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Multicultural Monolingualism: A Critical Collaborative Ethnography with an Equity-Oriented English Language Educator of Newcomer Students

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Education

by

Samantha Y. Harris

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Multicultural Monolingualism: A Critical Collaborative Ethnography with an Equity-Oriented English Language Educator of Newcomer Students

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by

Samantha Y. Harris

DEDICATION

In loving memory of Brandon.

I know you know it, but you are loved and truly missed.

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This dissertation wouldn't have been possible without the help and support of so many people. I want to express my deepest gratitude to all of them, but especially to Ms. E and her students. Thank you for welcoming me into the classroom. I learned valuable lessons and gained many fond memories. To Ms. E, I'm looking forward to the amazing work that you will do next.

Thank you to the Blum Center's Central Coast Regional Equity Initiative for funding this research-teaching collaboration.

사랑하는 우리 부모님을 위해, 모든 하는 일이 부모님께서 자랑스럽게 만들기 위한 것입니다. To my umma, thank you for letting me know it's okay to quit if I want, and that all that matters is being happy and healthy. Thank you, seester Amanda for basically getting me through from community college to here and for being the inspiration for my research. It wouldn't exist without you. Parents, seester, Michael, Stephanie, Katelyn, Liam, and Salah—I couldn't do this without you and by "this" I mean life! Thank you, Lauren, and Rachel, for being such supportive friends; this dissertation is nothing compared to what we've been through.

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LANGUAGES

English
Korean

ABSTRACT

Multicultural Monolingualism: A Critical Collaborative Ethnography with an Equity-Oriented English Language Educator of Newcomer Students

By

Samantha Y. Harris

Although there is an outward embrace of multiculturalism and multilingualism, monolingual ideologies that privilege White ways of languaging have persisted in K-12 schools. In this study, I provide the framework of "multicultural monolingualism" to describe how monolingual ideologies are sustained by and work in conjunction with neoliberal multiculturalism. Multicultural monolingualism can be observed in contemporary policies and guidance for practices regarding linguistically minoritized students such as Newcomer students and students designated as English learners. Newcomer students and students designated as English learners are often segregated from English-speaking peers into Structured/Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) programs on the basis of their linguistic difference; their social and linguistic isolation in these spaces disregards evidence that consistent opportunities to use the target language to make meaning is required for language development. Furthermore, guidance for teachers of these students includes engagement in culturally and linguistically responsive practices while still advocating for their acquisition of standardized/Academic English. It is unclear how equity-oriented educators contend with these contradictions within a culture of multicultural monolingualism; it is even more unclear what impact this ideological mismatch has on the teachers themselves.

Drawing on this theoretical framework which is grounded in critical theories of language, race, culture, and schooling from socio(cultural)linguistics and education, I engaged in critical, collaborative ethnography to investigate the experiences of one teacher of Newcomer students in SEI for English Language Development (ELD). Specifically, I aimed to answer the following research questions: 1) How does an experienced, equity-oriented English language educator recognize and respond to "multicultural monolingualism" in her teaching context?; 2) What is the relationship between an equity-oriented educator's pedagogical orientation and the language ideologies in her environment?; and 3) How does an equity-oriented educator understand her role as an English instructor in the larger "multicultural monolingual" landscape of schooling? In collaboration with a research-teacher partner, "Ms. E," I participated in and observed her classroom and school activities for twelve months, writing fieldnotes and conducting 20 interviews with Ms. E, which included teaching reflections and longer (1-2 hour) in-depth semi-structured interviews (roughly 16 hours). In this dissertation, I present a discourse analysis of interviews and observations that examines how an experienced teacher maintained her commitment to equitable teaching in the ideological climate of SEI/ELD.

Through the analysis, I found that Ms. E was motivated into agentive action via ideological awareness to interrupt monolingual practices in her school site, but also encountered multiple obstacles that were situated in the larger school ecology, namely, neoliberal ideologies about language education that challenged her agency and action. The findings not only demonstrate that multicultural monolingualism is a pervasive reality that manifests at multiple levels of a teacher's teaching context, but also reveal that neoliberal discourses about language teachers exclude advocacy and justice work from their role. In

addition, multicultural monolingualism created a paradox wherein Ms. E contradictorily evaluated her teaching practices by her own equity-oriented stance as well as by the stance of the White-perceiving subject of schooling. This paradox led to feelings of frustration, inadequacy, and emotional distress when she did not meet either standard. Finally, reflections upon her experiences in SEI/ELD revealed that she perceived sustainability in this professional role as requiring adherence to the White, monolingual norms by adopting a "savior" and "English supremacy mindset," and alternative ways of being within the multicultural monolingual environment felt overwhelming and exhausting without promise of structural change. Fortunately, a positive outcome of this collaborative ethnographic work was that in our shared reflection of teaching, we also engaged in reciprocal coaching and learning that led to the identification of the paradox she was working under and strategies for maintaining an equitable approach in the classroom.

Based on these findings, I discuss the contributions of this study which include two major conceptual implications: the need to center humanizing practices in all areas of teaching and the need to end segregation of Newcomer students and students designated as English learners. After discussing these takeaways, I propose the following interrelated recommendations for research, policy, and practice: 1) building common capacity for working with Newcomer students; 2) investment in curricular materials that are designed for diverse, multilingual students; 3) decreasing classroom sizes; and 4) humanizing conditions of the teaching profession. I also review this study's limitations and suggest potential avenues for future research.

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1. Introduction

In my experience as an educator, I have had to confront a contradiction. For four years, I taught a course at the University of California Santa Barbara's (UCSB) Teacher Education Program (TEP). The course, titled "Foundations of Academic Language" was meant to simultaneously cover culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy as well as provide support for students to pass the Education Teacher Performance Assessment, or EdTPA. EdTPA evaluates teacher candidates on subject knowledge and pedagogical skills including their consideration of what is referred to as "academic language demands" despite evidence that academic language is an artificial, hegemonic, and monolingual construct without an objective linguistic basis (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Harris, Meier, & Arya, 2024; Lippi-Green, 2011). For six years, I also taught for UCSB's program, School Kids Investigating Language in Life and Society (SKILLS), which offers a social justice-oriented sociolinguistics push-in program for high-school students, including students designated as English learners (see Lee et al., 2020). Similar to what I experienced in TEP, I often felt like I had failed as a teacher while battling the competing interests of fostering critical linguistic awareness with students while also feeling the need to "help" them develop English. Altogether, I have had to reconcile my own belief in language as a social practice and all varieties as equal with what I perceived to be the immediate needs of my students, which often required the reinforcement of hegemonic linguistic concepts and values.

Operating under this paradox year after year, and in many ways perpetuating it, I found myself in an experience scholars have described for early teachers when newly acquired theoretical knowledge and critical perspectives are put to the test within the four walls of real schools (Deroo & Ponzio, 2019; Farrell, 2006; Razfar, 2012). I was not just trying to balance

two opposing goals, but I was also not even sure what my students actually needed. I was certainly not alone in this struggle and saw parallels to it beyond my own experience. In an American Educational Research Association annual meeting paper session on the challenges and benefits of culturally responsive education, I remember listening to one presentation after the other that indicated that systems like standardized testing and rigid grading structures were frustrating educators' attempts to be culturally responsive (see Diaz et al., 2022; Kolluri, 2022; Moore, 2022; Zuiker, 2022). I have talked with colleagues who taught about the problems of Academic English language, but then assisted in classes with rubrics for assignments that delineate rigid expectations for academic language in student writing. As I continued teaching in TEP and for SKILLS, I began to feel frustrated and slowly came to the realization that I was merely providing my students with the vocabulary to talk about linguistic justice rather than truly disrupting the monolingual ideologies of schooling.

My pedagogical orientation has been shaped by my education and professional training in Applied Linguistics and Education. These fields have, in the past decade, taken a "turn" towards uplifting plurality, multiplicity, and hybridity of language practices as a challenge to traditional, monolingual paradigms (Kubota, 2016). Despite this "turn," monolingualism has persisted through the policies, guidance for practice, and curricula aimed at supporting Newcomer students and students designated as English learners; while emphasizing educational equity and cultural and linguistic responsiveness, these policies and guidance continue to unilaterally privilege English and its "native" speakers without challenging linguistic power dynamics or structural barriers to these students' equitable participation and success in schools (Flores & Nelson, 2015; Kubota, 2016). For instance, bilingual education programs have often been put forth as a solution to the linguistic discrimination and

marginalization of racialized and linguistically minoritized students in US schools (Flores et al., 2021; Lindholm & Leary, 2000). However, on-the-ground implementation of these programs reveals that bilingual education programs often reinforce monolingual ideologies, language separation, and preferences for White, elective bilingualism over racialized, circumstantial (heritage) bilingualism (e.g. Lee, Sun, & Lee, 2021). Despite the rising support for multilingual education (Najarro, 2023), Structured/Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) for English Language Development (ELD) continues to be the predominant model for Newcomer students. In this model, nearly all classroom instruction is in English, often with insufficient resources, among peers with limited English proficiency, and under the shadow of immigration enforcement concerns (Gándara, 2020). This segregation not only hinders their social and linguistic integration (and thereby, opportunities to practice and develop English), but also negatively impacts their academic success and future opportunities (Gándara, 2020).

Efforts to address the achievement debt (Ladson-Billings, 2006) for these linguistically marginalized students have frequently targeted the enhancement of teachers' pedagogical methods, emphasizing cultural and linguistic responsiveness; this approach suggests that it is not a problem of monolingual policies and structures, but a problem of teacher training (Arias & Faltis, 2012; Chang-Bacon, 2022). Existing research does not account for whether or how teachers, despite their commitment to cultural and linguistic responsiveness and educational equity, can effectively implement these practices within the monolingual context of US schools. Additionally, the research has yet to consider the impact of this dissonance on the teachers themselves.

Given this uncertainty, I chose to make this pedagogical contradiction the central focus of this dissertation. To better understand the experience of engaging in equitable teaching in

the current monolingual climate of education, the purpose of this study is to explore how an experienced, equity-oriented teacher navigates the ideological environment of an ELD class for Newcomer students and stays committed to their vision of socially just teaching. To that end, in this chapter I provide some important background information and outline my objectives for each of the chapters of this dissertation. In the final two sections, I provide explanatory notes about my choice to focus on Whiteness in English language education, including the experiences of a White teacher and my use of terminology for referring to students who are learning English.

1.1 Background

Equity requires dedication to liberation, freedom, truth, and justice (Muhammad, 2023). In language and literacy education, this means liberation from deficit views and harmful ideologies of linguistically and racially minoritized students' language(s); freedom from systemic barriers and rigid definitions of "success"; truth that all languages are valid, worthy of respect, and have a space in building and creating knowledge; and linguistic justice (Baker-Bell, 2020), which requires the dismantling of linguistic racism and the centering of linguistically minoritized students' language and literacy practices. Equity is present, too, when joy is uplifted; this is imperative for sustaining the well-being of our students and educators (Muhammad, 2023). And yet, this is rarely the standard that is set in schools.

Teacher experiences in domains such as SEI/ELD must be understood from their location in larger sociopolitical and historical contexts. The roots of English language education policy and practice in the U.S., for instance, are connected to efforts to establish the superiority of the language of White, Christian, Anglo settlers as civilized and to justify domination of the Indigenous population. These efforts coincided with attempts to eradicate

Indigenous languages and thereby ease colonial endeavors (Heller, 2007; Motha, 2014; Paris & Alim, 2014). These colonial and racial logics, combined with xenophobic animus, would inform assimilative and exclusionary efforts and policies towards subsequent migrant communities in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In education, this manifested as the enforcement of English as the primary language of instruction in schools (Ambroso, 2022; Lleras-Muney & Shertzer, 2015) as well as prohibiting students (particularly Latinx and Indigenous students) from speaking their native languages through abuse and violence (Gándara et al., 2004; Gándara & Rumberger, 2009; Macias, 1985). The 1920's through 1940's were also characterized by racist, exclusionary immigration laws that slowed the arrival of non-English-speaking migrants; as a result, many established bilingual schools' enrollments dropped and were also targeted by states' efforts to enact English-only education policies (Kim & Winter, 2017).

Immigration bans and English-only agendas set the status quo for decades until momentum from the Civil Rights movement and Cold War-era anxieties of national global competitiveness coalesced to drive immigration and education reform (Park, 2018). The Immigration Act of 1965 was thus passed to eliminate immigration laws that discriminated on the basis of race, and in 1974, the landmark Supreme Court case *Lau v. Nichols* established that placement of non-English speaking students in English-only classrooms was a violation of their Civil Rights, therefore compelling schools to make adjustments to grant equal education access to those students (Gándara et al., 2004; Hakuta, 2011). These developments would contribute to the diversification of American schools and the creation of hundreds of bilingual education programs across multiple districts (Crawford, 1998; Kim & Winter, 2017). However, these changes would also coincide with a revival of the English-only movement

during the 1970s through the 1990s as part of a growing wave of nativist and anti-immigrant rhetoric (Park, 2018; Wiley, 2007).

Education policies specifically addressing immigrant-origin students' needs beyond language alone followed a similar trajectory, but progressive educational reform does not suggest a cohesive national attitude or support for such policies. In fact, the policies themselves can often illustrate how fraught some of these issues were. In 1982, the Supreme Court ruled in *Plyler v. Doe* that a state's denial of funding for the education of undocumented immigrant children in the U.S. was unconstitutional; the case was the result of a 1975 Texas law that approved school districts charging families an additional $1,000 tuition for each student whose documented status they could not demonstrate. The basis for the 1975 state decision was the additional costs of educating students whose first language is not English, but legal scholars and sociologists now widely recognize this reasoning was a pretext for an underlying racist desire to protect White privilege (Park, 2018).

Demands for English(-only) language education in K-12 schooling have been identified as having less to do with language itself and more to do with racist and xenophobic attitudes (Crawford, 1998; Wiley, 2007). In 1994, anti-immigrant organizers proposed Proposition 187 in California, which largely restricted undocumented immigrants from gaining access to state public services, including education; this law, too, was challenged and found unconstitutional. However, just four years later, the passing of Proposition 227 eliminated bilingual education in California and led to the creation of SEI approaches to language education. Research has demonstrated that following the passage of Proposition 227, bilingual instruction for students categorized as English learners substantially decreased (Gándara et al., 2004; García & Curry-Rodríguez, 2000), student outcomes did not improve (Matas & Rodríguez, 2014), and every

year, fewer and fewer teachers were being prepared to work with multilingual students (Ulanoff, 2014).

It was not until monolingual, English-speaking, White, affluent families assigned value to multilingualism and multilingual education that momentum began to flow in the other direction (Delavan et al., 2021; Flores, 2016). Research highlighting the cognitive, social, and economic benefits of bilingualism sparked a growing interest in dual immersion programs, leading to an increase in such initiatives throughout the 1990s (Valdés, 1997). In California, the interests of linguistically minoritized communities and White Americans converged in 2016 when voters passed Proposition 58, which overturned Proposition 227. There has since been a growth of bilingual programs in the state (albeit slowed by the COVID-19 pandemic). Outwardly, the mission of Proposition 58 was to support educational equity and linguistic responsiveness. However, this narrative masked a deeper investment in social mobility and professional marketability—outcomes that, in practice, continued to benefit White, elective bilingual students (Flores et al., 2021; Katznelson & Bernstein, 2017; Muñoz-Muñoz, 2023). In summary, these education policies are not simply about language; they are rooted in racialized discourses, anti-immigrant attitudes, and White- (and therefore English-) supremacy. This history has implications for the present day.

Currently, students designated as English learners in California have primarily three program options: Dual-Language Immersion, which supports "first and second language proficiency, and cross-cultural understanding" [Education Code (EC) Section 306(c)(1)]; Transitional Programs, which use students' native language for academic instruction; and SEI, which is focused on English instruction (California Department of Education, 2024). Approximately 1,400 out of 9,000 California schools report having some kind of bilingual or

dual immersion program, but the remaining majority of schools are still engaged in SEI (California Department of Education, 2019). A Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE) Report published in 2023 found that California enrolled roughly 151,996 Newcomer students in 2020-21; this means that one in every forty students is a Newcomer (Finn, 2023). Newcomers are students newly arrived in the U.S., not defined by a specific time frame and may overlap with students designated as English learners. Some Newcomers may also be considered "Recently Arrived English Learners," if they have been in US schools for less than a year. This subgroup has specific federal tracking, whereas for Newcomer students, there are no specific federal accountability requirements (Institute of Education Sciences, 2024). Programs for Newcomers often address both language development *and* cultural adaptation, recognizing the particular challenges they face.

The PACE report (2023) estimates that, while the majority of California Newcomers are designated as English learners, they represent approximately thirteen percent of the total English learner population. This figure is approximate due to limited data, as is the case with information around their language and other educational needs. The majority of students designated as English learners are those who have not recently immigrated; a significant number were born and raised in the U.S. They are designated as English learners because they are deemed to lack specific criteria for English proficiency that are considered necessary for success in standard instructional programs (Sugarman & Geary, 2018). Newcomer students have unique needs that require additional resources, but California invests less in Newcomer education than the average state, which leads to conditions such as higher teacher-to-student ratios and negative outcomes for Newcomer students, including high dropout rates, low graduation rates, and low college and career readiness. This report also highlighted that there

is a general lack of data regarding Newcomer students' experiences, and calls for more research.

Further research is especially essential, considering the resurgence of explicit and hostile anti-immigrant sentiments in public discourse and in education policy (Ee & Gándara, 2020).[1] Additionally, more research is required because current education supports are proving to be insufficient, specifically for students who arrive in the high school years (Sugarman, 2017). Newcomer students of all backgrounds who enter US schools in secondary grades show English language development rates that are slower than those who enter in middle and elementary schools (Umansky et al., 2022). For these students who are acclimating to a new environment but have less time to familiarize themselves, it is urgent that schools and teachers provide intentional, accessible, culturally and linguistically responsive, challenging, grade-level-appropriate instruction (Hersi & Watkinson, 2012; Jensen et al., 2021; Kibler et al., 2015; Umansky et al., 2022; Walqui, 2006).

A major need that has been identified in response to these issues is creating a sense of belonging for students at school. Feelings of belonging foster long-term, positive academic, physical, and mental health benefits (Allen & Kern, 2017; Khawaja et al., 2017; Leonard & Reardon, 2021). McInerney (2023) identified five school factors that contributed to school belonging: support networks, participation opportunities, safety, recognition, and language. She found that translanguaging and daily use of students' dominant language in the classroom were major contributors to students' sense of belonging. Supporting these findings is the extensive research that demonstrates that linguistic responsiveness—recognizing and valuing the linguistic diversity of students, creating a classroom culture where all language use is

[1] For instance, in May 2022, Texas governor Greg Abbott revisited language-based arguments and suggested that the state would contest *Plyler v. Doe* (Chappell, 2022)

welcome and valid, and leveraging students' linguistic repertoire to support engagement in learning—leads to positive student experiences and outcomes (González et al., 2005; Lee, 2010; Nieto, 2002).

Despite these findings, schools remain predominantly monolingual. This creates a problem in which schools must quickly ensure Newcomer students' acquisition of English in order to provide them access to the disciplinary content being taught in English to their English native-speaker peers. Current attempts at addressing this problem have resulted in the segregation of students classified as English learners, including Newcomers (Gándara, 2021). This, in turn, actually limits their English acquisition, given that learning a language requires regular opportunities for target language use and meaning making with peers (Alvarez et al., 2021; Jensen et al., 2021). Gándara (2021) has argued that addressing the segregation of students designated as English learners is not just a matter of linguistic justice, but because most students in that category are also racially minoritized, it is also a matter of racial justice (Gándara, 2021). Yet, in a cross-cutting analysis of over 100 studies on the education of secondary multilingual learners (including heritage language learners), Mitchell (2013) found that in these students' educational experiences, race is often unaddressed, difference is seen as deficit, meritocracy is celebrated, and "English is ALL that matters" (p. 354, emphasis original).

1.2 Research Objectives and Overview

The purpose of this study is to explore how individual educators contend with this historical legacy. In Chapter 2, through a review of education and language acquisition research, I connect the history above to current conditions of schooling for Newcomer students and students designated as English learners, as well as their teachers. The review of the

literature highlights how, despite schools' appearance of serving linguistically diverse students, monolingual ideologies stubbornly persist in education policy and practices, which ultimately fail to adequately serve these students. In this dissertation, I propose the term "multicultural monolingualism," which refers to those monolingual conditions; I discuss this term further in Chapter 3 by explicating how it builds on critical theories of language, race, culture, and schooling that draw on socio(cultural)linguistics and education research. Because it remains unclear how this contradiction impacts teachers, I sought to understand those dynamics and began this research endeavor with an educator of Newcomer students in a SEI model of ELD. In Chapter 4, I describe my methodological approach for examining the experiences of a teacher throughout a school year at a public school in the Central Coast of California. For confidentiality, I use the pseudonym "Ms. E" to refer to the teacher and "Hidalgo High School" to refer to the institution where she teaches. I also describe the affordances and challenges of engaging in a critical and collaborative ethnographic approach, which was also autoethnographic.

The literature, theory, and methods described in Chapters 2-4 grounded my exploration of the following research questions:

1. How does an experienced English language educator recognize and respond to "multicultural monolingualism" in her teaching context?
2. What is the relationship between an equity-oriented educator's pedagogical orientation and the language ideologies in her environment?
3. How does an ideologically aware educator understand her role as an English instructor in the larger multicultural monolingual landscape of schooling?

In Chapter 5, I explore the first question by considering the relationship between Ms. E's language ideologies and the language ideologies of Hidalgo High School, beginning with the monolingual ideologies she perceives locally, and if and how she decides to take action to respond to them. In Chapter 6, I describe the emotional toll Ms. E experienced while attempting to enact her linguistic ideological awareness in a multicultural monolingual environment. Finally, in Chapter 7, I highlight the life experiences that attuned her to the presence of monolingual language ideologies and the activities she engaged in to unlearn and challenge those ideologies in her teaching context. This chapter in particular also examines how a White instructor comes to see through the Whiteness of language education in the U.S., with implications for SEI/ELD and English language teaching as a field at large. Findings for all three of these questions have implications for teacher preparation, education policy-making, and future research in Education and Second Language Acquisition, which I outline in Chapter 8.

1.3 Terminology, Scope, and Focus

1.3.1 Whiteness

There's a growing body of research that emphasizes the importance of highlighting the experiences of teachers of color in education (Pizarro & Kohli, 2020). With that in mind, I recognize that my choice to focus on the experiences of a White educator in this study may prompt some curiosity or concerns, and therefore, providing the rationale behind this decision may be helpful. For one, while it is important to uplift narratives of teachers of color, a recurring finding of such studies is the burden placed upon them in their professional contexts that require them to shoulder most, if not all, equity and justice work (Kholi, 2018; Snyder Bhansari, 2023; Souto-Manning & Emdin, 2023). Systems-level transformation of fields like

language education that are predominantly White will remain slow if depending only on racialized educators to do this work. By focusing on perspectives of an educator who is White but has undergone a journey of developing linguistic ideological clarity (see Chapter 7), I seek to understand how to bring White teachers, who make up the majority of the current education workforce, into this same trajectory.

Finally, understanding monolingualism with a direct address to Whiteness is important because multilingualism became marked and racialized as a result of Whiteness (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Gerald, 2022). This means that people are not born monolingual or multilingual, but rather they are conscripted into these categories via Whiteness and White, racial, colonial, and capitalist projects (Gerald, 2022; Doerr, 2023). Understanding Whiteness is key to recognizing relational positioning within a White, monolingual framework and the historical privileging of White linguistic practices in education, which continues to influence classrooms today. By examining the experiences of a White educator, we can better understand how the legacy of monolingualism and Whiteness informs the current educational landscape and the ways teachers may either perpetuate or challenge these dynamics.

1.3.2 Newcomer Students and Students Designated as English Learners

Students who speak additional languages other than English in the U.S. often get lumped into the category of 'English learners.' This category has gone by many names over the years, including Limited English Proficient, Former Limited English Proficient, English Language Learners, and English Learners—these are often shortened to their acronyms, and students end up being referred to simply as LEPs, FLEPs, ELLs, and ELs. These labels are now recognized as focusing on perceived deficiencies in students, rather than acknowledging and building upon their strengths. There is understandably much debate over terminology, as

labeling practices have real-world impact on how teachers and institutions view students, and consequently how students think of themselves. Researchers and educators are reevaluating these descriptors, especially those tied to histories of racism and linguistic discrimination. Some alternatives that have been taken up are ‘Multilingual Learner’ and ‘Emergent Multilingual Learner’ (García et al., 2008; Najarro, 2023)—neither of which have been spared from acronymization: ML and EML, respectively. These terms have been suggested because they acknowledge that students use many languages and don't make assumptions about their proficiency in English. In fact, Hidalgo High School was intentional about using the term ‘Emergent Multilingual Learner.’ According to Ms. E, this was “to honor the linguistic and cultural assets these students bring with them,” in contrast to terms like ‘English learner,’ which position them as deficient in English. But ultimately, any alternative is unsatisfying, as the reason the label and accommodations are required is because the system was only designed for English speaking students (Chang-Bacon, 2021; Gogolin, 1997; Matsuda & Duran, 2013). I have maintained that it is not the students who are insufficiently multilingual, but rather schools and systems (Harris & Silverman Andrews, 2024). Yet, remedying educational harm does require unifying, precise language, for instance, to distinguish between students who are multilingual but also English dominant and Newcomer students who are still learning English but multilingual in other languages (Institute of Education Sciences, 2024). So, what terminology should be used?

In this dissertation, I take up the following suggestion from Nelson Flores (in a Twitter post on March 7, 2019): “Students officially designated as English learners is kind of wordy, but it is the most precise label to describe students that we have developed a range of euphemisms for.” In addition, because Newcomer students have social, emotional, and

physiological needs that are obscured under the label of 'English learner,' which prioritizes language over all else (Finn, 2023; Goodwin, 2002; Portes & Rumbaut, 2014; Sattin-Bajaj et al., 2023;), I refer to students in this dissertation interchangeably as 'Newcomer students' and 'students designated as English learners' when those designations and statuses are important to the discussion, or simply as 'students' within their classroom context.

2. Literature Review

In this dissertation, I focus on the experience of one instructor of Newcomer students in one Structured/Sheltered English Immersion, English Language Development (SEI/ELD) classroom, but the experiences I discuss are not limited to that single space. Grounding the analysis in the scholarly literature that precedes this study, I argue that Ms. E's story is illustrative of challenges facing the fields of Education and Second Language Acquisition. To lay the foundation for this reasoning, in this chapter, I conduct a review of relevant literature. I begin with an overview of empirical studies on teacher preparation for working with Newcomer students to understand the current ideological environment of education for these students and their teachers. I connect that scholarship to empirical studies of teacher agency and identity to establish the role of the language educator in the larger discussion of educational reform for Newcomer students and students designated as English learners.

In this chapter, I summarize the key themes from existing research, noting a gap in how the needs of Newcomer students are addressed in both scholarly inquiry and teacher education. When these needs are considered, the focus has typically been on individual teacher beliefs, particularly those of early-career educators, with an emphasis on language acquisition rather than the full spectrum of the classroom environment. However, it is clear from the research that teacher identity, agency, and well-being are crucial factors for instructional support of Newcomer students. Throughout the chapter, I explore the implications of these findings for future research. I conclude the chapter by synthesizing these findings and connecting them to the current study, which examines all of these factors in a single classroom.

2.1 Newcomer Student Needs and Teacher Beliefs

As outlined in the previous chapter, racist, anti-immigrant, and English-monolingual education policies have all contributed to the segregation of students classified as English learners, including Newcomers (Gándara, 2021). The typical students designated as English learners highlighted in research and policy, and reflected in the demographics of California, are often U.S.-born, Latinx, and heritage speakers of Spanish (Sugarman & Geary, 2018). As previously mentioned, these students generally are comfortable using English but are subjected to language remediation because they are perceived to be lacking the academic language skills that are deemed necessary in the classroom (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Newcomer students have a host of social, emotional, mental health, and physical needs as a result of recent immigration experiences and insufficient support and systems in schools; however, in educational research and practice guidance, these students are frequently grouped under the broader term 'English learner' (Goodwin, 2002; Finn, 2023). Again, doing so emphasizes language proficiency above all else, overshadows the multifaceted needs of these students, and perpetuates the notion that "English is ALL that matters" (Mitchell, 2013). It's crucial for educators to recognize and address the comprehensive needs of Newcomer students for their overall well-being, but also as a fundamental part of language development.

US education policies that attempt to respond to the marginalization of Newcomer students have largely focused on the matter of teacher preparation (Gándara, 2022; Chang-Bacon, 2020). Because teacher attitudes towards these students impact experiences and outcomes (at the macro level through policy and in the micro level of pedagogical practices), several studies have focused on teachers' views and beliefs (Razfar, 2012; Rodriguez, et al., 2020; Villegas et al., 2018) and teacher education programs increasingly include direct

instruction on students designated as English learners (Hutchinson, 2013; Markos, 2012; Nutta et al., 2020; Settlage et al., 2014; Schwarz & Hamman-Ortiz, 2020). However, within this umbrella category of 'English learner,' very little attention is given to preparation for working with Newcomer students (Bartolomé, 2010; Goodwin, 2017; Lang, 2019; Rodriguez, et al., 2020; Sattin-Bajaj et al., 2023).

This study delves into the experiences of a teacher in a SEI/ELD classroom specifically serving Newcomer students, with a twofold purpose: first, to enhance understanding of the unique needs of Newcomer students, which in extant literature and policy is not given due attention. Second, by exploring the needs of teachers in SEI/ELD settings, this research seeks to better support these educators, which in turn will help their students. Furthermore, this inquiry may highlight systemic issues within the education system that extend beyond the individual educator, thus contributing to a more holistic approach to supporting both Newcomer students and the teachers who serve them.

Research shows that early educators often begin their careers with good intentions, but unfortunately, due to beliefs that assimilation is the path to success for linguistically minoritized students (including Newcomers) (Delpit, 2006; Eryaman, 2007; Gay, 2010), their teaching practices enforce White, middle-class linguistic norms and students are only rewarded if/when they can approximate those styles (Rodriguez & Magill, 2016). Villegas et al. (2018) reviewed research on preparing teachers to work with students categorized as English learners and found that while many reported favorable outcomes with regard to changing teacher candidates' beliefs, this did not often coincide with a shift in practice. Relatedly, research across University of California teacher education departments has found that while teacher candidates now graduate from their programs largely expressing asset-based orientations to language

learning, they continue to describe “effective” instructional practices for students categorized as English learners largely in terms of standardized Academic English language development (Spina et al., 2019). In a study of teacher beliefs and practices in ELD classrooms, Razfar (2012) demonstrated how one instructor who was “personally committed to multilingualism” would, in practice, resort to assimilationist and subtractive strategies (p. 78). As an example, this same instructor’s structural repairs of students’ linguistic production centered on “structures and form rather than communicative competence and meaning” (Razfar, 2005, p. 412). And, in a mixed-methods study with 127 preservice and beginning teachers, Chang-Bacon (2020) found that despite demonstrating pedagogical knowledge about how language works, teachers’ beliefs and practices with students categorized as English learners were often resistant to change. Similarly, even with pedagogical training, teacher candidates in Wade et al. (2008) continued to position students categorized as English learners as not their responsibility; the same was true for in-service teachers in an ethnographic study by Garza and Crawford (2010). However, Garza and Crawford also observed that language educators themselves were also devalued in schools and their expertise was disregarded, despite their specialization (see also Hamann & Reeves, 2013).

