supporting Willowbrook High School as an Instructional Coach for *English Learners. My inquiry began in the first quarter of the 2023-2024 school year while presenting a lesson on Reclassification Criteria to middle school students. Throughout that lesson, I noted students as actively engagement and, based on

formative assessment, determined that students understood the criteria necessary for exiting Designated ELD by the end of the lesson. However, I was left wondering about the vision of success I had communicated to students—which was grounded solely in the development of English Language proficiency.

During the process of preparing for delivering a similar lesson to this particular practitioner’s Quarter 2 class, I observed and supported the practitioner multiple times before the lesson. I spoke with multiple students and one interaction in particular affirmed my imperative for problematizing notions of success. During a one-on-one conversation, I learned about him and his family. I learned about his parent’s story of immigration and that he was first generation. I learned that both of his parents spoke their heritage language, and when I asked him if he spoke or read it, he replied in a way that demeaned the heritage language. This student, like many other students, who are labeled Long Term English Learners, is receiving mandated English Language Development services but does not (or never did) speak a language other than English. I decided to adapt a prior lesson on supporting students in understanding reclassification criteria and asked, “How does including sustaining language in a Road to Reclassification lesson disrupt student and practitioner perceptions of heritage language?”

Figure 8

Anthony’s Inquiry Brainstorming, California (own photo).



Liz

Liz is a Caucasian female who speaks English and no other languages. She is a veteran practitioner with twenty years of experience teaching History in secondary schools. At the time of *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community sessions, she taught three courses AP World History, You and the Law, and American Government.

Liz’s Exit Slips from the sessions she attended spoke to a desire for strategies to support *ELs. On Session 2’s Exit Slip, she stated, “I need some tricks! How do I really support them [*ELs] while taking care of everyone else?” While she wondered about supporting students with her specific course “language and concepts” as she reasoned they would be “very unfamiliar to students from other countries,” she decided to direct her attention towards engagement and motivation.

Liz’s developing inquiry was grounded in a perceived lack of motivation across students, but she selected a focal student with the thought that, “Maybe if I can work with him then I can help other kids.” She selected this particular student because she described him as “really unmotivated to do school” as a senior who needed to pass her course to graduate. She added that his motivation impacted his participation in the class, but it also impacted how classmates

perceived him. This reflection about the impact of lack of motivation on other students became an additional important aspect of exploring, “What’s going to motivate him?” During a conversation that took place in Session 2, we brainstormed potential barriers to participation to which she stated, “A lot of times these kids that are able to do it and they just don’t, they just bring it in themselves.” Liz expressed her inquiry as seeking “To get one student, one kid who’s unmotivated to do work” but later went on to add that she wondered, “how do I motivate this kid, not just now but for the future. What’s going to motivate you to work hard and apply your skills to life?” Her plan for her inquiry was to talk with her student about potential barriers because she was “curious what he’s going to say, what’s going to motivate him.”

April

April is a third-year educator who teaches English. She is a Black woman who speaks English. During our final session, April stated that while she doesn’t “speak any second languages,” she said, “a general interest in languages and having EL friends” made her driven to work with multilingual learners. Her interest in and value of linguistic diversity was demonstrated throughout her participation in the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community Sessions.

April’s inquiry emerged from an initial examination of a focal student. She chose a student who she stated was trying to participate, but “She doesn’t speak English very well and she can’t write it very well.” She stated that the focal student just didn’t have “enough English to formulate a response.” In a one-on-one conversation with me, April stated that her current approach to supporting the students was “having her just listen to her group and ask them how to write down some of the things they were saying so she could just get used to the words.” When I asked about the outcome of the current approach, April shared that her focal students was indeed able to “jot down a good two thirds of what they said,” however she went on to state that “some

of her groupmates weren't that helpful, which wasn't her fault." This introduction of a group dynamic spurred April explore the additional supports that might be offered, however the supports remained focused solely on increasing English language productions. During Session Three's Group Feedback Protocol, April articulated her question as:

how does providing not just her, but all of my students with sentence frames and word bank specific to the text, we're going to be reading increase engagement from this beginning EL student because it puts her on almost a closer playing field to everyone else because everyone will be answering using the sentence frame so she doesn't just stick out like a sore thumb.

The language support Intervention was built from a universal access approach with the hopes of mitigating any social stigma that *ELs might experience during participation. She went on to add that, "They'll be doing group discussion. So I'm going to be doing observation. I'm going to look at her work samples...I do want to get feedback directly from her." After receiving feedback and honing her inquiry, she articulated her inquiry question as, "How does providing sentence frames to all students encourage verbal engagement from EL students during group discussions and projects?"

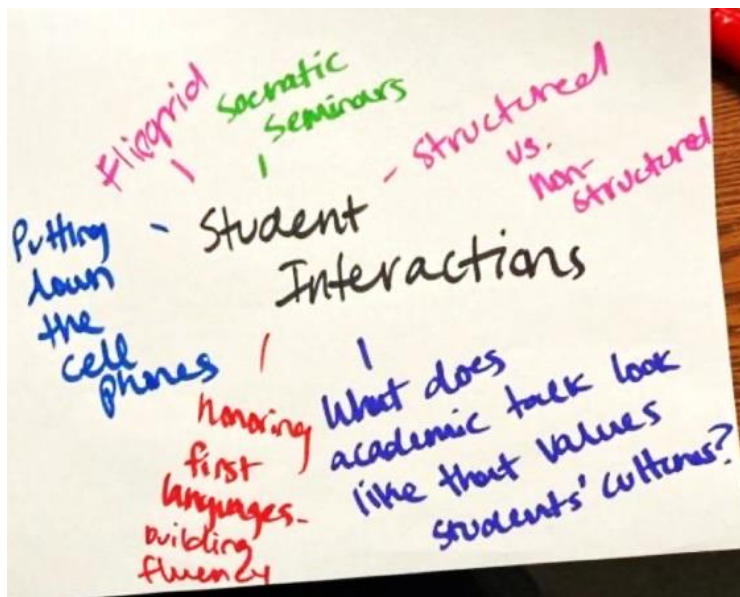
Hannah

Hannah has been an educator for seventeen years, eleven of which have been spent at Willowbrook High School. She is a White/Caucasian educator who does not speak a language other than English. At the time of the study, Hannah taught three courses: English Intensive 3, Film as Literature, and Exploring Modern Issues in Text. Hannah attended three of the four *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community Sessions. Her initial topics regarding student interactions included references to tools "Flipgrid," strategies "Socratic Seminars," and tensions "structured

vs. non-structured.” She also included the question, “What does academic talk look like that values students’ cultures?”

Figure 9

Hannah’s Inquiry Brainstorming, California (own photo).



During Session Two, Hannah was discussing with another participant about the lack of talk in their classes, Hannah stated, “I’m struggling with this myself as well...I will say they’re getting better. They’re opening up. I think they’re getting more comfortable, but it’s like we’re week five.” At the end of the session, she stated on her Session Two Exit Slip, “Despite many attempts to get students to talk, some are still silent. Why? Why are some still so silent?” This initial wondering led Hannah to develop an inquiry plan that sought to explore promoting student talk that would be seen as valuable to students.

The inquiry plan became more solidified during a one-on-one coaching conversation. She shared with me that, “I dunno if this is a question, but I dunno, I feel like there’s only so many people [to] talk [with].” I responded that, “To me, if you pose it as a question, it’s like in what

ways can I include additional voices in this space other than the one's that are here?" Recalling her brainstorming from Session 1, I responded that "There's a bunch of technology tools you can use to mediate between students in your classroom and outside of it." We discussed her brainstorming paper and her having listed "Flipgrid" as an aspect of student interactions she wanted to explore. I offered to connect her with another practitioner, who taught the same course at a different high school and stated, "That's a real easy thing, is send each other Flipgrid stuff." During the feedback protocol with other participants during Session Three, she articulated her developing inquiry as an attempt in:

trying to find ways to, like Anthony said, get more voices in there, get them to interact with other people other than the same four people they talk to every day. And to me, so I was thinking of, or Anthony gave me the idea to talk to [a teacher at another high school], maybe getting them, I was thinking maybe we could do some sort of pal activity through Flipgrid so the kids could post videos and then they can also go and respond

During this feedback protocol, she also introduced the idea of exploring how students respond to this process and whether they see it as "valuable." Through continued honing and planning, she arrived at two inquiry questions, "How do I get more diverse voices into my small classroom?" And "Is having my students talking with other classes going to be valuable for them?"

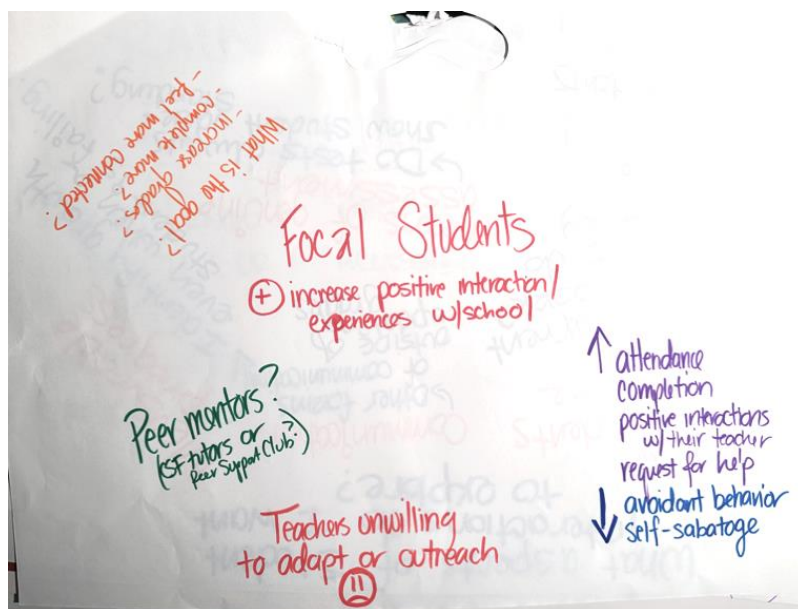
Rebecca

Rebecca is a White female English practitioner. She has taught for 13 years, and nine of those years at Willowbrook High School. She only speaks English. She splits duties with Daniel as *English Learner Program Coordinator for Willowbrook. Rebecca was only able to attend Session 1 of the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community, but her contributions during the session contributed to the shape of Session 2. Rebecca was initially concerned with a number of potential

topics to explore through inquiry. However, she remarked multiple times on a desire to impact the lives of other teachers. On her brainstorming paper, she identified a dilemma as “Practitioners unwilling to adapt or outreach” she went on to include in her Exit Slip that she was continuing to wonder, “How can I help support MLLs in other practitioners courses, while supporting the teachers—but without being able to tell teachers to be different.”

Figure 10

Rebecca’s Inquiry Brainstorming, California (own photo).



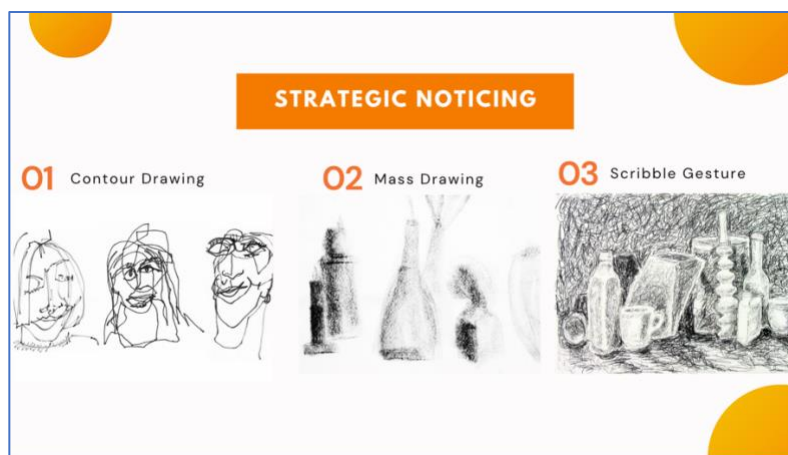
Session 1

Nine of the 12 participants attended the first session, which was designed to foster community through collaboration and introduce concepts to be explored and problematized throughout the sessions. These recurring concepts included: differentiating typical professional development spaces from spaces for collaborative inquiry; understanding typical phases of inquiry; and historicizing the institution of schooling as a part of the “largely assimilationist and often violent, White imperial project” (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 1). The session began with participants creating blind contour portraits of one another. These drawings were discussed as

representing a first step in strategically noticing the contours of a subject. The drawing itself was not the point of the exercise but an essential aspect of a larger process (Figure 11). The brief opening activity—which caused a great deal of laughter when we presented our portraits to one another—was used as a metaphor for our work in the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community: we were not “going to come away with the one best strategy,” and we were not going to produce flawless research. Instead, I stated, “The idea is that this is a space to collaboratively construct strategic noticing” of the strengths and needs of our *English Learners.

Figure 11

Session 1: Strategic Noticing Exercise, California (own photo).



Afterward, I presented an overview of the four sessions, their intended outcomes, and drafted activities for participant feedback. The only question that emerged came from Angela; it was asked as we discussed the culminating narrative. The graphic showed the due date for the Culminating Inquiry Narrative during a holiday break, and I assured the participants I would give them time beyond the stated date. In addition to an overview of the sessions, participants were asked to review the discussed norms and were invited to alter or co-construct additional norms. While no additional norms were created, Angela stated, “I don’t want to add to it, but I think it would be nice to revisit it, maybe, in our next session as we explore working together.” The

process of presenting an overview and norms to elicit feedback was intended as an initial attempt to democratize the professional learning space. However, there is also the potential that it was perceived as additional labor being imposed on participants instead of being carried by the facilitator. This was an early example of the tension I felt as an insider-outsider within the professional development space.

After norms were presented, I sought to provide an initial differentiation between typical professional development and the aims of this practitioner inquiry community. I presented a slide that stated, “All inquiry is PD. Not all PD is inquiry. Not all inquiry is Critical.” I then provided the quote:

Working from and with an inquiry stance ... involves a continual process of making current arrangements problematic; questioning the ways knowledge and practice are constructed, evaluated, and used; and assuming part of the work of practitioners individually and collectively is to participate in educational and social change (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p.121)

From this quote, I remarked on how inquiry has the potential to be “Critical” in the sense that it can “make normal strange” as well as challenge the “expert-novice distinction,” and that it should necessarily be grounded in a “collective responsibility to eliminate inequities” (Figure 12). Angela took a photo of the slide at this point.

Figure 12

Session 1: Critical Inquiry, California (own photo).



Afterward, the overarching question to guide the sessions was presented to participants. I discussed that we would not seek out the one answer to the question, “How might our designs for student interactions honor and extend Multilingual Learners’ full linguistic repertoires?” Nevertheless, our goal was to take this question up in each of our respective spaces and seek out more actionable responses. Next, I noted that belying this question was another, more critical question: “How might our designs for student interactions devalue and narrow Multilingual Learners’ full linguistic repertoires?” To further explore that idea, I told participants we would read and discuss an excerpt from the text, *What is Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy and Why Does it Matter?* (Paris & Alim, 2017).

We all read the excerpt, and I asked everyone to select a portion that “had you wondering, agreeing, or otherwise.” The subsequent conversation covered a range of exchanges on topics, including strengths and doubts in the efficacy of Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies, perceived discontinuities between the theory presented “in a vacuum” and the day-to-day practice of practitioners, and the contradiction of seeking change in a “rigged system.”

Multiple participants remarked on how the theory presented was divorced from practice and the larger aims of schooling. Rebecca, who is a White woman and speaks only English,

stated, “I’m always, like—great in theory, but like, show me an illustration of it.” Meanwhile, Stacey—who is a Black woman—said, “This is wonderful to talk about in a vacuum, but are we preparing them for the real world?” This notion that if the ideas presented in the text were enacted, they would fail to prepare students for the “real world” was iterated multiple times during the discussion. Rebecca went on to state:

We’re training kids for the real world, so if they enter the real world, or if we don’t correct grammar or language or mispronunciations and things like that because we’re respecting the language of the community, then when they go to job interviews and things like that, how is that impacting [them], you know what I mean?

Stacey extended this line of thinking by stating that if kids are not equipped with the “skills they need to, to engage in that racist system, then you have another type of inequality.” These participants expressed complex understandings of the relationships between linguistic and social systems and schooling’s role in mediating—indeed, perpetuating—hegemonic language ideologies. These practitioners remarked on their role in preparing students to navigate or accommodate racism and linguistic prejudice. Daniel, who is Latino and Native American, stated that change efforts are often taken up in ways that “increase or improve the conditions of the people who are already in a place of power or privilege”: the onus of change is placed on those who have not appropriated White Mainstream English (Baker-Bell, 2020).