It is clear that personal commitment to linguistic responsiveness and equitable language teaching is challenging to translate effectively into practice. Some research has begun to point to constraints such as the school and district culture, or practical considerations like time and materials that reinterpret multilingual intents into reductive outcomes. For instance, Deroo and Ponzio (2019) examined learning outcomes in a graduate course with five in-service teachers and found that while in-service teachers became more open to multilingualism in their classrooms and more willing to support students’ diverse linguistic practices, in application,

they were still held back by monolingual paradigms in schools (e.g., English-only standardized tests and school policies of language separation). Similarly, in Colombo et al. (2018), bilingual staff were admonished for speaking Spanish and translanguaging with students categorized as English learners because of leadership's prioritization of English acquisition for those students. Such findings suggest that while shifting individual perspectives of educators certainly has value, there is a need to move beyond individual beliefs and practices and/or to connect them to the larger teaching environment (Flores et al., 2018; Garcia & Kleifgen, 2018; Hornberger, 2002).

2.2 (Language) Teacher Agency and Identity

An ecological lens toward teaching, which considers a wide range of factors within the immediate and larger environment (Hornberger, 2002), is valuable not just for understanding how a context may influence teachers' beliefs and practices, but also for understanding teachers' capacity to create change in their contexts. Multiple studies have demonstrated how teachers build and draw on their agency to resist hegemonic, assimilationist institutional policies that harm multilingual students (Johnson 2009; Menken & García 2010; Phyak et al., 2022). Teacher agency in school environments can be defined as the capacity to "critically shape their responses to problematic situations" (Biesta & Tedder, 2007, p. 11) (see also Van Lier, 2010). For instance, Hopkins et al. (2022) conducted interviews with 96 California secondary English Language Development (ELD) educators from an ecological perspective to understand how district and school staff exercised their agency in shaping ELD policy implementation to provide additional support for students designated as English learners. Fones (2019) conducted a multi-site ethnography to understand factors that facilitated ELD teacher agency and found that agency was strengthened by collaboration with colleagues.

While existing studies provide a valuable foundation, more research is needed to examine teachers working with specific profiles within the umbrella term of "English learners," who are not a homogeneous group. Future studies should also investigate in-depth the daily, on-the-ground experiences of equity-oriented educators who have questioned their own beliefs and biases and are now seeking to implement their knowledge in a real-world context. The question of putting critical knowledge into action via agency is particularly important for early teaching experiences, when "the ideals that the beginning teacher formed during teacher training are replaced by the reality of school life where much of their energy is often transferred to learning how to survive in a new school culture" (Farrell, 2006, p. 212); thus, early educators have been the subject of much research (Villegas et al., 2018). However, much can be learned from experienced educators who are already more familiar with institutions and operations, and insights from their experiences can then support the education of teachers-in-training. In addition, more research that includes the role of teacher identity is also required. Much of the existing research on language educator identity has come out of Applied Linguistics and focuses on the overlap of linguistic and professional identity (Liu & Xu, 2013). This collective scholarship has demonstrated that teaching is an ongoing process of developing and inhabiting an identity that is fluid and complex and intricately linked to social processes and histories that distribute power and privilege. More recent studies of language teachers' identities have been influenced by poststructuralist thinking and critical theory, and have thus focused particularly on issues of status, justice, and equality as a distinct area of inquiry within language teacher education research (Barkhuizen, 2021; López-Gopar et al., 2022; Varghese, 2017).

An underlying theme of these studies of teacher identity is the ways in which it shapes teaching beliefs, thereby informing classroom practices (Liu & Xu, 2013; Kayi-Aydar et al., 2019). In a case study of three White teachers' classroom practices, Yoon (2008) found that teachers' professional identities—such as whether they were a 'content-focused' educator or a 'whole-student' educator—would impact their teaching practices, which subsequently related to their students' differential feelings of (dis)empowerment. Teacher identity, or sense of self in relation to the role of being a professional educator, is largely informed by lived experiences (Lortie, 1975). Thus, the development of teacher identities begins far in advance of their actual teaching journey (Buchanan, 2015). For instance, some studies have shown that teachers who are multilingual are less likely to harbor monolingual ideologies (Chang-Bacon, 2020; Fitzsimmons-Doolan, 2014). Relatedly, Snyder Bhansari (2023) demonstrated that by making connections to their identities, multilingual teachers of color were able to build their critical awareness of restrictive language policies. Teacher identity is also crucial for relationship-building with students, but for decades there has been a shortage of teachers who come from the same linguistic, cultural, or ethnic backgrounds of racially and linguistically minoritized students, in particular, for Newcomer students and those designated as English learners (Goodwin, 2002; Sattin-Bajaj et al., 2023).

White, monolingual English-speaking instructors make up the majority of those working with racially and linguistically minoritized students, including Newcomers. That includes a large portion of the teacher participants of the studies described above (although racial identity is often mentioned but not frequently included in the analysis). This is consequential as teachers who are unfamiliar with the experiences and backgrounds of their students may draw on problematic and essentializing ideas without being aware of it (Bacon,

2019; Howard, 2016). For instance, in a qualitative study of a reading intervention professional development series, Kim and Viesca (2016) found that three White teachers, all of whom were working with racialized students designated as English learners, did not recognize their White privilege or the role that race could play in their teaching. Reeves (2009) found that as a result of a secondary White English teacher's belief that an assimilative approach would benefit his students categorized as English learners, he would not differentiate instruction and took up a colorblind approach by claiming to treat those students "just like any [other] kid" (p. 38) and therefore neglecting their specific linguistic needs in a monolingual classroom.

The stepping stone to dismantling deeply held biases and beliefs about others is to begin with oneself (Assaf & Dooley, 2010; Case & Hemmings, 2005; Cockrell et al., 1999; Fitzsimmons-Doolan, 2018; Sleeter, 2001; Trujillo, 2005). For instance, through an archaeology of the self, "a deep excavation and exploration of beliefs, biases, and ideas that shape how we engage in our work" would allow teachers to reevaluate the intersection between their position as teachers and their identities (Sealey-Ruiz, 2022, p. 22). Additionally, explicit teacher-training about language and racism in conjunction with the colonial and anti-immigrant educational agendas in the U.S. is also necessary, as well as the practice of continued critical reflection on one's own teaching (Arday, 2018; Moosavi, 2022). But to reiterate, while much effort in research and teacher training has gone into changing teachers' beliefs and fostering critical understandings of their own identities, there is also the urgent need to extend beyond the individual level. Identity and beliefs must be understood in relation to the larger environment of education which enforces structures that prioritize English and harm racially and linguistically minoritized students. Holistic understanding of these realities is necessary for preserving well-being for students, but also for their teachers.

2.3 (Language) Teacher Well-being

There is little disagreement about how difficult, demanding, and stressful teaching is as a profession (Greenberg et al., 2016; Vedder et al., 2007). This is evidenced by the high rate of teacher turnover and burnout, which reached its peak following the COVID-19 pandemic. Teacher retention is at its lowest in low-income areas with schools that have high numbers of linguistically and racially minoritized students. Factors contributing to teacher attrition are unrealistic demands, emotional exhaustion, insufficient compensation and preparation, and discouraging social attitudes towards teachers (Dubbeld et al., 2019; Skarin & Zahner, 2022). Given the importance of teacher quality for students designated as English learners, the growth of teacher burnout is a relevant concern that needs to be addressed. For instance, in California, where students designated as English learners comprise almost 20 percent of the student population, Zahner et al. (2022) found that a majority of instructors of these students were not prepared with the resources and training they needed to serve students categorized as English learners. When teachers feel that their professional needs are not being met in this way, they are more likely to leave their sites and/or the teaching profession (Reed et al., 2022).

Teacher burnout is described as "a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who work with other people in some capacity" (Kokkinos, 2006, p. 25). There are few studies that look at teacher burnout or retention, specifically in the area of K-12 English language education and for teachers with Newcomer students. Of those few, Dubbeld et al. (2019) examined whether burnout was associated with immigrant student teaching contexts; they found that teachers held assimilationist attitudes and that burnout resulted from teachers feeling unprepared to respond to the linguistic and cultural diversity of their classes, echoing findings

from previous studies (Banks & McGee Banks, 2004; Dilg, 2003; Vedder et al., 2007). Studies that examine language educator burnout with adult language learners identify the same contributing factors listed above, but also include language-related concerns (e.g., demand and conflict over providing corrective feedback, including how much and what type) (Gkonou et al., 2020). Other research has found that emotions can be productive for equity-oriented instructors to identify uneven power relationships (Benesch, 2020) and that participating in research (e.g., being interviewed) can operate as a type of therapy for countering burnout, as it facilitates the retelling of and reflection on difficult experiences in the classroom (Gkonou & Miller, 2020). Therefore, further research should examine not only how to engage with emotions as a pathway to ideological clarity for language instructors, but also how research-practice partnerships can help to promote teacher wellness while also calling out structural factors of teacher attrition, such as insufficient compensation (Grayson & Willis, 2023).

Teachers' identity and engagement with emotions is an emerging area of study in education research (Benesch, 2017; Song, 2016). In the above-referenced qualitative study involving classroom observations with three multilingual teachers of color, Snyder Bhansari (2023) found that these educators' negotiation of restrictive language policy in relation to their own critical stances and racial and linguistic identities resulted in a type of emotional labor, and the intense emotions that they experienced often had to be repressed or ignored. On the other hand, emotions also motivated efforts of resistance and transformation. Similarly, in a study that documents counter narratives of justice-oriented teachers of color in urban schools, Pizarro and Kholi (2020) determined that these teachers were experiencing "racial battle fatigue," "the psychological, emotional, and physiological toll of confronting racism" (p. 967), which negatively impacted teacher well-being and retention.

While understanding the experiences of teachers of color is absolutely essential to transforming White, hegemonic school spaces, the work of transformative resistance should not only fall upon racialized educators. Future studies should explore the engagement with emotions and identity by White teachers, who make up the largest share of educators working with Newcomer students, with specific attention to the role of Whiteness. In existing research that explicitly includes Whiteness in the analysis of teacher identity and emotional experiences, there is evidence that emotions can be used by White teachers to obscure and maintain colorblind and racist beliefs towards racialized students (Matias & Zembylas, 2014). In a large-scale quantitative study of teachers' resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic, Yang et al. (2023) found that White teachers were more likely to exhibit "compassion fatigue" than their colleagues of color. Compassion fatigue refers to the set of stressful symptoms that contribute to higher rates of burnout such as exhaustion, frustration, and overwhelm that helping professionals including healthcare workers, educators, and social workers report experiencing when working to respond to a traumatized or suffering person (Stamm, 2010; Yang et al., 2023). Yang et al. suggested that the racial difference between the teachers and students might have been a factor in the high rates of compassion fatigue amongst White teachers, but concluded that further investigation was required.

The number of teachers in the U.S. is not keeping up with the demand, and the shortage is only getting worse. A study by Nguyen et al. (2022) found that at the time of their study, more than 36,000 teaching positions were vacant and approximately 163,000 others were held by teachers who were underqualified. A Learning Policy Institute report (Carver-Thomas et al., 2022) yielded similar findings in California, and showed that teacher retention worsened in the state following the COVID-19 pandemic; the report calls for the need to learn more

about and improve working conditions for educators and means to recruit and retain more qualified teachers. To mitigate the growing teacher shortage crisis, it is imperative to address issues of educator well-being and factors of burnout, while also critically examining the role of Whiteness; doing so will not only aid in recruiting and retaining qualified teachers but ultimately support Newcomer students in achieving equitable educational outcomes.

2.4 Discussion

In this literature review, I demonstrate that language education, and specifically, language teaching, is not *just* about language. I say this with a twofold meaning. First, for Newcomer students, language education is unjust. Second, it is connected to an array of other interrelated factors beyond language acquisition such as teacher beliefs, attitudes, and identities, as well as the labor, agency, and emotions of language educators. Within US history, language education and immigration policies make evident that this domain is not simply about language; the policies are rooted in racialized discourses, anti-immigrant attitudes, and White and English language supremacy. This history has informed the current context of education for Newcomer students, who experience a general lack of inclusion, both structurally and socially. This extends to the lack of research documenting their needs and experiences despite the fact that their social, emotional, and physiological needs differ from the larger category of students designated as English learners in which they are subsumed. While existing studies provide a valuable foundation for improving educational experiences and outcomes for Newcomer students, such as teacher-training reforms, a remaining challenge is how to apply critical perspectives and commitments to linguistic responsiveness in a real-world context.

Understanding the ecology of schools can not only help identify barriers that constrain, but can also also help identify the resources and pathways to support agency and action for

educators of Newcomer students and students categorized as English learners, and further the goal of equitable systemic transformation (Flores et al., 2018; Phyak et al., 2022). For instance, an ecological lens can contribute knowledge about the ways teachers build and draw on their agency to resist hegemonic, assimilationist institutional policies. This also requires a focus on equity-oriented educators who have already begun to critically examine their own identities and continue to question their own beliefs and biases. In addition, it might also interrogate what this process looks like for White educators who are committed to linguistic justice and educational equity, as this is not a profile or experience that has been examined in the literature. More, too, can be learned from experienced educators with familiarity of the possibilities for resistance on the ground. Finally, knowing that agency and resistance require emotional labor, scholarly investments in understanding and supporting teachers' needs and well-being are also required.

2.5 Conclusion

In the chapters that follow, I focus on the experience of one instructor of Newcomer students in SEI/ELD, but as previously mentioned, this is not simply a story about one school or one classroom. What happens in Ms. E's classroom connects both to the happenings beyond the walls of Hidalgo High School, and to the White investment in English monolingualism that is documented in the literature reviewed here. The evidence confirms that this investment in English monolingualism results in inequitable conditions for the students. Some questions that remain are how it impacts and is impacted by the work of teachers. I hope to contribute to this body of previous scholarship by providing an ecological perspective of an experienced, equity-oriented English language educator as well as her negotiations of agency and identity in relation to the realities of her environment.

3. Theoretical Framework

For a long time, I did not think of myself as a "theory" person. In academic spaces, I witnessed a divide between folks in the "theoretical" camp and those who were more "applied." I identified with the latter. But engaging in the analysis of Ms. E's experiences finally led me to realize how artificial this boundary is. The contradiction that I described in Chapter 1 could only be resolved in the end with an understanding of theory. As Love (2019) argues, without the language and knowledge that theory provides, sense cannot be made of the inequalities experienced every day in individual classrooms and individual schools. Responding to research the questions at the heart of this study requires theory as a framework to identify, comprehend, and interpret relevant variables and their relationships within a larger context and to help design the roadmap for future developments. The usual frameworks in studies that focus on teacher beliefs and experiences, and especially those working with students designated as English learners, involve language ideologies and critical language awareness. Both have contributed to this study and are discussed in the following sections. However, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, an examination of a language teacher's experiences of language ideologies requires an explanation for phenomena beyond personal beliefs, which include consideration of her environment and conceptualizations of teacher labor. For this reason, this work led me to develop a theoretical framework grounded in critical theories of language, race, culture, and schooling that draws on socio(cultural)linguistics and education. In this chapter, I provide an overview of the theories that informed the approach in this dissertation before introducing the framework itself and its use for investigating the research questions of this study.

3.1 Monolingualism Meets Neoliberal Multiculturalism

The concept of "language ideologies" refers to the deeply held ideas, beliefs, and social structures that inform our attitudes about language. These ideologies encompass the concepts and representations that shape how language is constructed and performed in society (Gal, 1992). They also underlie the rationales behind language policy decisions and influence how we evaluate the language use of others (Silverstein, 1979). Language ideologies emerge from speakers' sociocultural experiences and manifest through meta-discourses about "the purpose and use of language, about learning about language, and about learning through language" (González, 2005, p. 164); they are rooted in social and political practices, contextually bound, and reflect social positions and power (Straubhaar, 2021). Putting this all together, Bacon (2018) defined language ideology as "systems of belief, performed in context, at the intersections of language and social power structures" (p. 173). Put simply, they are the ideas that people have about language which are put into effect in real-world situations in order to maintain or acquire power. Language ideologies are not just held, they are enacted (Griswold, 2011; Lippi-Green, 2004). Their effect in the world is far-reaching; Woolard (1998) argued that language ideologies underpin central social institutions and practices including, but not limited to, nation-building, child socialization, and certainly education.

Farr and Song (2011) identified two important language ideologies for language education in general: standardization and monolingualism. While these ideologies can be conceptually separate, their origin and impact are closely intertwined. Language standardization involves the institutional valorization of an established set of norms for a language or a privileging of a particular variety, while ideologies of monolingualism view languages as bounded with a preference for use of a single language (e.g., per person, utterance,

or nation), resulting in the privileging of monolingual systems/speakers. Where these two intersect in education is within the upholding of a standardized language as the sole language to be used in school. Because these two are so closely related and language standardization could be enveloped under the scope of monolingualism, I refer to them collectively as monolingualism/monolingual ideologies moving forward.

The roots of monolingualism are connected to 17th-century efforts to "purify" language by decoupling it from its context, making it a modern object of knowledge (Farr & Song, 2011), and then connecting "types" of language with "types" of people (Bauman & Briggs, 2003). Monolingualism frames multilingualism and linguistic variation as a "pathology" when contrasted with hegemonic—often White—linguistic styles (Chaka, 2021); for the U.S., that is standardized English (Charity-Hudley & Mallison, 2010) also referred to as White mainstream English (Baker-Bell, 2020). López and Vazquez (2006) contend that under an English-only framing of education lies a benevolent racism "where 'good intentions' and compassionate altruism reproduce and reify a highly racialized discourse" (López & Vazquez, 2006, n.p.). Monolingualism thus also involves raciolinguistic ideologies—associations of language and race that are perceived as inherent (Rosa & Flores, 2017). Raciolinguistic ideologies collaboratively produce racialized speaking subjects (Alim et al., 2016), such that languages become enregistered (Agha, 2005) as racialized objects, and hegemonic listening subjects (Inoue, 2003) begin to perceive the language productions of linguistically minoritized individuals and communities as deficient based on their perceived race instead of by any objective measure of the utterance itself (Flores & Rosa, 2015).

Monolingual ideologies' influence is evident in the education policies outlined in Chapter 2. Due to *Lau v. Nichols*, placement of non-English-speaking students in English-only

classrooms was a violation of the Fourteenth Amendment and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Gándara et al., 2004; Hakuta, 2011). Thus, as of 1974, non-English-speaking students had a constitutional right to equitable educational access. However, educational access has been reinterpreted through assimilationist monolingual ideologies to mean access to education *through* English (Gray, 2020; Peralta, 2013; Reeves, 2004). So rather than restructuring a monolingual system to meet the needs of an increasingly multilingual society and student body, schools have treated education for English learners as an afterthought (Chang-Bacon, 2022). For instance, Sheltered/Structured English Immersion (SEI) programs aim to remold students' language into that of their "native" English-monolingual peers; this practice, rather than granting access, limits it, for instance by prohibiting students from taking advanced classes (Dabach, 2014), by using content that is not academically challenging or relevant (Callahan, 2005; Callahan & Gandara, 2004; Callahan et al., 2010), and by setting a unnecessary and ill-founded standard of monolingual native-likeness (Canagarajah, 2013; Cook, 1999).

Following a centuries-old legacy of monolingualism, language education research and practice in the 1990s shifted to an outward endorsement of multicultural education. With that shift, multilingual education became a viable, desired education model. This asset-based orientation to education included celebration of and aspiration to sustain multilingualism (Flores 2013; May 2009; 2014; Nieto, 2019). But this aesthetic application of multiculturalism neglected what was happening and continues to happen in schools: namely, the ongoing pressure for linguistically minoritized students to acquire standardized Academic English (Zéphir, 2010). It has been suggested that this multicultural turn was a result of changes such as diversification of population, evolution of the sociopolitical context, greater societal recognition of minoritized groups' experiences and disparities in outcomes (e.g., discourses

around the achievement "gap") (May, 2009; Nieto, 2019). Some might argue that since then, times have changed, citing current violent debates and steps backward in education such as the undoing of affirmative action and states' banning of African American Studies. Others might argue that these trends and events are just small setbacks or from a loud minority in an otherwise multiculturally-oriented majority. In this chapter, I join scholars who argue that monolingualism never left our schools and that it has always been present even within these multicultural reforms. That is, even within this broader discourse of multiculturalism and multilingualism, ideologies of monolingualism thrive (Chang-Bacon, 2020; Fitzsimmons-Doolan, 2014; Flores, et al., 2018; Katznelson & Bernstein, 2017).

Many critiques have already been put forth around the implementation of multilingual and multicultural education, in regards to language specifically, as well as the logics that underpin it. For instance, Katznelson and Bernstein (2017) analyzed the policy of Proposition 58 in California, which overturned Proposition 227's ban on bilingual education to highlight an underlying economic argument for multilingualism and multicultural education. Specifically, they locate the two policies within their sociopolitical contexts to illustrate how "in the time between the writing of the two texts, discourses of globalization and neoliberalism (Fairclough, 2006; Holborow, 2015) have infiltrated, or perhaps further infiltrated, the educational arena and have served to reframe debates around language education" from "bilingualism as a problem" to "bilingualism as a resource" (p. 12). In addition, within the shift to multicultural education, language learning became a matter of "individual responsibility [...] in service of economic growth" (Kubota, 2016, p. 486). Therefore, the celebration of multilingualism was the result of neoliberal thinking rather than as a matter of equal rights and access (Heller, 2010; Holborow, 2015; Shin, 2016). In other words, neoliberal capitalist logics

reshaped language as capital that is limited in access to a privileged few, namely, originally monolingual English-speaking elective language learners who are then deemed to be more marketable than circumstantial language learners or those acquiring English (Flores, 2013; Flores et al., 2021). As a result, multiculturalism/multilingualism—popularized from an original intent of criticality, inclusivity, and collectivity—has shifted to prioritize a multiculturalism/multilingualism that supports individual cosmopolitanism via elective bilingualism for the purpose of socioeconomic gain (Kubota, 2016). Additionally, schools, operating within the changing political landscape that began to view diversity and inclusion as more desirable, were also influenced by market-centric ideals of neoliberalism that made school demonstrations of multiculturalism and multilingualism forms of social/cultural capital to elevate marketability rather than genuine, foundational principles or core values intrinsic to the educational mission.

Kubota (2016) refers to this distorted form of multiculturalism (which includes multilingualism) as "neoliberal multiculturalism," which, she explains, "uncritically support[s] diversity, plurality, flexibility, individualism, and cosmopolitanism, while perpetuating color-blindness and racism" (p. 474). Neoliberal multiculturalism in schools is demonstrably harmful for racially and linguistically minoritized students. For instance, two-way immersion bilingual education, once formulated as a solution to deficit views of racialized students' languages, has been co-opted to benefit White, monolingual English-speaking students (Cervantes-Soon, 2014); similarly, Newcomer students' and heritage speakers' prior knowledge of a target language in foreign language classrooms is often used to support elective language learners in the classroom (Harklau, 2009; Harklau & Colomer, 2015). All the while, Newcomer students who provide schools with the cultural capital of "diversity" and "multilingualism" are still

positioned, even in progressive states like California, as not yet truly American until they gain proficiency in English (López & Vazquez, 2006; Roxas & Roy, 2012; Santa Ana, 2002), and therefore, acceptance and belonging are dependent upon their successful linguistic and cultural assimilation into White, American English monolingualism (Garza & Crawford, 2010; Griswold, 2011; López & Velásquez, 2006). Specifically, mandatory assessment for and placement in tracks or classes for linguistically minoritized students into English Language Development (ELD) courses demonstrate this monolingual compulsion even within broader discourses of multiculturalism (De Jong et al., 2009; Gysen et al., 2009; Stevenson, 2006). Finally, neoliberal multiculturalism operates not just to accrue linguistic privilege but also to simultaneously obscure monolingual ideologies within multiculturalism, making them undetectable to the very people and institutions that exercise these ideologies (Godley et al., 2007). Thus, neoliberal multiculturalism and monolingualism collide such that educators and policymakers are able to maintain the cognitive dissonance of encouraging cultural and linguistic responsiveness, for instance, while segregating a particular group of students for the purpose of linguistic remediation.

In this dissertation, I refer to the coexistence of multicultural and monolingual paradigms still in operation in education spaces as "multicultural monolingualism." I have developed this concept to describe how monolingual ideologies that privilege White ways of languaging in schools are sustained by and work in conjunction with neoliberal multiculturalism. I use the modifier "multicultural" to describe "monolingualism" specifically to highlight, while underscoring, that although policies and practice guidelines may be adorned with references to multilingualism, multiculturalism, and cultural and linguistic responsiveness, the fundamental essence is still monolingualism. When using the terms

"multiculturalism" and "multilingualism" in reference to dominant discourse, I draw on Kubota's (2016) articulation of neoliberal multiculturalism described above. Multicultural monolingualism can be observed in contemporary policies and guidance for practices regarding linguistically minoritized students. One example is the current California English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework (2014), a policy adopted by the State Board of Education to support implementation of standards for teaching students categorized as English learners. The Framework highlights cultural diversity, multilingualism, and biliteracy as valuable resources and assets while also advocating for acquisition of standardized Academic English and justifying the identification of and supplemental education for speakers of "nonstandard" varieties of English and languages other than English (see Chapter 9 of the Framework, for instance). This guidance does not critically question the need for such supplementary education nor the ideological nature of standardized Academic English (see Charity-Hudley & Mallinson, 2010; Harris et al., 2024; Lippi-Green, 2011). Another example is the widespread guidance to replace terms like English learner with "Emergent Bilingual/Multilingual Learner," as discussed in Chapter 1. This practice is recommended to reorient the label from deficit perspectives to an asset-based view of students' capabilities, but regardless, the existence of the labels mark a differential status resulting from ideologies of monolingualism (Chang-Bacon, 2021; Kubota, 2020; Ortega, 2019) by privileging monolingual, standard English-speaking students (Chang-Bacon, 2021; Gogolin, 1997; Matsuda & Duran, 2013). In both cases, multicultural efforts are reworked to reinforce monolingualism.

3.2 Neoliberal Ideologies and Language Teacher Labor

The neoliberal construction of multicultural monolingualism is a major factor in why it has been so difficult to challenge monolingualism and why the ideology of monolingualism is still deeply embedded in the ways educators, researchers, and policymakers think about, promote, and treat multilingualism. In my role as a teacher educator, I would sometimes struggle to foster students' critical consciousness and ideological awareness to see through multicultural monolingual policies and structures that impact students. Every year, I introduced students to culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy. We also discussed the struggle of maintaining this approach in response to pressures to teach to standardized tests like the ELPAC (English Language Proficiency Assessments for California). In particular, I remember when one student who had spent some time as a classroom volunteer said, "Sometimes the teacher has more than 30 students in the classroom, this [culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy] seems like a lot of work!" His comment was not unfounded, as directives for building on students' languages as assets or including multilingual content are often tacked on as supplemental to an existing multitude of learning objectives and pedagogical standards—many of which are monolingual in orientation. For teachers of students designated as English learners, then, crafting culturally and linguistically responsive content that is both disciplinary and conducive to language development essentially adds "curriculum development" onto their job description, as curricula provided for students categorized as English learners are often centered around decontextualized and irrelevant language forms (Jensen et al., 2021; Razfar, 2005; Valdés, 2018). Thus, teachers in training, trying to engage in justice efforts of changing systems and maintain professional requirements of meeting standards, are also expected to

develop their own curriculum and materials and differentiate instruction for large classrooms, but with few resources and little pay (Skarin & Zahner, 2022).

The inclusion of neoliberal ideologies within multicultural monolingualism can also have explanatory power for understanding the professional demands impacting teacher agency when confronting monolingual ideologies. In recent years, there has been a lot of concern about teacher retention, and teacher education programs have seen a drop in enrollment (Giroux, 2002; Sleeter, 2008); with this drop, there has been a loss of multilingual and ideologically aware educators and educators of color (Sleeter, 2008). This has been attributed, for instance, to the stress and exhaustion of confronting racism for teachers of color (Kohli & Pizarro, 2022) (see other studies in Chapter 2). More broadly, the declining number of teachers has been connected to the neoliberal treatment of teaching as a profession (Rodriguez & Magill, 2016). With the rise of neoliberalism and emphasis on efficient performance, workplace competition, and hyperproductivity, the professional responsibilities of the teacher have narrowed from content-area expertise and pedagogical skills to scripted universalized curricula and point-based, standardized measures to assess students' projected participation in the neoliberal, capitalist workforce (Baltodano, 2012; Rodriguez & Magill, 2016). Teachers' roles are restricted further by administrative responsibilities, which pull them away from meaningful planning time, relationship building with students, and efforts to advocate for change in educational structures.

For these reasons, in spite of extensive guidance for and evidence of developing ideological clarity (Alfaro, 2019; Assaf & Dooley, 2010), sociolinguistic consciousness (Lucas & Villegas, 2002), and critical language awareness among pre-service teachers, enactment in the classroom and in school systems is limited (Flores et al., 2018). The failure to sustain large-

scale, fundamental shifts in language education is in part owed to a false neoliberal premise that with enough hard work "changing the language attitudes of individual teachers will lead to the fundamental transformation of schooling" (Flores et al., 2018, p. 15). When not taught to take into account the neoliberalism that informs multicultural monolingualism, new educators are prepared to recognize ideologies around them or within themselves but may not know how to do anything about it. As described by Rodriguez and Magill (2016), "Educators are besieged by frivolous practices, forced to make sacrifices and survive by discarding social justice in favor of test score improvement" (p. 16). Meanwhile, the concept of neoliberalism allows the educator to understand their teaching context in all of its constituting parts and enables them to target their energy and agency where it might be most effective (Love, 2019).

Language classrooms do not exist in a vacuum. More research and reform should contend with monolingualism, taking a holistic understanding of teachers' work environment as an ideological "ecosystem" (Sexton, 2008) which includes societal, community, and institutional attitudes not just about language, but about teaching language and teaching in general. Societal attitudes about teaching informed by neoliberal logics have created a very narrow scope of teachers' job descriptions that do not include critical consciousness and justice-based reform efforts; for this reason, any action in that direction is viewed as insubordinate and hegemony is enforced by the neoliberal social structure, which rewards conformity and punishes dissent. As a result, teachers who do have ideological understanding of the world are seen as outsiders and/or are eventually pushed out (Rodriguez & Magill, 2016).

3.3 Monolingualism, Neoliberalism, and the Grammar of Schooling

The neoliberal construction of multicultural monolingualism has not only masked monolingualism in policies and practices, but it has also encouraged individual educators to

shift their mindset and shoulder the monolingual hegemony of the entire structure without providing adequate time, resources, and support to sustain this work (Love, 2019). Schools have long been resistant to structural transformation because education systems, structures, and processes, especially when it comes to language, have become deeply embedded in conventional societal thinking about the nature of schools and education, a phenomenon referred to by some scholars as the "grammar of schooling" (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011; Tyack & Tobin, 1994; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). The grammar of schooling involves the routines, structures, and rules that inform teaching practices and environments, even including how time and space are organized, such as classifying students and allocating them to classrooms and splintering knowledge into "subjects" (Tyack & Tobin, 1994, p. 454). Put very simply, the grammar of schooling is the way we think schools "should" be.

The alignment of the grammar of schooling with societal beliefs about education lends existing educational conventions to the perception of validity. This also means that educational systems are susceptible to the prevailing cultural and ideological forces, such as neoliberal views that often narrow the perceived roles and responsibilities of teachers. Because in the U.S. educational conventions were established by those who are English-speaking and White, this has influenced the grammar of schooling to center Whiteness, contributing to the reinforcement of White Supremacy Culture (Bauler, 2023; Okun, 2021). White Supremacy Culture is the pervasive belief system ingrained in the attitudes, principles, customs, and expectations of societies, communities, cities, regions, and countries that teach, both explicitly and subtly, that Whiteness is of high worth and embodies the standard of value (Okun, 2021).

Though not originally proposed in response to language education, the grammar of schooling was originally conceptualized with other connections to language:

> “Practices like graded classrooms structure schools in a manner analogous to the way grammar organizes meaning in language. Neither the grammar of schooling nor the grammar of speech needs to be consciously understood to operate smoothly. Indeed, much of the grammar of schooling has become so well established that it is typically taken for granted as just the way schools are. It is the departure from customary practice in schooling or speaking that attracts attention.” (Tyack & Tobin, 1994, p. 454)

As an organizing logic for the way real schools operate, the grammar of schooling also determines what languages are deemed appropriate for school and how languages ought to be taught. Bauler (2023) has connected the grammar of schooling to the enforcement of raciolinguistic ideologies (Rosa & Flores, 2017) of race, intelligence, ability, and language that discriminate against and marginalize racially and linguistically minoritized students. Specifically, it is because racialized students do not embody or perform the linguistic styles of White, middle-class speaking subjects (Baker-Bell, 2020; Cioè-Peña, 2021; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Henner & Robinson, 2023) that their language is deemed non-standard or inappropriate for school, justifying their de facto segregation (Bauler, 2023). The grammar of schooling can thus be linked to the White gaze: the centering of Whiteness and the view of the world from a White perspective (Paris & Alim, 2014). In other words, the norms of Whiteness inform what society believes schools should look like, including language (Bauler, 2023). If the grammar of schooling is informed by and reinforces idealized linguistic practices of Whiteness (Lippi-Green, 1997), then efforts to emulate “good teaching” result in enforcement of Whiteness and White language practices.

The grammar of schooling is also responsible for socializing teachers into the expectations about "good" and "bad" teaching and this, too, has been influenced by neoliberal thinking through societal discourse and later, through teacher education programs. The familiarity and predictability that the grammar of schooling provides make it difficult for teachers to push back. Thus, the grammar of schooling is crucial to understanding why multicultural/multilingual reform has been so difficult in monolingual education spaces. The grammar of schooling is so dominant that even when opportunities are available to reimagine education in ways that would support all learners, the impulse to protect existing structures that maintain White, monolingual, English-speaking, able-bodied, cis, heterosexual male privilege facilitates the protection of the status quo (Goodson & Shostak, 2021; Lankshear & Knobel, 2011; Tyack & Cuban, 1995, cited in Bauler, 2023). This is because, as Tyack and Tobin (1994) explain, "When new approaches are grafted onto the main instructional trunk of the system, they are rapidly assimilated to the traditional structures and rules" (p. 454).

The grammar of schooling has theoretical use for research that employs an ecological lens. From this approach, the researcher can look beyond what is happening in one teacher's classroom to take in the organizational framework that ultimately shapes the conditions under which teachers must act (Tyack & Tobin, 1994). The focus of the present study is on the intersection of neoliberal multiculturalism and monolingual ideologies that I refer to as multicultural monolingualism, while the grammar of schooling provides a lens for thinking about the common features of schools (e.g., leadership, organization, curriculum, etc.) and how they have influenced and have been influenced by multicultural monolingualism. As will be discussed in the following chapter, a critical ethnographic approach would provide the

necessary methods for understanding how ideologies emerge and are reinforced by the grammar of schooling.

3.4 The Paradox of Multicultural Monolingualism

Figure 1 illustrates the reciprocal relationship between monolingual ideologies, neoliberal ideologies, and the grammar of schooling that manifests as a paradoxical condition of multicultural monolingualism for language educators. Furthermore, the figure highlights that these concepts are conceptualized within a foundational context of White Supremacy Culture.

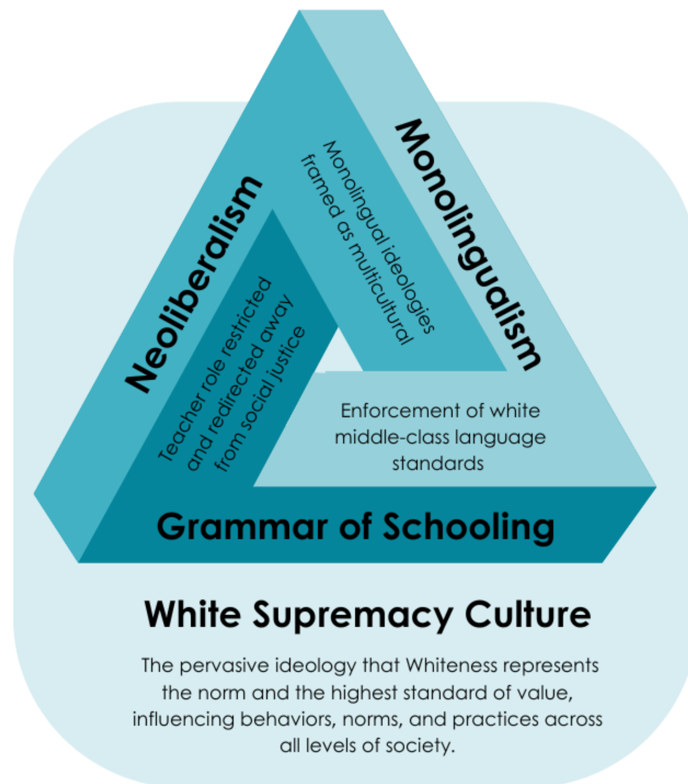

Figure 1. The Paradox of Multicultural Monolingualism

The outside walls of the triangle depict the interactions between monolingualism, neoliberalism, and the grammar of schooling. Where two of these forces meet, the outcome is

described on the inside edges. Monolingual ideologies inform the belief that education for students categorized as English learners should remold students' language into that of their White, native-English-speaking counterparts, and this is incorporated into and enforced by the grammar of schooling (i.e., what society thinks schooling for linguistically minoritized students should look like). At the intersection of neoliberalism and monolingualism, neoliberal discourses of multiculturalism work to obscure the monolingualism that underlies so-called "multicultural" policies and practices, allowing it to go unquestioned. And where neoliberalism and the grammar of schooling meet, what is thought of as good teaching does not include or support teachers' ability to fight unjust, monolingual practices. Finally, the White Supremacy Culture forms the base and background of the triangle, underpinning and influencing the three interconnected elements, thereby shaping the ideologies and practices within educational settings.

As a theoretical framework for research, multicultural monolingualism centers the scope of investigation on the factors shaping teaching conditions for educators of linguistically minoritized students. It questions taken-for-granted assumptions about language learning and language teaching. This is accomplished by taking into account monolingual ideologies, neoliberal ideologies, the grammar of schooling, and White Supremacy Culture all together, through identification of meta-discourses about the nature of language learning and language teaching (as a profession) expressed within the ecology of school culture (Chang-Bacon, 2020; Gal, 1992; González, 2005; Razfar, 2005; Rosa & Burdick, 2017). Importantly, use of this framework does not simply posit that multilingualism offers an escape from the paradox of multicultural monolingualism. Freedom from the paradox instead would require a critical understanding of language as social practice rather than as capital or assets to be acquired. It

necessitates a disruption of the binary-oppositional thinking that underlies hegemonic views of both monolingualism and multilingualism, and that contributes to ongoing linguistic hierarchies and power differentials (Doerr, 2022; Kubota, 2016). Ultimately, my hope is that this theoretical concept and its application in this study will contribute to existing efforts to transform stubbornly monolingual school spaces, not only to support and sustain critically-minded educators of students categorized as English learners, but also to create more equitable conditions for the students themselves.

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have demonstrated the ways in which current approaches to the education of students designated as English learners replicate openly assimilationist monolingual policies and practices of the past while hiding under the guise of multilingual education resulting from neoliberal discourses of multiculturalism. I provided the term "multicultural monolingualism" to capture this process. I subsequently discussed how neoliberalism has also shaped ideas about language teaching as a profession in ways that preclude on-the-ground critical consciousness and justice-based reform efforts to involve, instead, hyperproductivity around bureaucratic activities and rote conformity to universalized standards and curricula. I drew on the grammar of schooling as a concept for understanding the common features of schools and connected it to multicultural monolingualism and the neoliberal impact on the teaching profession. Finally, I offered the paradox of multicultural monolingualism as a theoretical framework to better understand how language, linguistically minoritized students, and their teachers are conceptualized and treated within the context of White Supremacy Culture. The value of this concept as a lens for educators and researchers is how it makes visible environmental factors and ideologies that worsen teaching conditions for

educators at large and also obstruct justice-oriented educators' efforts towards educational liberation for linguistically minoritized students.

4. Methods

Ms. E and I launched our research-teaching partnership in the summer of 2022. Our original goal was to investigate the experiences of a teacher participant's implementation of Equitable Classroom Talk (see Jensen et al., 2021) in a Structured English Immersion English Language Development (SEI/ELD) class for Newcomer students. We were interested in documenting successful teacher moves that facilitated students' engagement in dialogic interactions around disciplinary content that resonated with students' identities and cultural knowledge. Over several months of data collection and conversations, the focus of the project began to evolve away from teacher pedagogical moves to the experience of teaching itself. While the original research objectives were important enough to motivate our partnership in the first place, we came to recognize that one of the greatest challenges to fostering the engagement we sought to enact was the same ideological mismatch that I was experiencing in my work between an equity-oriented pedagogical stance and the linguistic hegemony of the teaching context. We found this commonality and new line of inquiry both compelling and still, in many ways, aligned with our original intent. The data presented in this dissertation reflect the outcome of this collaborative and critical ethnographic fieldwork conducted from the summer of 2022 through the summer of 2023.

The subject of this dissertation is distinct in that it examines a teacher's relationship and reaction to the larger ideological environment of multicultural monolingualism described in the previous chapter. While many studies rely on classroom observations or interviews or a mix of both, in this study I push beyond the boundaries of Ms. E's classroom to account for the intersecting layers of influence from the school, the community, policies, and societal attitudes. Therefore, I take an ethnographic approach, which allows the researcher to

contextualize actions and practices within the broader ideological educational landscape. Over the course of one year, I collected video and audio recordings and fieldnotes of classroom activities, fieldnotes and photos of school activities, classroom and school archives, teacher professional writing and reflections, pre-/post-interviews with the students, and interviews with support staff. Ms. E's identity and perspective was also purposefully central to the analysis and therefore, the study also incorporates elements of autoethnography including her reflection on lived experiences reaching far beyond the start of this collaboration and her teaching career; the details of the autoethnographic components of this study will be explored more thoroughly in the later sections of this chapter.

Ethnographies afford the researchers the opportunity to connect ideas and practices of language to the concrete conditions of everyday experiences and enable the observation of activities and events as they develop over time (Heller, 2008). This methodology also makes visible social processes and allows for an understanding of people's thoughts and actions (Spradley, 1980). All of these qualities are valuable to the research questions at the heart of this study. While ethnography is a prevalent method of study in education, the methods of this study are distinctive in their collaborative and, at times, autoethnographic approach. In this chapter, I describe these methods of data collection and analysis. I begin with a discussion of critical ethnography, highlighting how it differs from traditional ethnography and its affordances for research on language and education. I then describe the ethnographic setting, the focal educator, our research-teaching partnership, including engagement in the SKILLS (School Kids Investigating Language in Life and Society) Program, and my own positionality in this study. The remainder of the chapter focuses on my methods of data collection and analysis.

4.1 Critical Collaborative Ethnography

Ethnography is not just a methodology; it also operates as an epistemological approach in that it challenges singular, supposedly objective truths about the world by immersing the researcher-observer in the perspective of the members of the observed culture or community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Spradley, 1980). Or, in some cases, when the researcher comes from the observed community, it becomes a matter of evaluating how the researcher's own lived experiences and history as a member of that community inform their understanding of the social phenomenon (Nuñez & Garcia-Mateus, 2023). However, outsider researchers should also be reflexive about the interactive effects of their identity and data analysis (Yin, 2015), and in fact, the distinction between insider and outsider is not always so clear. This is illustrated in the present study and is discussed further in the research-teaching partnership section below.

Ethnography has been described by some researchers as well-suited for enacting equitable change because of its openness to and potential for the redistribution of power from those studying to those being studied (Madison, 2011; McCarty et al., 2013). Yet, even equity-oriented ethnographic methods are not free of ethical challenges. The roots of this methodological tradition are, after all, connected to colonial and racist projects emerging from anthropology and sociology that essentialized, exoticized, and othered its racialized and colonially oppressed research "participants"/"subjects" (May & Caldas, 2002; May & Fitzpatrick, 2019; Said, 1979; Villenas & Foley, 2011). For instance, claims that ethnography can be a political tool that can "give a voice" to racialized and marginalized people and communities have been critiqued for the suggestion that these groups lack the capacity to speak for themselves and for essentializing these groups by giving the impression that they would

speak with a singular voice (Bucholtz et al., 2016). It also reifies the hierarchical binary between the researcher and the researched.

In opposition to racist and colonizing views that produce essentializing ethnographies, there have been recent efforts to craft a new vision for ethnography and to consider how to engage in responsible and humanizing ways of formulating, implementing, and disseminating ethnographic work (Paris & Winn, 2013). For instance, in response to the notion that ethnography "gives a voice to the voiceless," an accompaniment approach to ethnography signals collective action and solidarity rather than empowerment bestowed by the researcher (Tomlinson & Lipsitz, 2013). This positioning redistributes power from the researcher to their research partner (as opposed to a research subject). Via accompaniment, ethnography becomes a joint activity (Bucholtz et al., 2016). In order to set aside objectivizing methodologies and restructure the research relationship as a partnership, the researcher is required to make an ethical commitment to be transparent about their own positionality, biases, and assumptions, and to recognize the agency of people whose lives and stories are central to the research (Blommaert, 2010; Bucholtz et al., 2016; Coupland & Creese, 2016).

Additionally, critical perspectives on ethnography argue that researchers must tackle the political and ideological aspects of research and simultaneously engage in critique of hegemonic structures while collaborating in resistance with marginalized populations (Heiman & Nuñez-Janes, 2021). Critical ethnography emerged from critical theory and thus has an epistemological framework that prioritizes freedom from oppression, including from colonial ways of thinking and knowing (Byrd Clark, 2023). Both ethical and critical ethnography continue the methodological practices of traditional ethnography, such as participant-observation and artifact collection and analysis, but the analytic lens has shifted from the

previous posture of removed objectivity to a subjective, critical, and reflexive researcher positionality (Fitzpatrick & May, 2022). Specifically, “critical ethnography is a qualitative approach to research that explicitly sets out to critique hegemony, oppression, and asymmetrical power relations in order to foster social change” (Palmer & Caldas, 2015, p. 1). There have been many influential and far-reaching critical ethnographies of language and education (e.g., Blommaert, 2010; Bucholtz, 1999; Heath, 1983). They often draw on or advance interdisciplinary critical theories including, but not limited to, raciolinguistics (Alim et al., 2016; Hernandez, 2017; Rosa, 2019; Venegas, 2022). They have investigated the effects of racially and linguistically discriminatory practices (Baker-Bell, 2020; Malsbary, 2014), and they have demonstrated how existing language education systems oppress linguistically minoritized students (May, 1994; Heller, 2006; LeBlanc, 2018; Palmer, 2011) and uphold White, monolingual ways of speaking (Gramling, 2016), including standardized, Academic English (Corella Morales, 2016). While engaging in critique, such studies simultaneously imagine and/or illuminate “critical multilingual alternatives” (May, 2022).

The affordances of a critical ethnographic approach for this study are that it allows for an examination of inconspicuous monolingual and neoliberal ideologies that exist across multiple scales. Moreover, this approach considers the broader social discourse on language ideologies while still linking them to particular policies, procedures, and practices (Heller, 2008; May, 2022). Furthermore, critical ethnography is a well-suited methodology for disrupting problematic dichotomies and fixed ideologies, and for revealing the complex and, at times, contradictory nature of identities, positions, and practices (Byrd Clark, 2022). The engagement in critical ethnography, too, lends itself to the development of critical reflexivity through conscious reflection on one’s experience in the research environment (Byrd Clark,

2020; Nuñez & Garcia-Mateus, 2023). Finally, its greatest asset is its capacity to unmask "invisible" processes and discourses of power, particularly when it operates as a platform for those who the larger systems and institutions have refused to listen to (Byrd Clark, 2022) and can thereby help create more equitable and just learning environments (Paris & Alim, 2017).

I characterize this study as a critical ethnography in which my main goal was to understand the following research questions: 1) How does an experienced English language educator recognize and respond to "multicultural monolingualism" in her teaching context? 2) What is the relationship between an equity-oriented educator's pedagogical orientation and the language ideologies in her environment? 3) How does an ideologically aware educator understand her role as an English instructor in the larger multicultural monolingual landscape of schooling? The study's emphasis on hegemonic monolingual language ideologies and the need to understand the teacher's experience within the context of her environment meant that this research had to be critical, collaborative, and ethnographic. Central to this work was the guiding purpose of critiquing educational inequitable norms and structures, specific to the experience of teaching English for Newcomer students (May, 2023; Villenas & Foley, 2011). Collaboration also contributed to the criticality of the project in that this approach cast off the longstanding White, colonial oppositional framing of the researcher and the researched, and took up an accompaniment-based, reciprocal approach to research and at times, to teaching (Bucholtz et al., 2016; Heiman & Nuñez-Janes, 2021; Nagar, 2014). During the data collection and in the writing process, I took account of my positionality with reflexivity (4.2.3). All of this work required my extensive presence and participation at Hidalgo High School and in Ms. E's classroom; while 12 months was sufficient for developing the findings presented here, Ms. E and I plan to continue this collaborative work into the future. Finally, in this dissertation, I

take up critical ethnography to imagine multilingual futures not just for students but for language educators—Ms. E and others like her.

4.2 Methodology

4.2.1 Research Setting

In April of 2022, I began reaching out to local school and district networks to identify experienced justice-oriented teachers with exemplary reputations for having positive relationships with students and fostering equitable classroom participation. My contacts put me in touch with Ms. E, a teacher of Newcomer students in SEI/ELD at Hidalgo High School (HHS). I was familiar with HHS, as well as the larger culture of the district. I lived in the area for six years, during which I served as an instructor for the SKILLS program at several high schools within the district. In the spring of 2021, I had conducted informal observations of another SKILLS class for four months at HHS, however, it was not a school that I had ever taught in. My early interviews with Ms. E were spent learning more about this teaching context. When I began volunteering in her classroom and observing her teaching practice at HHS, beginning in August 2022, I also began my ethnographic fieldwork via observation and active participation in school activities.

HHS is situated close to the border between a small town in Southern California with a population of approximately 30,000 residents and a larger city of about 90,000 residents. The collective area is predominantly White and highly affluent, but there is also a large number of working-class families, including a large Latinx and immigrant population—this was reflected in the HHS student population of approximately 2,000 students, with nearly 60% of students identifying as Latinx and about 40% as White. Additionally, 7% were designated as English learners, which included 50 Newcomer students. In HHS's district, schools utilized an SEI

model of ELD wherein nearly all classroom instruction is provided in English and students learning English are placed in a transitional program meant to develop their English proficiency.

Students in the district often expressed to me that their community felt divided, with Latinx and immigrant families predominantly living on one side of a specific street in town, while the wealthier White families resided on the other. They described Advanced Placement classes and other special academic programming in schools as being “for the White kids.” Similarly, there was a distinction between HHS and the nearby Central City High School (a pseudonym) with students describing CCHS as a school for “smart kids.” Following what teachers described to me as a “White flight” from the school, HHS experienced expected results such as budget cuts and increased numbers of students from low-income families, and, with the increased teaching demand associated with such changes, an exodus of HHS teachers from the school and the profession. These changes would be important for the developments in Ms. E’s classroom for the year of this research, and are thus central to the findings.

The bifurcation of schools and community also extended to politics. On the one hand, while the larger city tended to vote liberal (though political parties are no guarantee of ideological standing) it was not by a large margin, and there was also a very vocal contingent of conservative, anti-immigrant organizers. For instance, on any given Saturday, it would not be uncommon for pro-Trump gatherings to be held at the intersections of busy shopping centers. A few years prior to this study, a conservative group sued the school district for implementing anti-racism workshops, accusing the organizers of indoctrinating students and teachers, and of being racist towards White people. And several times throughout just my one year of data collection for this study, multiple instances of hate speech and racist bullying at

schools in the district made local headlines. This polarized climate reflects wider national debates over critical race theory and culturally responsive teaching. Nonetheless, during this same period, HHS explicitly articulated in its mission statement that the school held a commitment to equity and inclusion for all students.

Because of the segregated nature of SEI, Ms. E's classroom did not reflect the larger demographics of HHS. The class ranged from 28 to 36 students at different points throughout the year; students varied in age (14-19) and grade (9-12), but all were recently arrived immigrant students who had come to HHS within the past 3 years from several Latin American countries (e.g., Mexico, Guatemala, Peru) and all were Spanish-dominant, though some also spoke languages other than Spanish and English. With regard to language status, at the beginning of the year, students who were placed in SEI were organized into two classes by grade level, meaning that in the same classroom students' English language fluency and use differed widely from student to student. In November, the school agreed, at Ms. E's urging, to reorganize by proficiency level (see Chapter 5). After that point, the majority of her students were classified at the emerging level of English proficiency, and they were most comfortable communicating in Spanish. I did not have official information about students' socioeconomic status, but Ms. E and some students shared with me their experiences of financial and family instability at home and how, due to these experiences, as well as their migration experience, many were processing recent and ongoing trauma. Some students were also classified as Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE).

Ms. E's classroom as a physical space revealed much about the resources she had access to. The room itself, at first glance, was not remarkable in terms of decoration or organization, but closer inspection revealed that Ms. E was often pulling together resources

with little to no funding. The bilingual posters that covered the walls and whiteboards, she had made herself or assembled from student work, and many doubled as decorations and as advertisements for school and community resources (e.g. Latinx community night, school fundraisers). There was a used couch in the back of the room next to a small shelf that held a collection of books, some in Spanish but mostly in English. Cabinets and drawers were filled with snacks and spare paper, pencils, and highlighters that Ms. E purchased herself and that students made use of daily. At the front of the room, a technology station under the display television housed two spare tablets and multiple chargers for student use. Students were provided their own tablets by the school, and much of the curriculum, including for ELD, was integrated into learning platform apps. Ms. E would often rearrange the desks, but in general, they were arranged into groups with students facing each other (see Figure 2) to encourage collaboration and peer support.

Figure 2. Sketch of Ms. E's Classroom

4.2.2 Research-Teaching Partnership

When we first met, Ms. E struck me as introspective, energetic, and sunny. She is a White, 35-year-old (at the time of the research) woman born and raised in the community local

to HHS. In fact, HHS was her alma mater. She came from a working-class, conservative, and religious family. She is a native English speaker, but having studied Latin in college, she was able to easily pick up and become quite fluent in Spanish after spending some time in Chile and Peru post-graduation. Spanish was the primary language with which she communicated with students despite the district policy, which mandated that "nearly all" of the classroom instruction should be provided in English. Ms. E had a decade of teaching behind her in multiple contexts. As an experienced instructor, she not only held institutional knowledge, but a willingness to take risks in her workplace because of her self-confidence as a time-tested professional. By the time we met, she already had a reputation amongst like-minded teachers as someone who was willing to be an outspoken advocate for students, but she would explain that she had not always thought or acted in this way.

As an early-career educator, she said she had felt accountable to her bosses and would seek their approval first, driven by fear of a poor performance review or termination. After her first year, however, she experienced a shift in accountability as she gained experience and confidence. She reported that eventually, she looked more to her peers for evidence of whether or not she was doing a good job. When she returned to her hometown and her work was split between two schools, both of which she had attended as a child, she reflected, "I knew that I wanted to be part of a positive change. So, I kind of loosened up on caring so much about what administration thought and what I started caring about was what my students thought. And now, honestly, as the ELD teacher, now I feel the people that I work for now are definitely my students, their families. I want them all to think that I'm doing my best." In her early career, Ms. E had not fully formulated her critical perspective. Much of what she learned was fostered by her mentor teachers, a network of like-minded colleagues, and especially some professional

learning that happened along the way (see Chapter 7). But now, backed up by ten years of experience, knowledge, and confidence, there was not much that would stop her from at least trying new things and seeing what would stick (Chapter 5).

At the time of our collaboration, Ms. E was in her tenth year of teaching and her second year of teaching English to Newcomer students. She was also the mother to three small children, which occupied a lot of her time and attention as she tried to balance the demands of teaching. Regardless, when students, colleagues, or I requested her time and attention, she always gave it with her full focus and presence. There were times I observed Ms. E attempting to respond to an email when a student would ask her a question in person and suddenly, her phone would ring with an incoming call from a colleague. It took dexterous juggling, but she would do her best to successfully manage these simultaneous demands. This skill set of multitasking was required of Ms. E not only in balancing the various aspects of her job, but also in advocating on behalf of her students (described further in Chapter 5). The unsustainable work conditions at HHS ultimately led her to seek employment elsewhere (Chapter 7). This situation took an emotional toll on her throughout the school year (Chapter 6), but through it all, she never lost her passion for serving her students. I would often describe her to others as reflective, intentional, and tenacious.

The classroom culture that Ms. E built for her students was warm and flexible, with students having agency in how they spent the class period. Ms. E recognized that some students were not getting adequate support in content courses like math and science, and if they felt they needed that time to catch up on work in other classes, they could opt out of her planned activities to do that; if they were struggling emotionally that day and wanted to take the period to talk either to her or to a counselor, or simply take some time for themselves at their desk,

they could do that, too. Ms. E also recognized that students did not have many opportunities to socialize with their peers (described further in Chapter 5), so she intentionally did not police “social chatter,” as she referred to it. Altogether, this meant that in class, several things could happening at the same time, but Ms. E was also demonstrating both faith in her students to identify their needs and her responsiveness in accommodating those needs.

As a research and teaching collaborator, Ms. E gave me the same responsiveness that she demonstrated for students, often inquiring how she could be more supportive and checking in on my experiences in the classroom. Our partnership evolved throughout the year. At times, our original goal of equal partnership became troubled because of existing associations of researcher and researched, and the power imbalances involved in that relationship (see for instance Chapter 6). But as the year went on, our relationship became reciprocal and truly collaborative. For instance, by the time I began implementing the SKILLS materials in January, we had developed a sort of reciprocal coaching pattern. Reciprocal coaching defined by Zwart et al. (2007) occurs when two or more teachers regularly explore and reflect on different instructional methods together; the reciprocity in this model comes from the teachers’ interchangeable roles between providing teaching feedback and receiving it. Indeed, as Ms. E would reflect on her practices, I would often offer up suggestions for responding to challenging encounters, such as fostering student engagement, and Ms. E provided valuable constructive feedback for my instructional practices in SKILLS, such as ways to be more culturally and linguistically responsive to the students in the classroom (see for instance Chapter 6). The compounding weight of the work conditions throughout the school year meant that many of our teaching reflections and interviews were very emotional. Ms. E was quite honest and vulnerable about her experiences, for which I was thankful, but I also had to remain

conscientious about whether or not my presence and her participation in this collaboration added to her struggle. For these reasons, I strived to be reflective and attentive to my role as a research and teaching collaborator, and have tried to represent her story earnestly and ethically in this work.

4.2.3 Researcher Positionality

As we moved through this work together, Ms. E and I found that we had a lot more in common than we originally recognized. Our drive towards educational justice came from a shared experience of growing up in working-class, religious, conservative, patriarchal communities (see Chapter 7). Additionally, our shared experience as language educators was similarly influenced largely by our experiences as students learning from teachers who inspired our love of language. I became interested in the study of language after enrolling in a course in college that fulfilled a general education requirement and happened to fit my schedule; the professor also taught an introduction to linguistics course, which I elected to take. My research focus for this study, Ms. E's challenge of trying to be both culturally and linguistically responsive in a monolingual environment, resembled my own challenges across multiple classrooms (i.e., TESOL, TEP, undergraduate, and secondary students classified as English learners). My previous research, as well as my relationship to the topic and with Ms. E and her students, were thus certainly shaped by my own identity, negotiation of language ideologies, and experience(s) teaching across educational contexts.

While I was relatively familiar with the community around HHS and had taught via SKILLS in the district for six years, I am aware that I do not possess the same nuanced knowledge as someone born and raised in this community. Additionally, my own racial, ethnic, and linguistic background differs from Ms. E's as well as those of her students. I am racialized

by others as mixed-race or racially ambiguous, and therefore, the use of my heritage language, Korean, is often met with surprise and confusion. This alerted me early on to the existence of monolingual raciolinguistic ideologies that created specific expectations about my language based on my race. While in professional and academic spaces it often feels uncomfortable and delegitimizing when people inquire about my racial background or when my interest in a topic is reduced to "me-search" when my heritage identity is confirmed, with Ms. E and her students, my identity often became a resource. Students were curious about my background and rather than an interrogation about the legitimacy of my presence in the space, it felt like a necessary inquiry and opportunity to share information that was required for me to earn their trust. My identity as Korean/Asian American also proved to be useful for building connections with students whose first point of reference for Korea and Asia was often K-pop and anime, and though these could be seen as superficial, they were nonetheless effective starting points. Many of my earliest conversations with students were started with them asking me how to say or write something in Korean and I would, in turn, ask how it was said in Spanish or other languages they knew.

At the same time, I am cognizant of the privilege afforded to me (albeit partly as an outcome of assimilative forces) both because I perform what is heard as "native-like" and "standard" varieties of English, and can approximate forms of reading and writing that the academy has recognized as sufficiently "academic" and because there have been times when my name or the way in which I am being racialized by the White perceiving subject may go unmarked in academic spaces. My status as a dominant English speaker and my inability to speak Spanish fluently also became consequential in the classroom. On the one hand, some students saw me as an opportune interlocutor with whom they could practice English; Ms. E,

too, would sometimes characterize my lack of Spanish as an educational asset to "push students out of their comfort zone." On the other hand, it proved to be a hindrance to forming deeper relationships with all students, which would have been required for me to be a truly responsive teacher in that context. I often had to rely on Ms. E and other bilingual adults, such as support staff and volunteers, in the classroom to communicate quickly with students. Still, my own TESOL teaching background was in a community where my students came from a variety of language backgrounds in a single class—I had students who spoke Vietnamese, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Korean, Mandarin, Burmese, and Tagalog—so I have become accustomed to communicating with students using all of my tools of meaning making, including translanguaging, drawing, miming, and relying on technological strategies (such as Google translations or image search) to get and receive messages. I therefore strived throughout my time in the classroom to model vulnerability and consistent effort to listen and learn from students, regardless of the linguistic barrier.

As a researcher, I wanted to replicate teaching-research partnerships that I had encountered in my coursework as a PhD student (see for instance Lee & Walsh, 2017). Ms. E and I managed to achieve this goal as we worked together to respond to my research questions, determined data collection methods, and built on the early analysis and the write-up of preliminary findings. Although my role as a researcher and Ms. E's as a teacher were formally defined by the university and HHS, in practice, we both participated in teaching and research in ways that supported each other; our experiences and insights while teaching helped to shape the research, while the research often contributed to pedagogical decisions. At times, I forgot about my role as a researcher in my efforts to support classroom activities. However, I see our collaboration as pushing beyond just partnership. It is not simply coincidental that I was

recognizing the unreasonable professional demands being placed on Ms. E, while at the same time, the university that I was enrolled in was involved in the largest higher-education strike in U.S. history; my research also coincided with the course I was teaching on Asian Americans in Education, wherein we discussed the connection between the racialization of Asian immigrants and their histories of labor exploitation. Therefore, even as I maintained my role as an ethnographer by taking notes and recording interviews and observations, I did not shy away from sharing my own political perspectives, and I tried to take up a position of camaraderie and engagement in acompañamiento [(Heiman & Nuñez-Janes 2021) which is "a synonym of solidarity and refers to actions and practices in support of communities that experience injustices guided by fellowship and being in relationship with the oppressed" (p. 2)]. At times, these moments of support and solidarity become salient to the data and analysis. In combination, these intersecting contemporary events made me cautious about the way I would represent Ms. E's practice, and I strived throughout this process to ensure that our collaborative research partnership reflected the humanizing treatment I aim to enact with students and advocate for in the teaching profession.