Daniel expressed an ongoing tension in his work as a sense of futility in seeking to “reconcile” the fact that students “have teachers who tell them, like, you belong here, we want you here,” but that every other aspect of schooling communicates otherwise. He went on to state that the issues are systemic and will not “be solved by theory or ... groups like this,” and that one could dedicate a whole career to Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies and “still not improve the

situation.” This frustration was also alluded to by Rebecca when she stated, “If you’re saying that this system is like racist and classist, and all of these other things, and so we stop using it, what do students then graduate with?” The sense of futility in change and the rationale for continuing to perpetuate hegemonic language ideologies was summarized by Rebecca as, “you can’t just build it in one place. You have to build it in the whole society.” Participants expressed that because racism and classism exist, and will continue to do so, students must be equipped with White Mainstream English to survive in the system. In my anecdotal notes from Session 1, I wondered about whether this rationale could also be understood as a reason not to critically reflect on practice, or to maintain a practice that panders to Whiteness. This is challenged by Alim and Paris (2016) when they state that Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies were developed as “a pedagogical agenda that does not concern itself with the seemingly panoptic *White gaze* (Morrison, 1998) that permeates educational research and practice with and for students of color, their practitioners, and their schools” (p. 2).

As the conversation proceeded, I also noted an ongoing tension within myself between being a participant, facilitator, and instructional coach. At the start of the discussion, after a participant had shared a portion of the text that resonated, Angela—who is a Black woman—wondered about the protocol for contributing to the discussion. She asked, “This is just like, go?” In an effort to reiterate the co-construction of the space, I responded, “If you want it to be.” Angela then replied, “I want it to be whatever you want. Um, who is the teacher?” At this moment, a negotiation occurred between the typical division of labor within a professional learning space. My desire to have an unstructured discussion may have been atypical for the professional development experienced by Angela, or unexpected given her participation in

professional learning that I had facilitated prior to the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community. However, after this exchange, everyone contributed more openly without a structured protocol.

An additional tension regarding my shifting roles within the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community came during a series of exchanges regarding Stacey's claim that cell phone use in the classroom was a distraction. Other participants sought to "disrupt" this comment by adding that technology can additionally be used as a tool for translation and offer a potential avenue to being culturally responsive. My contribution sought to reframe the claims as potential inquiries:

It's interesting to think about students moving through different contexts throughout the day and, like, whether or not subjects or, like, the ease or the difficulty of a subject would, like, have a bearing on their use of their cell phones. But I, I think that that's also like a thing to, to, like, look at empirically, like, where does the disengagement stem from? Because then it's like, we're doing inquiry instead of it being like a foregone conclusion.

This comment may have been productive, because the participant later reflected on the deficit framing of student cell phone use. But it also closed that portion of the conversation in that no other participant contributed afterward.

After our discussion concluded, I provided poster paper, time, and space to begin to brainstorm and articulate "the questions, challenges, or dilemmas [we] have been considering around student talk." I encouraged everyone to think as broadly or specifically as they would like. At the end of the session, I offered directions for completing a Spotlight Student Profile (Appendix B) before Session 2 to ground our developing inquiry in the strengths and needs of a specific *English Learner.

Finally, we all completed an exit slip asking the following questions: What are your takeaways from tonight about language and supporting *ELs? What are your new or ongoing wonderings about language and supporting *ELs? The participants' exit slips spoke to a range of takeaways and wonderings, but three main categories emerged. We were continuing to process the text we read, wondering about potential topics of inquiry, and reflecting on the goal(s) of the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community.

Several participants remarked on continuing to process the reading and its implications for practice. Cindy, who was an Asian woman, asked, "Are my practices white-centered?" Angela reflected directly on the efficacy of Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies presented in the reading by asking, "Being culturally sustaining can help support our students? I'm not sure." Additionally, Gordon, who was a White male, wondered about, "whether the discussed 'dilemma' of a system embedded in a larger structure is a real or imagined problem." These quotes capture the range of reactions to the text presented. On the one hand, we were taking up insights from the reading and reflecting on our own practice, while on the other, we were questioning foundational ideas within the text and the efficacy of such an approach.

Many of the wonderings and takeaways also articulated emerging inquiry questions. Participants' inquiry topics related to their own practice as well as the practice of other practitioners. Gordon wondered about their practice by asking, "how my English and Spanish fluency might help or hinder my support of MLLs [Multilingual Learners]?" Cindy put forth a question regarding a focus on her own practice by wondering, "How can I best honor and extend cultural backgrounds of my students while still maintaining classroom management?"

Other participants articulated emerging inquiries regarding the practice of others. Daniel asked, "How do we get teachers to care? How do we get teachers to change? How do we get

teachers to reflect on faulty practices?” Rebecca remarked, “How can I help support MLLs [Multilingual Learners] in other teachers’ courses, while supporting the teachers—but without being able to tell teachers to be different?”

One final pattern across exit slips was a range of thoughts on the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community as a professional learning space that sought to go beyond a purely methodological approach to serving *ELs. Two participants expressed a desire for additional strategies for supporting *ELs. Angela stated, “Will we come away with a strategy that works for most? I feel like the takeaway is that there is not one solid answer.” Elena, who was a Latina and multilingual, acknowledged that “There is no one way to reach everyone. Different methods work for different students. There are various ways to support students.” She then further articulated a desire for additional strategies because of this understanding of the diverse needs of *ELs.

Finally, two participants explicitly remarked on the inquiry approach to problematizing practice. Gordon stated, “Questioning the ‘normal’ works well in an inquiry setting.” Stacey remarked, “I learned that I was pre-judging the motivations behind cell phone use. Asking questions sounds like a better way to gather information.” These participants make explicit a developing stance towards inquiry and its potential affordances for their practice and students.

The first session of the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community generated a great deal of discussion and reflection on practice through both designed activities, facilitated conversations, as well as unexpected exchanges. I left excited, exhausted, and inspired to continue the work of provoking and sustaining a collaborative space to problematize our practice.

Session 2

The second session of the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community was attended by nine of the 12 participants. It was designed as an environment where all participants could engage in collective critical reflection on practice necessary for the destabilization and rearticulation of language ideologies to occur. The session was divided into three main portions. First, themes from Session One were reviewed with participants. Second, participants viewed and discussed multiple texts regarding language, schooling, and society. Finally, participants had an opportunity to further develop their inquiry by developing their questions and identifying steps for moving forward.

After a brief icebreaker, the community norms were reviewed, and one additional norm was elicited based on the previous session's discussion of the excerpt read in the previous session. Angela wished to add "be okay with discomfort" as a new norm. This norm was agreed on and included on the norm slide. Afterward, I reviewed a theme that had emerged for me during the initial analysis, which regarded tensions in our practice. I told participants that various tensions stood out to me while reviewing Session 1. Examples included tensions between theory and practice; the competing understanding that "CSPs [Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies] De-Center Whiteness" and the perception that not training kids for the real world "creates another type of inequality"; and the tension felt in working for change in a "rigged system." Participants affirmed these as tensions expressed in Session 1.

Afterward, I presented a quote from a participant that I felt was beneficial in escaping the binaries that these tensions represented. The quote was from Rebecca while discussing the Alim and Paris (2016) piece read in Session 1. She referenced a passage and said that she saw this as a "Yes, and." She wanted to work at "honoring what they [students] come in with, their knowledge

and their language and their ways of being, and you're also giving them the information of, like, what will be expected of them from outside communities and outside world." From this quote, I spoke to the fact that our overarching question was built as a both/and proposition by including "honor and extend." In addition to these aspects of our overarching question, I stated that we also have an obligation to critically reflect on how our designs for student interactions can "devalue" students' languages. Afterward, I (re)presented our overarching question as, "How might our designs for student interactions devalue, honor, and extend MLL's [Multilingual Learners] full linguistic repertoires?" Furthermore, I bracketed "student interactions" and spoke to how our focus on student talk is one aspect of this work, but that it could be replaced with "grading practices, rubric designs, text selection, formative feedback, summative assessments, expectations, 504 processes, discipline policies, curriculum adoption, professional development, or funding and initiatives."

As a result of these reflections, I (re)presented our overarching question as, "How might [x] devalue, honor, and extend MLLs [Multilingual Learners] full linguistic repertoires?" where [x] could be any of the above-mentioned aspects of work or others. Finally, I shared that this was a space to strategically notice how we and schooling "devalue, honor, and extend" students' language, and how we can intentionally redesign to place less emphasis on devaluation and more emphasis on honoring (Figure 13). This process of iterative development is an instantiation of the claim that practitioner inquiry groups are "structured to 89epress8989ate 89epress89e a set of overarching questions, initially established by course planners but continually renegotiated" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p. 109). From analyzing contributions from Session 1, I (re)presented a revised overarching question which I hoped would more accurately incorporate and push forward our understandings of language and schooling.

Figure 13

Session 2: Revised Overarching Question, California (own photo).



Next, we engaged in a Jigsaw activity where we viewed different texts and then came together to discuss the connections between them. There were a total of 4 texts that included a three videos that included, *No Sabo Kids” Reclaiming heritage by learning Spanish* (ABC10, 2023); *Making Space for Native Languages in Newcomer Classrooms* (Edutopia, 2020); *3 Ways to Speak English* (Lyiscott, 2014); and a podcast episode, *The Day a Texas School Held a Funeral for the Spanish Language* (Inskeep et al., 2017). After viewing and listening to the texts, we reflected, “What story do these texts tell about language, schooling, and society?” During the debrief of the texts, personal connections to the texts—as well as an understanding of schooling as a powerful institution in authorizing or delegitimizing language—were expressed.

For many, their experiences connected with the experiences presented in the texts. There were a range of experiences expressed that spoke to how schooling has functioned to sustain and/or erase language. Elena spoke to the complexity of schooling’s role in maintaining language within her own family, stating, “I got lucky. I am first generation. I went to a bilingual

elementary school where I was able to learn both [English and Spanish].” However, she added that the experience was different for her siblings, including her sister, who did not attend bilingual schools and “struggles with Spanish, and it’s tough on her.” Elena connected this experience to a video viewed during the jigsaw titled “*No Sabo Kids*” *Reclaiming heritage by learning Spanish* (ABC10, 2023). She stated that she would say her sister is “a No Sabo Kid.” Daniel stated that the texts connected to his own “personal history with language” in that his grandfather received so many messages that devalued their heritage language of Spanish that “he didn’t bother teaching” future generations. He stated:

Two generations removed, now, I don’t have that connection to my culture in the way that I kind of wish I would. And that wasn’t our decision, that it was all put upon us, this idea that we had to conform to this standard in order to be part of it.

The texts elicited a range of responses that spoke to an understanding of how schooling can both affirm heritage language and undermine multilingualism. For some, insights were gained regarding the impacts on students that participants had not considered. Angela, who had listened to the NPR podcast episode, *The Day a Texas School Held a Funeral for the Spanish Language* (Inskeep et al., 2017), stated, “The fact that trauma still existed, that they’re still telling that story today, just shows how when you try to suppress something from a child, how they internalize it for a lifetime.” She reiterated this point after making a connection to her own experience growing up in a classroom where students who did not speak English would come to her school. The message she herself received from teachers was “how important it was to enforce that the student just speak English in the classroom.” She added that the text made her consider, “like, wow, that can be traumatizing for a student just to be forced to use a language that they’re not familiar with.”

Angela framed this final observation by stating that “from an English-speaking perspective,” it makes sense to limit the use of other languages; but that we were considering the implications from a different perspective. In articulating this, she was coming to recognize the harmful logic of monolingual ideologies. The comments also speak to an understanding of classroom language policies, students’ roles in enforcing them, and how these factors can create “traumatizing” environments and experiences for *English Learners.

Two participants remarked explicitly on schooling’s connection to larger social forces and how these play a role in the ascribing value to languages. Daniel articulated a key takeaway that “schooling is conditioning” and that “we’re almost stripping away a lot, in order to get them ready to be accepted into that system.” In this, Daniel interrogated what is lost in attempts to prepare students to be heard by the White listening subject (Rosa & Flores, 2017). Stacey remarked that the American project of schooling was never to educate but “to create workers.” She reflected on the texts and the debrief in relation to her prior experiences in school and stated that the current conversation about incorporating languages other than English into the classroom was “a result of the working world having a necessity for languages in a way that they didn’t 20 years ago.” These participants’ comments both speak to schooling’s role in sustaining society’s linguistic prejudice by “stripping away” aspects of student’s identities or in sustaining linguistic diversity for the sake of creating a commodity for exploitation. Either way, their comments speak to an understanding of schooling’s stance on language as one that does not center the needs of *English Learners or their right to language proficiency beyond English.

Following the discussion, participants returned to the initial brainstorm for their inquiry and Spotlight Student Profile to further develop an inquiry question to guide them. During the time dedicated to brainstorming, participants discussed both inquiry and non-inquiry related

topics. They supported the development of inquiries through both probing questions and offering strategies and encouragement. I checked in with multiple participants to provide support as a coach to hone inquiry questions through rounds of feedback and probing questions. I also provided one participant additional background information on the inquiry process, since she had not been able to attend Session 1.

The session concluded with an Exit slip, once again asking participants to reflect on the takeaways and wonderings regarding language and supporting *ELs. Patterns that emerged from exit slips included: language and identity; schooling and language; and the continued tension between seeking change in a “rigged system.”

Gordon acknowledged the “significant relationship between language and identity,” and how this recognition related to his role as a practitioner. Angela reflected how it was “important to honor ‘heritage’ language.” A second pattern in participant takeaways and wonderings was the complexity of schooling and language. Elena stated succinctly that the “school system has had a huge impact on language.” Stacey reflected on the role of schooling as “a tool and a barrier.” Hannah remarked on the potential ways that “schools can shape, in good and bad ways, how students relate language to their life and the world.” Daniel stated, “forced English usage is a way to condition students to a system that favors assimilation.” These comments demonstrated the range of understanding of the historical and continued potential impacts of schooling on multilingual learners.

Finally, participants shared the implications of these conversations for their work with students. Daniel asked, “If English is required for students to succeed, how can I create a classroom that improves English while not devaluing or discouraging use of home language?” Adrienne wondered about a translanguaging approach, stating, “How to incorporate multicultural

practices/other languages w/o spotlighting kids so it feels awkward.” These comments seek to reconcile a nascent understanding of counterhegemonic language ideologies and the monolingual ideological stance that is dominant and pervasive in schooling.

The second session allowed space for further conversation about language and schooling and our role as practitioners in change. The texts elicited personal connections to language and schooling, making for a fruitful conversation. As a facilitator, I opted not to assign inquiry work between sessions two and three because our discussion ran long, and most participants needed additional time to develop their inquiry questions and plan. I reflected afterwards in my analytical memos that there was a noticeable shift in energy. While during Session 1 practitioners sat in groups made up mostly of members from their own departments, the jigsaw activity afforded opportunities to connect and discuss with colleagues outside of their departments. In my analytical memos, I also remarked on how reframing the initial inquiry to be more open-ended seemed to help communicate more of a dialogic approach to the professional learning space. As we returned to our brainstorming documents, practitioners seemed more willing to extend their inquiry questions in their own directions.

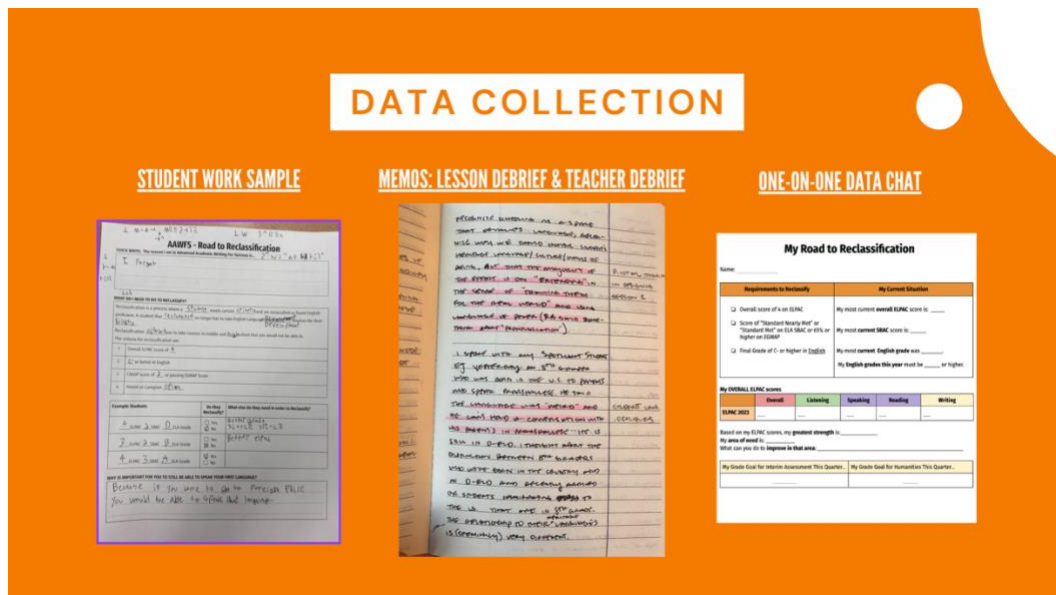
Session 3

The third session was attended by seven of the 12 participants. The primary focus of the session was for participants to develop a data collection plan that would respond to the inquiry question they had articulated in Session 2. A secondary aim was to have participants calendar the process of collecting data over the next several weeks before the culminating narrative was due. To support these purposes, I provided my own ongoing inquiry project as a model of what the other participants’ inquiry process could entail.

I began outlining the story of my problem by discussing “my own connection with language erasure over generations and how I think schooling plays a role in that.” After sharing my own history, I turned to how this problem manifested in my professional context as an instructional coach working with practitioners and students in Designated English Language Development courses in a middle school. I briefly outlined the inquiry question, the data sources I wanted to explore, and the plan for continuing to collect data throughout the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community.

Figure 14

Session 3: Model Data Collection, California (own photo).



We then took time to collaborate and complete a brief Data Collection graphic organizer (Appendix C), which was intended to further develop participants’ inquiry questions and articulate an overview of their data collection over the remaining two weeks. During this process, discussions within small groups developed our data collection plans. Additionally, I used this time to connect with individuals in one-on-one coaching conversations to support in honing questions and developing inquiries.

Afterward, we rearranged desks into a circle, and each person was given an opportunity to present an overview of their developing inquiry question and data collection plan. They then received feedback through a collaborative feedback protocol. The inquiries each person tabled represented a range of topics, including seeking to explore “active listening,” supporting student talk, and managing student engagement.

The participants exploring student talk approached designing their inquiries in varied ways that reflected both their content and classroom context. Adrienne, who teaches Advanced Placement English courses as well as College Prep English, sought to simply increase the amount of speech produced during CP English. Initially, she jokingly wondered, “Why the eff aren’t these children talking?” She later went on to clarify that her real focus for study was a structured interaction protocol’s impact on student talk related to a novel. April also focused on student talk and narrowed down her inquiry to a focal student recently arrived in the country. She wondered about including sentence stems during collaborative conversations to encourage the focal student to contribute more to the conversation. Hannah likewise focused on student talk and approached it through the lens of student valuation of conversations with other students outside of their own class. She designed an inquiry that would use technology to mediate a conversation between a Designated-ELD course for Newcomer students across multiple sites. This was undertaken in an effort to “include more voices” in a classroom of only four students.

Another common pattern of inquiries was related to student engagement and classroom management. Liz selected a focal student, stating she sought to “motivate this kid, not just now but for the future.” She wondered about what could motivate him “to work hard and apply [his] skills to life?” Liz wanted the student to understand their own continued disengagement with content, the implications of disengagement for graduating, and how to take ownership of their

participation. She decided to collect data using quick check-ins at the end of classes and to quantify the student's participation during that day. Similarly, Cindy stated that her inquiry was based on her experience that "students are so easily distracted and disengaged, especially in my ELD class." Others offered suggestions in the forms of external motivators, including using music as a reward or offering fidgets for supporting regulation. Ultimately, Cindy opted to move forward with her intention to start from the understanding that students feel engaged in school or by teachers and ask, "what classes do they feel most engaged and what are aspects about that class ... that make them feel engaged?" The data Cindy collected from a student survey might then be used to "take and try in my classes and observe...if those tweaks in my instruction do make a difference in engagement." While both these participants sought to address the motivations and engagement of students, each took different routes in doing so. Throughout the feedback protocol, we connected to one another's inquiries, asked probing and clarifying questions, and offered suggestions for additional interventions and what additional data could be collected.

Once again, we ended by completing an exit slip at the end of the session. The patterns that emerged from the wonderings and takeaways often related to the continued development of participant inquiries, increasing salience of expansive language ideologies (including seeking to sustain heritage language), and language being seen as a social practice.

Multiple people continued to express insights gained and ongoing questions about their developing inquiries. Cindy's takeaway related to the design of her inquiry. She stated, "finding out what MLLs [Multilingual Learners] already think is engaging can help inform my own instruction." Cindy's takeaway demonstrated an insight gained from the inquiry process. In detailing a data collection plan to answer her inquiry question rather than jumping into strategies

to address a perceived issue, she decided to begin with what the students found engaging in other courses to guide next steps in instruction. Similarly, Hannah asked, “Is having my students talking with other classes going to be valuable for them?” This ongoing wondering encapsulates an ongoing inquiry that was articulated and developed through the session.

Another observed trend in participant responses to the exit slip focused on support for *ELs. While Liz stated, “Still not quite sure how to help kids with GOV language and concepts,” she went on to add, “Getting ideas though!” Adrienne asked, “Any specific silver bullet strategies to use? (Probably not, but it’s a question.)” These responses evidenced a continued desire for methodologies in support of *ELs. Other participants voiced an appreciation of specific strategies being discussed during the session. Liz stated, “I like the practical ideas to help kids.” Several participants referenced a specific strategy—“Save the Last Word”—that Adrienne suggested to Stacey. Additionally, two people reflected on insights gained around the use of strategies connected to the “purpose/function of [the] assignment.” Furthermore, April remarked on “how unique each approach is depending on what you are focusing on.” In these final responses, there was an expressed understanding that choice of instruction and strategy was related to—indeed contingent on—the learning intentions of a specific lesson or task.

Finally, multiple people demonstrated a continued reflection on honoring “heritage language in day-to-day learning” (as April put it) within an institutional setting that aimed to homogenize English use. Cindy wondered, “How can we encourage students to continue to foster their home language while still in a Designated-ELD class?” These participants returned to the tension involved in calling hegemonic expectations of English proficiency into question when the additional languages that students come to schooling with proficiency in are so often disregarded.

Session 3 sought to hone participant inquiry questions and support the development of a data collection plan. Participants were provided one model for carrying out the process and were given opportunities to collaboratively develop their own processes. Finally, participants were given space and time to discuss their inquiry questions and data collection plans, as well as receive feedback for their plans through probing questions, participant connections, and suggestions. In my analytical memos I reflected on how much practitioners who were participating in the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community were doing in their personal and professional demands. I began to note the competing demands placed on each member of the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community. I also noted how I was feeling the complexity of moving between the roles of facilitator, participant, coach, and colleague. I found myself in a coaching role often during this session, and I wondered about different modes of coaching including facilitative, directive, and dialogic—and of these which would most support the aims of democratizing professional development and re-positioning practitioners as knowledge generators.

Session 4

The final session of the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community began with a task intended to introduce participants to a qualitative coding process. First, we wrote a reflective response to the prompt, “What draws you to working with and supporting MLLs [Multilingual Learners]? How does your language autobiography contribute to your work with MLLs [Multilingual Learners]?” Then we selected a “Golden Line” from our reflective response to read aloud. Afterward, two groups were created; all of our Golden Lines were written on Post-Its; and each group engaged in a collaborative process of creating and naming categories representing the relationships between Golden Lines. From this process, each group generated a “Collective

Why.” Between the two groups, the categories that represented collective purposes for supporting *ELs included intentions to “empower, support, and appreciate,” while the second group created the categories of “support and access, respect home languages, and allyship” to capture their analysis of the data. Afterward, Saldaña’s (2021) visualization of the thematic coding process was discussed and related to the process of determining a “Collective Why.”

After this exercise, I returned to my own inquiry and discussed the data organization and analysis process that I had completed. This was intended to offer a potential model for other participants’ organization and analysis.

Figure 15

Session 4: Model Data Analysis Slide, California (own photo).

The slide features an orange background with two main questions at the top: "How does the data 'answer' your question?" and "What unexpected outcomes or patterns are emerging?". On the left, a white arrow labeled "Have question nearby" points towards a central data analysis table. The table is divided into four columns: "Big Picture", "Process", "Big Picture", and "Process". The first two columns contain text from a research paper, while the last two columns contain a list of categories and a small diagram. The categories listed include "Deficit language ideologies", "Talk with family", "Dialect", "Communication with family", "Communication with teachers", "Learn about other languages", "Distribution of language proficiency", "Developing understanding", and "More intentionally working to communicate in addition".

Afterward, we worked individually and collaboratively to organize and conduct an initial analysis of the data collected. During this time, I provided one-on-one support to those who had either missed prior sessions or who were still working to finalize their data collection plan. These one-on-one conversations functioned to clarify data sources that may be used to answer inquiry

questions. A conversation with Daniel also led to a honing of his inquiry to reflect on his own practice rather than seeking to impact student participation in other courses and content areas.

Finally, we completed an exit slip. For Session Four, we responded to the following questions: “What are your takeaways from tonight about this inquiry process? What are your new or ongoing wonderings about this inquiry process?” The articulated takeaways were regarding the process of using “data analysis-graphic organizers” and how this process of “collecting and sifting through data was hard.” Hannah remarked on the data gleaned and how “you need to move forward with research based on your data,” even if “it may not prove your initial assumptions.”

Others remarked on the larger implications of the inquiry process in serving *English Learners. Angela wondered, “Does using inquiry-based data analysis need to be tailored to each individual student’s needs?” This question about recognizing the differing needs of *ELs echoes the takeaway from April, who stated, “Supporting ELs and MLLs [Multilingual Learners] is really complex and requires a lot of research/inquiry into teaching practices and the minds of ELLs.” These questions and statements offer insight into the stances practitioners were taking towards inquiry in relation to supporting *ELs in their classroom. Additionally, Daniel asked, “Why do schools not directly enforce inquiry in their instruction?” This question may speak to a developing perception of the value of inquiry as a process beyond a professional development opportunity, now as a potential aspect of quotidian instruction.

Session Four was designed with the intention of engaging in collaborative analysis, modeling one process of organizing and analyzing data, and offering space and time for participants to apply these processes to their own inquiry. The group conversations, one-on-one coaching conversations, and impromptu interactions showed that participants were in various

stages of data collection, organization, and analysis processes. Furthermore, the planned and unplanned opportunities for dialog around our inquiries and practice allowed for unexpected development of our ideas of the strengths and needs of *English Learners. In analytical memos I noted how the conversations between participants were generative in making sense of the data. The conversations between members seemed to increase a great deal. I wondered about the cause being an increased comfort within the space or the affordances of the activity designs for the session. It may well have been both—and certainly other factors—but I left the session once again reflecting on the complexity of my multiple roles in particular as a facilitator that designs spaces with differing affordances for professional learning.

Inquiry Unbounded: Practitioner Inquiry Beyond the Four 90-Minute Sessions

Throughout the process of the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community, I began noting the ways the community was expanding beyond the confines of the sessions. The boundaries between when and where the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community took place and when it did not began to deteriorate. A more fluid and dynamic understanding of inquiry, practice, and community began to emerge.

Many participants communicated with me via email with questions and clarifications about data collection and would provide updates on initial insights gained. Three participants met with me outside of the after-school sessions to further discuss the shape of their inquiries, as well as their ongoing process of data collection. During the process, I was invited to observe multiple lessons in Adrienne's class, both related and unrelated to her inquiry. With Stacey, I co-taught a lesson that modeled a strategy that she would then go on to utilize for her inquiry. Additionally, for Hannah, I supported the arrangements between her site and another site that would be included in her inquiry as she sought to incorporate additional voices into her own classroom.

While the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community was designed as four 90-minute sessions, it quickly became apparent that the connections being formed within each session afforded opportunities for ongoing collaboration outside of the planned meeting times. As such, the notion of “inquiry as a time- and place-bounded classroom research project” was being challenged and shifted towards a “way of knowing and being in the world of educational practice” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p. 120).

The above Participant Inquiry Community Sketches were created as contextualizing vignettes to aid in further understanding the findings presented in the following chapter. The four sessions occurred over the course of four weeks in the second quarter of the 2023-2024 school year. Each session was 90 minutes and was structured to provide texts and discussions to destabilize naturalized axioms undergirding dominant, hegemonic language ideologies. Each session would then pivot to connecting these developing understandings to practice through each practitioner’s own developing inquiry. Each session was audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed, and participant-generated artifacts were collected. After the fourth session, practitioners created a Culminating Inquiry Narrative that responded to the prompt, “What was the story of your inquiry?” These data were analyzed; findings and analysis are presented in the following chapter.

Chapter 5

Findings & Analysis

In many ways, Daniel exemplified the experience of many of the practitioners in the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community. Like many others, he moved back and forth between language ideologies that challenged and sustained linguistic hegemony as he participated. This experience is common and results from our imbricated personal and professional experiences. Daniel stated that he joined the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community because it aligned with his “passion for teaching and advocating for MLL/EL students.” During his participation, he continuously engaged in ways that actualized his personal imperative to “empower my students and not allow things like practitioners, schools, or systems to tell ‘em that they cannot achieve.” Daniel’s inquiry was grounded not just in his imperative to advocate for *ELs but also in a personal history with language subordination and his experiences as an educator (un)successfully supporting language development. During Session 2, Daniel shared personal stories about his family’s language loss and that the decision to not learn Spanish “wasn’t our decision, that it was all put upon us this idea that we had to conform to this standard in order to be part of it.”

Throughout the sessions, Daniel positioned his understanding of his students by continuously pointing out that the discussed issues resided not in students, but that they were “persistent and systematic.” During numerous discussions, he stated that students have “spent a lot of time [in a system] suppressing them and you know, it doesn’t matter what classroom they walk into ... when they walk in ... they walk in knowing that they don’t fit in.” In other moments, he explained *ELs’ perceptions of schooling in relation to the “forced English usage” students experience in school and stated that this “is a way to condition students to a system that favors assimilation.”

Yet the tensions inherent in supporting *ELs—and the various forms that support can take—caused him to draw on language ideologies that sometimes seemed at odds with his stated goals. On the one hand, he spoke to the recognition that schooling’s aims for *ELs were “almost stripping away” aspects of students’ identities—including language—“in order to get them ready to be accepted into that system.” On the other hand, he spoke to a deep sense of “personal responsibility” in supporting *EL development of English Language proficiencies. During a one-on-one conversation where we were discussed his inquiry, his focus on “transferability,” and whether his Designated English Language Development course was leading his students to more success in other classes, he stated: “[This school] recently had a kid that I feel I personally failed because he spent three and a half years here and didn’t learn any English, and he failed every single class because of that.” This sense that success or failure was dependent upon English proficiency was a recurring point in conversations with Daniel. On another occasion, he stated: “the one thing that’s going to save them in some classes is being able to read and speak in English.” Daniel continuously analyzed and discussed the issues facing *ELs as systemic, and continuously described the tension inherent in the pressure to prepare students for participation in a system that was “stripping” away aspects of their identities.

This tension that he carried as an advocate and practitioner—as well as someone who personally experienced generational culling of language—was expressed succinctly in one exit slip where he asked: “If English is required for students to succeed, how can I create a classroom that improves English while not devaluing or discouraging the use of home language?” As participants, we moved through and with this tension. It arose in subtle and pointed ways. At moments, for certain participants, it was intellectual and abstract; at other times, it was read directly from the scars we carried.

Daniel’s opening vignette represents many of the findings to be discussed in this chapter. Findings and analysis are understood through the lens of key theoretical constructs, including language ideologies, contradictions within an activity system, and *inquiry as stance*. This study focused on a practitioner inquiry involving 12 participants over four 90-minute sessions during the second quarter of the 2023–2024 school year, which aimed to understand the language ideologies practitioners express through two research questions:

1. What language ideologies do practitioners who support *English Learners articulate and embody in a practitioner inquiry community?
2. How does participation in a practitioner inquiry community mediate the language ideologies of high school practitioners who support *English Learners?

This chapter details the findings for each research question by presenting the themes from the analysis of data.