4.3 Data Collection and Analysis

4.3.1 Data Collection

When I first reached out to Ms. E over email, letting her know I was looking for teachers to partner with for a study on equitable participation for students categorized as English learners, her response was enthusiastic. It was towards the end of the school year, and she expressed pride in the Young Playwrights Festival, featuring plays written by her Newcomer students, which she had organized with a community partnership (see Chapter 6).

The community partnership would not be able to continue into the following year, so a research partnership seemed to her like a good way to replace the previous initiative, as I was able to bring with me my experiences, materials, and resources from the SKILLS program (described further in the following section). We agreed that our shared purpose would be to look for opportunities and practices that supported students' equitable participation in her classroom. We would start with my weekly visits, where I would observe and form relationships with students. I would also assist her teaching where I could, for instance, hand out papers or answer student questions. Her class met every day for 90 minutes during the regular school year, from August to June. Beginning in September, we would engage in weekly teaching reflections responding to a standard set of questions: "What went well? What did not go so well? What can we do to improve moving forward?" But as time went on, our discussions became more organic and we responded to emerging issues and questions as they arose. Eventually, as the research questions shifted to focus more and more on Ms. E and her identity and practice, the data collection methods also changed to include longer, more in-depth interviews with her.

In January, I began the implementation of the SKILLS program in Ms. E's class every Wednesday. SKILLS is a 20-week academic outreach program which provides students from minoritized linguistic backgrounds access to an introductory sociolinguistics curriculum that highlights the sociopolitical dimensions of language practices and combines research and activism by bringing together teaching teams of graduate and undergraduate students that "push in" to the existing school schedule (Bucholtz et al., 2018). For Ms. E's class, I was the graduate instructor and was accompanied by three Spanish-English bilingual undergraduate student mentors. All three undergraduates were enthusiastic and passionate about gaining classroom experience and working with this group of students; they would often volunteer to

accompany me to HHS even on days when SKILLS was not taking place. I used existing SKILLS curricula, but with Ms. E's support, adapted them to meet the needs of her Newcomer students. For instance, rather than using existing materials that were focused on heritage language learning, which might not be as relevant or relatable to Ms. E's students, I took up Ms. E's suggestion of including content about Indigenous languages of Mexico, which was met with positive reactions from students (Chapter 6). Though the SKILLS program is not central to the research question, elements from the programming are salient at different moments throughout the data analysis.

Altogether, the data includes 20 interviews (totaling roughly 16 hours) including periodic teaching reflections and three longer (1-2 hour) in-depth semi-structured interviews. In addition, I collected 12 months' worth of observational data, including video and audio recordings and fieldnotes of classroom activities, photos and fieldnotes of school activities (e.g., linguistic landscape), classroom and school archives (e.g., student work, event flyers), written work by Ms. E (e.g., reflections for her teaching network, teaching philosophy), pre-/post-interviews with the students, and interviews with the Bilingual Curriculum Specialist.[2] Because reflective interviews were often reciprocal and interviews were semi-structured to resemble conversation, my own voice was frequently included in the data and was part of the analysis; in these moments, it was especially important to be reflexive about how I brought my own subjectivity into the research. All of these interviews and activities contributed to an extensive, substantial data set. For this dissertation, I focus primarily on interviews with Ms.

[2] The role and title of support staff, such as Bilingual Curriculum Specialists (BCS), differs across schools and districts. According to the job description posted by HHS, the responsibilities of the BCS are the following: assist classroom teachers in instruction and supervision of students classified as English learners in content courses; provide support services to individual students or small groups; create or modify instructional materials; improve literacy teaching through instructional strategies and activities targeted towards students classified as English Learners. These responsibilities are discussed further in Chapter 5.

E to bring forward the teacher's perspectives, but I also periodically bring in other evidence to contextualize or strengthen a point when necessary. The research methods used in this study were approved by the UCSB Human Subjects Committee. Research funds awarded by UCSB Blum Center's Central Coast Regional Equity Initiative allowed me to compensate Ms. E with a $400 gift card, though she originally signed on before this funding source or possibility of payment was available.

4.3.2 Data Analysis

I began iterative data analysis during data collection. I employed thematic coding for the data (mainly focusing on if, how, and when Ms. E experienced, recognized, and responded to monolingual ideologies) while also looking for emergent themes. The data was then recoded in relation to the emergent themes, as well as an emerging theoretical framework. Emerging themes included different ecological levels (e.g., policy, community, school structure), Ms. E's agency and action, teacher identity, and the role of Whiteness in English language teaching. Framework codes included monolingual ideologies, neoliberal multiculturalism, and social/institutional messages about the grammar of schooling in relation to language education. Synchronous dialogic member checking (Brear, 2019) occurred throughout via multiple in-person meetings in December, March, June, and July. Member checking also occurred asynchronously. I regularly shared data, emergent themes, and outlines of initial findings with Ms. E via Google Docs and we held ongoing conversations over email and text messages. Ms. E also contributed to analysis and writing through this collaborative feedback loop (Paris, 2011); primarily, her contributions consisted of examining coded data and early write-ups and adding comments, as well as offering insights and feedback within in-person and text conversations. While the findings in the subsequent chapters, presented through thick

description (Geertz, 1973), provide a detailed account of Ms. E's everyday lived experiences, they also offer a larger account of the impact of multicultural monolingualism on the equity-oriented educator.

The various interviews with Ms. E, as well as the supplemental data from classroom observations and student interviews, were analyzed using discourse analysis (Gee, 2008; Gee & Green, 1998). I structured the analytic process according to a discourse analysis approach (Blommaert, 2010); discourse was treated to mean "all forms of meaningful semiotic human activity seen in connection with social, cultural, and historical patterns and developments of use" (Blommaert, 2005, p. 3). By this definition, discourse exceeds words and can thus involve embodied actions and practices of institutions (Smith & Zantiotis, 1988, p. 100). Therefore, discourse of language teaching refers not just to the language as used by teachers but is inclusive of language and practices used to talk about language. Combining a discourse analysis approach with ethnography enabled me to capture the nuances of how ideologies operate in real life, which are often so subtle that they can easily go unnoticed. Finally, as Ms. E and I analyzed our personal experiences within the culture of language teaching, by engaging simultaneously in the practice of autoethnography along with other ethnographic methods, we could analyze and interpret our lived experiences in relation to the larger sociocultural context (Chang, 2016).

In this study, Ms. E and I took up roles as researcher-teacher collaborators who both research and teach; therefore, I too was in many ways a participant in the study. By including and interpreting my own actions and experiences along with Ms. E's reflections about her personal experiences throughout her lifetime, this study is also autoethnographic in nature in addition to being ethnographic. Autoethnography is premised on the understanding of the

world as socially constructed through discourse that can provide insights into larger cultural phenomena (Spector-Mersel, 2010). Self-study and autoethnography, though relatively new methods, are currently experiencing a surge in popularity across academia, particularly in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) and language education (Stanley, 2019). Examples of autoethnographic research that involve K-12 in-service and pre-service teachers exploring their language ideologies through their experiences, learning, and teaching are readily available (see, for instance, Kessler, 2024; Yazan, 2019), as are studies of autoethnographies conducted by researcher-teachers reflecting on language teaching with college, university, and adult learners (such as Canagarajah, 2012; Park, 2014). However, it is less common to find studies that feature the collaborative autoethnographic insights of both a K-12 teacher and a researcher while they are actively and simultaneously engaged in teaching and research activities. Our autoethnographic, self-reflective perspectives were crucial for this study's critical and analytical engagement with positionality. The methods of this study underscore the valuable insights that can emerge from teacher-researcher and school-university partnerships, highlighting how these collaborations can offer deeper perspectives on the intricacies of language education and produce positive outcomes and processes that address the challenges specific to this teaching context.

4.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have outlined the unique methodological and analytic approach that is central to the robustness of this study's research design. I have sought methodologies that allow for an in-depth examination of the relationship between ideologies and the actions of individuals that pushes beyond the traditional confines of classroom observations and interviews. With the continued rise of neoliberal discourses and persistence of monolingualism

in education, the need for critical interrogation of these ideologies remains paramount. The proliferation of such ideologies has brought about an increased importance for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to refine their understanding of how language is treated in schools and how language educators' labor is treated. By including the intersecting layers of influence from the school, the community, policies, and societal attitudes, the ethnographic approach not only provides the means to connect language ideologies to the concrete conditions of activities and events as they develop over time, but also makes social processes visible, allowing for a deeper understanding of people's thoughts and actions.

I conscientiously adopted ethical, critical, and collaborative practices while employing this ethnographic methodology by challenging inequitable educational practices, engaging in humanizing and solidarity-based research practices, and producing knowledge that is socially relevant and transformative. Combining a discourse analysis approach with critical, collaborative ethnography enabled me to capture the nuances of the interplay between equity-driven pedagogical practices and the prevailing language ideologies. The extensive data collected—20 interviews, twelve months of observational data, and various classroom and school archives—allowed for an in-depth examination of how Ms. E navigated multicultural monolingualism in her context at HHS, and her understanding of her role as an English instructor within the multicultural monolingual landscape of SEI/ELD for Newcomer students.

The autoethnographic nature of this study is also significant. Both Ms. E and I offer our reflections and personal experiences, making this study autoethnographic as well as ethnographic. Our self-reflective perspectives have been crucial for the study's critical and analytical engagement with positionality. The findings presented in the subsequent chapters through thick description not only provide a detailed account of Ms. E's everyday lived

experiences, but also offer a larger account of the impact of multicultural monolingualism on the equity-oriented educator. The methods used in this study not only support its innovative design but also provide a framework for a deeper understanding of the challenges and dynamics faced by educators in diverse linguistic and cultural settings. The understandings that emerged are the focus of the analyses in the chapters that follow.

5. Teacher Agency In A Multicultural Monolingual Context

"Liberation is a praxis: the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it." — Paolo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 1970, p. 33

The year I conducted this study was particularly important because, although it was not Ms. E's first year of teaching, she was entering somewhat of a new context at Hidalgo High School (HHS). Schools and students were still in the midst of processing the three uncertain and intense years of the COVID-19 pandemic along with off-and-on remote learning. HHS was also undergoing its own large transition. That year, the school had experienced a change in leadership and student demographics; there was also a growing problem with teacher retention (described in Chapter 4). Ms. E had also joined a cohort of teachers of Newcomer students as part of a non-profit professional development fellowship outside of HHS that provides training and resources for instructors to enact change for Newcomer students in their local contexts. All of these different factors became salient to her agentive efforts as a language teacher advocate across the school year.

In this chapter, I explore three narrative examples that show how Ms. E experienced, recognized, and responded to multicultural monolingualism in her teaching context. Through analyses of interviews and written data from Ms. E, her colleagues, and her students, I demonstrate how an experienced instructor of Newcomer students built agency and sought out ways to enact change. The narrative examples focus on, respectively, 1) the California Seal of Biliteracy, 2) Newcomer student placement and support at HHS, and 3) HHS content teachers' attitudes towards Newcomer students. These examples were chosen for their rich dataset, primarily because they were ongoing, allowing for the observation of a full life cycle of teacher

agency—the evolution from recognizing a problem, responding to it, witnessing the outcomes of actions, to adapting to those results. Furthermore, they collectively encapsulate the various layers of multicultural monolingualism of Ms. E's teaching context, from societal attitudes to language education policy, as well as the community, school, classroom, and personal levels.

Findings from these three narrative examples show how Ms. E was motivated into agentive action via ideological awareness. Ideological awareness involves the capacity to question the ideological foundations and power differentials in broader social discourses, including ideologies of language and race (Alim, 2005; Bartolomé, 2004; Britton & Leonard, 2020; Fox & Chang-Bacon, 2023). Throughout these examples, Ms. E demonstrated teacher agency by critically examining the prevailing monolingualism influencing Newcomer students' educational journeys. Upon recognizing harmful monolingual practices and policies, she would respond in action by drawing on available tools, resources, and her understanding of institutional power structures. Sometimes, her actions resulted in unanticipated outcomes and challenges. Ms. E encountered multiple obstacles that were situated in the larger school ecology, namely, neoliberal ideologies about language and the labor of language teachers that challenged her agency and action. I also include findings that show how, in that same context, she often found strategies, resources, and other pathways to success. Subsequently, I discuss a holistic view of HHS as an ideological "ecosystem" (Sexton, 2008)—that is, a consideration of the full landscape of teaching and its relationship to language ideologies. An ecological approach is useful for gathering multiple manifestations of the construct in question—here, language ideologies—and for understanding how they are ordered and relate to one another. This interconnected view across spaces is required to address monolingualism at every level to promote lasting transformation (Hammond, 2020; McLaren & Hawe, 2005). I conclude the

chapter by exploring these barriers and strategies, and discuss some implications for teacher educators, policymakers, and researchers.

5.1 Narrative Example #1: The Seal of Biliteracy

5.1.1 A Multicultural Monolingual Policy

During this study, state-issued guidance for teaching students designated as English learners, specifically the California English Learner Roadmap (2017), became a recurrent referent in Ms. E's reflections of her teaching practices. On the one hand, the policy document, which outlines the state's vision for English learner education, in Ms. E's view, valued multilingualism via the first of its four principles:

1. Assets-Oriented and Needs-Responsive Schools
2. Intellectual Quality of Instruction and Meaningful Access
3. System Conditions that Support Effectiveness
4. Alignment and Articulation Within and Across Systems

California Department of Education (2017) describes Principle 1 of the Roadmap in more detail with its essential components:

> **Principle One: Assets-Oriented and Needs-Responsive Schools**
> Pre-schools and schools are responsive to different EL strengths, needs, and identities and support the socio-emotional health and development of English learners. Programs value and build upon the cultural and linguistic assets students bring to their educa-tion in safe and affirming school climates. Educators value and build strong family, community, and school partnerships.
>
> Elements:
>
> A. The **languages and cultures** English learners bring to their education are **assets** for their own learning and are important contributions to 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.

B. Recognizing that there is no universal EL profile and no one-size-fits-all approach that works for all English learners, programs, curriculum, and instruction must be responsive to different EL student characteristics and experiences. EL students entering school at the beginning levels of English proficiency have different needs and capacities than do students entering at intermediate or advanced levels. Similarly, students entering in kindergarten have different needs than students entering in later grades. The needs of long term English learners are vastly different from recently arrived students (who in turn vary in their prior formal educa-tion). Districts vary considerably in the distribution of these EL profiles, so no single program or instructional approach works for all EL students.
C. **School climates** and campuses are affirming, inclusive, and safe.
D. Schools value and build strong **family and school partnerships.**

> Schools and districts develop a collaborative framework for identifying English learners with disabilities and use valid assessment practices. Schools and districts develop appropriate individualized education programs (IEPs) that support culturally and linguistically inclusive practices and provide appropriate training to teachers, thus leveraging expertise specific to English learners. The IEP addresses academic goals that take into account student language development, as called for in state and national policy recommendations (p. 25).

Not only was Ms. E well-versed in this policy's guidance, but she also often drew on it as a barometer of school performance regarding Newcomer students. She once succinctly evaluated HSS, saying, "I'm at a school that's not aligned with the California English Language Roadmap Principle 1."

However, she did not accept the policy as holistically multilingual; that is, she was able to recognize and analyze its separate parts and, for instance, took issue with aspects that reinforced monolingualism. An area that she problematized and witnessed the impact of at HSS was the disparate requirements to receive the Seal of Biliteracy for students designated as English learners versus those that were not. The Seal of Biliteracy as outlined in the English Learner Roadmap "encourages districts to recognize students' biliterate proficiency [...] marked by a gold seal on the diploma or transcript" (California Department of Education,

2017). Ms. E identified early on that the requirements for the Seal of Biliteracy privileged elective-bilingual, previously-monolingual English-speaking students, the majority of whom were White. Specifically, an elective-bilingual student learning any language other than English can demonstrate proficiency in a multitude of ways (e.g., Advanced Placement exam; International Baccalaureate exam; the SAT world language exam; or completion of four years of classes with a GPA of 3.0 or higher and a passing score in a district-determined fluency test). Students learning English, however, may only prove their bilingualism/biliteracy by meeting *all* of the following: all English Language Arts course requirements; a GPA of 2.0 or better; a passing score in the English Language Arts section of California's content-based standardized test known as the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP); and a passing score on the English Language Proficiency Assessment of California (ELPAC). Altogether, these requirements and measures do not allow students to demonstrate their full multilingualism—a critique that is gaining ground in the state (see Heineke et al., 2018; Stavely, 2023)—and the bar for demonstrating English proficiency is often set much higher than for non-English languages and implicitly prioritizes acquisition or maintenance of English over languages (Chang-Bacon & Colomer, 2022; Schwedhelm & King, 2020; Subtirelu et al., 2019). As a result, fewer of HHS' Newcomer students and other students categorized as English learners were able to receive this award than elective-bilingual students, most of whom were White, previously monolingual English speakers.

5.1.1 The Certificate of Multilingualism

The Seal of Biliteracy is just one example of how multicultural monolingualism can manifest in education policy. Previous learning from professional development and life experiences that led Ms. E to develop ideological awareness (see Chapter 7) allowed her to see

through the multicultural monolingualism of the Seal of Biliteracy. While there was not much she could do to rewrite these standards at the state level, she began to imagine ways to mitigate its implementation at the school level. Often, when challenging monolingual ideologies, her first strategy would be to navigate the power structure of the institution (e.g., talking to school or district leadership). In the case of the Seal of Biliteracy, she did the same. After recognizing the problems and the impact of its implementation at HHS, Ms. E took her concerns about the differential awarding of the Seal of Biliteracy to the County Office of Education and raised the possibility of modifying the requirements. She reported that she was told, “You don't need to worry about this. You need to make a quality ELD program at your school. Don't worry about shifting mindsets beyond that. Just do a good job in your classroom.” Not receiving support from this end and unable to access change-levers for the policy itself, Ms. E recognized that even if she could not undo a monolingual structure like the standardized testing requirement of the Seal of Biliteracy, one option for the time being could be to simultaneously celebrate all students’ multilingualism and address the invisibility of Newcomer students and other students categorized as English learners. She would make her own award. With authorization from school leaders and partnering with the students in ELD, she led the creation of a school-level “Certificate of Multilingualism” (pseudonym).

Rather using than a standardized assessment that measures students’ decontextualized grammar and vocabulary, Ms. E and ELD students at HHS designed a qualitative survey where self-identified multilingual students with a 2.0 overall GPA or higher could describe any of the ways in which they use multiple languages to serve their community currently or how they wish to do so in the future. The criteria, determined by Ms. E with the students, shifts the focus away from standardized, academic language to the extensive and complex repertoires of

language employed by multilingual students outside of school (Martínez & Mejía, 2020) and reframes bilingualism as a community asset (Orellana et al., 2003) and as a fund of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992), rather than a deficiency reformed by schooling.

Responses to the survey were later published in an HHS social media post to celebrate the students' language practices outside of school and included things like, "I translate for my parents at the grocery store and the bank," and "I want to utilize my languages as a doctor so I can communicate with all of my patients." In HHS that year, roughly 100 students earned the Seal of Biliteracy, and 98 others were awarded HHS's first-ever Certificate of Multilingualism. While it may not carry the same weight for college applications, an important motivator and desired outcome was that students felt seen. Their multilingualism was recognized, as evidenced by the caption for the post, which addressed students, saying: "We see your excellence and value the bridges you are building every day. ¡No hay límites para ustedes!" One student shared with Ms. E that her mom cried when she saw her daughter's response quoted in the post. And Ms. E heard from student counselors that the award ceremony was a meaningful experience for students and their families.

5.2 Narrative Example #2: SEI/ELD Curriculum, Placement, and Support

5.2.1 Multicultural Monolingual School Structures and Systems

In an effort to bridge the educational gap for students identified as English learners, there are many predominant initiatives at the federal, state, and local level designed to ensure these students receive the same rigorous, grade-appropriate content as their native English-speaking peers. Nonetheless, Ms. E's firsthand observations of some of these initiatives in practice unveiled a stark disparity: what was intended to be a suite of multilingual support structures and systems at HHS was, in practice, functioning in a largely monolingual manner.

This included 1) the introduction of an English Language Development curriculum, 2) the school policy of placing students in classes based on grade level rather than on English proficiency, and 3) the provision of support from a Bilingual Curriculum Specialist (BCS). The school had recently adopted a literacy curriculum designed for students categorized as English learners. This was an improvement from the previous years in which there was no curriculum provided except for access to an expository reading and writing curriculum that was not designed for students learning English. However, the new literacy curriculum still resembled a "bits and pieces" approach (Jensen et al., 2021) to language education (e.g., focus on decontextualized grammar and vocabulary) (see Figures 3 and 4) that lacks disciplinary activity to engage students in the ways of thinking, problem-solving, and using language of an academic discipline (Flores, 2020; Jensen & Thompson, 2020).

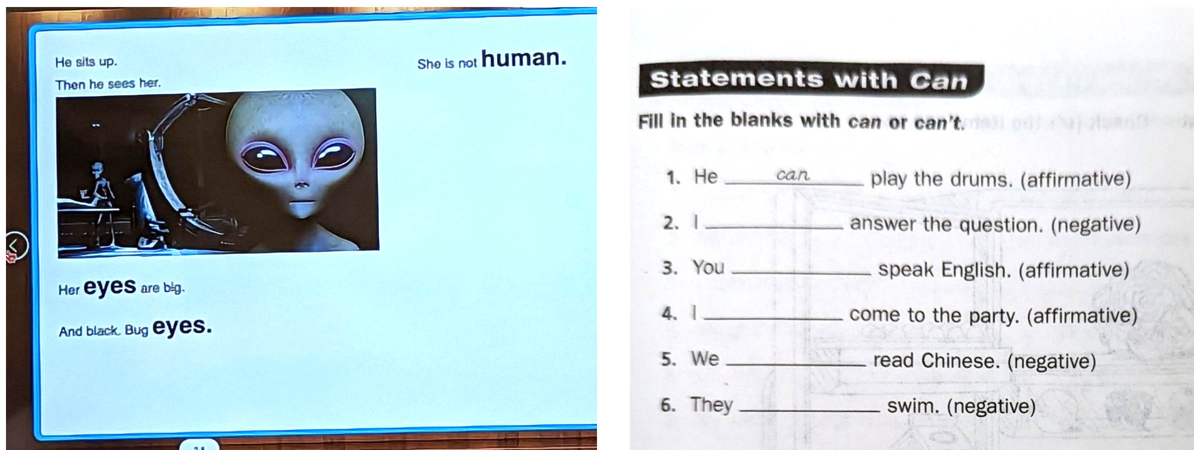

Figure 3. Photographs of the ELD curriculum provided by HHS

When I asked Ms. E how she felt about the literacy curriculum, she said, "I mean… how do I feel about it? It's terrible. It's not relevant. But to a certain extent, it does help in the sense that there is something there." She aptly identified problems with the curriculum, but practically speaking, it provided some structure where there was none. Guidance on the publisher's website stated that the curriculum could be "made" culturally sustaining by

supplementing it with additional, culturally sustaining materials—for that, Ms. E would have to start from scratch. Underlying this guidance and approach to language teaching (which departs from the original conceptualization of culturally sustaining pedagogy by Paris and Alim, 2017) is monolingualism, which decouples the language from its context in “reductive" language learning activities (Razfar, 2005) as well as a neoliberal approach to multiculturalism, with cultural and linguistic sustenance positioned as supplemental to the core curriculum and falling wholly upon the educator’s discretion.

Two additional systems/structures at HHS, which Ms. E recognized as functionally monolingual despite their intended design to support multilingual learners, included the placement of students by grade level and the employment of a Bilingual Curriculum Specialist (BCS). According to California Department of Education records, HHS’s population of students categorized as English learners had grown by a percentage point every year for the previous three years. During the year of this study, the number reached 165 (8%). Of that total, roughly 50 were Newcomer students. Although there were resources like multiple bilingual staff, instruction and curriculum were still exclusively in English, and for the 50 total Newcomer students, there was only one BCS available to assist in classrooms at the start of the year. In English Language Development, HHS Newcomer students were grouped by age and grade-level. Consequently, Ms. E found herself responsible for a class of 36 students, while another instructor, newly hired, managed a significantly smaller group of 14 students.

On the one hand, the availability of a BCS signals some attention to the needs of multilingual students. While there is not much research that looks at the role of BCS in classrooms to support students categorized as English learners, the need for BCS in the first place suggests the monolingual nature of existing materials and programs. Additionally,

although the BCS was meant to lend a bilingual perspective to instructional strategies and activities, her role at HHS was often reduced to a translator for Newcomer students in their content classrooms. Many content teachers would also relegate the responsibility of teaching Newcomer students entirely to the BCS. As Ms. E described it:

> *I think because the BCS is there, the teacher is like, "Oh well, they're working with [the BCS]." Then the teacher is not giving the same kind of encouragement that maybe they would with an English-speaking student.*

Prior studies have already shown a tendency for teachers to leave the educational responsibilities for students designated as English learners to ELD instructors (Mahalingappa, 2013; Pettit, 2011). These findings highlight another unsettling possibility: Even as remedial multilingual supports are implemented, educators are withdrawing from their educational responsibility for students designated as English learners in the content classroom.

The BCS in Ms. E's classroom, Ms. G (pseudonym), was a Spanish-English bilingual Mexican American woman in her 20's. Coincidentally, she was an acquaintance of mine prior to the start of the study; we had worked together as part of my SKILLS instruction in previous years. However, our shared presence in the classroom this year was unplanned and merely a happy coincidence. In my interview with her, Ms. G confirmed the dynamics described above and shared what she observed of the students: "In other classes, unfortunately, they participate less [compared to in Ms. E's]. Because it's an English classroom." She shared that there was one bilingual physics teacher who would ask questions in Spanish with good results. With other teachers, even when Ms. G would help them translate their answers to English, students struggled to speak up in English in front of the whole class. To make matters worse, Ms. G was the sole BCS meant to support 50 different students across all grade levels and subjects,

and as the weeks went on, it became obvious that one support staff was not enough. Any time Ms. G could not be in a Newcomer student's class, in Ms. E's description, it was "basically a lost day."

The other matter of student placement was related in some ways to this problem and similarly exhibits aspects of multicultural monolingualism. Grouping students by grade-level has been recommended, in contrast to traditional practices of grouping by proficiency, to support access to grade-appropriate content for students who are learning English (de Jong & Commins, 2006). This, too, has the appearance of promoting equitable access for these multilingual students, but its implementation at HHS yet again resulted in monolingual conditions. This arrangement left Ms. E as the only adult in a classroom of 36 students. There was precedent in HHS when, in such cases, the BCS could support and co-teach a large ELD class, but because Ms. G was already stretched thin, at the start of the year she could only support Ms. E once a week. That being the case, and with a less-than-satisfactory curriculum, Ms. E had a lot on her plate in terms of lesson planning, preparation, and classroom management. In addition, she was the only coordinator for more than 150 students in ELD at HHS. In that role, she was, in her words, "the point person for the long list. The counselor, family engagement liaison, admin, parents, etc." Ms. E would compare her prior experience teaching Latin and Spanish to teaching ELD and highlight how much less planning time she had in the latter role (see more in Chapter 6).

Each of these three school-level issues were problematic in their own right, and because of the extra demands they placed on Ms. E, she started to see significant implications for classroom management. She did not want to act as a disciplinarian or authoritarian in the classroom, but at a very basic and practical level, managing 36 students in the classroom with

limited curricular and personnel support was quite exhausting. As a research-teacher-collaborator, I too experienced cognitive difficulty of teaching to a classroom of more than thirty energetic youth, though with less frequency. It is quite difficult to be responsive to more than thirty individual differences in a mixed-proficiency class, even with sufficient or adequate teaching materials (Sariçoban, 2010; Veenman, 1984). However, in the full year I worked with Ms. E in the classroom, she never shouted or enforced any silence but instead shouldered the frustration (see Chapter 6) while looking for solutions.

5.2.2 Professional Networks and Community Partnerships

These three issues, separately and together, illustrate the permeation of multicultural monolingualism throughout school-level structures and systems. Ms. E felt that the decision to group learners by grade level demonstrated that her Newcomer students were not a priority and that this was made merely to fill an accountability checkbox. She said, “We have examples of them doing 9 through 12th grade [proficiency-level] classes in the world language department. It's not like this doesn't happen in other spaces.” Furthermore, five weeks into the school year, Ms. E “became curious” after learning HHS had allocated funds to pay for a second BCS months prior. With this knowledge and recognition of inequitable, monolingual circumstances, Ms. E attacked from different angles. Her first strategy, again, was to take the issues to leadership. Compared to the Seal of Biliteracy, in this instance, there was a clearer and more accessible actor within the system that she had access to: the vice principal. But the discussion did not go as she expected. She remembered, “[The vice principal] was like, ‘Well it sounds like a management issue.’ You know she kind of put it back on like my teaching. I was like, ‘Oh.. shit…’” From her reaction, it is obvious that the vice principal’s response hit her hard. There was no acknowledgement of how challenging creating culturally responsive

disciplinary content for a class of more than thirty students might be. The problem was also reframed as a criticism of her capacity to be an effective teacher. At the time, Ms. E experienced this as a personal slight, but embedded in this framing are neoliberal ideologies that rationalize unmanageably large classroom sizes (as well as standardized testing, low teacher pay, etc.) (Basu, 2004) as manageable if the teacher can just work and try hard enough.

By November, Ms. E began seeing signs that the new administration was not very supportive. When the immediate leadership discouraged her efforts, she took up a different strategy: navigate the power structure first by contacting the district to ask for the second BCS, and then leverage collective power by reaching out to the teaching union. Both strategies ended in unanticipated and less-than-desirable results.

> *The district responds [about the BCS] and says, "One, you have a person starting tomorrow, a Bilingual Paraeducator.[3] Two, we don't know of it. We didn't know you needed a second Bilingual Curriculum Specialist. So that really pushed me over the edge. She [the vice principal] tried to play it off as if this Bilingual Para[educator] that the district is paying six hours a day for is the person that we've been waiting for, who we've allocated the funds for. It's not. They don't have the same education level. And the district is sending us this person because our need is so great, right? But what we need are two BCSs, AND this Para[educator].*

[3] According to a HHS job posting, a Bilingual Paraeducator is a support staff whose role is to assist classroom teachers; provide tutoring to individual students or small groups of students; monitor instructional exercises, practices and assignments; administer and score assessments; perform routine clerical duties to support the classroom teacher, including copying instructional materials, scoring papers, recording test scores, and maintaining student files; and assist the certificated teacher in classroom management. This role is discussed in more detail on p. 82.