Overview of Findings

After analyzing audio-recordings, participant-generated artifacts, and participants’ culminating inquiry narratives, four themes emerged that describe the language ideologies that practitioners expressed throughout participation in the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community, and the ways participation in the Community mediated language ideologies. This chapter is structured to present three findings that respond the initial research question, What language ideologies do practitioners who support *English Learners articulate and embody in a practitioner inquiry community? The first finding—counterhegemonic language ideologies—describes how practitioners articulated and embodied “a range of contrasting beliefs such as embracing linguistic pluralism and acknowledging the linguistic equality of multiple languages and language varieties” and taking up a “descriptive, rather than prescriptive, view of language”

(Metz, 2019, p.3). The second finding, hegemonic language ideologies, describes how practitioners indexed ideologies “that have become successfully ‘naturalized’ by the majority group” (Kroskrity, 2004). While I enumerate and discuss the specific patterns of hegemonic and counterhegemonic language ideologies as distinct categories, it is important to acknowledge that practitioners expressed counterhegemonic and hegemonic language ideologies at different times, or even in the same breath; their expressions can be understood as points on a language ideology spectrum that shifted and changed throughout the course of their participation. The third finding—multiplicity: “yes, and”—captures this complexity by describing how practitioners articulated and embodied these language ideologies that exist on a continuum.

The final finding responds to the second research question, How does participation in a practitioner inquiry community mediate the language ideologies of high school practitioners who support *English Learners? The fourth finding, re-mediating conceptualizations of supporting *English Learners, explores how practitioners demonstrated an increasingly complex understanding of *English Learners through participation and destabilized and expanded notions of supporting *English Learners beyond being “simply instrumental in the sense of figuring out how to get things done” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p. 121). While expansive conceptualizations of *ELs were demonstrated during the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community, Philip (2011) cautions against concluding that this conceptual change or ideological transformation is static and applicable across all contexts. Instead, he understands the participant’s ideological transformation as gradually extending “the span of situations in which a concept is perceived as applicable” (Wagner, 2006, p. 10 as cited in Philip, 2011, p. 324).

Theme 1: Counterhegemonic Language Ideologies

Session Sketches provided contextualizing information and demonstrated the variety of language ideologies that practitioners indexed throughout *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community participation. Throughout the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community, three patterns of counterhegemonic language ideologies emerged that were articulated and embodied through conversations, inquiry design, and analysis of practitioner-generated artifacts and culminating inquiry narratives. These included counterhegemonic language ideologies that understood language as more than a decontextualized system; instances of drawing on expansive language ideologies; and ideological stances that understand language as affording access and privilege. While this theme of counterhegemonic ideologies is presented as an overarching category of language ideologies, these language ideologies are best understood as points on a continuum of beliefs and attitudes about language that vary in the degree to which they move toward counterhegemonic aims.

Language Beyond a Decontextualized System

“There is a significant relationship between language and identity.” This concise statement understanding language as more than a decontextualized system was expressed by Gordon in his reflection on Session 2’s exit slip. Gordon, a veteran teacher of 32 years, expressed this concept from his position as a White English speaker who developed Spanish as a second language. In this ways and others, participant articulations and embodiments of beliefs in language as more than a decontextualized system reflected their lived experience. That lived experience likewise connected with the texts utilized during the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community. During Session 2, while debriefing the Jigsaw Activity, Daniel—who is Latino and Native American, and only speaks English—shared a connection he had made to the texts he

read. He spoke about a video titled, “*No Sabo Kids*” *reclaiming heritage by learning Spanish* (2023)—specifically about a portion of the video that looks historically at eradicationist language policy in the United States. He stated:

I was mentioning to a couple of people that my grandfather was raised in Arizona, spoke Spanish for the majority of his childhood until he moved to California, and then that was probably in the, gosh, thirties, forties, something like that. And so, it makes a lot of sense that he was discouraged from speaking Spanish when he had kids. He didn’t bother teaching them Spanish. And so, two generations removed, now I don’t have that connection to my culture in the way that I kind of wish I would.

For Daniel, the familial experience with generational language loss undergirds an understanding of language as more than a decontextualized system; specifically, he understood it as an aspect of culture and identity. During this debrief, Daniel also expressed an embodied understanding of linguistic hegemony. In situating his grandfather’s migration to California in the “thirties, forties, something like that,” and connecting this historical period with forced assimilation, eradicationist policy, and the pedagogy of the time, he summarized, “it makes a lot of sense that he was discouraged from speaking Spanish.” He then went on to shift his reflection to locating agency in his grandfather’s choices, stating, “He didn’t bother teaching them Spanish.” In this remark, Daniel indexed an understanding of hegemonic language ideologies being reproduced throughout the history of schooling and how they work at “convincing others”—in this case his grandfather—“to accept [dominant groups’] language norms and usage as standard” (Wiley, 2000, p. 125). The language subordination process as a lived experience, for Daniel, undergirds the belief and attitude that language is more than a decontextualized system, but an essential aspect of culture and identity that was articulated in this moment during Session 2.

In Session 3, I shared a similar experience while I was describing how my inquiry connects to a larger imperative: “I’ve shared before about my grandparents and my own connection with language erasure over generations and how I think schooling plays a role in that. And so that’s always my stem for this work.” I went on to explain my own connection to feeling the tension in advocating for *English Learners as someone who only speaks English and feels like an outsider to my culture because of not speaking Spanish. This remark was intended to model how we might frame our developing inquiries in the stories and imperatives we carry with us, but it also indexed a belief and understanding of language as deeply rooted in identity and culture. Like Daniel, I spoke to schooling as a space that perpetuates linguistic hegemony and articulated a tension between being Latino and not speaking Spanish. And, indeed, that tension exists for me and others. I expressed another language ideology when I shared that I feel like an outsider because of a loss of Spanish. This is the result of a hegemonic conceptualization of the relationship between language and culture—that all Latinos speak Spanish, or that all Latinos should, to make claim to that identity.

This is an ongoing area of deep reflection for me as a facilitator. I want to provide space for practitioners to express the tensions we feel regarding language and identity without reifying essentialist conceptualizations of language and identity. This tension and these language ideologies are both rooted in my experience. Participants in the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community articulated understanding of language beyond a decontextualized grammatical and syntactical system; however, the ways this understanding was articulated as a developing conception of language or rooted in the experience of language within a family gives nuance to the pattern.

An additional way that practitioners expressed beliefs and attitudes about language as a decontextualized system was through the articulation and embodiment of counterhegemonic understandings of language as a set of practices. For Henderson (2017), this counterhegemonic language ideology is evidenced when language is understood as “context-dependent [and] a complex construct with varying forms that are situationally governed” (p. 24). This language ideology was expressed often in the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community—for example, in the supporting of students to understand the genre, audience, social purpose, or language function of a written or spoken task within classrooms. In multiple instances, practitioners drew on this language ideology when discussing designing scaffolds for increased participation of *ELs. During Session 3, when April—a Black woman in her second year of teaching—was sharing her developing inquiry in supporting student talk by embedding sentence frames in an upcoming lesson on *The Crucible*, I replied to her by stating,

the suggestion I give folks with sentence stems now is just to identify what’s the language practice that you’re asking students to do. Are you asking ‘em to build on each other’s ideas or argue or summarize or whatever? And then the sentence stem be tied to that.

Afterward, Adrienne—a White monolingual woman—wrote down a takeaway on her exit slip: “Specific strategies + sentence frames. How can we support students? Make our support matched to our purpose/function of assignment.” In both instances, participants articulated a stance that understood language as “situationally governed” (Henderson, 2017, p. 24). From this understanding, they brought awareness to the specific situation and form of student participation that was desired. Adrienne’s exit slip represents a common understanding of language as a set of social practices expressed by participants across various contexts.

In Session 2, April indexed this language ideology during a discussion of texts that participants interacted with during a Jigsaw activity. One text April viewed was, *3 ways to speak English* (Lysicott, 2014). During the group debrief, she explained,

I like that it talked about code-switching, which is my jam because I tell my kids all the time, I'm like, there's no bad English, there's no wrong English. Just we speak different. We speak differently when we talk to different people. The way I talk to you is not the way I talk to my friends, not the way I talk to my mom. I'm going to change throughout the day no matter who I'm talking to. And then there was a part where she was like, if someone tries to make fun of me, how even when they were making fun of her, it was grammatically incorrect because they didn't understand how to speak Patois. How are you going to tell me my English is wrong? What? I'm speaking a totally different form of English, and you were also doing it wrong. What does it mean to be articulate? So that was really good.

For April, the belief and attitude that language is “context-dependent [and] a complex construct with varying forms that are situationally governed” was used as a way of framing instruction and woven into her pedagogical stance (Henderson, 2017, p. 24). Within her statement, she argues, “there's no bad English, there's no wrong English.” She indexes a belief and a desire to validate nondominant languages and varieties of English as well as use her position to destabilize Standard Language Ideologies perpetuated in schools (Lippi-Green, 2012). She goes on to say, “The way I talk to you is not the way I talk to my friends, not the way I talk to my mom,” which indexes an understanding of the role context and audience influence the linguistic forms drawn on. Finally, April ends with a reflective question about the underlying theme of Lyiscott's (2014) performance by asking, “What does it mean to be articulate?” This question embodies a powerful

analysis of race through the lens of language—what Alim and Smitherman have referred to as “languaging race”—and goes beyond just understanding language as situationally governed in particular settings with particular audiences (2012). The question poses a challenge to the White listening subject that makes determinations of articulateness and functions to racialize the speaking subject (Flores & Rosa, 2015).

For other participants, the language ideology of language variation as normal is a lived experience. During a one-on-one conversation debriefing the same texts, Liz—a white woman who only speaks English—shared a portion of her text summary by explaining, “It’s all about code switching. That was the keyword I was supposed to throw in earlier. Code switching depending on your situation and where you are.” Elena, who was in the same group and who identified as multilingual and Latina, stated, “I do that all the time.” In response to Liz, Elena expressed the language as a social practice ideology in that her remark affirmed the concept—which is a nascent understanding for Liz—by relating them to her own experience of doing so. In this exchange, Elena also indexed a related counterhegemonic language ideology that Henderson outlined: the belief and attitude that language variation is normal and “language mixing and hybridity is something that bilingual people do” (2017, p. 24). Elena’s matter-of-fact statement that she code switches “all the time” articulates an understanding of pulling from different aspects of her linguistic repertoire in response to audience and purpose, but also a normalization of that process for people who are multilingual. For both Elena and April, the ideas of code switching are lived experiences as women of color. Whereas for Liz as a White woman, the nascent concept was relayed as a “keyword” she had heard from a prior discussion. This is yet another instance within the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community where language ideologies

were expressed in ways that were connected to the identities and positionality of each practitioner.

Many participants throughout the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community expressed an understanding of language as woven into their own and students' identities. They drew on their understanding of language as a complex, context-dependent, and variable system. How and when these participants drew on this counterhegemonic language ideology, however, differed based on practitioner positionality and contexts within the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community.

Expansive Language Ideologies

An additional pattern of counterhegemonic language ideologies located during participation in the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community was expansive language ideologies, which Banes et al. describe as expanding “what is acceptable language for schooling” (2016, p. 169). The term “expansive” within a Cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) framework is used to denote expansive learning—a rearticulation of the entire activity system based on the “formation of new, expanded object and pattern of activity oriented to the object” (Banes, 2016, p. 47). Successful expansive learning is considered to be a “qualitative transformation of all components of the activity system” (Engeström & Sannino, 2010, p. 8). The expansive language ideologies expressed by participants do not represent a full transformation of the activity system; instead, they represent understandings, attitudes, and beliefs about language as they seek to engage with an “essential dilemma which cannot be resolved through separate individual actions alone” (Engeström, 1987, p. 165). This essential dilemma—which the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community was designed to provoke and sustain—is born of seeking to ameliorate discrepancies in the outcomes of *ELs in a system that has historically been violent against them. This currently manifests in many ways, including a definition of success based on English proficiency

as measured by standardized assessment. The counterpoint to this contradiction is to honor and sustain a student's full linguistic repertoire.

Within the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community, multiple people designed their inquiry with the explicit intention of engaging with this tension by expanding allowable language in classrooms. Gordon's central inquiry question began with the premise of leveraging students' heritage language to create a more welcoming environment. He asked, "Would translating my Welcoming Inclusion Activity prompts elicit linguistically richer responses?" This query was echoed by other practitioners who sought to honor students by creating opportunities for students to draw on their full linguistic repertoires.

Hannah, while sharing her developing inquiry during Session 3—which included utilizing technology to support students in her Designated English Language Development course by giving them access to additional student voices by connecting with another high school's similar Designated English Language Development course—stated, "I think it would also be cool if they could find someone who spoke the same language over there and they could talk to each other in English and in their home language." For Hannah and Gordon both, the movement towards a more expansive language ideology is indexed in a desire for inclusion of more of their students' linguistic repertoires than before. The expansive language ideologies indexed demonstrate shifts in practice as a result of this belief and attitude about language.

For Gordon, who is White male, the design for students to use more of their linguistic repertoire is a central aspect of his inquiry, in that he offers translations and allows students agency in responding using their full linguistic repertoire with the aim of making students feel more welcomed and included. As a function of this design, he also hoped for "linguistically richer responses." In a one-on-one conversation, he added that "richer responses" was a

subjective term. Though he was not exactly sure what he meant by this, he saw the inquiry as an opportunity to develop clarity. This goal was aided in part by his selection of a focal student who had recently arrived in the country and spoke Spanish, which he spoke as well.

For Hannah, the focus of her inquiry was on providing more opportunities for students to develop proficiencies in English because of her class size of four students. She wanted to connect them with other students at another high school. The aspect of her design that expanded the allowable language in schooling was secondary to those aims, though it “would also be cool” if they occurred. The difference between these two instances of expansive language ideologies demonstrates that these instances exist at different points on a continuum, moving toward more hegemonic or counterhegemonic aims informed by the context of the practitioner and their goals.

Expansive language ideologies were drawn on within discussions during sessions as well as in the inquiry designs participants carried out. Expansive language ideologies were also reflected on as part of their current practice and the problems that were encountered in seeking to expand allowable language in schooling. In a reflection to an Alim and Paris (2016) article read in Session 1, Adrienne wrote, “The more we can allow students to express themselves in their own way, so that they can participate and be themselves, the better they will do and the better they will feel at school.” She connected her own practice to calls within the texts to honor students’ full linguistic repertoire by sharing that, “In my class, I offer students chances to write daily journal entries in their home language,” but added that “no student has actually taken me up on it.” In Session 2, she continued to reflect on this by wondering on her exit slip, “How to incorporate multicultural practices/other languages w/o spotlighting kids so it feels awkward.” Adrienne’s tension of honoring without “spotlighting” spoke to the recognition that allowing

students full linguistic repertoires in the classroom is in tension with classrooms typically being dominated by English.

Participants, at times, articulated (within sessions) or embodied (in their practitioner inquiry) beliefs and attitudes towards language within schooling in ways that sought to expand the dominant classroom language use policies. Participants' tendency to intentionally design opportunities for students to draw on their linguistic repertoires demonstrated how these expressions and embodiments could make impacts in the classroom.

Language of Access

A final pattern of counterhegemonic language ideologies that practitioners drew on during the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community was a belief and understanding that “access to language affords access to privilege and opportunity” (Henderson, 2017, p. 24). This language ideology was drawn on by multiple participants across various contexts within a session and articulated across multiple sessions. It often focused on the access and privilege afforded both within schooling and beyond.

Multiple people drew on this counterhegemonic language ideology by connecting language development and particular language uses as affording access, success, and opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable to them without certain linguistic proficiencies, specifically within the context of schooling. During a one-on-one conversation where Daniel and I were discussing his inquiry and his focus on “transferability” and whether his Designated English Language Development course was leading his students to more success in other classes, he stated, “We recently had a kid [at the school], that I feel I personally failed because he spent three and a half years here and didn't learn any English, and he failed every single class because of that.” This sense of success or failure dependent upon English proficiency

was a recurring point in conversations with Daniel, who then stated, “The one thing that’s going to save them in some classes is being able to read and speak in English.” Daniel indexed an ideological stance in seeking to support student success with the underlying belief that access to language—in this case, English—would afford more success and opportunities to *ELs.

Additionally, Daniel’s statements indexed an evaluative attitude towards his own instructional practice grounded in this counterhegemonic language ideology. He ascribed a personal failure to his efforts with a particular student because of the lack of language development. Daniel’s belief in the necessity of English skills to access courses taught in English within an institution that perpetuates monolingualism is not without tension, given his personal experience with language. Here, the tension of language ideologies is located in the drive to honor and extend students’ language in an effort to afford success in other courses, and the opportunities academic success affords. In this moment, he indexed an understanding grounded in his experience and expertise as an educator who has had to navigate schooling wherein English proficiency probably will offer a higher probability of success and future opportunity to students.

Another instance of this pattern of articulation came about during Session 3 while participants were engaged in a feedback protocol designed to support the development of their inquiry project. April shared her intention to provide universal language supports to her class by embedding a vocabulary bank and sentence stems in an interaction structured so all students would use these scaffolds. This was to ensure her focal *EL student would not “stick out like a sore thumb” in the context of the exercise. Similarly, Hannah drew on the ideology of language as affording access and privilege by stating, “I think those stems are going to be useful, not just for her, but for everybody because that’s practice with academic language on the tongue, it’s not

just for English Learners...This is the language you use to be successful.” In this exchange, Hannah articulated a belief that offering opportunities for students to develop and utilize specific language practices will benefit future success. This utterance also indexed a belief that *Academic English and the language used to be successful are one and the same. While these beliefs and attitudes about language may also function to perpetuate monoglossic perspectives that imagine “linguistic practices associated with normative monolingualism as communicative ideals,” the exchange between April and Hannah was grounded in the belief that language is a tool to address inequity and that it affords opportunities to develop the necessary language for success (Rosa & Burdick, 2017, p 113).

Other participants drew on this counterhegemonic language ideology in ways that connected language development with opportunities and privileges beyond schooling. One example came about during Session 1 while discussing the Paris and Alim (2016) text that was read as a group. Stacey spoke about schooling’s role in supporting students to appropriate the linguistic capital necessary for future success; she stated that “kids aren’t leaving this institution with the skills that they need to engage in that racist system.” She added that in not providing these tools for success, schooling and practitioners create “another type of inequality.” Stacey went on to clarify that these necessary skills included “dress codes and certain things like, um, how you write an email to your boss and stuff like that.” While the embodiment of this articulated language ideology in practice may function to maintain the status quo, it is, nonetheless, rooted in a belief and logic that certain literacy practices and language use—particularly English and formal registers of dominant varieties of English—allow access to opportunities and privilege.

Throughout the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community, participants drew on counterhegemonic language ideologies and summarized them as an understanding of language as more than a decontextualized system; expansive language ideologies; and access to language. Access to language in particular was understood to afford opportunities and privileges that addressed inequities in student outcomes.

Theme 2: Hegemonic Language Ideologies

Participants in the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community also drew on hegemonic language ideologies—that is, “those that have become successfully ‘naturalized’ by the majority group” (Kroskrity, 2004, p. 523). Wiley (2000) adds that hegemonic language ideologies are best understood as a range of beliefs reproduced by dominant groups that function to “create a consensus by convincing others to accept their language norms and usage as standard” (p. 125). The hegemonic language ideologies practitioners drew on can be understood in two categories: English language as more important, and raciolinguistic ideologies. Though this data is analyzed within the single category of hegemonic language ideologies, practitioners indexed various hegemonic language ideologies on a continuum. Furthermore, every participant indexed both hegemonic and counterhegemonic language ideologies throughout their participation in the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community; this balance is discussed in Theme 3 below.

Articulations and embodiments of hegemonic language ideologies are understood both as common sense or “naturalized,” and functioning to reify existing language hierarchies and the beliefs on which they are founded. For Henderson (2017), the belief that “Everyone needs to learn English is necessary for getting a job or accruing economic or social capital” constitutes the language ideology: English language as more important (p. 24).

Participants expressed this language ideology to justify their focus on academic language and English proficiency through the lens of affording opportunities for success both within and beyond schooling. During Session 3, in a one-on-one conversation with Daniel about his focal student and the student's emerging bilingualism, he stated succinctly: "the one thing that's going to save him in some classes [is] being able to read and speak in English." Multiple participants drew on language ideologies that tied success to a particular register and variety of English. This represents a naturalized axiom, and functions to "stabilize a particular form of power and domination" (Hall, 1996, p. 27 as cited in Philip, 2011, p. 300). There is great tension here for practitioners with an imperative to support *ELs in academic spaces. Even when participants like Daniel—who stated on his Session 2 exit slip that "forced English usage is a way to condition students to a system that favors assimilation"—and Hannah, who sought to expand the allowable language in her classroom, these counterhegemonic language ideologies are contradicted by hegemonic language ideologies, like seeing English as more important. This dissonance has been expressed by Metz (2019) as, ultimately, preparing students to accommodate linguistic prejudice, but this analysis of practitioner language ideologies presents nuance to Metz's claim. Participation in an inquiry community can be seen as a space to problematize practice while acknowledging practitioners as nodes within a much larger system that functions to perpetuate White linguistic hegemony (Baker-Bell, 2020).

An additional instance of this hegemonic belief being articulated was in Hannah's statement during a structured feedback protocol during Session 3. In response to April's sharing of her developing inquiry, Hannah affirmed April's use of sentence stems as a universal support offered to the whole class. Hannah went on to focus on how the scaffold is beneficial for all students, since it allows them to practice "academic language" and remarked that academic

language “is the language you use to be successful.” While this same statement can also be understood to form part of the counterhegemonic language ideology of language of access, it is built from the notion that English—and *Academic English—is necessary for success within and beyond schooling. These beliefs and attitudes have been naturalized in schooling, particularly for supporting *English Learners, despite calls from sociolinguists to understand *Academic English as something that cannot be located empirically. Rather, analysis should center on the ways *Standardized English and *Academic English are produced and how each “contributes to processes of social reproduction and societal stratification” (Flores & Rosa, 2015, p.152).

Furthermore, this articulation also is built on an additional set of beliefs and attitudes that Rosa and Flores (2015) have termed raciolinguistic ideologies, defined them as language ideologies:

grounded in the erroneous assumption that language of racialized students will be heard objectively and ignores the reality that ‘racialized speaking subjects are constructed as linguistically deviant even when engaging in linguistic practices positioned as normative or innovative when produced by privileged white subjects’” (Rosa & Flores, 2015, p.151).

Raciolinguistic ideologies underlie claims that success for *ELs is hinged on their utilization of *Academic English. These raciolinguistic language ideologies fundamentally place the onus of change on multilingual learners to strive to appease a white listening subject (Flores & Rosa, 2015). During Session 1’s group debrief of the Paris and Alim (2016) text, Rebecca offered:

we’re training kids for the real world, so if they enter the real world or if we don’t correct grammar or language or mispronunciations and things like that because we’re respecting

the language of the community, then when they go to job interviews and things like that, how is that impacting [them], you know what I mean?

Rebecca’s expression of a hegemonic belief about specific grammar and pronunciations being associated with employability—and the practitioner’s role in equipping students with grammar and pronunciation—is an ideological stance common among practitioners in educational settings (Metz, 2019). Again, this is grounded in beliefs and attitudes about language that racialized and linguistically minoritized students need to attend to the linguistic expectations of the White listening subject (Rosa & Flores, 2015). Rosa and Flores (2015) challenge these hegemonic language ideologies by seeking to shift the onus of change from the speaking subject to the White listening subject, because “Altering one’s speech might do very little to change the ideological perspectives of listening subjects” (p. 152).

While all participants remarked on the importance of students developing English for success, Stacey—who is a Black woman in her second year of teaching—extended the interrelationship between multilingualism and economic success. During a group debrief of the Paris and Alim (2016) text read during Session 1, she stated:

Okay. So, I will say that I think schooling is—I truly believe that the American Project of Schooling is to create workers. It’s not actually to educate. It’s never been to educate. It’s never—we’re imposing all these values on a system that was meant to educate workers. And so I think if I look at it from a different perspective, this process of educating people to be workers 20 years ago looked different than it does right now. There’s more room to have language, multiple languages in school. Then when I was in school in 1996, and I graduated in 1996, there was no talk about incorporating languages into the classroom. And I think I see that as a result of the working world having a necessity for languages in

a way that they didn't 20 years ago. So I'm always going to go back to: what was schooling created for? To create a better worker. We can put all these other values on it if we want to, but modern schooling in all major Western countries is that. No way to get around that.

Stacey's analysis of the inclusion of languages other than English into the classroom was grounded in an understanding of schooling's relationship to capitalism. Stacey's understanding of the purposes of schooling—which she says is not “actually to educate,” but instead is designed “to create workers”—represents a valuable critique that may not otherwise have been voiced. When Stacey states from an understanding of “the working world having a necessity for languages in a way they didn't 20 years ago” that there is consequently “more room to have language, multiple languages in school,” she demonstrates an understanding of the deep relationship between language, schooling, and economic interests. This language ideology demonstrates the powerful ways that sustaining languages can be woven into dominant purposes of schooling and preclude the opportunity for understanding students' right to sustain and maintain their heritage languages and cultural lifeways.

Throughout their participation, multiple participants articulated and embodied language ideologies that functioned to reproduce socially constructed, shared, and taken-for-granted assumptions about *Academic English proficiency and its relationship to the success of racialized and linguistically minoritized students. These language ideologies—and the naturalized axioms that they are derived from—are context dependent, and no participant drew on only hegemonic language ideologies or counterhegemonic language ideologies. In fact, all participants expressed a range of language ideologies throughout the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community. This shows that even when hegemonic language ideologies are enacted, they are

neither static nor uncritiqued. Professional development design may thus be able to incorporate critique structures of hegemonic language ideologies as one way to introduce movement as a key aspect in how practitioners understand the needs of *ELs.

Theme 3: Multiplicity: “Yes, And”

Throughout the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community sessions, participants drew on language ideologies ranging across a continuum from hegemonic to counterhegemonic. Analysis of participant data reflected that individual participants drew on seemingly contradictory or conflicting ideologies throughout participation. Kroskrity (2004) offers that “language ideologies are profitably conceived as multiple because of the plurality of meaningful social divisions (class, gender, clan, elites, generations, and so on) within sociocultural groups that have the potential to produce divergent perspectives expressed as indices of group membership” (p. 503). Kroskrity (2004) terms this plurality “multiplicity,” which describes participants as having the capacity to articulate and embody a range of potentially conflicting language ideologies (p. 501). Rosa and Burdick (2017) add that expressions of language ideologies should be understood “as a situated presentation of self,” which allows for an understanding of practitioners drawing on language ideologies as “strategic performances of identity” based on “particular interactional and institutional settings” (p. 107). Given this understanding of the multiple and situated nature of language ideologies, it is not surprising that practitioners embodied and articulated conflicting and, at times, seemingly contradictory language ideologies throughout the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community.

In Session 1, during a group conversation debriefing the Paris and Alim (2016) text, Rebecca, who is a White monolingual woman, stated,

On that, like, second paragraph of the first page I wrote kind of like, “yes, and.” Like the improv thing, like the idea of, like, you’re saying, “Yes,” and also, “and.” So like, I guess that when I’m not being devil’s advocate, that would I guess be the solution, is you’re doing both. You’re honoring what they come in with and their knowledge and their language and their ways of being. And you’re also giving them the information of, like, what will be expected of them from outside communities and outside world and that larger context.

Rebecca’s comment came just moments after having expressed a hegemonic language ideology that the educator’s role included “correct[ing] grammar or language or mispronunciations.” In these moments, she demonstrated the complexity and contrast of language ideologies that practitioners often express. In her initial comment on grammar and pronunciation, she stated that she was being a bit of a “devil’s advocate,” which may have been a response to the text provoking tension; however, in her follow-up where she named her stance of “Yes, and,” she indexed a movement towards a more expansive language ideology where schooling and instruction makes attempts at “doing both.”

Hannah also expressed contrasting language ideologies within a single session. During Session 3, while practitioners were sharing their developing inquiries, Hannah drew on an expansive language ideology in stating a desire and hope for her own students to talk to other students “in English and in their home language.” Just moments later, she drew on a hegemonic language ideology that it was necessary for students’ success that they developed and utilized *Academic English. These contrasting beliefs about language—that using multiple languages is desirable on the one hand and, on the other, that only one language, English (and a formal register of it), is needed for success—stem from contrasting aims to honor and sustain students’

linguistic backgrounds while also preparing students to accommodate linguistic prejudice by appeasing the White listening subject (Flores & Rosa, 2015).

A similar tension arose as Daniel drew on conflicting language ideologies that aligned with his specific object, as well as the generalized object of supporting *ELs (Engerström, 2016). The tensions between the purposes of supporting *ELs—and the varying ways support can take place—caused him to draw on various language ideologies that sometimes seemed at odds. On the one hand, he spoke to the recognition that schooling’s aims for *ELs was “almost stripping away” aspects of students’ identities, including language, “in order to get them ready to be accepted into that system.” On the other hand, he spoke to a deep sense of “personal responsibility” for *ELs developing English Language proficiencies.

Daniel continuously analyzed and discussed the issues facing *ELs as systemic and described the tension of the pressure to prepare students for participation in a system that was “stripping away” aspects of their identities. In his Session 2 exit slip, he stated: “Forced English usage is a way to condition students to a system that favors assimilation.” This tension that he carried as an advocate and practitioner—as well as someone who personally experienced generational culling of language—was expressed succinctly in his exit slip for Session 2 where he asked, “If English is required for students to succeed, how can I create a classroom that improves English while not devaluing or discouraging the use of home language?” This question indexed an acknowledgment of contrasting beliefs and attitudes both held by himself and imposed within the institution of educating *ELs. On the one hand, Daniel acknowledged the dominant conceptualizations of English being necessary for success when he wrote, “If English is required for students to succeed...” On the other hand, he expressed a counterhegemonic language ideology when he asked, “How can I create a classroom that improves English while

not devaluating or discouraging the use of home language?” Daniel demonstrated going beyond merely destabilizing the hegemonic ideologies he held, and sought—as he said many times—to “reconcile” this tension. Daniel’s question also centered on the central contradiction that the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community was designed to explore.

Finally, in my own inquiry project within the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community I drew on conflicting language ideologies that sought to problematize the dominant measures of success for *English Learners while also preparing students to navigate a system not designed to sustain their linguistic backgrounds. An essential aspect of my own inquiry design was with the aim to encourage the teacher I was coaching and doing a model lesson for to “Understand the [student *EL] reclassification process” and “Identify specific things that must be done in order to reclassify.” These intentions guided the design of learning to help students understand that the development of language—specifically English and the demonstration of proficiency with English on the mandated assessment or the district’s interim assessment—would unlock increased opportunities for course selection in both middle school and high school. In this lesson design, I drew on the language ideology language of access in that language provided students with knowledge that afforded access to opportunities and privilege (Henderson, 2017). On the other hand, it also reified a focus on language development as a demonstration of English proficiency on a mandated state assessment. Furthermore, while I provided an opportunity for students to reflect on reclassifying as a dominant conceptualization of success by presenting my own story of language loss—as well as providing an example of a model student who had reclassified yet no longer spoke his heritage language—this aspect was a small, though not insignificant, portion of a lesson that primarily focused on students navigating an unjust system. In this lesson, I drew on both hegemonic and counterhegemonic language ideologies that seemed

at odds but may be better understood as strategic performances of identity within an institutional setting that desires demonstrations of English proficiency. My own aim for students was to construct an understanding of academic success that included the importance of sustaining their heritage language.

Rosa and Burdick (2017) offer an additional way of understanding why seemingly contradictory language ideologies can be mutually held with their argument that practitioners drawing on language ideologies are displaying “strategic performances of identity” based on “particular interactional and institutional settings” (p. 107). As practitioners, we arrive in professional development spaces with complex beliefs and attitudes that function to challenge and perpetuate hegemonic language ideologies based on our personal and professional experiences. These language ideologies also have impacts on our conceptualizations of the instructional needs and pedagogical approaches to serving *ELs. The final theme below explores how participation in the *EL Inquiry mediated these conceptualizations.

Theme 4: Re-Mediating Conceptualizations of Supporting *English Learners

My intention in designing the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community was grounded in a belief that professional learning needs re-mediation, which “involves the reorganization of instruction, learning, social relationships, and artefacts, all the features that help influence, shape, and emerge in socially mediated interaction” (Gutiérrez et al., 2009, p. 236). Re-mediation seeks to shift the onus of change from what practitioners lack to the designs of the learning space and affordances offered therein. The four 90-minute sessions of the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community was an attempt to support the collaborative generation of knowledge and problematization of current practices for supporting *ELs. Through participation in the Practitioner Inquiry Community, participants’ conceptualizations of how to support *English

Learners shifted in several ways. The inquiry process allowed practitioners to re-view their students, and participation afforded opportunities to critically reflect on deficit thinking.