Ms. E found the district's response to her questions surprising for a few reasons. First, it confirmed that the funding that had been set aside for this service was not being taken advantage of for some time. Additionally, the district's response, combined with what the vice principal had told Ms. E, led her to the realization that leadership was attempting to fill the need for a full-time Bilingual Curriculum Specialist with an hourly Bilingual Paraeducator, although their roles and requirements differed. The differences are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Comparison of Bilingual Curriculum Specialist and Bilingual Paraeducator

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Qualifications</td></tr>
<tr><td>Bilingual Curriculum Specialist
Fluency in Spanish
Knowledge of the general academic needs and behavior of students
Knowledge of California K12 content standards
Ability to establish and maintain productive working relationships with students, school staff, parents, volunteers and other adults
Ability to use appropriate English grammar, spelling, punctuation and vocabulary
A bachelor's degree in education, bilingual education, or a related field
Bilingual fluency in Spanish</td><td>Bilingual Paraeducator
Fluency in Spanish
Knowledge of core subjects taught in K12 school districts
Knowledge of basic instructional strategies and techniques
General understanding of student learning styles or modalities
Ability to relate to students individually or in small groups
Ability to communicate effectively with students and staff; establish and maintain cooperative working relationships
Ability to use appropriate English grammar, spelling, punctuation and vocabulary
Graduation from high school and at least one (1) year experience working with children in an educational or other organized setting
Completion of two (2) years college (48 semester units) or A.A. degree (or higher)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Responsibilities</td></tr>
<tr><td>Bilingual Curriculum Specialist
Assist classroom teachers in instruction and supervision of students</td><td>Bilingual Paraeducator
Assist classroom teachers in a classroom or other learning environment
Provide tutoring to individual students or</td></tr>
</table>

classified as English learners in content courses ● Provide support services to individually or in small groups ● Create or modify instructional materials for use with individuals or small groups ● Improve literacy teaching through instructional strategies and activities targeted towards students classified as English learners.	small groups of students ● Monitor instructional exercises, practices and assignments ● Administer and score assessments ● Perform routine clerical duties to support the certificated teacher, including copying instructional materials, scoring papers, and maintaining student files ● Assist the certificated teacher in classroom management.

In general, the qualifications for the two roles are not drastically different except for educational attainment. Their responsibilities, too, have significant overlap but differ slightly in that a BCS is positioned as a co-instructor with the ability to determine and lead classroom instruction and materials. However, because teachers were not trained on how to work with a BCS to support students, Ms. G ended up mostly working as a teaching assistant, similar to what a Bilingual Paraeducator would be doing, making the distinction irrelevant. Additionally, Ms. E would later learn that while the Bilingual Paraeducator role does not require a college degree, the woman who was selected for the position had obtained her Bachelor’s. Ms. E would later examine this data with me and point out that functionally, there was no difference in qualifications or day-to-day tasks, but the title alone allowed the school to pay the Bilingual Paraeducator significantly less than the BCS. In other words, the school was trying to save money on services for students designated as English learners—yet another example of neoliberal cost-cutting in education (Basu, 2004) and school-level multicultural monolingualism.

In a last attempt to address student placement and support, Ms. E reached out to the president of her local teachers union. After lengthy communication back and forth and involving human resources, the administration finally agreed to switch from grade-level to

proficiency-based placement. However, the outcome was not as she had anticipated. Ms. E had expressed that this switch should not occur until the end of term, so as not to disrupt student schedules and allow for a smooth transition for teachers. This warning was disregarded and Ms. E, as the ELD coordinator, was given two days to sort out students' schedules and communicate the change to teachers. Ultimately, she got what she had asked for: after November, the proficiency-level-based class enrollment was 28, but it was not a success because, in her words, "it was not implemented in a way that put the student experience first." I would argue that teachers were not given much consideration either.

These neoliberal conditions and excuses were barriers, but not insurmountable ones. The conditions were challenging because of the problematic teacher-to-student ratio, as well as limited planning time for adapting or creating curriculum. Therefore, Ms. E would also attempt to mitigate the problems from that end. She first reached out to her professional networks, such as teachers at another local school, and her cohort and mentors from the professional learning fellowship. She also drew on local university and community resources. A colleague from the cohort recommended a template created by Efrain Tovar, a well-known Newcomer student educator who works on research and projects to support the development of identity and language affirming curricula and teaching practices for Newcomer students designated as English learners. The template (see Appendix A) was easily adaptable. It structured reading of longer texts with user-friendly online tools like lexile editors and word cloud generators.

In previous years, Ms. E had also pulled on community resources like a local theater company (described in Chapter 6) with whom she partnered to create content-based learning centered around playwriting. That school year culminated with students writing

autobiographical plays that were acted out in a finale showcase. This year, when the theater partnership was no longer an option, it was fortunate timing to hear from a university researcher who was also part of the SKILLS program (described in Chapter 4), which offers culturally responsive and linguistically accessible materials and culminates in a research symposium for students' action research projects. Ms. E had already been contacting university professors and students to see what options were available. She also sought out local university and community partnerships that could provide human support via undergraduate or graduate student volunteering or teaching practicums. As a result, on some days she was able to have 1 or 2 support persons, which allowed her to provide more individualized instruction to her large class. On non-SKILLS days, I would typically be accompanied by at least one of the bilingual undergraduates (described in Chapter 4). The effect of simply having one or two other adults in the room was noticeable to Ms. E. Contrasting those days to the days when she was alone, she said:

> *When it's only me in here, you can be waiting for a word for at least 15 minutes, you know what I mean? Just by nature of how many bodies are in here. Especially, since this is the place where socially they're the most comfortable on campus. Yeah, of course things are gonna get a little crazier—like off task or out of hand. But I think they appreciate having—they get help so much faster when the two of you are here.*

Unsatisfied with the shift from the bits-and-pieces curriculum she was given, she turned to the culturally responsive materials she was able to piece together from her networks and community partnerships. Students were often bored and disinterested with the grammar-and-vocabulary- focused district-approved materials, but the new content that Ms. E adapted

fostered critical conversation in her classroom and increased engagement. In the following excerpt, she describes a class where they used Efrain Tovar's literacy template to read an article about landmarks that celebrated Latinx activism in the U.S. (Appendix A).

> *It was definitely palpable energy. I was like, there is a long history about who the x [in Latinx] might refer to, but it is to break apart this idea that not all Latinos are the same. And then they were in disbelief about Latinx people, like, making history here. They were like, "Oh, Ms. E, name me one person!" I said Cesar Chavez. I also brought up Sandra Cisneros, those were the two that I knew from the top of my head. Then we got an article off the internet that was like, more recent ones like Alexandria Ocasio Cortez. Talking about Lin Manuel Miranda was funny because they were like, "So, he makes songs. Why is he important?" They don't know about* Hamilton*. They asked, "Who is this person?" Well, Ms. G got in there and was like, "He has opened the doors to many Latinos in Hollywood because the types of stories he's telling are our stories." So, she took it that way. I mean, maybe some of them were and some of them weren't [interested], but definitely this table [of students] who are always kind of boisterous, they were like, "Here? They made history here? You're kidding me."*

While no curriculum is perfect, discussing the use of "Latinx" as an identity and the activism of Latinx historical figures can foster critical thinking skills and opportunities for meaning making more than the reductive, irrelevant, and frankly boring content of a grammar-and-vocabulary-based curriculum. While students lost none of their energy, the transition to these more challenging and engaging materials bore fruit. Following Ms. E's discussion with

the class described above, she also assigned students a project of presenting on a landmark from their home country. I worked in small groups with students. One ninth-grader, Miguel, decided to focus his presentation on *Ángel de la Independencia*, a statue that commemorates Mexico's independence from Spain. As he described his presentation to me, we were able to make connections to SKILLS content about colonization and assimilation demonstrating that students can engage with critical academic subjects effectively, even if their English language acquisition is ongoing.

Students also took ownership of their project for the SKILLS Day presentation and engaged in much more collaborative and critical learning than what was possible with the existing curricula. Although I was designing much of the SKILLS curriculum, this partnership was also reciprocal in that Ms. E often had valuable contributions and suggestions for how to make material more suitable and responsive to her group of learners (see Chapter 6). While both Ms. E and I felt that conditions had improved overall following her efforts, she would later reflect, "I mean, in an ideal world, we'd just have smaller [class] sections."

5.3 Narrative Example #3: Teacher Attitudes Towards Newcomer Students

5.3.1 Interpersonal Multicultural Monolingualism

The final narrative example focuses on other HHS teachers' attitudes towards Newcomer students and how they, too, exemplified multicultural monolingualism but on an interpersonal level. Both in other classes and outside of the school, Newcomer students were simultaneously invisible and hypervisible. Ms. E described how many of the students had left close-knit communities in their home countries and felt rootless here in their new home. In the surrounding neighborhood of HHS, Ms. E would explain that "they [students] go into the grocery store and they're being followed, or they go on the bus and there's anonymity. They

don't feel like the bus driver knows their name and they don’t know their [the bus driver’s] name.” In other words, students did not feel seen or at home but when they were being racially profiled and overly policed, they felt too conspicuous and still out of place. Figure 4, a drawing from one of Ms. E’s students, Silvanna (pseudonym), illustrates the separation of languages in her community—in public spaces such as stores, students felt pressured to speak English. Additionally, many of the Newcomer students were anxious about using English, because of pressures to sound native-like. These students felt forced into silence outside of school.

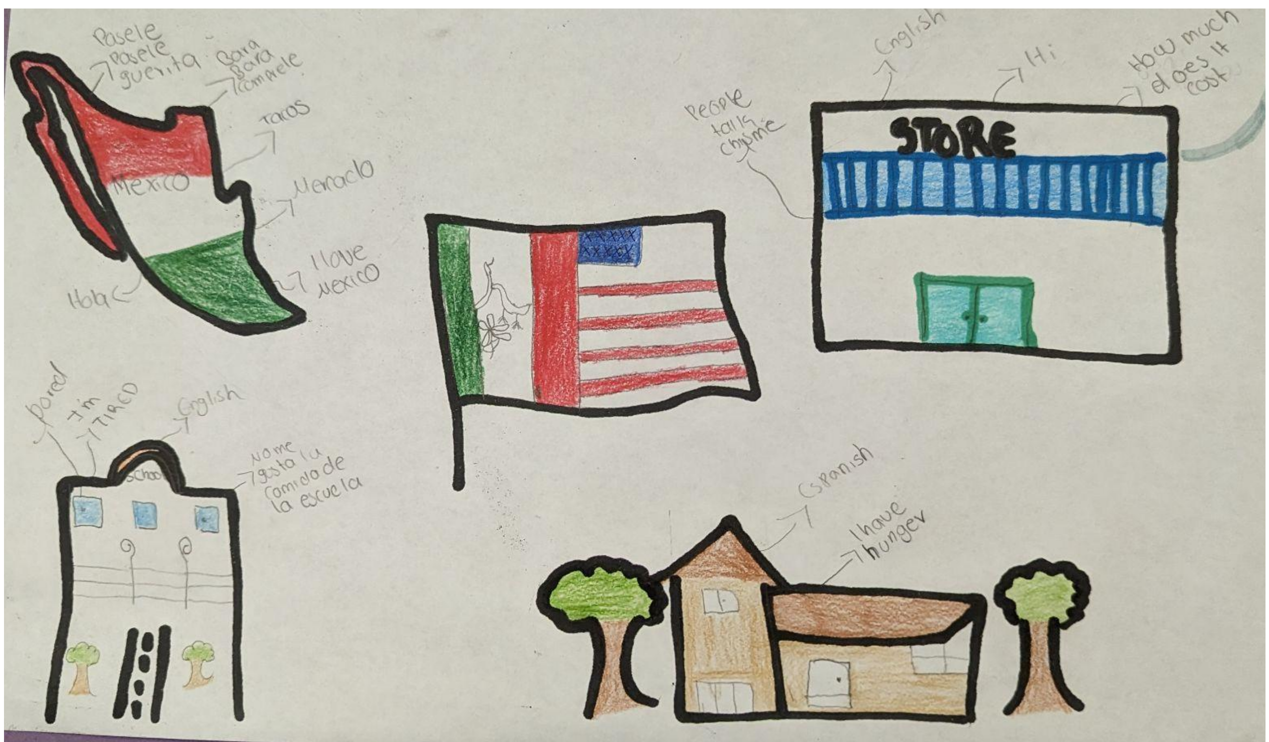

Figure 4. Silvanna’s drawing of her language use in the community

Ms. E would later describe that this dynamic extended to HHS. I conducted in-class interviews with students in October (with support from my bilingual undergraduate mentors and MS. G) and students confirmed: “The teachers don’t pay attention to the students who are Latino,” and, “It seems like anytime I try, like, anytime I give effort, nobody sees me. But then

anytime that I'm taking a break, everybody sees me." Ms. E was aware of such attitudes from the other teachers. She lamented once in writing about a student, Neymar (pseudonym), who was ditching his other classes because he felt unseen:

> *The sense of being an outsider, of being different, of being unable to access content—it was a burning frustration for him. The teacher who had failed to use his name, and the names of other students like him, were unintentionally and unknowingly leaving our Newcomer students out.*

Ms. E's reflection echoes concerns she raised throughout the year that teachers did not see educating Newcomer students as part of their responsibility. This is evident too in Ms. G's account of how teachers assumed educating Newcomer students was the responsibility of the BCS alone. Altogether, these descriptions depicted students as simultaneously invisible and hypervisible to their classmates and teachers and within the larger school culture.

Students' invisibility in other school spaces made their ELD classroom a "social oasis" in Ms. E's words:

> *School systems that are failing are all coming into this room. This is the only space where they're all in a somewhat cohesive social group. Everywhere else, they're othered. So that chattiness that we see—they're not like that anywhere else in school.*

The narrative example of the ELD curriculum, placement, and support in the previous section illuminated how failing school systems can overlap to create significant challenges for an individual teacher at the classroom level. In this case, interpersonal factors, namely, teacher attitudes, were also having an impact on Ms. E's classroom and adding to her struggle. Her observation that students were more excitable and "boisterous" in her class was later confirmed

by Ms. G and the students themselves. After being silent all day, they would enter Ms. E's class and explode with energy. Knowing this, she made a concerted effort not to police "chattiness" and "social chatter," but this also presented a challenge when trying to corral more than 30 students into planned activities (this is discussed more in Chapter 6).

5.3.2 Building Communication and Community with Teachers and Newcomer Students

Rather than trying to change student behavior, Ms. E turned her attention to shifting teachers' attitudes toward Newcomer students and supporting improved practices. Her goal was to encourage all the teachers of Newcomer students to try and "put forward some kind of at least emotional support if not instructional support for working with Newcomers and also getting them to start advocating for our students' needs." To that end, she scheduled optional meetings once a month and invited all 36 content teachers with Newcomer students in their classes to discuss asset-oriented, needs-based approaches. Her strategy was to pull on the best elements of the English learner policy—for her, the guidance in the California English Learner Roadmap, Principle 1 (5.1.1). Right away some barriers surfaced. Some teachers simply chose not to attend; others initially pushed back on Ms. E's call for equity-oriented teaching for Newcomer students because they saw it as beyond the scope of their job responsibilities. She quoted a complaint from a teacher who said, "Teaching Newcomers is so much extra! Why was I chosen for this?" Like leadership, they also initially reframed the issue as a problem with Ms. E's teaching, saying, "You need to teach [Newcomer students] self-advocacy. You need to teach them to get their needs met." These responses reveal that even within a general turn towards multilingualism, serving immigrant-origin, linguistically minoritized students is still often seen as a pedagogical add-on rather than as foundational. Additionally, the teachers' pushback echoes neoliberal discourses of individual effort (Harvey, 2005) and conceals

monolingual ideologies in policy and practice that create the needs that students were expected to self-advocate for.

In response to this, Ms. E's strategy was to conduct her own research. First, she spoke with students to look for trends; she found that teachers rarely spoke directly to Newcomer students and opted to communicate through the BCS as a translator, which contributed to students' feeling of exclusion. Next, she gathered teacher perspectives. She found that very few instructors had experience working with a BCS and received little to no instruction about how to best leverage the BCS' expertise. Based on her findings, she was able to inform a theory of action: to build communication and community between teachers and Newcomer students. The actions she took included sharing her findings with her colleagues, forming six workshops for content teachers based on standards and input from Newcomer students and hosting a series of family events that brought together content teachers with Newcomer students and families.

Ms. E was always forward-thinking, looking for ways not only to improve her own teaching conditions but also to create lasting transformational change. She began to build institutional knowledge by crafting a guidebook for future instructors of Newcomer students. She also leveraged a university connection that emerged from her participation in a professional learning program over the summer to hold a listening session with Newcomer students and pre-service teachers. I was able to attend this listening session. The class was attended by about thirty teacher candidates. The eight Newcomer students all sat in a panel at the front of the large room, and Ms. E stood in the back facilitating the conversation—taking questions from the audience and translating students' responses. One of the questions from the crowd was: "What is one thing you wish you could hear from your teachers?" The students paused for the translation and thought before one shared a response: "Tú puedes." ["You

can."]. Regardless of what Ms. E was advocating for, this student's answer revealed the simple truth that students just wanted their teachers to acknowledge them and show confidence in their abilities. Ms. E teared up as she translated for the class, perhaps because she knew that this was not often the case.

An important takeaway from this experience for Ms. E was to not stop at teachers' attitudes when addressing monolingualism; in other words, it was necessary for her to understand the roots of their thinking. She would later reflect:

> *What I found as I dove deeper is empathy for my colleagues. Every other Newcomer content teacher received no training and no protocol for how to incorporate a BCS or work with diverse Newcomer students [...] My colleagues only had one class during their credential programs regarding best practices for English learners. For many of them that was years ago. My teacher leadership moments have been shifting from the outraged response "Who are these people I work with?!" to the curious stance, "How can I work with these teachers?"*

Although it was not explicitly articulated, her strategy here was to call in her colleagues to develop their ideological awareness with curiosity and conversation, rather than cutting them out and allowing them to perpetuate harm, by pausing to understand where they were coming from. In doing so, she created possibilities of working towards collective action rather than continuing to do this work in solitude. As pointed out by a high-school ELD instructor participant in Gerald (2022), "even with a theoretically supportive administration only so much [is] possible if [you] try to go it alone" (p. 130). Unfortunately, however, as Gerald (2022) also

warns, "people don't tend to stay with [an] organization long if there is oppression worth challenging" (p. 130), and Ms. E was not able to witness the results of her efforts (Chapter 7).

5.4 An Ecological School Culture of Multicultural Monolingualism

Researchers and teacher educators often treat monolingual ideologies somewhat like a disease—as beliefs or values that an individual person can "cure" or rid themselves of with little consideration for further action beyond this personal change. A more productive way to view monolingualism is as an ecology—a complex system that moves across time and space, made up of many different interacting parts including students, teachers, curriculum, the physical environment, the school culture, and the broader community and society. From this standpoint, even though an instructor may cultivate critical language awareness to counteract monolingualism in her own teaching methods, she remains embedded within a multifaceted, intricately layered, and interconnected system that is predominantly monolingual. Adopting an ecological perspective on schools reveals that monolingual ideologies do not function in isolation. This viewpoint recognizes that neoliberal multiculturalism is simultaneously working to recast monolingualism as a superficial exhibition of multilingualism. HSS was certainly exempt from this dynamic.

To an outside observer, HHS showed some signs of celebrating and valuing multilingualism. Throughout the year, the school advertised cultural, family, and community events, and most resources and communication were bilingual, as were several of the staff. The school was intentional about using the term "Emergent Multilingual Learner" to "honor" the linguistic and cultural assets these students bring with them, in contrast to terms like "English learner" which position them as deficient in English. In the three narrative examples shared above, examples of this multilingual rhetoric included state-wide policies that seemed to

celebrate students’ biliteracy and bilingualism; curriculum that “can be made” culturally sustaining; student placement to provide equitable access to grade-appropriate content; and support from specialized bilingual staff. However, this outward narrative of multilingualism in the school belied the structural systemic monolingualism under the surface. In this schema of multicultural monolingualism, there are no English-only policies, and teachers may not explicitly say they don’t believe in Newcomer students’ abilities, but between the lines of policies, practices, and procedures in Ms. E’s instructional context, monolingualism was evident and ingrained from the top down.

A common model for representing the ecology of an institution’s culture is through layers of concentric circles that coincide with expanding social influences. Bronfenbrenner (1979) proposed an influential social ecological model for child development that has been extended for use in other efforts to understand contextual factors that influence individual behavior (Zavelevsky & Lishchinsky, 2020). Building off this model, others have examined individual subjects in relation to the larger system in which they operate and vice versa (Hammond, 2020; McLaren & Hawe, 2005). The subjects of monolingualism that Ms. E identified and set about working to change fit well into the strata of Bronfenbrenner’s original ecological model, with the Organizational/Institutional layer being specified to the school (Figure 5).

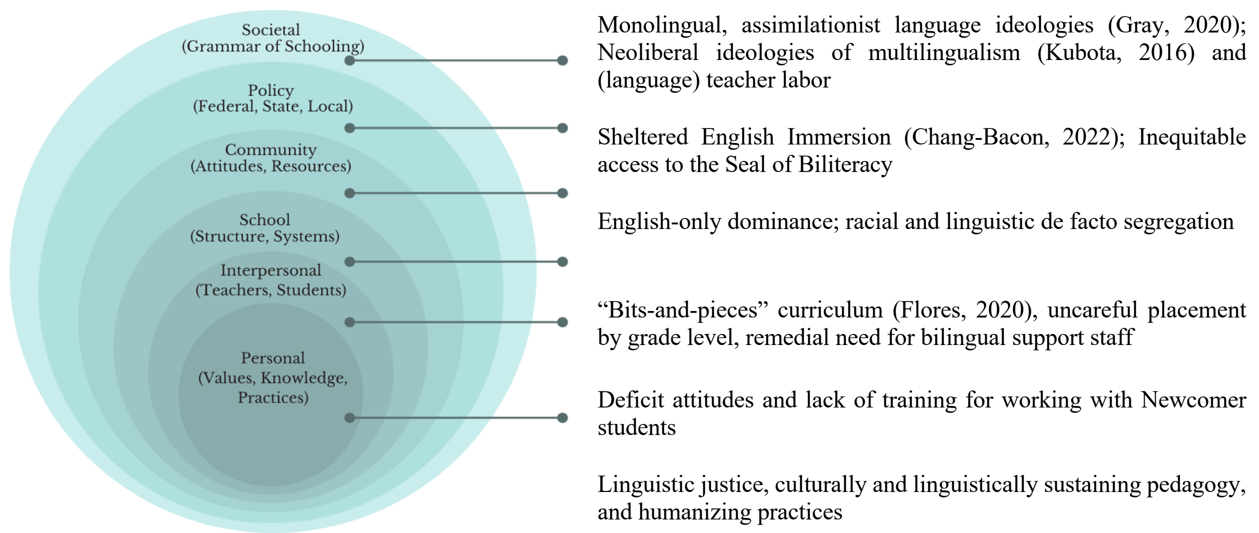

Figure 5. An Ecological School Culture of Multicultural Monolingualism

(Adapted from the Bronfenbrenner's 1979 social ecological model)

Students' experiences of being overlooked and overpoliced in other school spaces made Ms. E's classroom a social haven, but this complicated her efforts to engage them in disciplinary learning. Furthermore, her efforts to mitigate that challenge resulted in troubling responses that reframed student-advocacy work as outside of the boundaries of her job. Simultaneously, educational policies and curricula guidance stipulated implementation of culturally sustaining pedagogy without provision of adequate resources. Ms. E, again, is not alone in this problem. In a recent study, California educators reported that district-provided instructional materials were not adequate for teaching students designated as English learners, and a majority believe that the materials were also not culturally relevant (Zahner et al., 2022). Separately, research has found that the average California high school educator will have a class size of 29; while lower than Ms. E's original 36, it being the average suggests that at the

high end, many teachers are also working with groups of well over 30 (NCES, 2018) (data on the average class size specifically for ELD is not readily available).

In all, the policies, practices, and attitudes examined in this chapter connect back to the reality that US schools at their core are monolingual; they were not designed with multilingual students in mind (Chang-Bacon, 2021). For that reason, remedial efforts like the Seal of Biliteracy and relying on Bilingual Curriculum Specialists are so ineffectual. For this reason, too, content teachers felt that teaching Newcomer students was not their responsibility. But for ideologically aware instructors like Ms. E, doing nothing is also unacceptable. While she drew on a number of strategies to enact change at HHS, the throughline of Ms. E's efforts was, as she would later articulate in writing, "I made my problem everyone's problem." Hearing about the multiple times in which neoliberal discourses were deployed to derail her attempts to make change, I asked her, "What would you say to a teacher who says, that's not the language teacher's responsibility?" She responded:

> *I would say, "Your year is going to be long and arduous. If you keep telling yourself that, this is going to keep happening. This is going to be a burden that just keeps following you around. Whereas once you own that, this is literally the central work of the world language classroom. There's so many possibilities. Everything becomes fertile ground for growth and community."*

5.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I explored three narrative examples illustrating Ms. E's experiences with, recognition of, and responses to multicultural monolingualism within her teaching context at HSS. In the first narrative example, The Seal of Biliteracy was shown to be a multicultural monolingual policy. Ms. E problematized the unequal criteria for students

designated as English learners and elective-bilingual, previously-monolingual, English-speaking students. She confronted this and drew on her teacher agency by creating The Certificate of Multilingualism with ELD students, creating an opportunity for their multilingualism to be acknowledged and in a way that reframes multilingualism as a community asset.

In the second narrative example, the ELD curriculum's fragmented approach, student placement by grade level, and the underutilization of the Bilingual Curriculum Specialist (BCS) as merely a translator highlighted multicultural monolingual systems and structures within HHS. Ms. E addressed the resulting challenges of classroom management and curriculum development by tapping into professional networks and community partnerships. However, pushback along the way revealed underlying neoliberal ideologies that function to rationalize systemic issues as individual teacher responsibilities.

Finally, the third narrative example explored the interpersonal dimensions of multicultural monolingualism. Newcomer students faced both invisibility and hypervisibility in the school environment, making Ms. E's classroom a social “oasis” but contributing further to the challenges of classroom management. Rather than policing student behavior, she sought out relevant data which prompted her to foster communication and community between teachers and Newcomer students through workshops, events, and a guidebook for educators. However, the process was not without challenges. Reactions from fellow teachers underscored a broader issue: the support of Newcomer students was still regarded as an extra task rather than an integral part of schooling, and the pushback mirrored neoliberal values that prioritize individual effort while obscuring the underlying monolingual ideologies in educational policy and practice.

Synthesizing these narratives, I presented an ecological framework for understanding the school culture of multicultural monolingualism. Throughout the narratives presented, Ms. E responded to the pervasive multicultural monolingualism embedded at every level of the school ecology. In that discussion, I emphasized the importance of an ecological lens because it offers a comprehensive perspective that recognizes the complexity of educational environments. It acknowledges that issues such as monolingualism are not isolated to individual beliefs or actions, but are deeply woven into the grammar of schooling—the fabric of the educational ecosystem, which includes students, teachers, curriculum, school culture, policies, and broader societal attitudes. This lens allows for a holistic understanding of how these elements interact and influence one another, which is crucial for identifying the systemic nature of monolingualism.

In summary, as I have shown in this chapter, the value of taking the ecology of multicultural monolingualism into account is that even by looking at one teacher, one school, one community, it provides an inventory of all the salient factors of influence so that educators and policymakers can move beyond simplistic solutions that address only the surface level of monolingualism. An ecological approach emphasizes the need for collective action and systemic change, rather than placing the onus solely on individual educators or students. Ms. E would often reflect on how professional development about serving Newcomer students would help with the problems she identified. What if professional development and teacher education included the history of collective action in the workforce and the recognition of neoliberal ideologies in conjunction with monolingualism? The expectation for classroom teachers to take on large classrooms without the required teaching supports and materials redirects their efforts and energy to meet these logistical demands and away from efforts

toward justice and equity. Ms. E did not immediately recognize the neoliberal ideologies imposed on her; when she encountered neoliberal pushback calling her teaching practices into question, it would at times cause her to doubt herself. While this rarely stalled her work, eventually it became evident how neoliberal ideologies were beginning to take an emotional toll on her. I discuss this in the next chapter.

6. The Paradox of Multicultural Monolingualism

“Who the teacher is has a great deal to do with both the way she defines problems and what can and will be done about them... her job involves the additional personal burden of doing something about these problems in the classroom and living with the consequences of her actions over time.” — Magdalene Lampert, “How Do Teachers Manage to Teach? Perspectives on Problems in Practice,” Harvard Educational Review, 1984, p. 180

In this chapter, I delve deeper into Ms. E’s engagement in equitable teaching within a multicultural monolingual climate of Structured English Immersion (SEI)/English Language Development (ELD) for Newcomer students. Specifically, I examine the tension between her pedagogical ideals and the ideological and structural barriers she encounters, investigating the personal and professional repercussions of such conflicts on her teaching practice and well-being. In the sections that follow, I first detail Ms. E's approach to teaching, highlighting her overall pedagogy and approach to language instruction. I then reflect on two main themes from the first half of the school year through vignettes: the first addresses classroom management challenges, and the second examines her instructional decisions around content and language use.

These themes emerged as recurrent focal points in Ms. E's teaching reflection interviews. Classroom management surfaced as a prominent concern early on because of the school-wide dynamics explained in Chapter 5. The large class size, coupled with Newcomer students’ simultaneous invisibility and hypervisibility elsewhere, rendered Ms. E's classroom a space where students felt at ease to express themselves fully and authentically; as Ms. G (the Bilingual Curriculum Specialist) and the students themselves explained, this sense of

comfort contributed to their high energy and chattiness in Ms. E's class. The second topic of content and language choice became a central focus because of Ms. E's role as an English language teacher to students whose dominant language was Spanish—a language in which she was also fluent. Additionally, her desire to shift away from the district-provided ELD curriculum allowed her considerable freedom in selecting content that would be more engaging and relevant for her students.

Analyzing Ms. E's reflective interviews and writing alongside my classroom observation field notes and student artifacts, I showcase instances of Ms. E's introspection regarding her teaching practices, including perceptions of teaching successes and failures; the personal, emotional, and professional effects that the multicultural monolingual environment had on her; and the resources and strategies she employed to mitigate these negative influences. Analyzing these multiple sources of data within the thematic vignettes allowed me to take into account the ecology of multicultural monolingualism. My analysis reveals a paradox in the ideological framework that shaped Ms. E's reflections on her teaching and the standards by which she held herself accountable. On one hand, a commitment to a humanizing pedagogy and linguistic responsiveness shaped her self-evaluation, while on the other, she was also being influenced by the pervasive, monolingual White-centric grammar of schooling. This dichotomy led to a situation where, when she failed to meet these contradictory expectations, she would internalize the systemic educational inequities affecting her students as personal failures, rather than recognizing them as manifestations of a harmful educational structure. In other words, what emerged was a confinement to oppositional-binary thinking of "good" and "bad" teaching.

Oppositional-binary thinking relies on dichotomous epistemologies which divide knowledge into discrete and opposing categories, and create "this-or-that" and/or "us-vs-them" dynamics (Bhattacharya, 2015; Keating, 2016). For Ms. E, "good" teaching was contradictorily determined at once by her commitment to equity as well as internalization of hegemonic societal imaginings of effective instruction. This contradiction took an emotional toll on Ms. E across the year; as a result, teacher well-being became a central part of this research.

The mental and emotional impact of teaching for educators is a necessary line of inquiry, particularly in light of the growing issue of teacher retention and the need to retain and sustain equity-oriented, multilingual educators (Snyder Bhansari, 2023; Warner & Larbi-Cherif, 2022; Zahner et al., 2022). This study contributes to a large and growing body of research on teacher mental health and well-being, but with a fresh perspective. Employing a critical collaborative ethnographic approach enriched the data beyond Ms. E's singular perspective and extended the analysis beyond the confines of the classroom. The intimate scale of the study and its emphasis on a collaborative accompaniment model capture the dynamic researcher-teacher partnership and joint endeavors to address the challenges faced within the classroom.