Participants also reflected that meeting the needs of *ELs is a complicated process that is contingent on the specific needs of each student. The inquiry process was an emerging aspect of supporting *ELs in new and inventive ways.

Re-Viewing *English Learners

Analysis of the data affirms the role inquiry can play in developing broader conceptualizations how *ELs experience their classrooms and beyond. In Session 2, Angela demonstrated an expanding conceptualization of the experiences of linguistic discrimination that *ELs face after listening to the NPR podcast episode *The Day A Texas School Held A Funeral For The Spanish Language* (Inskeep et al., 2017),” in which two women were subjected to a funeral for their primary language. Angela shared with the group, “That is something that carried on with them throughout their years. And in a more traumatic sense, not like, oh, I just had to stop speaking Spanish. There was a trauma that was attached to that.” Angela remarked on the “trauma” multiple times as she came to better understand the impact of linguistic discrimination in institutions like schools. She continued to reflect on this and went on to connect it to her own experience in school, stating,

I went to school in the early nineties, elementary school, and I just remember how when we would have a new student into the classrooms student who didn’t speak English, how important it was to enforce that that student just speak English in that Classroom. And from an English-speaking perspective, it’s like, yeah, so we can communicate that. When you get these backstories, you’re like, wow, that can be traumatizing for a student just to be forced to use a language that they’re not familiar with.

With this remark, Angela re-remembered her experience by applying nascent, expanding conceptualizations of *ELs. In this moment, she remarked on the ways that she was positioned, as a Black English-speaking student, to enforce language policy—and the hegemonic language ideologies that undergird them—within the classroom by understanding how “important it was to enforce that that student just speak English.” It was through the text and discussion that a new way of understanding an experience through a perspective other than the “English speaking perspective” emerged and was applied to her own experiences.

Others spoke about the inquiry process affording opportunities to re-view the specific *ELs in their own classrooms. Hannah reflected in her Culminating Inquiry Narrative a key takeaway was that she “enjoyed talking with my spotlight student. I got to know more about her and I realized that I should be more mindful of sitting down and just taking a moment to get to know my students better.” Hannah’s remark demonstrates how participation in the inquiry process afforded opportunities to connect with students through use of tools like the Spotlight Student Profile and centering the inquiry on a focal student.

Each participant had incredible demands placed upon them each day. Teaching multiple periods a day of different courses is only one, small dimension of the demands placed on practitioners, and teachers in particular. Competing demands that arose for participants throughout the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community included family responsibilities, mandated after-school training, after-school staff meetings, leadership teams, district committees, and adjunct duties. All these duties were piled on every participant and functioned to decrease the cognitive bandwidth available for building the relationships so necessary for student success. An essential aspect of the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community was to provide a space to slow down and collaboratively co-construct strategic noticing.

Angela stated a similar sentiment in her Culminating Inquiry Narrative, noting that she took away from the process “how important it can be to ask MLL [Multilingual Learners] students how they feel supported in the classroom. By checking in with my spotlight student, I learned how he sees himself in the classroom.” Angela specifically referenced the concept of a “spotlight student” introduced during the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community in an effort to make the inquiry more manageable in a four-week period. This concept was also introduced to destabilize monolithic conceptions of *ELs and afford participants opportunities to understand the complex needs of any given student. Through participation in the inquiry process, Angela stated that she “learned how [the student] sees himself in the classroom.” This was an important outcome of participating in a professional development space, particularly one that strove to de-center an instrumental approach and seek a more critical, relational approach to meeting the needs of *ELs.

Participation in the inquiry process allowed practitioners to re-view the *ELs they served and shifted conceptualizations of how to support them. Daniel shared that participation in the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community allowed for a type of reflection on practice that was atypical from his usual reflection. He remarked on the prevailing assessment structures and measures of success that afforded a particular view of students, stating, “My evaluation of students is usually wrapped up in assignments and skills assessments.” However, through his participation in the inquiry process, he “realized that my evaluations can be more holistic that takes into account how my students feel about themselves and their learning.” Daniel’s reflection speaks to the ways of supporting *ELs beyond an instrumental approach that were mediated through participation. In this case, Daniel reflected on the focus he brought to his inquiry, which

examined his focal student's confidence, and the implications of his work on the ways he evaluates—or what he considers within the purview of his evaluation.

An additional example of this pattern came about during Session 3, when April was analyzing data from her focal student. The data included both student work and a self-generated memo about the conversation that took place. April sought to include universal classroom support in the form of a sentence stem in an effort to elicit the participation of an *EL focal student who had recently arrived in the United States. April wondered, “Will this help?” to which she gave her own response: “No.” But she went on to add, “I don't think it was a full ‘no’ because I think it helped; just not in the way that I thought.” Her qualified “no” resulted from her data collection and analysis, whereby she came to understand that her focal student did not feel safe in her group because of peer dynamics that were not being attended. Through analysis and discussion, April came to develop a broader understanding of her focal student and what barriers existed to her participation. April stated in her Culminating Inquiry Narrative that, “Having the frames available was helpful for writing but didn't guarantee student would talk. Having the frames is only a part of the equation.” She learned through participation that it was not just using sentence stems—an instrumental approach—that was important, but that additional social dynamics occurring within the group entailed a more relational approach to supporting *ELs.

Multiple participants remarked throughout participation on the ways their conceptualizations of *ELs both within their classrooms and beyond had broadened. This expanding conceptualization was mediated by the texts, tools, and collaboration that took place within and beyond the four sessions of the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community, and had immediate effects on practitioner relation with *ELs.

Opportunities to Critically Reflect on Deficit Thinking

The *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community also afforded participants opportunities to critically reflect on their own deficit thinking (Valencia, 2010) that had been applied in educational spaces. This reflection in turn had implications for how participants conceptualized their support of *ELs.

One example is found in Stacey's articulation of a lack of engagement in her classroom, particularly among *ELs. She understood this disengagement as driven by students' inability to divert attention from their cell phones. She described her attempts at "prying them away from their phone" as unsuccessful. She understood the issue of students' cell phone use to be particularly cumbersome among ninth-grade students because "in eighth grade they're not allowed to have access to their phones," while in ninth grade they are allowed unencumbered access. Angela disrupted that analysis of cell phone use during a discussion that took place in Session 1 offering that, "our language-learning students and our students of color—the disengagement happens because there's not that access to begin with. And so, I can remove the cell phone [but] now [students are] forced to engage in a space that I'm really uncomfortable engaging in." Angela attempted to reframe student engagement as one outcome of a schooling experience that hasn't been inclusive. She went on to conceptualize of cell phone use for *ELs as a matter of access through the use of translation apps. During this discussion, I sought to destabilize the framing concepts that Stacey utilized to make sense of student engagement. I offered that:

I think that that's also like a thing to, to like, look at empirically. Like, to say, like, is this actually occurring? Or, like, to ask the student, like, instead of saying, you know, all ninth graders are doing this, to be like, I have this student that's doing this in this class.

Like, can I focus on that one student to try and understand what are the, like, precipitating things that are making them like turn to that? Like why, what, where does the disengagement stem from? Because then it's like, then we're, then we're doing inquiry instead of it being like a foregone conclusion ... the idea then is to shift into, like, in what ways can I understand this student so that my instruction is contingent on what they're actually—or like, what they're bringing into this space.

At this moment, I felt a deep unease as a facilitator and participant. As a facilitator, I wanted to support a productive conversation, and as a participant I wanted to interrupt the deficit perspective. I hoped to reframe the underlying thinking as a question by asking, “why, what, where does the disengagement stem from?” I was immediately worried when my comment closed the conversation. However, after this discussion and after participants worked to develop their own inquiry, the session ended with individuals writing takeaways and wondering on exit slips. Stacey wrote, “I learned that I was pre-judging the motivations behind cell phone use. Asking questions sounds like a better way to gather information.” Stacey’s exit slip demonstrates a critically reflective stance on her own practice and speaks to the Inquiry community as a space for problematizing current practices and sensemaking.

Adrienne also commented on how the inquiry process afforded opportunities to develop an awareness of the deficit lens that can often be employed when seeking to understand the needs of *English Learners. Adrienne wrote in her Culminating Inquiry Narrative: “The process of attending sessions and going over the materials provided really reinforced the importance of supporting student talk at all levels of learning and emphasizing a positive mindset rather than a deficit perspective.” For Adrienne, the inquiry process afforded reconsideration of the ways in which she supported *ELs not only through strategies and structures at “all levels of learning,”

but also recognizing a “deficit perspective” that is one aspect of how we conceptualize the needed supports for *ELs.

Through the process of reflecting on my own inquiry process, I recognized how I was applying a deficit lens to a practitioner I was supporting as an instructional coach within my inquiry. I wrote in my Culminating Inquiry Narrative:

An additional finding came out of critically reflecting on my interactions with an observing practitioner. I had sought also to disrupt the thinking of this practitioner by modeling this lesson that brought unspoken visions of success to the forefront. However, during the debrief of the lesson the practitioner listed multiple ways that they are already seeking to affirm heritage languages in their classroom. It was a moment of clarity (and a bit of embarrassment/shame) when I recognized that I was approaching this practitioner through a deficit lens, operating on what I thought they lacked versus what they were already doing.

For me, slowing down to have a conversation about the assumptions I was making with the teacher I supported allowed me to acknowledge what was already taking place, but also recognize how I was “operating on what I thought they lacked versus what they were already doing.” Just as Angela and I had sought to interrupt the deficit perspective being expressed by Stacey, the inquiry process had functioned to interrupt my own deficit perspective. Stacey’s reflection that “asking questions sounds like a better way to gather information” has been with me ever since. The embedded, ongoing self-reflection and collaboration with other practitioners in the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community allowed opportunities for us to identify ways our conceptualizations of *English Learners can be grounded in a deficit perspective—or a lens that seeks what is not there. Naming and recognizing deficit perspectives entails a shift in

conceptualizing how we go about supporting *English Learners—for example, by seeking to understand the complexities of *ELs rather than designing support from preconceived notions of what is lacking among them.

Supporting *ELs is A “Complex Process and Changes with Every Student”

Nascent conceptualizations of how to support *English Learners emerged in participants’ movement from a technical pedagogical approach to a responsive and contingent pedagogical approach. Liz captured the initial stance held by many participants towards supporting *ELs when she wrote, “I need some tricks!” on her exit slip for Session 2. This need for tricks was grounded in an instrumental view of how to address the needs of *English Learners as well as a dominant conception of professional development opportunities as designed to equip participants with “tricks” or strategies. Different participants began calling this stance into question at different points throughout the sessions. For instance, Elena wrote as a takeaway on her exit slip for Session 1, “There is no one way to reach everyone. Different methods work for different students. There are various ways to support students.” Others presented their processing through a more questioning tone, such as Adrienne, who asked, “Any specific silver bullet strategies to use? (Probably not, but it’s a question.)” Angela also expressed a shift in her expectations of the professional learning space and conceptualization of supporting *ELs when she wrote on Session 1’s exit slip, “Will we come away with a strategy that works for most? I feel like the takeaway is that there is not one solid answer.”

At the start of Session 1, I had asked if anyone had participated in inquiry before. Other than Daniel, everyone said no. The held expectations of professional development—development designed through a practitioner inquiry approach and development that is not—hold distinct images of teaching, teacher learning, and teachers’ role in educational change (Cochran-Smith &

Lytle, 1999). The *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community was designed to identify contradictions within the instruction of *ELs in a context of White linguistic hegemony, but it was also designed to provoke the tensions within a professional development framework specifically focused on *ELs. Often, professional development focused on *ELs is designed as a set of strategies; meanwhile, inquiry repositions practitioners as knowledge-generators, whose contexts are potential sites of study. This second tension was named by Angela when she asked, “Will we come away with a strategy that works for most?” This indexes a belief and desire for an instrumental approach. Afterward, she concedes, “I feel like the takeaway is that there is not one solid answer,” perhaps beginning to entertain the idea of leaning into the complexity of meeting the needs of *ELs through a more contingent and responsive pedagogical approach.

Through participation in the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community, many of us came to more frequently and more directly state a conceptualization of supporting *ELs contingent on the capacity and needs of individual students. April wrote in her Culminating Inquiry Narrative that: “Supporting EL students is a very complex process and changes with every student.” The increasing salience of this nascent conceptualization of how to support *English Learners that focused on students rather than approaches began with destabilizing common-sense, taken-for-granted notions in the first two sessions as we engaged in a discussion of texts. The process was then supported by the developing inquiry process itself.

Multiple people connected the nascent conceptualization explicitly to the inquiry process. Angela expressed a related sentiment when she asked on her Session 4 exit slip, “Does using inquiry based data analysis need to be tailored to each individual students’ needs?” At the end of Session 4, April stated, “Supporting ELs and MLLs [Multilingual Learners] is really complex and requires a lot of research/inquiry into teaching practices and the minds of ELLs.” This final

reflection demonstrated how the conceptualization of supporting *ELs had shifted; how inquiry and research were seen as emerging aspects of continuing to support *ELs; and, finally, how April developed a critically reflective stance towards her own practitioner practices. Far from asking for “tricks” or placing the onus on students to “just talk,” practitioners demonstrated shifts in their conceptualization of supporting *English Learners to varying degrees and in varying contexts.

Inquiry as an Emerging Stance for Supporting *ELs

A final pattern in practitioners’ shifting conceptualizations of how to support *English Learners was demonstrated through the acquisition of inquiry habits. Participants more frequently referenced the utility of inquiry in their practice, but also demonstrated appropriation of a stance toward inquiry that extended beyond only “solving classroom problems or producing findings.” Gradually, inquiry was conceptualized as more of a “critical habit of mind” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p. 210).

Finding utility in the process of inquiry that took place both within and outside of the *EL Practitioners Inquiry Community sessions was discussed by multiple participants. Reflecting on the inquiry process through their Culminating Inquiry Narrative and the interventions that were explored, multiple people spoke about how the findings of their inquiry would inform future support of *ELs. As Gordon reflected in his Culminating Inquiry Narrative: “The results of my inquiry compel me to action. In the future, I will translate open-ended language prompts frequently.” Gordon’s remark spoke to the efficacy of the outcomes, a change in practice, and the future utility that resulted from his inquiry. Similarly, Elena reflected on the efficacy of her intervention that aimed to increase engagement and participation:

Overall, there is a lot of active participation in class. There are still students who do not participate in class but for the most part students are engaged more and participate more frequently. As a reflection on this inquiry, I will continue to utilize this in my classes. It has a positive impact in the classroom environment.”

Elena names the “positive impact” of her intervention designed during participation in the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community. For Elena, the outcomes of the inquiry are largely about the utility in simply solving classroom problems—in her case, increasing “active engagement.”

Elena’s example represents an important aspect of this finding: that not all participants took up or moved as significantly towards an inquiry stance or to exhibiting a “critical habit of mind” regarding inquiry (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p. 210). Daniel, who focused on his inquiry on better understanding the developing confidence of a single student in his Designated-English Language Development course, stated, “I wish to continue this approach in evaluating my other classes. With social/emotional learning becoming more en vogue, I can offer opportunities to my students to learn more about their self-perception.” The participants gleaned strategies through participation in the inquiry process; however, the strategies and their efficacy arose from the collaboration and conversation within the community and the application in practitioners’ own educational spaces. In this way, the utility of interventions and strategies was derived when practitioners were repositioned as knowledge-generators within a community of inquiry.

Far from merely producing findings from a single cycle of inquiry, many participants discussed new and emerging questions that extended the inquiries carried out during the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community. In her Culminating Inquiry Narrative, Hannah reflected on her attempts to give the students in her Designated-English Language Development course access to more voices by utilizing technology to connect her class with another in the district. She wrote,

I wonder if I can continue to have a “Buddy” classroom at another campus that my students could form better connections with if we have more interactions. If they spent more time throughout the year writing and talking to each other, they might be more comfortable talking to each other.

For Hannah, the inquiry process produced new questions in terms of maintaining the structure of her current inquiry, but she also began to elucidate a new emerging inquiry around how connecting her students to other schools with similar courses might lead students to “be more comfortable talking to each other.” This speaks to the continued emergence of areas of inquiry through the problematization of current practice. Reflecting on his inquiry process, Gordon spoke in a one-on-one conversation with me about his developing interest in the ways that technology—whether a laptop or phone—may have an impact on language production during the translated Welcome and Inclusion Activity at the start of each class. He also expressed several more nuanced questions to consider in future iterations of incorporating translation, including:

Is there a limit to how much translation I can and should do in my teaching? I.e., is there a point of diminishing returns, after which translation has no effect or is contraindicated? In a MLL [Multilingual Learners] classroom with multiple languages, will it be best to have differentiated materials? I.e., should I provide my Spanish-speaking students with just English and Spanish materials, while providing my Vietnamese-speaking students with just English and Vietnamese materials? Or should I provide all my students with all the translations? Should I provide multiple-language translations for my students’ parents and guardians, in my weekly emails, for example?

In his inquiry, Gordon sought to cultivate community, sense of belonging, and “linguistically richer responses” from a student who had recently arrived. These new questions expand the idea

of translation beyond his Welcoming and Inclusion activity and wonder about the larger aims of translation within his classroom. Gordon's questions demonstrate deep curiosity about the way translation is used, or can be used, to support *ELs in his classroom.

Interestingly, within these questions, he wondered about "a point of diminishing returns," which indexed a belief and attitude about the ultimate goals he held for language development. A new tension emerged around how translation can be used to cultivate a more welcoming and inclusive environment to an extent, but that there may be a point "after which translation has no effect." This comment indexed a tension between the pursuit of inclusion through the use of translation at the expense of English development—a central tension demonstrated by multiple participants throughout participation. These questions and their specificity demonstrate a stance toward supporting *ELs and caregivers that builds from the inquiry and extends beyond it, positioning his professional context as a site for future study (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009).

Participants also about the applicability of the inquiry process to other practitioners and students. Daniel asked in his Culminating Inquiry Narrative, "How can practitioners incorporate inquiry into their curricula throughout the year?" He expressed an additional wondering about "How the constraints of our work as practitioners (textbooks, curriculum, etc.) create roadblocks for students who are not happy with themselves as learners?" Daniel also stated the belief that "Taking time to question why we do this job can lead to us finding ways to better our practice." Daniel's remark that taking part in the process of questioning as an aspect of inquiry that supports *ELs demonstrates a movement towards a way of "being in the world of education practice" that extends beyond the instrumental "in the sense of figuring out how to get things done, but also and more importantly, ... deliberating about what to get done, why to get it done, who decides, and whose interests are served" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). In this case, the

questioning is not just about how things get done, but about the purposes that sustain practitioners.

Angela echoed these sentiments in her Culminating Inquiry Narrative, where she reflected on the process of inquiry and key moments of the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community:

I think that as we focus on our multilingual learners, it's important to consider how CSP [Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy] should be front and center in how we develop curriculum that supports all student learners. The first chapter of the book states, "What if the goal of teaching and learning with youth of color was not ultimately to see how closely students could perform White middle-class norms, but rather was to explore, honor, extend, and, at times, problematize their cultural practices and investments?" By using this lens to consider how rich our MLL [Multilingual Learners] lives are, and what they can bring to the table, we can, as educators, enhance their experiences in the classroom, and support their learning.

In this reflection, she remarked on the outcomes of the inquiry process that go beyond findings. This remark stands in stark contrast to her initial exit slip from Session 1, where she stated, "Being culturally sustaining can help support our students? I'm not sure." In her Culminating Inquiry Narrative, she was clear about the role of Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies in supporting *ELs and did not name the efficacy of strategies for supporting *ELs; instead, she named a counterhegemonic "lens" that incorporated beliefs and attitudes about students' language that should be "front and center."

Participants' conceptualizations of how to support *ELs were expanded through participation in the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community in multiple ways, including broadened notions of *ELs; developing and applying a deficit monitor; seeing utility in the findings they

themselves generated through collaborative inquiry; and taking up a stance that saw inquiry as extending beyond the four sessions of the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community.

Summary of Major Findings

The findings presented in this chapter relate to the language ideologies that practitioners drew on in an Inquiry Community, as well as the ways participation in a Practitioner Inquiry Community mediated articulated and embodied language ideologies. Four themes emerged from analysis of participant data, which included audio-recordings, participant-generated artifacts, and participants' Culminating Inquiry Narratives. The first theme, counterhegemonic language ideologies, described how practitioners drew from "a range of contrasting beliefs such as embracing linguistic pluralism and acknowledging the linguistic equality of multiple languages and language varieties" and taking up a "descriptive, rather than prescriptive, view of language" (Metz, 2019, p. 3). The second theme, hegemonic language ideologies, describes how practitioners also articulated and embodied language ideologies "that have become successfully 'naturalized' by the majority group" (Kroskrity, 2004, p. 523). The third theme, multiplicity: "yes, and," described the ways practitioners drew strategically from multiple language ideologies that exist on a continuum between hegemonic and counterhegemonic throughout participation in the inquiry community. The fourth theme, re-mediating conceptualizations of supporting *English Learners, explored how participation expanded participants' perceptions of *English Learners as well as the ways that practitioners go about supporting them. Together, these findings reflect that inquiry can be an important tool in mediating existing ways that practitioners think about standards of success for *ELs.

Chapter 6

Conclusions

Introduction

In carrying out this study, I sought to better understand the language ideologies that practitioners articulate and embody during professional development and how participation in a Practitioner Inquiry Community might mediate those language ideologies. My desire to discover more about how White linguistic hegemony is challenged and perpetuated in professional development was born out of my own personal and professional experiences. My dissatisfaction with the professional learning spaces I experienced as a classroom educator and instructional coach certainly played a role, but my own familial history tied to language erasure served as the foundational impetus. While these experiences may have given initial designs for the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community, it was through the contributions of other practitioners that the final shape was formed. The vast majority of participants were classroom teachers, with one participant—me—being an Instructional Coach for *English Learners. The 12 participants were a diverse group representing a range of subjects and grades taught, years of teaching experience, languages and varieties of languages spoken, and racial and gender identities. To understand the language ideologies participants expressed during participation—as well as how participation within an inquiry community mediates language ideologies—this study focused on the following research questions:

1. What language ideologies do practitioners who support *English Learners articulate and embody in a practitioner inquiry community?
2. How does participation in a practitioner inquiry community mediate the language ideologies of high school practitioners who support *English Learners?

This study used data that included audio-recordings of the four 90-minute sessions, participant-generated artifacts, and culminating inquiry narratives produced by each participant. A thematic coding process was utilized to construct four emergent themes. This chapter outlines the discussion of the findings, limitations of the study, and implications for policy and practice.

Discussion of the Findings

This study is grounded in the understanding that practitioners' language ideologies are powerful conceptions embodied in our praxis and mediated through participation in professional development. Nearly all practitioners participate in professional development each year, but what practitioners often experience as professional development comes in the form of short workshops. When professional development is related specifically to supporting *ELs, practitioners receive eight hours or less per year (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Gebhard, 2010; Rotermund et al., 2017). For practitioners who support *ELs, practitioner inquiry represents a potential space for collaborative interrogation of practice and the generation of counterhegemonic language ideologies. Schooling, and the professional development that takes place within it, should be considered a site of ideological production. As a consequence, *EL-focused professional learning should provide opportunities for practitioners to make tacit beliefs about what languages that are understood to be more valuable in classroom spaces explicit; to promote understandings of the relationships between language, identity, and culture; and to address practitioners' language ideologies about *ELs in the classroom (Silverstein, 1998; Banes et al., 2016). Practitioner inquiry imagines professional development that moves beyond hegemonic conceptions of professional learning that perpetuate the expert-novice, formal-local knowledge, and practice-theory distinctions (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999).

This study aimed to understand the language ideologies that practitioners who support *English Learners express during participation in a practitioner inquiry community. A thematic coding process was utilized, and four themes emerged through analysis: participants articulated and embodied counterhegemonic language ideologies; participants articulated and embodied hegemonic language ideologies; practitioners drew on a range of seemingly contrasting language ideologies throughout participation, which I have rendered as multiplicity: “yes, and”; and participation afforded practitioner re-mediation of their conceptualizations of how to support *English Learners. In the following sections, each theme is discussed in turn.

Theme 1: Counterhegemonic Language Ideologies

During the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community, practitioners articulated and embodied counterhegemonic language ideologies in several ways, including understanding language as more than a decontextualized system; drawing on expansive language ideologies; and demonstrating ideological stances towards language as affording access and privileges. Articulations and embodiments of these counterhegemonic language ideologies existed on a continuum between hegemonic and counterhegemonic and, though they are seen as occupying varying positions on the continuum, the following discussion represents expressions that demonstrate movements toward counterhegemonic language ideologies.

Understanding language beyond a decontextualized system includes interrogating how language relates in complex ways to identity and culture. We frequently drew on these language ideologies by relating them back to our own complex experiences. Research demonstrates that a range of factors—including geographic location, education, and linguistic background—impact language ideologies, and that most practitioners agree there is a responsibility to teach students the value of different dialects and how language can be used for a range of purposes (Pettit,

2011; Metz, 2019). Additionally, the counterhegemonic language ideology that language variation is normal was drawn on by multiple participants for multiple reasons, including its connection to their work with students as well as their own experience as multilingual. This aligns with research that identifies how practitioners' linguistic background affects how they draw on language ideologies where *ELs are concerned (Metz, 2019).

Practitioners articulated and embodied expansive language ideologies throughout participation both in discussion and inquiry design. Expansive language ideologies are beliefs and attitudes that delimit allowable languages in class. Through Cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT), what practitioners understand as an allowable or situationally appropriate language for *ELs within their contexts is contingent, in part, on a subject's perception of the specific object at a particular moment in action (Engerström, 2016). This specific object held by a practitioner can come into tension with a generalized object of a "historically evolving activity system" (Engerström, 2016, p. 45). This tension between specific and general objects within an activity system was evidenced by participants' understanding of the goal of developing English language proficiency as well as the importance of sustaining students' heritage language. For multiple participants, this tension emerged in early sessions, and the co-constructed inquiry process functioned as a second stimulus in exploring the contradictions that emerged (Engeström, 2016).

These tensions and contradictions resulted in expressions of expansive language ideologies that are best understood as points on a continuum. Martínez and Caraballo (2018) express an ideal of expansive language ideologies, which is "when youths' full repertoires of language are engaged to enact meaning making" within the context of a classroom (p. 103). For some participants, the articulation or embodiment in inquiry design functioned to expand what

was considered allowable language in the classroom to varying degrees. Though participants did not fully actualize what Martínez and Caraballo (2018) described as an ideal, further inquiry and re-mediation of methods may see participants moving closer to and further away from this ideal in their re-negotiation of linguistic expansiveness.

A final pattern of counterhegemonic language ideologies that emerged during the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community was language as affording access and privilege (Henderson, 2017). Participants demonstrated a complex understanding of the injustice inherent in English's positioning as a "requirement for gaining access to education, justice, and so on" (Rojo, 2017, p. 81). Through this understanding of English as a linguistic regime, participants connected language development and particular language uses as affording access, success, and opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable to them, specifically within the context of schooling. Flores and Rosa (2015) offer a fundamental challenge to the belief that equipping students with academic language will lead to success and opportunity; they argue that racialized and linguistically minoritized students producing the target language will be heard and seen outside of their positionality. For Flores and Rosa (2015), "whether racialized communities are accepted as appropriately engaging in these linguistic practices continues to be determined by the white listening subject, not by speakers' actual practices" (p. 167).

The counterhegemonic language ideologies indexed by participants—specifically, English as a language affording access and privilege—did not explicitly address the White listening subject, or how our articulations and embodiments of language ideologies perpetuated White linguistic hegemony (Baker-Bell, 2020). Despite beliefs and attitudes articulated to the contrary, our role as practitioners remained fixed on supporting students in navigating—indeed, accommodating—the linguistic prejudice that linguistically minoritized students face in

schooling and in the “real world.” While these counterhegemonic language ideologies in many ways challenged hegemonic aims, many did not “disrupt underlying racism that sanctions certain language practices as ‘standard’ or ‘Academic’” (Flores & Rosa, 2015, p. 152). This is an important point in understanding practitioners’ language ideologies beyond a dichotomous analysis of hegemonic and counterhegemonic: because both hegemonic and counterhegemonic forces are at play, practitioner beliefs exist as varying points on a spectrum between the two.

Theme 2: Hegemonic Language Ideologies

Participants in the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community also drew on hegemonic language ideologies—that is, “those that have become successfully ‘naturalized’ by the majority group” and are reproduced by dominant groups. These ideologies function to “create a consensus by convincing others to accept their language norms and usage as standard” (Kroskrity, 2004, p. 523; Wiley, 2000, p. 125). The hegemonic language ideologies practitioners drew on throughout participation are captured in the categories of English language as more important and raciolinguistic ideologies. This finding seemed somewhat unavoidable, as “educational institutions play a key role in the maintenance and replication of linguistic prejudice” (Bacon, 2017, p. 344). While many policies, practices, and ideologies function in this maintenance, it is also recognized that “language ideologies can function as mediational artifacts and ... impact the context(s) of second language learning” (Razfar & Rumenapp, 2011, p. 251). This is crucial in understanding how language ideologies—both hegemonic and counterhegemonic—affect learning contexts for linguistically minoritized students.

Articulations and embodiments of hegemonic language ideologies can be understood as both naturalized and functioning to reify existing language hierarchies and the beliefs on which they are founded. For Henderson, the belief that “Everyone needs to learn English necessary for

getting a job or accruing economic or social capital” constitutes the language ideology: English language is more important (2017, p. 24). This language ideology was drawn on as participants justified their focus on *Academic Language and English proficiency through the lens of affording opportunities for success both within and beyond schooling. This trend is consistent with research that found that practitioners who support linguistically minoritized students hold counterhegemonic views of language use outside of the classroom, but “when considering language in the context of schooling, practitioners expressed a hegemonic view—upholding the status quo with all of the existing social, racial and linguistic hierarchies and inequities” (Metz & Knight, 2021, p. 242). Additionally, the invocations of students needing not just English writ large to be successful but *Academic English is consistent with research on practitioners’ language ideologies (Metz, 2021).

Metz (2021) demonstrated the power and presence of what he terms the dominant school narrative, which is a set of language ideologies that results in imagining that proficiency with Standard English or *Academic English is an essential aspect of overcoming barriers to equity. Throughout participation in the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community, multiple participants articulated and embodied language ideologies that functioned to reproduce socially constructed, shared, and taken-for-granted assumptions about *Academic English proficiency and its relationship to success for racialized and linguistically minoritized students. This is further complicated when *Academic English is understood as an “idealized notion of the kinds of language valued in schools” (Martínez & Mejía, 2020, p.53).

Raciolinguistic ideologies underlie those claims that success for multilingual learners is hinged on utilizing *Academic English. These raciolinguistic language ideologies fundamentally place the onus of change on *English Learners to appease a White listening subject (Flores &

Rosa, 2015). This is consistent with research that has shown that when traditional measures are used to define success in schooling for both student and practitioner, practitioners resist designing learning spaces where students can pull from their full linguistic repertoire (Marshall et al., 2022). Raciolinguistic ideologies are often indexed by well-meaning practitioners who seek ways to create more equitable outcomes for linguistically minoritized students; however, this set of attitudes, beliefs, and practices about language in schooling turns hegemonic when it functions to stratify students based on linguistic proficiencies with *Academic English, and subordinates *ELs who arrive at schools with complex linguistic repertoires but are perceived by the White listening subject as lacking the language of schooling. Additionally, Bacon (2017) reminds us that the “language varieties most often singled out as problematic predictably correspond to the language practices of students of color,” which allows these language ideologies to function as “proxy for preexisting racial prejudices across educational and societal institutions” (p. 343). These hegemonic language ideologies and the naturalized axioms from which they are derived are always context dependent. This said, it is important to note that no participant expressed only hegemonic language ideologies, though the same could be said of counterhegemonic language ideologies. All participants expressed a range of language ideologies, both hegemonic and counterhegemonic, throughout the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community.

Theme 3: Multiplicity: “Yes, And”

In addition to drawing on language ideologies that ranged across a continuum from hegemonic to counterhegemonic, individual practitioners drew on seemingly contradictory or conflicting ideologies throughout participation in the *EL Inquiry Committee. This finding is consistent with research that has found practitioners to have contrasting language ideologies that

are expressed in a range of contexts, including while analyzing student writing, providing lesson feedback to colleagues, and while enacting official and unofficial language policies (Bacon, 2020; Henderson, 2017; Lemmi et al., 2019; Schieble et al., 2022).