It took considerable time to recognize Ms. E's engagement with oppositional-binary thinking due to the ingrained and often invisible nature of Whiteness and monolingualism within the grammar of schooling. We often could not detect when this was being factored into her self-reflections. Identifying and breaking free from oppositional-binary thinking proved challenging, as it required navigating the discomfort of ambiguity with limited models for alternatives to this dichotomous mindset. As time progressed, however, the

process of research collaboration and its accompaniment orientation created opportunities for qualitative inquiry and praxis that gradually guided us, myself included, to a post-oppositional understanding and a new direction forward. In the third section of this chapter, I describe the movement wherein Ms. E and I were able to identify and name the paradox, and thereby "manage" to teach despite its presence. I take up these findings all together, in solidarity with Ms. E and other equity-oriented language educators, to argue for a humanizing teaching profession and to explicate how humanizing the language teacher's professional experience is not just the responsibility of policymakers and other educational leaders, but, in their absence, can also be made possible in part by the work of collaborative research.

6.1 Ms. E's Teaching Approach

6.1.1 Whole-Student and Humanizing Pedagogy

When I asked Ms. E directly about how she would characterize her own teaching style, she described it as a "whole-student" and "humanizing" approach:

> *Ms E: I would say it is critical to me that every student is heard and spoken to multiple times in a class period. That has to happen. If I have a kid who comes in and comes out and I have gotten no communication from them, and neither has anyone else— [stops to respond to student question]*
>
> *Samantha: You were saying, every student is seen and heard…*
>
> *Ms. E: Multiple times. You have to have that happen multiple times. As far as learning outcomes, I would say those were secondary last year to community making, if that makes sense. The question that that's answering for me, is where's this kid's affective filter? How comfortable are they in this space?*

Ms. E’s description and enactment of humanizing and whole-student pedagogy for her Newcomer students exemplifies evidence-based best practices of seeing students as whole people with situational and complex backgrounds, identities, and needs (Bartolomé, 1994; Salazar, 2013). Humanizing pedagogy, originating from the work of Freire (1970), is built out of critical care for students as well as “trust, relations of reciprocity, active listening, mentoring, compassion, high expectations, and interest in students’ overall well-being” (Salazar, 2013 p. 129). The principles of humanizing pedagogy require teachers to listen to students’ interests, needs, and concerns, to prioritize students’ overall well-being, and create a safe learning environment (Salazar, 2013). In addition, they necessitate teachers’ capacity to build strong relationships with students and to be culturally and linguistically responsive in the classroom (Sadowski, 2021). Ms. E’s arrival to a humanizing and whole student approach (explained further in Chapter 7) was a result of her ten years of experience, anti-racist professional development, and self-initiated research. She had read and shared that she was influenced by the foundational work that humanizing pedagogy has grown out of:

> *I'm really into Paulo Freire's work…* Pedagogy of the Oppressed… *I still don't understand all of it because it's too smart for me. But I feel like what I took from him is that if you can get people to talk and listen, you can get people to write and read. And if you can get people to write and read, you can get people to organize. And if you can get people to organize, you can get people to change their lives.*

What she is describing is the aspect of humanizing pedagogy that emphasizes civic engagement towards social justice (Bajaj et al., 2023). A specific item that she named and that I observed in her teaching was making sure that content was culturally and linguistically responsive. This,

as described in Chapter 5, was also tied to her desire to align with guidance in the California policy for teaching students designated as English learners. For this reason, she made efforts to ensure students' cultural knowledge and their whole linguistic repertoire was centered and valued in classroom activities. She also was unafraid to tackle questions of racism, colonization, and linguistic discrimination with her students, making her a supportive co-teacher for implementing the SKILLS curriculum in the second half of the year. Other strategies included finding opportunities for students to communicate to a wider audience, such as a cohort of pre-service teachers (Chapter 5), the SKILLS Day attendees (Chapter 4), and the audience of their original plays (6.1.2).

Other aspects of humanizing pedagogy that I observed in Ms. E's practices were classroom management and instructional practices that were responsive to the fact that many Newcomer students are experiencing poverty, insufficient support, and recurring trauma within and outside of their schools (McIntyre et al., 2011; Tienda & Haskins, 2011). Recognizing early on that her Newcomer students had needs that she felt inadequately prepared to address, Ms. E asked her district if it could provide trauma-informed teaching materials (Crosby et al., 2018; Hood, 2018; Tigert et al., 2022). She received a slide deck of resources from the district which she used to educate herself on best practices. With this knowledge, Ms. E always put student well-being first. She worked hard to make the classroom a safe space; for instance, she rarely discouraged social chatter in the classroom. She also greatly respected students' autonomy and prioritized mental health. There were several days I observed students who appeared emotionally distressed. Rather than trying to coerce them into engagement, she would delegate tasks to me, Ms. G, the bilingual paraeducator, or a teacher candidate before conversing with the student. Sometimes she would give students the space to just chill out on

the couch in the back of the room, and they were always welcome to put their head on their desk to rest. Overall, her classroom was a flexible learning environment (see more in Chapter 4). With the high number of students physically present, Ms. E had much to navigate in the way of students' individual needs, but as described in Chapter 5, she worked hard to foster trusting relationships with them.

The impact of her practices became particularly evident towards the end of the school year. One student, Neymar, decided to do his research project for SKILLS Day on what made a good teacher for immigrant students (Figure 7).

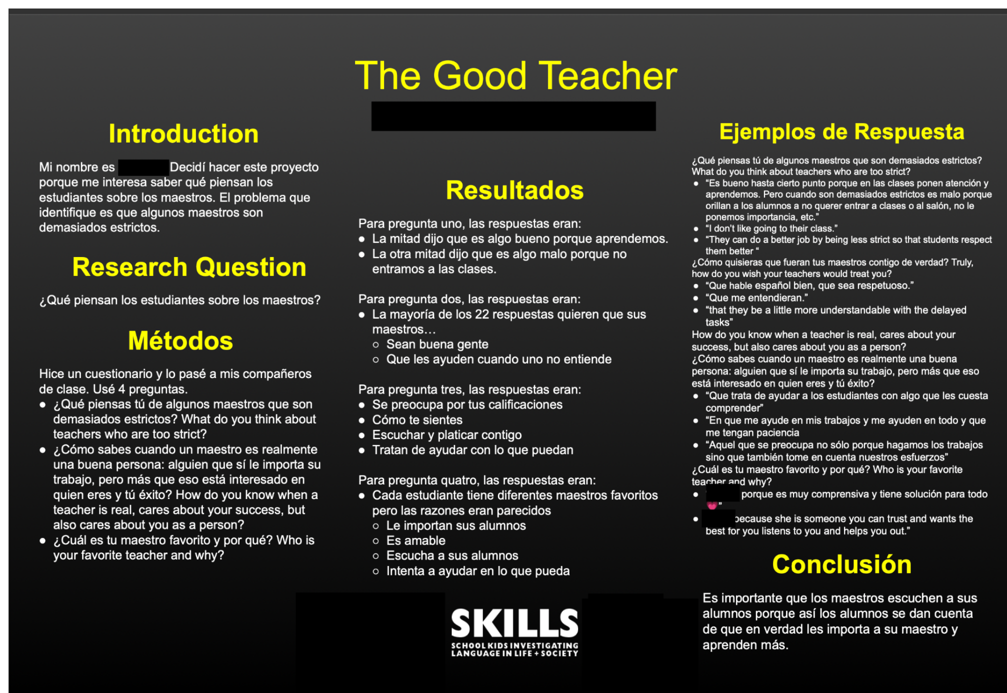

Figure 6. Neymar's research project on what makes a good teacher for immigrant students

To answer his research question, Neymar constructed an anonymous survey and distributed it to Ms. E's class as well as the other SEI/ELD class for Newcomer students at HHS. One of the questions inquired: "¿Cuál es tu maestro favorito y por qué? Who is your favorite teacher and why?" Responses included:

Miss E porque es muy comprensiva y tiene solución para todo 💗[Miss E because she is very understanding and has a solution for everything 💗]

Ms. E porque es muy amable y demuestra que se preocupa por los estudiantes. [Ms. E because she is very kind and shows that she cares about the students]

Ms. E por que ella me entiende mas [Ms. E because she understands me more]

The findings from Neymar's survey were also confirmed in interviews I conducted with students at the end of the year with help from Ms. G and bilingual undergraduate volunteers. When asked about the positive aspects of their SEI/ELD class, students highlighted that not only was Ms. E understanding and willing to communicate with them in Spanish, but also that she was supportive in helping them manage struggles outside of learning English, including how to get bus passes, how to look for jobs, and that more than anything else, she had "patience" with them. Overall, Ms. E's commitments and strategies constituted the core of her humanizing and whole-student pedagogical approach.

6.1.2 Linguistic Responsiveness

Ms. E's teaching approach was also connected to her understanding of language acquisition. She explained to me that when she first took on the role of teaching in SEI/ELD, she began by seeking out students' needs and goals:

I was asking them... Hey, why are you here? What do you want to get out of this class? They wanted to be able to build peer connections. They wanted access to our campus community. They wanted to be able to date English-speaking kids. That was really what I could tell was gonna get me the most bang for my buck as far as what type of language to teach them.

Based on students' responses, Ms. E would try to facilitate opportunities to engage in social conversations in English. For instance, on special occasions like holidays, Ms. E would provide conversation prompts and provide guidance for me and Ms. G to ask students personal questions about the topic (in English and occasionally translanguaging) and to encourage but not enforce that students do the same. Separately, she would express concerns about students acquiring Academic English based on her observation that current teaching practices at HHS made general education content linguistically inaccessible; this tension would return throughout the year (see 6.2.2), but she concluded that this was more of an issue of teachers needing training on how to scaffold for all learners rather than a matter of students' deficiency.

While the aforementioned concerns informed her understanding of *what* to teach when it came to language development, her understanding of *how* to teach was largely informed by a professional development series focusing on a teaching method that is built out of the theoretical work of Stephen Krashen.[4] She summarized that learning as follows:

> *Comprehensible input theory is comprehension plus one, right? So, it is more about what the student has and how do you add to their language plus one. What I'm doing in the ELD classroom would be comprehensible input theory from Stephen Krashen and things like [this teaching approach]. Personal question and answer comes out of that practice.*

As she explains, comprehensible input theory suggests that language learners require exposure to language input that they might not be fully familiar with but that they are still able to understand or interpret (Krashen, 1982; 2003). In addition, it exhorts language teachers to

[4] The teaching method was based largely on the theoretical work of Stephen Krashen but was created independently by a former educator. This person has recently donated to political organizations that aim to ban gay marriage. Neither Ms. E nor I were aware of this matter at the time of this study. In our commitment to not promote initiatives that endorse hate, Ms. E and I jointly decided to not disclose the name of the program here.

provide many opportunities for students to engage in meaningful communication output (Swain, 1995). For these reasons, social interaction and active participation are necessary to foster language development (Gass, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978; Wong-Fillmore & Snow, 2000). With this grounding, Ms. E's investment in humanizing pedagogy was strengthened because student comfort in the classroom was a necessary component to ensure language development.

> *If they [students] are on flight or fight mode, they're not gonna get any language acquisition. So that's part of it, just making sure that our class is one where students aren't triggered. And then the other function of being seen and heard is developing their voice as authors and agents, right? It's just flexing that muscle of like, "I exist, I take up space."*

Ms. E's explanation is that students need to feel safe and respected in order to be able to learn. When students feel threatened or stressed, their bodies and minds are focused on survival, not on learning. Her reasoning resonates with guidance that safe and welcoming classroom environments that help to mitigate language-related anxiety are necessary for fostering language acquisition (Krashen, 2003; Pappamihiel, 2002; Verplaetse & Migliacci, 2008). This is particularly true in the case of Newcomer students (Leonard & Reardon, 2021; McInerney, 2023). As described in Chapter 5, the larger environment of HHS provided little such comfort, and Ms. E's students' language and behavior were made invisible and hypervisible. Alert to these experiences, Ms. E was very resistant to policing behavior in her classroom and did not enforce any language rules in her class. She would model and encourage translanguaging in the classroom, learn about students' interests and backgrounds and build teaching material around these topics. Language objectives were structured around language arts targets, such as play writing or poetry, and she would seek out opportunities for students

to engage in meaningful communication in English. The purpose of their language development was not to communicate in ways that are "appropriate" for school, but to give them additional resources for expressing themselves. A good example of this was the Young Playwrights Festival that she had organized for her students the previous year:

> *A family friend of mine taught English theater at HHS for a long time. Maybe 14 years or something like that and I reached out to different theater companies in our area. I got linked up with this guy from a theater outreach program. [...] And so that's how we ended up with the final product being a monologue or a dialogue, it could be fiction or nonfiction, but it was based on these different prompts we gave the students, and it was performed at the Young Playwrights Festival by actors.*

Once again, Ms. E's lifelong connection to the community was a valuable resource. In addition to this partnership, to facilitate playwriting, Ms. E and her students read Act 5 of the Josefina Lopez play *Simply Maria, or the American Dream*. The students then took the scene as inspiration to tell their own stories in both Spanish and English. As stated in the above quote, she then partnered with the HHS theater instructor/family friend to have theater students (some of whom were bilingual but primarily English-dominant) act out the plays at the festival. Ms. E's Newcomer students had creative control over casting and partnered with the student actors during multiple rehearsals to provide feedback about delivery and emotions in the scenes. Reflecting on this endeavor, Ms. E explained:

> *My students were more focused on language targets. Like what words in English do you hear? What do you understand about the context? Because they hadn't read each other's work. So each time they see the scene reenacted in a*

different way it's new English content for them. We also broke them into heterogeneous groups with student actors and Newcomer students. And that got my students what they were craving, which was interaction with English-dominant students but also they are bilingual students. But they're students who have a longer history in our community.

The content-based collaboration facilitated Ms. E's Newcomer students' access to participation in disciplinary activities and opportunities that they hoped to engage with other students outside of their siloed SEI/ELD program. Unfortunately, the theater partnership was not able to continue into the following year because the theater programming no longer had the funds to continue. Therefore, I was not able to observe the playwriting and performance myself. However, over the school year, I also witnessed Ms. E creating and implementing her own materials. For instance, at the beginning of the year, students read the poem "Spanish" by Gary Soto from his book, *Red Hot Salsa.* In the poem, the author describes his upbringing including a comparison of his use of English and Spanish, while also translanguaging within the poem itself. Ms. E employed different strategies for students to engage with the poem which was provided in English and Spanish: for instance, searching the text for characters and asking students to draw a picture of the characters based on how they are described. The poem was accompanied by a bilingual handout (see Appendix B) with a graphic organizer where students could brainstorm words they would use to describe themselves, memories that illustrate those identities and the people, images, sounds, and other things involved in that memory. On the back of the handout, there were sentence frames pulled from Soto's original poem that students could use to structure poems about themselves. While there was plenty of opportunity for students to use English in this activity, Ms. E did not mandate it because she

wanted students to feel comfortable communicating in their primary language for at least some part of the day. However, she was not always at ease about this decision.

6.2 The Paradox of Multicultural Monolingualism

In this section, I present two thematic vignettes derived from the initial half of the school year. The first vignette delves into the challenges of classroom management, while the second explores Ms. E's instructional choices concerning content and language usage. During this time, neither Ms. E nor I had developed a clear conception of “multicultural monolingualism” or its implications. As prefaced in Chapter 4, our original aim was to examine teacher moves for implementing Equitable Classroom Talk (Jensen et al., 2021) in a SEI/ELD setting for Newcomer students. Our focus was on identifying effective teaching strategies that encouraged student participation in meaningful discussions related to academic content, which also aligned with their cultural identities and knowledge. However, as we progressed through the first few months of data collection and engaged in ongoing dialogue, we increasingly recognized that the pursuit of engaging students in equitable dialogue was consistently hindered by an ideological mismatch. This mismatch was between an equity-oriented pedagogical approach (for Ms. E one that is humanizing, whole-person, and linguistically responsive) and the prevailing linguistic hegemony within the teaching environment that, on the surface, appeared to embrace and value multilingualism. Consequently, our investigation started to transition toward exploring the lived experience of teaching in the face of these ideological contradictions.

The following two thematic vignettes are informed by a detailed analysis of Ms. E's reflective interviews, my observational notes from her classroom, and various student artifacts from the first half of the school year. The vignettes presented here explore the

dynamics of a multicultural monolingual teaching environment and how they can shape an equity-oriented educator's evaluation of their own teaching practices. The first vignette examines classroom management, a universal educational challenge, although here it was particularly intensified by the ingrained multicultural monolingualism present at various levels of HHS. The second vignette shifts focus to the intricate decisions surrounding content and language use, which are especially critical in the context of SEI/ELD and for Newcomer students due to the inherent focus on language, but also offers insights applicable to other teaching scenarios.

6.2.1 Vignette #1: Classroom Management

Ms. E's original intentions for the year of teaching we spent together included making "connection circles" a regular practice in class. Connection circles are relationship building activities that have emerged out of restorative justice and trauma-informed teaching practices; they are used to foster routine, understanding, experiences, and relationships (Rasmussen, 2016). For Ms. E's connection circles, students would sit in a circle on the grass outside of their classroom and circulate a "speaking piece," an object of a significance or sentimental value like a framed family photo. Questions and prompts were given to garner social connections, build relationships amongst the students, and elicit personal resonance with the content of the class for that day. While connection circles had run well in her previous year, now with nearly double the number of students, things had changed:

> *Samantha: "So today's Friday September 9th and we're meeting about the first couple weeks of school. So we're at like, 30 [students] now?"*
>
> *Ms. E: "Right. So it's 30 exactly. I haven't been doing my connection circles because that first week I was doing the circles like, every day outside. But the*

students just weren't participating. I would have them in a big circle and they would be passing around the speaking piece. But everyone would be talking over, whoever had the speaking peace. Like, about other things, not about… Yeah, just social chatting on the side but that's like the complete opposite of being seen and heard.

This conversation took place prior to the hiring of a bilingual paraeducator and when the solo BCS could be in class just once a week. I was also attending once a week at this point and my schedule was such that it overlapped with the day that the BCS was present. Therefore, for at least four out of five school days, Ms. E was attempting to complete the connection circles with 30 students as the sole adult facilitator. On days when I did attend and participated in the sharing circle with Ms. E and her class, I witnessed what she had described. While students were willing to engage in the sharing, they would often be responsive only to those sitting closest to them, and the sheer size of the class made responsive listening difficult to manage. This was also a moment where my own lack of Spanish made it difficult to support Ms. E—for instance, by creating smaller circles and sharing the facilitation role. In one of our early reflections, she explained why she decided to stop using that activity:

I was like, okay, well I can't keep running this activity as if nothing is wrong here. You know what I mean? So, we left that aside in week two, and haven't returned to it. [...] I felt nervous. I was just kind of off my game.

This reflection on her struggles to enact the connection circles and her decision to end them stirred up emotions that were uncomfortable for her. Her nervousness may have stemmed from her awareness of the potential benefits of these practices for her students if effectively carried out. And perhaps, she had some concern about reporting a negative outcome to me, a

researcher. This could be connected to a "research-practice gap" in education (Mills et al., 2020). The "gap" is characterized by a lack of effective communication between researchers and practitioners despite the wealth of research on teaching practice. For this reason, research often does not fully incorporate the needs and insights of practitioners (Lampert, 1985) and conversely, there is limited application of research findings to actual teaching environments (Mills et al., 2020). Moreover, despite the study's intent to be collaborative from the outset, it was still in its early stages, with Ms. E and I in the process of building a deeper understanding of one another. Consequently, Ms. E might have experienced self-consciousness with a researcher present in her classroom, possibly stemming from concerns about being assessed on her teaching abilities, highlighting the potential challenges of researchers' presence in classrooms and importance for researchers to allow sufficient time for trust-building with teacher collaborators.

Ms. E's concerns about engagement and classroom management returned throughout the year. So, she pivoted to a new format:

> *Now it's a lot of pair-share. So, you know, I'll give them a prompt and then they have to do something on their own for like two minutes. I do it by song. So, then they have to read whatever they wrote to at least one other person… but it's just not the same as what we set out…*

In guidance that outlines the benefits of connection circles, a major caveat is that teachers need reasonable class sizes in order for students to hear and actively listen to others, to avoid distractions, and ultimately achieve the desired outcomes (Rasmussen, 2016). But rather than identifying this structural factor as a problem, Ms. E concluded that she was "off her game," echoing the neoliberal accusations that her "classroom management" strategies were

insufficient (Chapter 5). While she recognized that a class size of 30 students was not ideal and was harmful for education in general (thus motivating her to take action, as seen in the previous chapter), she did not immediately connect this with her teaching practices. And this would not be the last time.

The year of this study also happened to coincide with the 22nd FIFA World Cup. The day of the World Cup match between Argentina and France was a memorable one. The live game was broadcast right in the middle of Ms. E's class. That day, Ms. G was unavailable, so it was just me and Ms. E working with the students that day. Few things united this large group of students, but that day, even those who were not fans of soccer were keen to watch and support the last-standing South American team, Argentina. After some urging from the students, Ms. E agreed to play the game on the classroom screen with the volume off. It was obvious that this was an important event for students. She made one stipulation: that they should continue with their work. As the end of the game drew closer, there was no keeping students' attention as they became fully absorbed and fought to get the volume on. Three-quarters into the class period, Argentina scored, and the class erupted with joyful cheers. In that same moment, Ms. E looked at me across the room with an exasperated, defeated expression—but again, she did not stop the students from celebrating. In the reflection interview that immediately followed, to my surprise, she broke down in tears. She said:

> *I am interested in improving these kids' experiences. And I'm interested in, like adjustments [to her teaching] that are doable for me. Yeah… And so, it means that I have to be really intentional about the time that I give them. And even though it doesn't feel like a tight ship in here. Um… that doesn't mean that it's not intentional. [...] I just feel like the example of the bad teacher.*

Again, this moment of reflection created a tense emotional response. What she is reiterating to me at this moment is her commitment to a positive learning environment and positive learning experiences for these students, including needing to make "adjustments" to her own teaching practices, which requires reflexivity and seeking out areas to improve. She suggests that because their time in that space is limited, the decision about how that time is spent is important and must be "intentional." These reservations, again, could be related to an awareness of my presence in the classroom and a perception of research as evaluation of her teaching practices. She suggests this class "does not feel like a tight ship"—an expression which relayed an idealized view of a well-organized and highly disciplined classroom. By not achieving the standard of running a "tight ship," perhaps she felt her own teaching practices might be characterized in general, by me, or in the final research product, as "bad teaching." If she wanted to run a "tight-ship," she felt that would require her to take on more of an authoritarian role and police students' behavior—a move which she felt betrayed her commitment to humanizing practices. But when students engaged in social conversations after being silent all day or when they shared a collective moment of joy and laughter, it created anxiety for her because it did not fit the rigid expectations of what classroom management should look like. But where did these notions of rigid expectations come from?

The values, knowledge, ways of being, and ways of speaking that are expected and imposed in schools—the grammar of schooling (Tyack & Tobin, 1994)—are informed by the practices of Whiteness (Bauler, 2023). This includes the way students are expected to behave in classrooms (McManus, 2021). In other words, schools operate as "White perceiving subjects" (Flores & Rosa, 2015). A White perceiving subject refers to an entity whose perceptions and interpretations of the world around them are influenced by racialized semiotics

that privilege and normalize Whiteness (Rosa & Flores, 2017). For racially and linguistically minoritized students, such as Newcomer youth whose cultural knowledge and language practices do not reflect what is expected or prioritized by the White perceiving subject that is the grammar of schooling, there is pressure (historically, even by physical force) to adapt one's behavior to what is deemed "appropriate" in schools as determined by White, middle-class, or elite, able-bodied, cis-het masculine norms (Bauler, 2023; Dudley-Marling & Lucas, 2009; Flores & Rosa, 2015; McMannus, 2021; Souto-Manning, 2010). For this reason, schools report disparities in disciplinary actions taken against White, English-monolingual students and racially and linguistically minoritized students (Girvan et al., 2017; Whitford et al., 2019).

Classroom management in research with Newcomer students has been connected to a larger effort to assimilate students in White ways of being through micro-management of student behavior (McManus, 2022). Additionally, neoliberal discourses encourage assimilation into White norms of behavior as advantageous for students by framing it as emotional regulation and self-discipline (Dishon & Goodman, 2017; Sondel et al., 2022). Altogether, then, teachers' urge to control students, especially racially and linguistically minoritized students, is viewed as well-intended and for students' betterment (Castagno, 2013; Leonardo, 2009; Paradise et al., 2014).

Policing students' behavior and insisting that they sit still, be quiet, or get back to work went against the whole-child and humanizing approach that Ms. E was striving for. Ms. E resisted the urge to control students' behavior through traditional classroom management practices, opting instead for a more humanizing approach but in the end, she felt discomfort because this approach was in conflict with the White perceiving subject vis-à-vis the grammar of schooling. The discomfort resulted from a disconnect between the identity and goals she

imagined for herself (e.g., “improving these kids' experiences”) and her understanding of what teaching should look like (e.g., “running a tight ship”) (Pennington & Richards, 2016). The disconnect led her to worry that in fact, she was an example of the “bad teacher.” Extensive research has demonstrated the harm that appropriateness-based, Whiteness-informed standards and ideologies of schooling are harmful to linguistically minoritized students (Baker-Bell, 2020; Cioè-Peña, 2021; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Henner & Robinson, 2023). Here, harm is evident, too, for educators like Ms. E whose pedagogy does not resonate with Whiteness within the grammar of schooling. Evidence of professional and emotional conflict for equity-oriented instructors adds to the growing concern of the mental and emotional impacts of teaching within inequitable structures (Heiman & Yanes, 2018; Amanti, 2019; Snyder Bhansari, 2023).

It is possible, as with the discussion of the connection circles, that Ms. E’s worry about being a “bad teacher” was stronger because I was in the classroom. The presence of a researcher could have made her feel as if her teaching was being evaluated. Research, too, then is implicated as a White perceiving subject that evaluates a teacher’s humanizing practices as inappropriate for school. This conversation did not just alert me to an educational paradigm, but also to the fact that even with my intention of acting in accompaniment with my research teacher collaborator, the traditional power of the researcher as an authoritative academic figure is still present (Fitzpatrick & May, 2022). It was clear that extensive work was required of me as a collaborator—to build trust and good faith—to not conduct research as surveillance but to engage in solidarity within a research-partnership. In fact, I found Ms. E’s insights to be highly relatable to my own experiences as an instructor. She was contending with the desire to support students' collective joy as well as the pressure to enforce a more “disciplined” learning environment. And rather than acknowledging in that moment that she had created the

conditions for a rare moment of communal celebration in school, she internalized her actions as “bad” teaching practices because they did not resemble the hegemonic expectations of schooling.

6.2.2 Vignette #2: Content and Language Choice

Ms. E's framed teaching within an oppositional-binary mindset categorizes her classroom actions strictly as successes or failures. However, she found herself caught between two conflicting standards: her personal commitment to educational equity and her internalization of the grammar of schooling, and with it, Whiteness, individual effort, and monolingualism. This dichotomy created a paradox where her best efforts inevitably fell short by one measure or the other. This conflict manifested in her reflections around classroom management and another prominent area: decisions regarding content and language choice.

As described in Chapter 5, the district-provided curriculum emphasized decontextualized grammar and vocabulary content that Ms. E evaluated as neither culturally and linguistically relevant nor engaging and challenging for her students. Ms. E was driven by her training and personal conviction to be culturally and linguistically sustaining and to promote equitable participation in the classroom, but both approaches require intensive content that holds students to high expectations in a disciplinary practice (Jensen et al., 2021; Valdés, 2018). Ms. E was also convinced that language could and should be learned through content-based instruction and that students deserved to learn in culturally and linguistically responsive ways. However, without pre-existing materials and institutional support, the task felt daunting. In Chapter 5, I described how, when I asked Ms. E how she felt about the literacy curriculum, she expressed her dissatisfaction, but admitted it provided some structure where there was none. Reflecting further, Ms. E said, “If I hated it so much, why am I using it? Well, because

it’s a textbook designed to teach students to acquire English, and I don't have that anywhere else.”

Ms. E’s partial reliance on the grammar and vocabulary-based curriculum that she identified as irrelevant and nonideal both linguistically and culturally for her students is in part a symptom of the multicultural monolingual environment described in the previous chapter. For instance, as the only coordinator for more than 150 students at HHS, she was often pulled in every direction other than where she wanted and felt she needed to be. She once shared with me how difficult it was for her to have meaningful planning time for her class. When I asked if that was typical of all teachers or specific to ELD, she said, “All I know is when I taught Spanish and Latin, the time that I was working was spent on grading and lesson plans, versus now, I'm in this school-wide role and I’m in the office a lot.” I came to understand her plight more in the spring semester when I adapted the SKILLS content for Ms. E’s class. Even adapting existing materials for a once-a-week class occupied far more planning time than Ms. E would typically be allotted. Essentially, Ms. E’s job responsibility had implicitly shifted from language educator to language curriculum developer without additional hours in the day or commensurate compensation. Particularly at the start of the year when fewer adults were present in the classroom, the inadequate planning time meant sometimes the district-provided curriculum was the inevitable choice.

With so little time to pull anything else together, on some days Ms. E would rely on the curriculum that she hated, and then felt bad for doing so. Even on days when she was able to implement other content-based instruction, her belief in the curriculum as the expert (“designed to teach students to acquire English”) and societal pressure for students to acquire English made her feel bad for doing other activities. At times, she was also conflicted about

using Spanish in the classroom. She reflected on these feelings in writing after the school year ended:

> *My choices fell between two bad options for my Newcomer students[...]: "English at them" (provide English input at varying degrees of comprehensibility) vs. leverage my fluency in Spanish and not police social talk in order to provide a safe haven from all those other folks who were Englishing at them all day long. Oftentimes, because I believe a student's humanity is a necessary part of the learning process, I chose the latter one. As an English teacher however, that meant I often ended the day feeling discouraged. Thoughts like, "I am failing them. I am not Englishing at them in the right way. I am not Englishing at them slow or fast enough. How can I English at them more?" reverberated throughout my afternoon into my evenings.*

Similar and related to the oppositional-binary thinking of "good" and "bad" teaching with regard to classroom management, Ms. E was grappling with a perceived binary choice between Spanish and English. Use of Spanish fell in line with her humanizing approach and values and pressure to "English at students" emerged from the monolingual context of English language instruction. This conflict demonstrates her awareness that students were not actively participating in their English language learning, and that they are being passively exposed to English with no guarantee that they understood the meaning. Her phraseology ("Englishing at them") suggests that use of English would be unidirectional and a rejection of student autonomy; to speak, yell, or talk "at" someone implies that the speaker isn't interested or willing to understand or hear back from their interlocutor. In other words, Ms. E perceived that speaking English in her class would be less about serving the students and more about meeting

an imposed standard of “good” teaching just for the sake of it. This, in combination with her recognition of the English monolingualism outside of her classroom, led her to follow her conscience and speak Spanish. But as was the case with the World Cup game, her decision to go against the White perceiving subject that is the grammar of schooling caused her to feel discouraged and wonder about the possibility that she was “failing” her students. Her fears reveal how the dominance of monolingualism ignores the research that use of students’ primary language can accelerate Newcomer students' English and while still maintaining their other language(s) (García et al., 2011; García & Kleifgen, 2010; Steele et al., 2017; Umansky et al., 2022).

The binary on which monolingualism is premised and the impassable line between languages that caused Ms. E so much stress, too, is artificial (Doerr, 2022). Ms. E’s actual language use, as I observed, did not cleanly fall into just Spanish or just English but instead could be characterized as translanguaging to make meaning. Teachers’ translanguaging (Li Wei, 2018) in this way has been shown to be beneficial for learning, inclusion, engagement, and relationship building (Cenoz & Gorter, 2011; García et al., 2011; Lewis et al., 2012; Palmer et al., 2014). But translanguaging is not the same in every context. For instance, it is difficult to sustain and gain the purported benefits of translanguaging when employed in a monolingual environment (Allard, 2017; Deroo & Ponzio, 2019). In this study, it is also evident that for teachers, the choice to translanguage can be accompanied by complicated feelings within a context of multicultural monolingualism like HHS, which outwardly encourages students’ multilingualism (e.g., through use of the term Emergent Multilingual Learner versus English Learner) but strictly maintains the role of the teacher as an arbiter of assimilation into English (see also Snyder Bhansari, 2023). Ms. E's reflections reveal the detrimental impact of a

contradictory environment on educators, illustrating how it can undermine their efforts, lead to discouragement, and cause them to question their critical language awareness, particularly when it lacks institutional support.

6.3 Naming the Paradox

The incongruence between her goals (teaching the whole-person in humanizing, linguistically responsive ways) and the outwardly multicultural, inwardly monolingual conditions of the school proved to be emotionally taxing for Ms. E. In response to the stress of her job, she shared that she made a conscious effort to engage in self-care and self-work, including unpacking these experiences and emotions with her therapist, and making sure to spend time with her children and friends. She said that these efforts were "keeping [her] going this far," but admitted that her stamina was wearing out and in November, disclosed that she would be seeking alternative employment.

For the time being, it seemed that there was no solution to the taxing, binary thinking she was trapped in. As a researcher-teacher collaborator, I tried to be supportive by offering materials and suggestions for activities for class or generally reassuring her, but at the time I, too, had difficulty imagining a sustainable solution for the struggle she was encountering. Recognizing Ms. E's engagement in oppositional-binary thinking was not immediately apparent to either of us. She was not often misled by the pretense of multiculturalism when she encountered monolingualism, such as in the criteria for the Seal of Biliteracy; her professional development and personal study provided her with the language and tools needed to identify monolingual ideologies. Identifying neoliberal ideologies—and understanding how they limited her professional role, worsened teaching conditions, and promoted conformity while discouraging dissent and her advocacy for Newcomer students—proved to be a far more

complex challenge. Neoliberalism was not a concept that Ms. E had come across in her professional training, and while I was aware of the term, at the time, I lacked the theoretical understanding to connect it to Ms. E's teaching experiences.

Over time, our research collaboration, rooted in the principles of accompaniment research, which redistributes power through collective action and transparency, laid the groundwork for a deepened qualitative inquiry and led us to the recognition of the neoliberal ideologies that shaped Ms. E's work and self-reflection. The research process facilitated for us, praxis—"reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" (Freire, 1970, p. 52) and progressively led us toward a post-oppositional understanding. In this section, I expand on how this evolution unfolded, and in the section that follows, I describe the changes in the classroom and Ms. E's thinking that it precipitated.

In February—the start of the second semester at HHS—I was taking a graduate course called Teacher Learning and Knowing in which we were assigned to read the article "How Do Teachers Manage to Teach? Perspectives on Problems in Practice" (1985) by Magdalene Lampert. The epigraph that opens this chapter comes from that text. Lampert writes from the perspective of a teacher-researcher. As the title suggests, this article focuses on Lampert's teaching experiences in her mathematics classroom as "a dilemma manager, a broker of contradictory interests" (p. 178). The dilemma she faced was fostering equal participation for the girls and boys in her class while also responding to a need for classroom management. She summarizes her conundrum as follows:

> *I felt that I faced a forced choice between equally undesirable alternatives. If I continued to use the blackboard near the boys, I might be less aware of and less encouraging toward the more well-behaved girls. Yet, if I switched my position*

to the blackboard on the girls' side of the room, I would be less able to help the boys focus on their work. Whether I chose to promote classroom order or equal opportunity, it seemed that either the boys or the girls would miss something I wanted them to learn. (Lampert, 1985 p. 179)

I read this article line by line with rapt attention, recognizing in its narrative the same pedagogical dilemmas that Ms. E was encountering nearly forty years after Lampert's writing. From Lampert's unique positionality, she was able to articulate the conceptual paradoxes that comprise a teacher's responsibilities. For instance, she writes, "While she [the teacher/researcher] works at solving society's problems and scholars' problems, she also works at coping with her own internal conflicts. She debates with herself about what to do, and instead of screening out responsibilities that contradict one another, she acknowledges them, embraces the conflict, and finds a way to manage" (p. 190). The conclusion Lampert arrives at is that the images of teachers produced by researchers position them as receivers of theory and exempt from their environment. Such images place them in paradoxical circumstances by portraying unresolvable educational problems as resolvable; that is, by suggesting individual teachers can confront any dilemma with the right theory and action. She proposes instead a more true-to-life image of teachers as "dilemma managers" who can acknowledge that, while they may not be able to solve problems on their own, they "can learn to cope" by 1) considering the conditions of their context and 2) making use of their own unique gifts and abilities to mitigate problems as they arise.

Ms. E and I would occasionally recommend podcasts or share article links with one another. After reading Lampert (1985), I wrote an email to Ms. E with a PDF of the article attached. Three hours later, I received a text message from Ms. E that read: "This article 😍."

In the morning, it was followed up by a voice memo from Ms. E explaining, "I just… I want to do this recording because I feel like reading that article… I don't know, maybe I'm dramatic, but I feel like there could be a significant before and after for me…" The bulk of her voice memo is transcribed below:

> *I've spent a lot of time, what my therapist will call self-flagellating or over the fact that I can't solve these problems. When we were assigned professional development books, I would read them and annotate them and like, put post-its on them, and then I'd go into my classroom and be like, "Why am I still having these unsolvable problems?" Whereas, like, now I feel like after having read this paper, when I see these problems I can't solve, I can know that it makes sense. That makes sense for the context that I'm in and for the role that I have. And what's my personal gift that I can bring to help manage this unsolvable problem? What Lampert encouraged me to do was to reach within my own identity to take inventory of my personal assets, resources, and skills and get really good at coping. I can do this by looking for opportunities within the dilemmas to leverage my personal potential but cast aside any hope of "solving" or "fixing" the unending list of "its." This article really validated the personal work that I've been doing as part of my professional work. And I think that now when I go into the classroom and I have these unsolvable problems, I can think, "Oh yeah, like this is a well-documented moment that is something that's occurring in all classrooms, not just mine and what's my personal solution or improvisation gift that's going to allow me to cope and*

allow my students to cope and maximize their outcomes? I'm excited. I'm so excited to see how our classroom changes.

Ms. E's reflection provides an insider's perspective on the challenges of implementing humanizing and linguistically responsive pedagogy in a dehumanizing, monolingual environment. Ms. E had an awareness of monolingual ideologies and the agency to act both in her classroom and beyond, but in spite of directed efforts, she continued to encounter what felt like "unsolvable problems." What was still required to escape the binary thinking and the conceptual paradox was external validation that the problems she faced were not hers to solve alone. Lampert's article acknowledged the inherently messy nature of teaching, which sometimes leads to less-than-ideal choices. This provided Ms. E the self-confidence that her decisions, despite not resembling what is represented by the grammar of schooling, were still beneficial in some way for students. Reflecting on the article, Ms. E came to the same conclusion as Lampert—that rather than placing the burden of "fixing" the entire problem on herself, she could approach the task with a clearer awareness of the environmental limitations as well as with an inventory of her own knowledge, talents, and strengths, and "manage" the dilemma instead.

While our reflection on the text facilitated a transformation in Ms. E's thinking, I felt that the essay was still limited in its characterization of "unsolvable" problems and in its discussion of how and why these "unsolvable" problems emerged. While Lampert speaks to the importance of recognizing the "particulars" of one's teaching environment, an important factor to consider is how those particulars came to be. A parallel in both Ms. E's and Lampert's classrooms is the perception of a forced decision between maintaining class "order" and being responsive to the individual needs of students. While Lampert concludes that teachers must

learn to "manage" the dilemma of balancing conflicting demands, and Ms. E found some peace of mind in recognizing that this dilemma may be inevitable for teachers with large classrooms, again the focus eludes the primary source of the dilemma. The question for me remained: why must teachers have such large classrooms in the first place?

The same week that Lampert's article was assigned for the graduate class, we were also scheduled to read Chapter 6 of Bettina Love's (2019) book, *We Want to Do More Than Survive: Abolitionist Teaching and the Pursuit of Educational Freedom*. In this chapter titled, "Theory Over Gimmicks: Finding Your North Star," Love describes theory as a "location for healing" (p. 124) as theory "gives you language to fight, knowledge to stand on, and a humbling reality of what intersectional and social justice is up against" (p. 132). She provides an overview to introduce several critical theories, such as Critical Race Theory, Black Feminist Theory, Queer Theory, and finally, in a section titled "What Lies Beneath," neoliberalism. Connecting neoliberalism to teaching practice, Love says:

> *The teacher strikes of 2018 have everything to do with neoliberalism. The neoliberal agenda in terms of public education is decades old [...] instead of adequately funding schools, ensuring teachers have the resources and support to teach dark children beyond survival, and increasing teacher pay, school districts and city governments sustain the educational survival complex. (p. 145)*

It was upon reading this chapter that the paradox became clearer for me. Neoliberalism was not named in Lampert's (1985) article, but its effects in normalizing challenging teaching conditions can be identified when reading with that lens. Using this as a starting point, I revisited the data with this new theoretical orientation and arrived at the term "multicultural

monolingualism" in early drafts of Chapter 5. I gave the draft to Ms. E as a part of the member-checking process and for the first time, introduced this idea of multicultural monolingualism. I explained it to her in a conversation. This is how it was written up in the draft:

> *We use "multicultural" from Kubota's (2016) neoliberal multiculturalism to describe the ways in which neoliberal and monolingual ideologies collaborate such that monolingualism becomes undetectable (Godley, et al., 2007), and whereby educators and policymakers are able to continue in the cognitive dissonance of celebrating multilingualism while segregating a particular group of students for the purpose of linguistic remediation [...] While monolingualism might be recognized and inspire action from a critically conscious educator, discourses of neoliberalism that emphasize individual effort, hard work, and merit might create unrealistic expectations for an instructor to try and tackle monolingual structures on their own and hinder strategic, collaborative forms of resistance.*

She responded to the definition with a comment that said "wowwww this hits home hardcore." The concept struck a chord with Ms. E, inspiring her to engage in reflective writing that subsequently contributed to the data for Chapter 7. She also conveyed to me that she embraced the idea and shared it with fellow educators in a micro-credentialing program she participated in later that academic year, where it similarly resonated. The point that resonated with them was the disconnect between institutional messages promoting equity and cultural responsiveness and the lack of concrete support for teachers to implement these concepts. This gap exists alongside the heightened pressures teachers face, which are compounded by the simplistic binaries of "good" versus "bad" teaching that are prevalent in

the political discourse surrounding teaching (Stacey et al., 2022). From this juncture in our collaboration, our reflections moved beyond assessing lessons and activities as "good," and instead focused on strategies for navigating and "managing" the contradictions we encountered in the classroom going forward.

6.4 Managing to Teach in the Paradox

The dictionary defines the verb "to manage" as the capacity to survive or reach one's goals, particularly in the face of significant challenges; it also means to cope with difficulties. Lampert expands on this, noting that to “manage” to do something can also imply a certain resourcefulness, suggesting that the act of managing may involve contriving to do something, indicating that inventiveness or improvisation is an essential part of a manager's skill set. This interpretation posits that a manager is someone adept at finding ways to accomplish tasks, with action and creativity being integral to the process of management. In Chapter 5, I documented Ms. E's resourcefulness and her ability to effectively "manage" within a multicultural, monolingual environment. In this section, I will explore how Ms. E “managed” teaching, harnessing renewed energy that came from naming the paradox and the coalescence of more favorable conditions resulting from her agency and action described in Chapter 5. This allowed me to witness the potential of Ms. E's teaching approach when circumstances were better aligned with her methods.

Ms. E was able to reap the benefits of her agency and action in the spring semester—benefits which included meaningful shifts in her own teaching environment. Those shifts included the presence of more adults in the classroom and the availability of more easily adapted culturally and linguistically content. The arrival of the new bilingual paraeducator and three bilingual undergraduates mitigated the problem of the large classroom at least once a

week. The biggest help came when, in the spring, teacher candidates in a local teacher education program began regular fieldwork and student teaching—one in her Spanish class and one in her SEI/ELD class with Newcomer students. Their student teaching time freed up more time for Ms. E's planning and guaranteed that there was at least one other adult in the room every day. These personnel changes coincided with her acquisition of new teaching materials (Chapter 5) as well as the start of the SKILLS program once a week in class.

Ms. E and I collaborated to align the content that she implemented (e.g., Efrain Tovar's templates) with content for SKILLS. As a SKILLS instructor, I had the time and access to materials that Ms. E did not. The strength and gift that Ms. E brought to our collaboration was a deep knowledge of students' individual needs and their backgrounds to make content truly responsive to the students in that class. The patience and effort she had spent familiarizing herself with each of those students' experiences and identities was valuable for informing the formulation of the SKILLS content.

One student in particular, Dominik (pseudonym), concerned Ms. E, and we often discussed him in reflection interviews. He was very reserved and disconnected from the rest of the class. Rather than socializing with others, he preferred to watch anime or play games on his tablet. He was willing to engage in class activities involving reading and writing but was very reluctant to converse or to share any written work with other students, even in Spanish. When Ms. E eventually learned that Dominik spoke Nahuatl at home with his parents and siblings, she thought that this might be an avenue to engage him in SKILLS content. We collaborated together on bringing Nahuatl into one of the SKILLS lessons. In a class focused on breaking down the distinction between named languages and dialects, we shared and discussed a YouTube video titled, "Todas se llaman lenguas" ("They are all called languages").

Figure 7. Screenshot of Youtube Video, "Todas se llaman lenguas"

Link to video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Vck43KLPKc&t=32s

In the video, a series of speakers list language names including indigenous languages, before stating, in their own chosen language, "They're all called languages." Around the one minute mark, the speaker uses Nahuatl. Before watching the video, students were asked to think about and respond to the question: "What is the message of the video? Why do you think this video was made?"

Because there were enough adults in the room, we were each able to work in small groups with students and engage them in that day's task. Ms. E was seated at Dominik's table. When we played the video, students were attentive and interested; they seemed to be excited to hear new and unfamiliar languages (e.g., Zapotec, Polish, Catalán). When the Nahuatl speaker began to talk, suddenly, this student who had been almost silent all year began loudly translating the Nahuatl to Spanish for his classmates. He was loud enough that I could hear

him from the table I was working with across the room. As he continued, Ms. E and I made eye contact with complete shock. Reflecting afterwards, Ms. E celebrated, "[Dominik] talked today! So much, did you hear him? So, when the video was going, he was shouting the translation, like so loud!" While this moment was brief, it was impactful. Ms. E's instinct contributed to this moment of confidence for Dominik and this moment of uncontested success for her as a teacher resulted in feelings of joy for both. She shared afterwards that she leveraged that moment to encourage him to try translating the Spanish-English bilingual handout into Nahuatl as well.

To follow up this topic, we asked students to create language maps modeled after a pre-service teacher training activity by Martínez and Mejía (2020). The purpose of the exercise is to help participants develop a more nuanced understanding of their students' various linguistic repertoires and to recognize their own linguistic variation and complexity, which is often ignored in education spaces. We created graphic organizers for students to use to notice, document, and represent the multitude of ways that they use language in different spaces and with different people (see Appendix C). About a week later, Ms. E sent an excited text saying, "I couldn't wait till tomorrow, I have to show you!" She was excited because Dominik had completed his language map. This language map would later serve as the jumping-off point for Dominik's SKILLS Day project which he presented independently with Ms. E cheering him on (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Dominik's SKILLS Day Poster

While this example of our work with Dominik might seem like a small win to some, they are important. In Vignettes 1 and 2 of this chapter, it is not that Ms. E found teaching unenjoyable, but rather that the conditions at the time rendered the joyful moments of teaching infrequent. This example from later in the school year illustrates that, even with minimal support, when conditions are conducive for educators, equity-oriented teaching—such as humanizing and linguistically responsive approaches—can be a source of joy rather than merely a struggle, which is vital for the sustainability of such work.

6.5 Conclusion

Ms. E’s experiences analyzed in this chapter speak to a pedagogical tension from her own competing demands of humanizing pedagogy versus conformity and equity versus monolingualism. This conceptual and pedagogical paradox was worsened by the constraints of limited class time. Similar tensions have been documented in studies that critique neoliberal influences on contemporary education paradigms. Specifically, when student interactions and teaching practices violate the hegemonic expectations of the grammar of schooling, they are reinscribed via neoliberal discourses of efficiency as a waste of limited instructional time (De Lissovoy, 2015; Philip et al., 2019; Taylor, 2022). Ms. E's struggle over whether to translanguage while teaching English or to "English at" her students existed because of the pressure for students to be able to access content instruction, which is taught only in English. In her struggle, and in guidance to engage in "culturally responsive ELD" instruction, there is little consideration of why fluency in English is a prerequisite for learning in the first place (Flores & Garcia, 2020). This is not to say that students should not learn or be taught English; in my work, I have argued that use of English can function as a means for racialized and linguistically minoritized speakers to resist the raciolinguistic frames that their interlocutors inscribe onto them (e.g., Harris & Lee, 2024). Rather, I would argue that these debates do nothing to disrupt the monolingual status quo of teaching of and through English alone. The harm that monolingualism exacts upon students is well-documented; in this chapter, we see how it is also tied to harm for their educators.

In summary, Ms. E's evaluation of her teaching was informed by two conflicting sources: her critical stance as a teacher advocate and the monolingual White perceiving subject within the grammar of schooling. The former prioritized responding to the whole

language learner and the latter only on assimilating learners into one language and with a focus only on decontextualized language and not on their social, emotional, mental health, and physical needs. This conflict led her to internalize educational inequities for Newcomer students as individual failures, rather than recognizing that they are rooted in systemic harm, resulting in harmful feelings such as anxiety and guilt.

The findings presented here demonstrate how susceptible even equity-oriented educators are to the subtle ideological paradox of multicultural monolingualism which impacts all areas of teaching and normalizes harmful, dehumanizing teaching conditions. Findings in this chapter illustrate also the importance of teachers' awareness of the emotions related to their practice. Research does acknowledge the presence of emotion in teaching (Jaggar, 1989; Benesch, 2018), but emotion is often framed often as ancillary to the pedagogical work itself (Snyder Bhansari, 2023). For this reason, teacher education, professional development, and related research should prioritize the cultivation of emotional reflection in addition to critical reflexivity on teaching practices *in relation* to the larger teaching environment. Ms. E's and my engagement in collective reflection via our research collaboration and eventual recognition of the paradox of multicultural monolingualism seemed to alleviate some of the emotional struggles Ms. E had been contending with. University-school partnerships might therefore be an opportune site for further exploring the affordances of collective reflexivity. Alternatively, opportunities for like-minded educators to connect and engage in collective reflexive practice even across classrooms and school sites might also hold some promise. A productive outcome from this study is the finding avenues for praxis and joy through such collaboration. I hope that this work will inspire future studies to expand upon and maximize these outcomes.

7. Confronting Whiteness in SEI/ELD

"When we can begin to tap into the deep vessel of who we truly are, so many things would end about oppression. I believe the powers that be don't want us rested because they know if we rest enough, we are going to figure out what is really happening and overturn the entire system." — Tricia Hersey, *Rest is Resistance: A Manifesto,* 2022, p. 29

In this chapter, I confront the critical yet often overlooked influence of Whiteness in Structured English Immersion/English Language Development (SEI/ELD). Chapter 5 revealed how monolingualism, cloaked in neoliberal multiculturalism, constrained Ms. E's agency and permeated every level of the educational ecosystem. Chapter 6 highlighted the resilience of the grammar of schooling, rooted in Whiteness, which positions it as a White perceiving subject, and illustrated how neoliberalism masks detrimental teaching conditions as normal, leading to a paradoxical experience for those engaged in equity and justice efforts. This final chapter turns to the core of the paradox—the underpinnings of the ecology: Whiteness. White Supremacy Culture is the foundation of multicultural monolingualism, as shown previously in Figure 1 (Chapter 4). While Ms. E was not always aware of the ways it constrained her efforts as a teacher advocate or her goals for implementing humanizing and linguistically responsive pedagogy, Whiteness was a major theme in her reflections when considering her personal and professional identities. In this chapter, I focus on this theme that emerged at the personal level to investigate some remaining questions: What was this teacher's journey toward becoming an ideologically aware instructor (including her attention to Whiteness)? How does she understand her role as an English instructor in the larger multicultural monolingual landscape of schooling?

In this chapter, I explore Ms. E's account of how she grew her linguistic-ideological awareness, including developing racial literacy through self-reflection and collective reflexivity with colleagues and mentors. Racial literacy, as defined by Sealey-Ruiz (2013), "is a skill and practice in which individuals are able to probe the existence of racism and examine the effects of race and institutionalized systems on their experiences and representation in US society" (p. 386). For teachers, this means being able to talk about and respond to racism with students, to be alert to the impact of race in their own practices, and to interrogate school structures, systems, and processes that harm racialized students (Sealy-Ruiz, 2021). Ms. E described how she moved from a position of White saviorism to a curious and growth-oriented stance that was supported through different opportunities (some implicit, some explicit), to relationally explore race, its impacts, and her own Whiteness.

Findings in this chapter reveal the challenges Ms. E faced during her transition to and experiences within SEI/ELD, as she grappled with moving beyond an individual understanding of linguistic discrimination, privilege, and racism. This struggle marked her journey toward critical language and racial ideological awareness, as well as a recognition of White supremacy and English monolingualism as systemic issues. Some of this struggle, again, emerged from the neoliberal ideologies embedded within the multicultural monolingual environment of contemporary SEI/ELD. Finally, I detail how Ms. E's choice to depart from SEI/ELD, coupled with her engagement in our collaborative ethnographic partnership, represented acts of defiance against neoliberal ideologies surrounding teacher labor and advocacy. Her emotional trajectory throughout the school year culminates in her departure. Yet, the findings here—especially her rationale for leaving—offer valuable insights into the constructive steps that can follow such fatigue and other forms of burnout.

Much of the data presented in this chapter come from a 2-hour interview that I conducted with Ms. E on the final day of the school year. The analysis of the findings in this chapter has many autoethnographic elements as it incorporates Ms. E's personal narrative and reflections as central components of the research. Autoethnography involves an analysis of an author's lived experiences as a sort of self-interview (Ellis et al., 2011; Moosavi, 2022). In autoethnography, authors can reflect on their lived experiences and begin to disassemble hegemonic ideologies (Sawyer & Norris, 2013) and call into question accepted norms and values within a particular culture. For this reason, autoethnography has been identified as a vehicle for fostering ideological awareness with teachers (Ponzio, 2021; Yazan, 2023). The purpose of the interview was not development of ideological awareness itself, but instead operated as a sort of analytic exercise for Ms. E to reflect on the various factors across her life that fostered her racial and linguistic ideological awareness. Furthermore, the collaborative and reflexive aspects of this study, where both Ms. E and I were engaged in a partnership along with the consistent member checking, enabled Ms. E to function as a co-researcher, actively participating in the analysis and interpretation of the data. However, despite the autoethnographic openness of the study, Ms. E's choice to remain anonymous points to a conscious navigation of the vulnerabilities associated with exposing one's personal and professional identity, especially when critiquing one's workplace and the systemic structures within.

7.1 Developing Linguistic and Racial Ideological Awareness

7.1.1 Acknowledging Linguistic and Racial Difference

As a product of the community she now serves, Ms. E had a lifetime of familiarity with the neighborhood around HHS, which gave her a unique perspective and understanding of the

challenges and opportunities facing her students; this hometown history also informed her early steps toward linguistic and racial ideological awareness. Ms. E reported that she became aware of the presence of race and of her own Whiteness at a very young age. In elementary school, she was one of only a few White students, and race was already a noteworthy social factor and subject of discussion for her and her mostly Latina childhood friends. It became even more salient to her upon transition to junior high school when she became aware of the racial segregation in her town.

I noticed right away because I used to take the bus to school with all of the Latino kids, Filipino kids, Vietnamese kids… I remember being on the bus with all my friends, getting to school, going to class and being in classes with all White kids. And then I would finish the day and I would get back on the bus and be with all my friends. You know what I mean? It was super obvious to me.

These experiences themselves weren't enough to become aware of racial hierarchies or to formulate her advocacy stance, but they were the starting point of her awareness of racial difference and inequality. Further development of her racial and linguistic ideological awareness would occur later on, in part owing to happenings in her own home. Ms. E's parents— conservative, working class, and very religious—had a controlling and restrictive parenting style. As young as fifth grade, her femininity and sexuality were heavily policed, complicating her relationship with her parents and pushing her away from their religious orientation. As she recounted her life, from that point it became very much a story about seeking guidance and direction outside of the home for support. She found her way to a number of impactful mentors. For instance, when her relationship with her father became strained in high school after he lost his job, she found solace in a particularly enjoyable Latin course. She

remembered the teacher as being funny and effective. He would often say to students, "Well, when you're a Latin teacher, you'll tell *your* students…" The expression was a bit of a prophecy for Ms. E, as she settled on Classics Languages (Latin) as a college major with the hopes of teaching it one day. In freshman year of college, she found a similar connection with a professor in a general education course in American Indian Studies and served as their research assistant for a project related to Indigenous language materials. This became her minor studies area. She credited these educational experiences for helping her to develop her critical lens for thinking about language and race.

> *While I'm taking Latin and Greek the bulk of my work is Western Civ, and then the other bulk of my work is American Indian Studies. And I remember a therapy session being like, I feel like this is on purpose. I feel like these things are so, so different, but there must be some reason why my interests intersect here. And I think that all led to me being able to see Whiteness very distinct like that, contrast of those two things being my area of expertise. It at least opened a curiosity.*

Classics, the study of the languages, culture, and history of "Western Civilization," is, at its center, the origin story of Whiteness and what is imagined as "White" culture (Poser, 2021). American Indian Studies, meanwhile, deals with languages, culture, and history of the people against whom Whiteness was constructed and wielded as a weapon for oppression, displacement, forced assimilation, and genocide (Teuton, 2009). Ms. E admits that the juxtaposition of her studies was not enough for her to begin critically deconstructing systems she was familiar with, but it was enough to force Whiteness into the foreground.

During college, she also had her first teaching experiences. She participated in a program where she assisted in a second-grade classroom, providing homework help and enrichment activities. She noted that she was the only person in the program who was not from the community and the only person who did not speak Spanish. Experiences in this role began to spark her awareness of monolingualism in education. She shared a specific example:

> *So, I'm working at this program with a Newcomer. His name's Luis (pseudonym) doesn't speak English. He can't do his math homework. It's word problems. I look at this and I'm like, this is not accessible. So, I go to the teacher first thing in the morning, all the kids are lined up, the teacher is probably completely overwhelmed. I didn't have that context. I say, "Hey, I just want to know can we modify this for him so that it's accessible?" And she looks at me and goes, "I have a class of x number of second graders. If he's sitting down and quiet, that's all I need from him." Now, I'm thinking like "That's fucked up," but at the time, she's the authority. So, it's like, "Oh, okay… thank you so much," you know? And I leave but as I'm driving home, I'm like… that seems fucked up, because I'm coming out of a system where I was always trying to get affirmation from my teachers. I didn't know teachers could be like that, you know?*

This interaction was impactful for Ms. E; she was witnessing, or at least recognizing, for the first time how an educator's treatment of students could be different and even harmful based on the student's language and identity. Looking back on this moment, Ms. E stops to note that the teacher at the time was "probably completely overwhelmed," perhaps seeing a bit of her

own experience reflected in that memory. But while acknowledging that challenge for teachers in general, she does not excuse the teacher's disregard for the student's needs.

Ms. E internalized the injustice of this moment and also remembers her own "many failures" with Luis.

> *I had a little Spanish dictionary that I would carry around with me. There's so many instances where I did this kid wrong. He was fighting with a girl, and I wanted him to apologize, so I looked up the word, sorry. And it says, "Lo siento." And he says, "Disculpa." I said, "No, I want you to tell her you're sorry," He says, "Discupla." and I keep going, "No…" because I don't have the awareness that he IS saying sorry. It's just a different word than what's in my little dictionary. This poor kid, you know?*

Participation in service-learning programs for undergraduate students (such as the one described here by Ms. E) has been influential in the development of students' empathy and respect for people who are different from them, their sense of civic responsibility, as well as a deeper understanding of their own identity (Cox & McAdams, 2012; Mather et al., 2012). As an undergraduate participant in this program, Ms. E was surrounded by linguistic and cultural difference, and the linguistic difference between her and her student, Luis, was very salient to her. Service-learning experiences are also credited as ways for students to reflect on and critique their own cultural assumptions and values (King, 2004); we see this here as Ms. E's perception of education, informed by her own childhood experiences as a model student, was shattered when she witnessed Luis' educational reality. Perhaps this was her first window to multicultural monolingualism: As part of this program, she was engaged in service-learning by supporting a Newcomer student's math education but with no prerequisite of her being

bilingual and no structures in place for his equitable access. While at the time she did not identify this as a systemic problem or as related to race, it directed her to the monolingualism of schooling. The second example involving Luis also informed her of how her monolingualism could impact students. *Disculpa* and *lo siento* are just two of many phrases in Spanish to express remorse. But not being familiar with this variation at that time, Ms. E relied on her Spanish-English dictionary and continued to scold Luis despite him following her instructions. It is not clear at what point she realized this mistake, but rather than raising concerns about Luis' need to acquire English, she identified this as a signal to begin her own linguistic growth and was determined to learn Spanish.

In her efforts to learn Spanish, she became TESOL-certified online. She then applied and was hired for a position teaching English in Chile. Her time spent in South America facilitated her learning of Spanish, but also expanded her growing critical understanding of race and racism by being outside of the U.S. and having exposure to White racial frameworks in this new context. For instance, she learned about the prevalence of colorism in those communities. She admitted, too, that she was shocked when she met Black and Asian Spanish speakers and reflected on this surprise. Although she did not have this terminology, she was able to identify that her internalized raciolinguistic ideologies (Flores & Rosa, 2015) had limited her recognition of the diversity of racial and linguistic identities. Indeed, research has suggested that studying or working abroad, similar to service-learning, can foster an awareness of hegemonic ideologies, but can also reproduce existing colonial relationships (Barkhuizen, 2022). Ms. E did not sign up for or seek out any programs or perspectives that critically interrogated these dynamics involved in language teacher work/education abroad, but she would not be able to elude them. While in Chile, she became well-acquainted with a colleague

from Australia. In their conversations, they reflected on the nature of language and race, as well as on their role as English teachers. She described what she learned from those conversations:

> *He was talking about how what we were doing was akin to imperialism, and he had this whole thing about how, "I don't know how I feel about the whole world learning English." And those conversations, I think were helpful to me like I was like, "Oh, you're kinda right. I can see how this is like similar to a cultural genocide or at least ethnocentrism." One of the conversations we talked about was the Aboriginal experience in Australia because I had come out of this American Indian Studies program. We found common phenomena.*

Their conversations echo an increasing awareness that English has been a language of colonialism and imperialism, enforced violently and through policies of assimilation, with the field of TESOL enduring partially as a remnant of these colonial efforts (Canagarajah, 1999; Gerald, 2022; Motha, 2014; Pennycook, 1998). This remembered encounter is consistent with the view that exploring the racial and colonial dynamics of TESOL is an essential step in addressing them (Mackie, 2003). As two White educators teaching English abroad, Ms. E and her colleague articulated the problematic nature of their role. Again, the forced visibility of Whiteness was enough to raise questions of ethics, but they did not arrive at any particular conclusion about what to do moving forward. However, their collective reflection was perhaps more effective for Ms. E because of the historical context from her American Indian Studies program to ground it in. Her awareness of this oppressive colonial history of English teaching continued to develop throughout her ten-year teaching career.