Within the context of supporting linguistically minoritized students in secondary schools, there exist competing language ideologies. Many believe that, on the one hand, *ELs' heritage languages should be honored and sustained, and, on the other hand, *ELs need to develop *Academic English to be successful in schooling. These notions represent “practical, taken-for-granted, commonsensical ways of sensemaking” (Philip, 2011, p. 300). While these commonsense notions are in many ways contradictory, Philip's (2011) *Ideology in Pieces* framework understands it as typical for practitioners to hold “fragmentary, disjointed, and episodic” commonsense notions, and that these are sustained because we “are not compelled to reconcile their sensemaking across contexts” (p. 300). With this understanding of commonsense notions of supporting *ELs and of the language ideologies bound up in those notions, it becomes important to consider designing professional learning spaces that afford practitioners the opportunity to index nascent counterhegemonic language ideologies in particular contexts. This is also “always understood in relation to how [a] person is socially positioned,” which, in part, entails an explicit focus on re-positioning practitioners as knowledge-generators (Philip, 2011, p. 301). The discussion of the final theme elucidates how seeking to reposition practitioners through participation in the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community contributed to shifts in ideological sensemaking.

Theme 4: Re-Mediating Conceptualizations of Supporting Multilingual Learners

The intention in designing the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community was grounded in a belief that professional learning needs re-mediation, which “involves the reorganization of

instruction, learning, social relationships, and artefacts, all the features that help influence, shape, and emerge in socially mediated interaction” (Gutiérrez et al., 2009, p. 236). Re-mediation seeks to shift the onus of change from a focus on what a practitioner or student lacks to the designs of learning spaces and affordances therein. The four 90-minute sessions of the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community represented an attempt to support the collaborative generation of knowledge and problematization of current practices for supporting *ELs.

Through participation in the Practitioner Inquiry Community, practitioners’ conceptualizations of supporting *English Learners shifted in several ways, including that the inquiry process allowed practitioners to re-view their students; that participation afforded opportunities to critically reflect on deficit thinking; that meeting the needs of *ELs is a “complex process and changes with every student”; and that the inquiry process was an emerging aspect involved in supporting *ELs.

Multiple participants remarked throughout on the ways they had come to broaden their conceptualizations of *ELs both within their classrooms and beyond. Movement from a dominant to a more expansive understanding of *ELs required a conceptual rearticulation wherein “many of the commonsensical meanings and associations of words, concepts, images, anecdotes, and so on are broken and an association of new meanings is established” (Philip, 2011, p. 301). While expansive conceptualizations of *ELs were demonstrated during the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community, it is important to be cautious about concluding that this conceptual change and ideological transformation is static and applicable across contexts. Instead, the shifts should be understood as a gradual extension of “the span of situations in which a concept is perceived as applicable” (Wagner, 2006, p. 10 as cited in Philip, 2011, p. 324).

Participants in the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community referenced with increasing frequency the utility of inquiry in their practice while supporting *ELs, and demonstrated an appropriation of a stance toward inquiry that extended beyond only “solving classroom problems or producing findings” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p. 210). Inquiry was rather demonstrated more as an emerging “critical habit of mind” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p. 210). This trend is consistent with research wherein practitioners participating in an inquiry community were able to develop an understanding of the research process that allowed them to make sense of their classroom practice as research. This, “in turn, bolstered their self-perceptions as professional educators, as well as researchers. Educators often discussed the fact that involvement in the practitioner inquiry process helped them to redefine their own practice in new ways” (Mertler, 2021, p. 8). These findings connect with additional research that has shown participation in inquiry communities to increase confidence in practitioners’ ability to promote student learning, develop habits of inquiry beyond the formal inquiry, increase enthusiasm for teaching, and feel more affirmed in their understanding of the value of the teaching profession (Noffke & Zeichner, 1987; Zeichner, 2003).

From an Ideology in Pieces (Philip, 2011) perspective, the construct of *inquiry as stance* (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009) and practitioners’ appropriation of same might best be understood as an ideological transformation entailing shifting and developing new beliefs, attitudes, and concepts regarding the role of inquiry within the practice. Like their nascent broadening conceptualizations of *ELs, practitioners demonstrating aspects of *inquiry as stance* should not be understood in binary terms. Philip argues that:

acquiring a concept requires the development of context-specific ways of seeing and using the concept across a variety of situations. In this light, it is not appropriate simply

to state that one has or does not have a concept. For teacher educators, a more accurate description of teachers' conceptual understandings would include the contexts in which they can adequately see and use the concept (2011, p. 305).

This analysis helps add nuance to practitioners' broadening conceptualizations of *ELs and emerging inquiry stances. Whether these concepts "stay," or the degree to which they are applied in the spaces in which they support linguistically minoritized students, is contingent on the context and the practitioner's ability to see their applicability.

The findings of this study speak to the complexity of beliefs and attitudes that practitioners draw on within professional development settings, as well as the role of practitioner inquiry in re-mediating ideological transformation. The four sessions were originally designed by me, and facilitation was largely done by myself; however, it was expected, and indeed occurred, that "the content and course of the intervention are subject to negotiation and the shape of the intervention is eventually up to the subjects" (Engeström, 2016 p. 219). As I negotiated the tensions associated with occupying so many positions during the four sessions as a facilitator, participant, researcher, and instructional coach specializing in supporting *ELs, I continuously came back to the aim of "provoking and sustaining an expansive transformation process led and owned by the practitioners" (Engeström, 2016, p. 64). In moments, this aim was in sight; at other times, it felt distant. Nevertheless, it was certainly a space where practitioners came to collaboratively work "the tensions and presumed contradictions between a number of key ideas and issues that have to do with research, practice, and knowledge," specifically with linguistically minoritized students in mind (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, pp. 93–94). Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) wrote that "With practitioner research, the border between inquiry and practice are crossed, and the boundaries between being a researcher and being a practitioner are

blurred” (p. 94). In analytical memos from the earliest stages of designing the four sessions all the way through the final phases of analysis, I continuously returned to the blurring of boundaries and borders of who I was and am as a researcher and practitioner who aims to support not only linguistically minoritized students, but also the practitioners who so profoundly shape their experience in schooling.

Tensions to Consider

This study focused on understanding the articulated and embodied language ideologies of practitioners who participated in a practitioner inquiry community at one high school. The purpose was to understand how the process of inquiry can mediate language ideologies. One challenge of this study was sampling because I used a purposive sampling of cluster class practitioners, and they self-selected into the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community. This sample was not representative of the entire school. Many, but certainly not all, practitioners opt into teaching cluster classes. This may have implications for the generalizability of findings, but as this study also sought to understand how the language ideologies of specific practitioners were mediated by participation in inquiry, results may nevertheless prove illustrative.

Another challenge was the fact that articulated and embodied language ideologies of a single individual were sometimes multiple and seemingly contradictory across contexts. This study took this into account and understood this as expected, but the complication remained. Additionally, the operationalized definition of *English Learner per the California Department of Education does not capture all linguistically diverse students and speakers of non-dominant varieties of English. This tension involved in having practitioners focus on *ELs instead of all linguistically diverse students was not without consideration. On the one hand, the dominant school language narrative is often applied to all linguistically diverse students; however, not all

linguistically diverse students are marshaled into remedial language development courses or have additional yearly testing requirements imposed on them. This tension was an aspect of ongoing reflection and was captured in analytical memos throughout the data collection and analysis process.

Implications for Policy and Practice

The knowledge gained from this study can contribute to both understanding practitioners' language ideological sensemaking and inform educational partners that seek to design professional learning experiences that cultivate counterhegemonic language ideologies. This research project can contribute to complicating and extending responses to Borko's (2004) acknowledgment that what and how practitioners learn from professional learning experiences is an ongoing process.

The implications of this research for practice are numerous. Essential to the aims of this work are providing findings that speak to outcomes and opportunities for students, re-mediating practitioners' language ideologies, and expanding the conceptions of efficacious instructional coaching in the design of professional development.

The design of the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community represents a potentially fruitful implication for future practice. In drawing from Philip's (2011) theory of Ideology in Pieces and Cochran-Smith & Lytle's (2009) notion of Practitioner Inquiry, the sessions were designed to incorporate texts and discussions to destabilize naturalized axioms and utilize inquiry processes to mediate ideological transformation. While shifts in conceptualizations of linguistically minoritized students were observed, how these conceptualizations impacted the ongoing instruction was beyond the scope of this study. Future research might include the articulated and embodied language ideologies both within a practitioner inquiry community and in the

educational contexts of practitioners directly supporting linguistically minoritized students. This research project represents a potential lever for change that has implications for *EL academic outcomes, as well as the ways instruction is designed to create a widened range of acceptable language use in schooling.

The findings from this study can contribute to the refinement of instructional coaches' roles and responsibilities. Instructional coaches can center practitioner knowledge generation by facilitating the exploration of a problem of practice in the context of practitioners' classrooms or educational spaces. As it represents a departure from many current approaches to building practitioner capacity, this approach has implications for how educational partners plan and develop future professional development. The findings of this research project speak to more expansive notions of efficacy where instructional coaching models grounded in practitioner inquiry are concerned. This study also has implications for evaluation of the efficacy in professional development and teacher learning, in that nascent conceptualizations applied by practitioners should be understood in terms of their salience in new contexts. This study also demonstrated the importance of appreciating the complex nuances in beliefs and attitudes that practitioners index. This is particularly important to understand when we also consider the context of schooling in which practitioners are situated.

This study demonstrated the importance of considering the positionality of facilitators of professional development, which is relevant for future designs in professional development. Designers and facilitators have a responsibility to consider their own positionality when actualizing calls for practitioner inquiry that understands:

practitioners as researchers; assumed links among knowledge, knowers and knowing;

professional contexts as sites for study; emphasis on communities, networks, and other forms

of collaboration as the central social structure that fosters and sustains inquiry; blurred boundaries between inquiry and practice; new conceptions of validity and generalizability; systematicity in terms of data collections and analysis; and efforts to make the work public and open to the critique of a larger community (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p. 118).

This study demonstrated what practitioner inquiry as a model for professional development can offer those who work with *ELs within a large district. This research can contribute to calls for capacity-building across organizations and institutions in its development of understanding individual practitioners, practitioners' activity, and collective development of practices across practitioner inquiry communities (Cobb et al., 2009). Future research and practice should be aimed at both scaling and extending this work. Multiple Practitioner Inquiry Communities could occur simultaneously at multiple sites and include additional practitioners to add further dimension to future research. Such endeavors could be further extended by including an analysis of the spaces in which practitioners interact with *ELs; this would create better understandings of not just the language ideologies articulated and embodied in professional learning spaces, but also additional contexts in which these nascent ideologies' salience might be considered.

As an instructional coach and professional development provider, I strive to challenge dominant designs of professional learning that fetishize strategies serving multilingual learners (Bartolome, 1994). Overwhelmingly, what is focused on in professional development aimed at serving *ELs is grounded in addressing imagined deficiencies in students instead of focusing on the flaws of the institution of schooling. Bacon (2017) reminds us that "any move toward equity and antiracism must address the links between linguistic discrimination and the larger racial prejudices" (p. 355). Designing, facilitating, and participating alongside practitioners in an inquiry community that seeks to reposition the practitioners supporting linguistically minoritized

students as knowledge generators should be considered a fruitful entry point for professional development providers into humanizing and democratizing the process of ideological transformation.

Conclusion

Early and often within my analytical memos, I reflected on the tensions that were emerging within me as a facilitator, participant, researcher, instructional coach, and colleague. There was an additional tension I felt: on the one hand, I held, and continue to hold, an imperative to encourage practitioners to go beyond visions of success that center linguistically minoritized students appropriating linguistic and cultural practices that share affinities with White, middle-class households. On the other hand, I strive to create a more democratic and humanizing professional learning space where practitioners are truly repositioned as knowledge generators in my professional development sessions. Despite my intentionality in design, I also imagined the ideas my colleagues had for what my provision of quality facilitation, professional development, and professional learning would look like. These imagined expectations caused the pressure to build within me. Throughout participation, I wondered and reflected on: Am I really an insider at Willowbrook? Did participants have enough space to speak and reflect? Am *I* not a participant? Should I speak up as a participant—knowing my positionality affords unearned credibility in the space? Am I really participating alongside other practitioners if my inquiry is used as a model? Then, what does facilitation mean in Practitioner Inquiry or in more democratic models of professional development?

Facilitation and participation were not only one thing; my position as an insider/outsider swayed in relation to other practitioners' familiarity with concepts and processes within the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community. At times, I seeded the space with ideas. At other times, I

followed along as unplanned insights emerged from practitioners. In one moment, I would be troubleshooting the audio recorders in the middle of a discussion, and the next moment I would be arguing internally about whether to pull the conversation back toward my aims. Like the findings from this study, my responses to these tensions were nuanced by my positionality within each context, activity, and discussion of every session of the *EL Practitioner Inquiry Community.

My dissonance remains as an educator within a schooling system that is in moments subtractive, violent, and dehumanizing and in other moments affirming, consciousness-raising, and emancipatory. The process of formulating and carrying out this study has challenged me to re-consider my role as a facilitator of professional learning as well as a scholar-practitioner. While carrying out this project has allowed me to better understand the nuances of language ideologies and the role of inquiry mediating the, new questions and new tensions have emerged that warrant continued reflection. I continue to wonder about the relationships between inquiry and practice over a longer period of time. I am more curious than ever about students' perception of practitioners language ideologies, particularly those practitioners that are seeking to reflect and inquire into their own practice. Relative to other professional development offered in this district, this professional development was substantially longer than what is typically offered; however, I wonder about structures that would support this as an ongoing process over the course of a school year or more. I am also more and more curious about the role of time, compensation, and practitioner's expectations of professional development that mediate willingness to participate in Practitioner Inquiry. These wonderings are woven into my day to day work as an Instructional Coach for *English Learners and a scholar practitioner.

For me, the transformation of language ideologies that practitioners underwent remains a crucial aspect of improving experiences in schooling and access to opportunities for linguistically minoritized students. But equally important is the process by which that transformation occurred. Re-mediating professional learning spaces is as important as re-mediating the educational spaces for linguistically minoritized students. Flores (2020) recognizes that the current remedial approach to educating *ELs is damaging and that “what needs remediation is *not* the cultural and linguistic practices of racialized communities but the listening/reading practices that continue to inform mainstream representations of these practices” (p. 28). In this observation, I read a call to re-mediate crucial aspects of learning spaces for linguistically minoritized students, including language ideologies.

This study aimed to extend the reach of this viewpoint by showing that it is equally important to re-mediate the professional learning spaces where those who support linguistically minoritized students problematize current practices, beliefs, and attitudes through inquiry.

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Appendix A: Demographics & Background Survey

#	Question	Response Options
1	First & Last Name	Open Response
2	Pronouns	Open Response
3	Subject(s) taught during the Practitioner inquiry Community	Open Response
4	Years of teaching experience	Open Response
5	Years of teaching experience at Willowbrook High School	Open Response
6	Do you consider yourself a speaker of a language other than English or a nondominant English variety?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • Prefer not to reply
7	Gender/Gender Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-Binary • Woman • Man • Transgender/Trans Woman • Transgender/Trans Man • Prefer not to reply
8	What race or ethnicity best describes you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Indian or Alaskan Native • Asian • Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander • Black or African American • Latino/a/x • White/Caucasian • Multiple ethnicity/Other (please specify) • Prefer not to reply

Appendix B: Spotlight Student Profile

 Anonymous Name:	 Country of birth:
Languages spoken:	 Describe their English language proficiency:
Describe the student's ability to read and write in the languages they speak.	ELPAC OVERALL SCORE: ____. Speaking: _____ Reading: _____ Listening: _____ Writing: _____
Educational experiences (e.g., amount of time in U.S. schools, educational experience in home country, any interrupted schooling):	
<div style="text-align: right;">  </div>	

Staehr Fenner, D. & Snyder, S. (2017). *Unlocking English learners' potential: Strategies for making content accessible*, p. 38. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Family background (e.g., with whom student lives, family separation/reunification status, parent or guardian's home language and literacy skills):



Student interests:



Based on observations, describe the student's participation in class. How does the student interact with others? How does the student engage in tasks?

Adapted from Staehr Fenner, D. & Snyder, S. (2017). *Unlocking English learners' potential: Strategies for making content accessible*, p. 38. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Appendix C: Data Collection Graphic Organizer

Complete the following Data Collection Plan with initial thinking on how you can go about exploring the question articulated.

Data Collection Plan	
The Problem: Why is this work important to you? What aspect of student interactions do you want to explore?	
The Question: Pose it as a question.	

Most Available Data		
What do people do?	What do people produce?	Ask what they think?
Observation - audio, photo, and/or memo	Artifacts: Student work samples, exit tickets, etc.	Interviews, surveys, questionnaires

Data You Will Collect	How will it help answer your question?