7.1.2 From Awareness to Practice

Prior to her formal entry into her K-12 teaching career, much of Ms. E's ideological awareness was fostered by these chance encounters with supportive educators, friends, and colleagues. But she still had a lot of growing to do. When reflecting on her own equity orientation, she would also often point to experiences in the classroom and professional development opportunities that had had a lasting impact. She applied for a credential program for single-subject teaching in world languages while she was still in Chile. Upon acceptance, she relocated to Southern California where the program was based. Notably, however, she did not often reference her teacher education program (TEP) throughout our research together. When I asked in this final interview if her program ever addressed racism and its connections to language, she replied, "No. Never named. [But it was] implicit."

She student-taught Latin at a magnet school in Southern California. Her recollection of this early career experience resembled that of teachers well-documented in research. That is, she began with good intentions, but, by her own admittance, relied mostly on deficit perspectives of her students, most of whom were Black and Latinx (Delpit, 2006; Gay, 2010). She explained at that time, teaching Latin, "I felt like I was saving people." The White savior complex or White-saviorism is understood as a benevolent stance taken by White persons and institutions wherein they position themselves as heroic liberators of urban students of color from a self-made condition of subordination and poverty without a recognition of White culpability in that oppression (Matias, 2013; 2016). In our interview, Ms. E reflected on how she inhabited a White savior mindset that was attached to the context of teaching Latin:

> *It was from a savior place where I was like, these are the keys to the castle because if Latinx students learned Latin, you know, it's ninety percent of the*

domain-specific vocabulary they'd be able to walk into their bio classes or their history classes. And like all of these SAT words, all of a sudden are more transparent.

There's extensive research on how acquisition of standardized and academic English has been positioned as holding "promise" for Black, Latinx and other linguistically and racially minoritized students (Baker-Bell, 2020; Johnson, 2022; Flores et al., 2018). These attitudes inform assimilationist educational interventions that position these students and their communities as linguistically deficient, and obscure racial discrimination and oppression (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Rosa, 2016; Valenzuela, 1999). In this case, early in her career, Ms. E viewed Latin as a means for racially minoritized students to acquire "SAT words," a shorthand for academic standardized English. Referring to Latin using the feudal metaphor of "keys to the castle," she recalls her view of this language as a means of "saving" Black and Latinx students by scaffolding them into academic language. In fact, she explained that she came out of TEP with the goal of having "Latin classes that reflected the demographics of the school" (as opposed to mostly White, like in her secondary schooling experience). Her account joins research that demonstrates how personal commitment to linguistic responsivity and equitable language teaching can also be translated in practice to maintain dominant, monolingual, White-centric education paradigms (Chang-Bacon, 2020; Deroo & Ponzio, 2019; Razfar, 2012).

Yet again, Ms. E benefited from the opportunity to engage in collective reflexivity. Her cooperating teacher at that school site was a White Jewish man who attributed his own "critical awareness" (her words) to his many school leaders and colleagues of color. In response to her stated reason for teaching Latin, he would tell her, "That's problematic too … there's problems with that thinking too." She reflected with gratitude on this feedback and how he would often

push her to examine her thinking by "asking her questions" and, she said laughing, "never giving any answers." While he didn't explicitly name the ideologies or practicalities that he found problematic in her thinking, his tendency to ask questions was enough to force her to consciously think about and evaluate her stance and allow her to arrive at a personal understanding of the problematic nature of her initial reasoning for teaching Latin.

After obtaining her teaching credential, Ms. E spent one year at her first job teaching Latin on the East Coast. The following school year, she was able to obtain a similar position back in her hometown in California. The knowledge that she gained from all of her prior experiences, including her revised opinion about the potential of Latin for linguistically minoritized students, was transferable and evident upon her return.

> *I come [back] and the Latin teacher here is telling me how to sell the program. He's telling me that you know Latin is for smart kids and I remember being like… I don't believe you. And I'm also not willing to market that way, like I'm not going to lie to people.*

With some experience now behind her, Ms. E was not just developing awareness but also encountering opportunities to exercise some agency and apply those critical perspectives in practice. A year later, she transferred to the same junior high school that she had attended. Unchanged from when she was a student, the school demographics were mostly White. She shared that early on in this role she tried to introduce more diversity into her course content by including stories with characters of color. One day in class, a White student made a racist comment about one of the characters. This would be just one example of a series of "racist incidents" she recalled that made her realize she did not have the tools or knowledge in a way that she felt was adequate and necessary. So, she began "looking for tools" to confront racism

in her classroom and asking, "How do I interrupt this? How do I address this?" This was the beginning of her professional and educational investment in forming racial literacy.

Her strategy was to pursue any available professional development on the topic of racism, equity, and anti-racist teaching. The first event that she attended was hosted by an non-profit organization that focused on equity in education. It was a five-day residence workshop that explored the history and legacy of racism. The impact of this training, though it had taken place a full eight years prior to our research-collaboration, was evident. Ms. E referred to that experience numerous times throughout the year to ground her identification of and efforts to counteract the injustice she was witnessing in HHS (Chapter 5). In particular, she remembered an activity where she reflected on the segregation in her community with teachers of color, who she had grown up and gone to school with. She recounted the emotional impact of learning about the harm segregation had caused them. Another more recent professional development had specifically focused on anti-racist language teaching, wherein educators were engaged in learning experiences around the needs of "emergent multilingual learners" or "EMLs."

> *The whole training was about EMLs. I was the only non-ELD person who was there. It did a lot of good, as far as teaching me how to best serve heritage speakers [...] it wasn't until after that training that I really felt empowered to have discussions about diversity, equity, inclusion, and representation. Like, does this story strengthen a stereotype, or does it combat it and why? Who's represented, who isn't?*

Around this time, she was also introduced to and became active in a local teachers group that centered around allyship and equity that emerged out of the same program that held the five-day training. This group connected her with a local supportive network of like-minded

teachers in the area. After two years of the group's operation, Ms. E observed that the organizers, who were mostly teachers of color, were unpaid for this labor, and she appealed to leadership at her school and secured regular funding for the group organizers for subsequent years. This group became an important professional learning community that also helped to shape her understanding of ELD teaching as a profession, and teaching at large.

When the Latin program at her school closed, Ms. E was offered and accepted a position teaching Spanish. She accepted the role for the time being but did not shut herself off to other opportunities because she viewed herself as a "guest in this language," specifically expressing concerns about being "another White lady Spanish teacher." By this point, Ms. E had constructed a teacher identity, shaped by her previous experiences, that prioritized paying attention to the ways in which she might be participating in the harm of linguistically and racially minoritized students. Because she was a White nonnative speaker of Spanish, Ms. E had to confront the fact that many of her students who were Latinx and heritage speakers of the language had a very different connection and experience with the Spanish language. As a result, she was worried about her capacity to be responsive in that role. Latin, which, like English, is primarily associated with Whiteness and therefore privilege, did not create the same conflict of interest for Ms. E. Although Spanish is also a colonial language, in the U.S. it is now also racialized and the focus of many discriminatory policies and practices.

Ms. E referred to her concerns as "an identity crisis." With TESOL experience, she thought that teaching English might feel more authentic and meaningful, and approached her administrator to be considered for the role. The position was occupied at the time by a White monolingual English-speaking woman. My proximity to HHS via the SKILLS program was relevant to this moment, as this instructor was known to the program because of the deficit

attitudes she had toward her own students, but also because multiple SKILLS instructors had witnessed and reported her racist comments directed at our Latinx and Asian American undergraduate mentors as well. Her reputation and tenure in the job for several years would become relevant to findings which I discuss later in this chapter.

This previous teacher retired a year after Ms. E's request, but by then, Ms. E had a very young child and was pregnant. When the job was offered to her, she declined, saying, "I have the heart for this and I have the know-how but, my current situation is not what you need for this role. You need somebody who can give it their all…" Leadership found an alternative candidate who Ms. E described as a "great teacher," and noted her credentials in English and Spanish as well as her Latinx heritage. This teacher, according to Ms. E, put in a tremendous amount of effort at HHS with positive results. However, Ms. E cited the demands of this job with few resources and little support as the reasons this teacher left teaching altogether after her third year in that role. When HHS's number of Newcomer students grew in the year after the pandemic, the school then had to split the previously single SEI/ELD course into two. A recently graduated teacher was assigned to one class and Ms. E was given the other. "And then now," she explained, "We're here. That's how I came to be an ELD teacher."

7.2 Teaching in SEI/ELD

7.2.1 White Saviors and Altruistic Shields

Two years after her transition into the ELD space and ten years after her official start of teaching, Ms. E was already planning her exit to another school and another teaching context. After learning about and witnessing the work that she put into teaching English at HHS (as seen in Chapters 5 and 6), I was curious to understand this transition. After all, her predecessor only lasted three years, but the person who held the position before stayed much

longer. The earliest sign that Ms. E planned to leave occurred in November. In a reflection interview where Ms. E was contemplating how to approach classroom management (described in Chapter 6), she shared that she was preparing her resume to look for other employment in and outside of education. I asked her what she felt that she needed. After giving it some thought she explained:

> *I think the way to survive in this role is you have to have a healthy dose of "savior mindset." You have to really believe that you're saving people. And you also have to kind of buy into an "English supremacy" mindset, you have to really feel like... what you are doing is somehow better than what they would get elsewhere…*

For Ms. E, sustainability in this professional role as an English teacher was dependent upon the adherence to the White, monolingual grammar of schooling by adopting a "savior" and "English supremacy" mindset. It has been argued along these lines that because the category of English learner itself emerges from a deficit perspective and ignores students' multilingual resources (Bartlett & García, 2011), educators in SEI/ELD classrooms are susceptible to a "savior complex" (Green & Dantley, 2013). However, here Ms. E pushes this argument further and suggests that logics and conditions of SEI/ELD education are such that adopting a savior mindset and English supremacy is the only way to maintain that career path long-term. And so, she found herself in a place once again where she felt her imposed professional identity as an SEI/ELD instructor was incompatible with the identity she imagined for herself.

Ms. E later built on this idea explaining that, from her experience, ELD teaching is largely occupied by monolingual English-speaking White women. In fact, the national average

for ELD teachers is 86% women and 87% White (NCES, 2021); data on ELD teacher language proficiency is not available. Of these White ELD teachers she said:

> *A lot of what they're doing is coming from, like altruism. You know. And so what that breeds is curriculum or experiences that infantilize students. They miss the opportunity to break out of the classroom.*

Her analysis is similar to the research that identifies how deficit perspectives towards English learner designation can lead teachers to engage in an "infantilizing" pedagogy (Duff & Talmy, 2011) and/or attempts to "water down" content until English proficiency is reached (Callahan, 2005; Murphy & Torff, 2019). These practices are not aligned with evidence that students designated as English learners benefit from demanding and challenging curriculum, provided they are given appropriate linguistic support (Harvey, 2015; Hill & Miller, 2008; Taboada, 2014). While research connects this to language attitudes and ideologies, Ms. E traces it back to benevolent "altruism" and "White saviorism" and the unconfronted Whiteness of ELD teachers and the ELD teaching profession. Gerald (2020) coined the term "altruistic shield" as an ideological tool by which White English teachers absolve themselves of racism by claiming that their work is altruistic or self-sacrificing. In this way, White teachers defend themselves from in-the-moment charges of racism (p. 22).

Gerald later (2022) connected this to discourse about teachers on social media platforms that suggests that because teachers "work hard" they should be excused for racist behaviors. The notion that additional labor can absolve anyone from taking accountability for their own racist actions and attitudes encapsulates the essence of multicultural monolingualism, as neoliberal ideologies of "hard work" and "niceness" are shown to be effective for nullifying confrontation of Whiteness/racism or reform (Bramen, 2018). The

slipperiness of these discourses was at one point evidenced by Ms. E's own adoption of that stance to defend these women. During an initial overview of the findings, she admitted that she felt conflicted about the critique she offered above because, "those women also helped me a lot this year." Once again, as seen in Chapter 5, while Ms. E identified the influence of monolingualism and Whiteness with relative ease, the influence of neoliberal ideologies complicated her analysis, and she reverted back to the "altruistic" shield, though not on her own behalf.

7.2.2 "Englishy English Teachers" and A System that Requires English

While Ms. E was hesitant to critique her White colleagues, she did not otherwise hold back her argument that the SEI/ELD context was deeply embedded in monolingual Whiteness. To that end, she provided what she felt was her strongest piece of evidence:

> *The number one thing I can think of is the selection process for the ELD teacher is not the same as looking for a math teacher or Spanish teacher. It's really based on who is a warm body with a good personality. Honestly, I think that part is just luck of the draw, but it was like… who's available that we can stretch into this role rather than going out and advertising for a professional who is trained in it.*

Her suggestion that school leadership would fill the role with "anyone who is available" could imply that she perceives her own placement in that role in that way and with disregard for her as an experienced professional; after all, she had her own concerns about her fitness for the role and being able to "give it her all." The practice of differential teacher placement resonates with the research that reveals how Newcomer students and students categorized as English learners are often placed with inexperienced or unprepared teachers (e.g., Dabach 2014; 2015;

Gandara & Maxwell-Jolly, 2000; Rumberger & Gándara, 2004). Ms. E ultimately concluded that it was "a symptom of implicit biases rearing their ugly heads." She referenced the extended tenure of the previously mentioned ELD teacher who was openly racist as evidence of the school's insufficient attention to the qualifications and readiness of those assigned to teach Newcomer students. She also provided another more recent example. Ms. E described a monolingual English-speaking White male teacher who was placed in ELD to teach 11th grade students designated as "long-term" English learners. This teacher had, on multiple occasions, expressed a deficit mindset towards racialized students. She attempted to coach him by asking questions, emulating in some ways her own mentorship experience. However, following continued problematic behavior such as racist academic profiling—assumptions about students' academic abilities based on their race (Ochoa, 2013)—Ms. E and another colleague decided to take their concerns to leadership. The administrator responded by telling her she had "too high of expectations" and that she was "just caring about the wrong things." The teacher was scheduled anyway. As I tried to unpack this encounter with Ms. E, it became clearer not just how this situation had unfolded, but how it informed her understanding of the nature of English language teaching at its core.

> *That I think is because they think that he is smart and he's like a very "Englishy" English teacher. And honestly, I think they just didn't want to admit that Whiteness is a problem. "Nobody's a racist here. Everybody wants what's best for our students." That's how they start every meeting with me. "We all agree that everybody wants what's best for our students." I do not give a fuck what people want for our students if you have not confronted your Whiteness, it's going to harm our families and students. Period.*

Ms. E's use of "Englishy English teacher," referring to the characteristics of a quintessential "English teacher," invokes how an English teacher is imagined within the grammar of schooling. According to the research, the standard profile and preference for teachers of English is White native speakers (Gerald, 2022; Ruecker & Ives, 2015). However, if the White, male, native-English-speaking teacher, whose placement in ELD Ms. E opposed occupied the "Englishy" English teacher status that the system prefers, where does this place Ms. E, who is also White and a native speaker of English? Her description suggests an ideological preference for English teachers who uphold the monolingualism of ELD. That is, within the grammar of schooling, societal expectations of who would make a "good" ELD teacher does not just include Whiteness and native speaker status, but also prioritizing acquisition/use of English as well as adopting a deficit mindset. Such educators are preferred in systems of Whiteness, which are designed to perpetuate themselves (Gerald, 2022), like the grammar of schooling.

Ms. E disaligns herself with the figure of the "Englishy English teacher," and her experiences, as well as those described in other chapters, suggest that others around her view her as not conforming to this role. For example, when she translanguaged in the classroom and engaged in student-advocacy work, others saw that as being outside of her job description. This is likely why she was repeatedly told to "not worry about shifting mindsets" (see Chapter 5) and here that she was "caring about the wrong things." At the same time, she describes continued attempts to demonstrate that individual actors are not racist by the explicit claim "nobody is a racist." This claim serves as a superficial attempt to distance individuals from racism, thereby perpetuating multicultural monolingualism through a merely symbolic opposition to (linguistic) racism. In contrast, Ms. E's understanding of "good" teaching by her own standard of educational equity included "confronting Whiteness." Confronting,

disrupting, or breaking down Whiteness (Matias & Mackey, 2016; Sleeter, 2001) involves analyzing the ways in which White supremacy and privilege operate in society and continue to oppress and marginalize racialized people, including individuals complicit in these processes. It is meant to lead to the disruption of the systems of power that uphold Whiteness. Ms. E felt this work was required not just at the personal level, but at the structural level. She witnessed little such effort at both levels.

A final example of how Whiteness was embedded in the ELD context that Ms. E observed had to do specifically with English itself. She reflected in writing that HHS students were surrounded by English all day; this monolingual environment as described in Chapter 5 resulted in Newcomer students being left to sit through hours of inaccessible content with little support to help them understand and make meaning. Despite institutional awareness of this reality, she said, "teachers carried on teaching." Ms. E and I were perplexed by these frustrating circumstances, but no amount of English instruction in Ms. E's 90-minute period with these students would make content from outside of her classroom more accessible because it would do nothing to change the monolingualism of those other spaces. When asked why she thought individual actors were invested in maintaining this status quo, she surmised:

> *I think they [administrators, teachers, policymakers, etc.] think that the school is providing a discipline or a mindset or life skill. That's going to prepare this student for the real world.*

Here, she suggests that ELD's investment in preparing non-English-speaking and multilingual students for the world beyond school enforces the use of standardized academic English. This investment has been documented in prior studies (Seltzer, 2023) and belies monolingual and raciolinguistic ideologies (Flores et al., 2018; Rosa, 2016) that rationalize

assimilationist education policies by claiming that acquisition of standardized Academic English is a means to overcoming educational, economic, and racial inequalities (Seltzer, 2023). However, linguistic discrimination can persist based on one's racialization alone and even when conforming to standardized academic English (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Seltzer, 2023). Therefore, the insistence on preparing students for this imagined and ideologically informed "real world" that demands such restricted language use continues to limit the possibility of providing rigorous, engaging, and responsive multilingual education for these students. Ms. E connected this line of thinking to concepts she had learned as an American Indian Studies minor.

> *It reminds me of in American Indian Studies there was this idea that the missionaries were gifting Indigenous people with this better way of life. Like saving them, like… capitalist… "pull them up by their bootstraps."*

Her education in ethnic studies from college gave her the lens to see how modern-day English education policies resemble the "benevolent assimilation" imposed on Indigenous communities during colonization. Now, however, rather than religious arguments, capitalist ideologies of "pulling oneself up by one's bootstraps" justify the continued marginalization of non-English-speaking students in US schools. This argument is perhaps more difficult to recognize when discussing only the Newcomer students rather than students categorized as English learners at large. That is because Newcomer students like Ms. E's do not just speak minoritized varieties of English, but also speak languages that are seen as outside of English entirely. In fact, despite her previous critique, even Ms. E would at times raise concerns about whether her students would be adequately prepared to navigate monolingual

environments during and after high school. Indeed, that was the case, as seen in her struggle over whether or not to speak Spanish in the classroom (Chapter 6). She also once said:

> *The more they master English, the more agency they're going to have in a system that requires they master English. And also, just small scale it feels good to master a language and acquire a new skill. So, that's important.*

Her explanation reveals at once the awareness of a school system that operates as a White listening subject (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Seltzer, 2023) but also a feeling of responsibility to help students to comply with the system. But rather than following along with that narrative or caving to these concerns, she still chose to use Spanish and to translanguage with students. She would also avoid the "Englishy" English curriculum that focused on grammar and vocabulary to focus on content that was relevant to students' identities and aligned with her humanizing linguistically responsive approach. In other words, while recognizing that the rest of the system is monolingual, she also recognized SEI/ELD was monolingual too. Invoking a stakeholder who buys into these ideologies and has an investment in preparing Newcomer students for the "real world," I pressed Ms. E for more information:

> *Samantha: What if I asked, "But are they learning English?" What would you say to someone like that?*
>
> *Ms. E: I would say, what a great question. I can see that it's super important to you that these kids learn English. I think I would just rely on the fact that we live in an English-dominant society. English is the currency for power, agency, money, you name it. So, the buy-in to learn English is taken care of. That's happening. What I would say is that we're making space.*

For Ms. E, more important than acquisition of English was the creation of a positive learning environment for Newcomer students. Students are already motivated to learn English and that could happen if there is a supportive environment wherein they could lower their affective filter—that is, the emotional barriers that can inhibit learning. Many things can contribute to a high affective filter, such as stress, anxiety, and feelings of non-belonging, all of which can result from race-, gender-, or language-based discrimination in school spaces (Hammond, 2014). Therefore, Ms. E's focus on humanizing pedagogy and linguistic responsiveness is justified, even if the goal is to foster proficiency in English. Although she explained it in this way, it did not necessarily reflect her level of confidence. She genuinely wrestled with the decision on a daily basis, questioning what was the "right" or "good" thing to do (Chapter 6). She had not encountered research that demonstrated that Newcomer students develop proficiency more quickly in both English and their other languages when they are in bilingual programs (Steele et al., 2017) and that English language development is not hindered when instruction is provided in Newcomer students' dominant language (Umansky et al., 2022). Instead, the dominant monolingual grammar of schooling told her that use of students' language and other humanizing practices were "bad" ELD teaching, and Ms. E could not help but to feel uncertain about her choices. All this uncertainty added to the growing emotional turbulence of a personal and professional identity in conflict.

7.3 Leaving SEI/ELD

7.3.1 Professional and Personal Identity in Conflict

While Ms. E decided to leave HHS and ELD, she was not leaving teaching. She taught Latin as long as it had been an option, and despite her initial reluctance to teach Spanish, she was willing to go back after two years in SEI/ELD. Witnessing the differential treatment and

systemic disregard for Newcomer students and students designated as English learners, and feeling unprepared and unsupported in her efforts to enact equitable education in that space, made her want to leave.

> *I think what makes ELD so intolerable is the fact that the EML [Emergent Multilingual Learner] moniker is something that the district and all levels of power performatively talk about. And so, seeing our most vulnerable get ignored, trampled on. Honestly, that's what it's like. It's like watching someone get beat up and knowing that there are people there that could interrupt it and aren't. So I think that's how it makes it so unenjoyable. And that to me is very specific to ELD.*

In this instance, what she was describing as “specific to ELD” was in contrast to her experiences teaching Latin and Spanish. She references HHS’ use of the term "Emergent Multilingual Learner" as opposed to “EnglishlLearner” with the stated purpose of honoring the linguistic and cultural assets that students bring with them. Reflecting on this practice, Ms. E identified this choice as “performative” while behind the scenes, the change in label had done little to improve conditions for and attitudes towards these students. Chapter 5 highlighted the individual actions she took to counteract the monolingual environment, but all the while there were few signals of large-scale change or movement from “people that could interrupt it.” In Chapter 5, referencing her attempts to shift her fellow teachers’ mindsets, she described “want[ing] my problem to be everyone’s problem”; that is, rather than performatively encouraging culturally and linguistically responsive teaching for ELD (for instance), sincere approaches should include policy, structure, and culture-aligned reform and targeted disruption of monolingualism at every level.

The feeling of personal responsibility for her Newcomer students without the collective support was a major factor in her deciding to leave. Reflecting on this decision, she summarized it yet again as a systemic issue:

> *Because the school system isn't set up for them, they're always going to have needs that are outside of what teachers come out of their TEP programs thinking they have to do. So, I think that's what makes it so untenable.*

What she is pointing to in essence is the designation of “English learner” and subsequent segregation for the purpose of receiving additional services. But the need for additional services and support results from the construction of a system without those students in mind. This point echoes existing critiques of SEI and other ELD tracks for racially and linguistically minoritized students (Aronson, 2017; Chang-Bacon, 2022). She also simultaneously implicates TEP in this problem by suggesting that teachers graduate from these programs no more prepared to serve the needs of Newcomer students than when they entered. After all, as she recalled, in her own TEP experience, these issues were “never named.” Extensive literature confirms her concerns that teachers are inadequately prepared to work with Newcomer students and students designated as English learners (Bartolomé, 2010; Lang, 2019; Lucas et al., 2008; Olsen & Jimenez-Silva, 2008; Roseberry-McKibbin, & Brice, 2005; Sattin-Bajaj, 2023; Walqui, 2000). This insight also provides context for feelings she revealed at the end of the year:

> *One thing is for sure, working with these students has a way of making any teacher feel like a real novice. Like, do I have the skill set required to serve this student population? And feeling like I'm not a good teacher. It’s rough. That happens to me all the time.*

As demonstrated in Chapter 6, much of Ms. E's feelings of falling short stemmed in large part from the conflicting schema from which she was drawing. But the findings presented above in her reflections on the Whiteness of ELD highlight the tensions inherent in being a multilingual teacher in a monolingual system. Because her personal and professional identities conflicted with each other, such that her professional role felt counteractive to her ongoing efforts to confront her own Whiteness, no matter what she did in the classroom, she was likely to feel like she failed. And thus, she concluded that the savior and English supremacy mindsets were the easiest way to survive in this career, lamenting, "I really worked hard to unpack both of those things. They don't align with my values."

These ideological conflicts in addition to the policies that placed her in large classes as the only adult made her job, in her words, "really lonely." The work was easier when she was surrounded by supportive colleagues and leadership. But in the past few years, Ms. E had seen the exits of many equity-oriented district leaders as well as close colleagues she had met in the teacher allyship and equity group. While emphasizing to me that her position was difficult, she reiterated that she knew the circumstances would feel worse for multilingual educators of color.

> *When we look at educators of color, it's been consistently unsafe. I mean since Prop 227 there was a mass exodus of bilingual educators, right? [...] educators of color are not making it past the five-year mark because school is hostile, and school is a racist, toxic, work environment and the more aware of that you are the more work you have to put forward.*

The loneliness experienced by Ms. E in her day-to-day role became lonelier after the conditions pushed her like-minded colleagues out of the field. Research has shown a similar

pattern on a larger scale. Racially and linguistically minoritized teachers who are attuned to the ideologies of race and language that are impacting the educational experiences of their students demonstrate more willingness to challenge racist structures and practices and advocate for change (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Fox & Chang-Bacon, 2023; Snyder Bhansari, 2023). At the same time, colorblind and racist environments that negatively impact racialized students also affect their teachers of color and cause high levels of burnout (Kohli, 2018; Pizzaro & Kohli, 2020; Snyder Bhansari, 2023). Ms. E's story is different because she is a White educator.

7.3.2 Combatting Fatigue and Savior-Martyrdom

I asked Ms. E how she felt her experiences were different from teachers of color. She focused on how Whiteness impacted her role and agency:

> *Samantha: And how do you see your experience as different?*
>
> *Ms. E: I'm White. You know, I think as much as I care, and as much as I can learn… my tolerance for bullshit, will always be a little bit higher because… It's not my lived experience… I guess what I'm trying to say is like my first instincts sometimes are more in line with my family than I want them to be. And so, I think that like gives me a tolerance for bullshit.*

Ms. E, having developed her awareness of racial and linguistic ideologies, including how Whiteness informs ELD, experienced this knowledge like other educators as a responsibility to act ("The more aware of that you are the more work you have to put forward") (Giroux, 1997; Sox, 2023). The school was not just a racist and dehumanizing place to learn—she specified that it was an inhospitable work environment, even for her. But because she is White and had been raised in a dominant culture of Whiteness, she noted the emotional toll of witnessing racism is not the same as experiencing it. Rather than distancing herself from her

power or privilege (Case, 2012; Grillo & Wildman, 1995) she engaged in a conscious effort to consider if and how she is aligning with Whiteness through inaction when racist instances occur.

As she told me this, however, she also admitted, “That being said, I applied to like… I stopped applying for around 55 jobs this winter.” This follow-up commentary suggests that she recognized the contradiction between being committed to doing the work while actively seeking new employment. This came up a few times. For instance, she would say things like, “It is hard, because I know I’m not the only ELD teacher who’s in this role…” Recognizing that there were schools and teaching positions that were similar if not worse, and as articulated above in combination with her awareness of her privilege, her comments suggested that the “right” decision would require her to be more resilient and stay the course.

Ms. E contemplated that her departure from SEI/ELD might be seen as giving up. If that was indeed the case, it could be attributed to "compassion fatigue"—the exhaustion and frustration that often leads to burnout for educators who work with traumatized or suffering students (Yang et al., 2023). Interestingly, Yang et al. note that White teachers report higher levels of this fatigue, which may be linked to "White fatigue," as Flynn (2015) defines it, which is the exhaustion from grappling with the realities of racism, especially when faced with consistent messaging about structural racism in educational settings. Flynn (2015) describes how White people may struggle to reconcile the shift from an individual understanding of racism to an understanding of institutional and systemic racism. But in Ms. E’s case, it doesn’t seem to be a matter of White fatigue. It seems more akin to racial battle fatigue defined as the stress and exhaustion stemming from the continuous need to address racism or educate White individuals about the racist nature of certain actions and microaggressions—but experienced

by racially minoritized people (Smith, 2004; Smith, Hung, & Franklin, 2011; Smith, Yosso, & Solorzano, 2006).

As a White woman, Ms. E acknowledges that her experience is different and, by her own admission, somewhat less personally challenging. She nonetheless found herself in a vexing predicament: the systemic inequality informed largely by the multicultural monolingualism of SEI/ELD in contrast to her own pedagogical commitment made her profession an unsupportive, dehumanizing, and fatiguing environment. Simultaneously, she felt a moral responsibility to meet her students' needs and guilt for leaving because of an awareness of how conditions could possibly be worse in her absence. However, the feeling that she was individually responsible for students' needs, the idea that only she could provide for them, and the commitment to continue in that space while experiencing conflict or uncertainty for how to best serve students were merely resurgent manifestations of White saviorism. This framing also limits the scope of the problem to the individual teacher and the classroom itself, which suggests that the students are the ones in need of remediation rather than the schools.

Her final decision ultimately entailed the realization that persisting through the contradictory environment and her subsequent exhaustion was yet another demand of multicultural monolingualism—that you can do the work of creating educational equity in ELD by yourself if you just try hard enough. She connected this thinking to a concept she had learned in the five-day training:

> *Another thing [is] martyrdom ... like saying, "Well if I don't do it, nobody else will." That's what I hear all the time. And I just, I feel like I've come too far in my self work, and I don't want to pass that on. My daughter already is like, "I'm going to be an English language teacher too, Mom." She talks about how she*

helps in her class with her friends who are Spanish-dominant. And obviously, I love that and that's part of how I got here is being in the similar role of my own elementary experience. But I don't want to perpetuate the idea that we're saving folks, you know? I definitely think that's problematic.

Gray (2020) has defined "martyrdom" in teaching as "[the] pressure to make great personal sacrifices, sometimes through guilt and manipulation, because of the inherent rewards of teaching children" (p. 1). The subject of teacher martyrdom escalated in public discourse following the COVID-19 pandemic (see for instance Brown, 2023; Fan, 2021; Kraushaar, 2022; Slaten Frasier, 2023), primarily critiquing the expectation that teachers should independently and relentlessly support and inspire students, even to their own mental, physical, and emotional detriment. This critique has been connected to dominant narratives of White women teachers as virtuous saviors in urban schools who rescue poor students of color from their own deficiencies, but only with great personal sacrifice (Matias, 2013; Stanley & Schroeder, 2023). Leonardo and Boas (2021) succinctly capture this dilemma: "The White and female teacher is afforded the privilege of inhabiting this 'honorable' role, but she will never wholly succeed in it. She is told that she is fit for teaching, and she takes up the post righteously, but the system is bound to fail, especially when she teaches students of color" (p. 319). It is within this context that Ms. E's realization takes shape, as she confronts the systemic shortcomings that render individual teacher advocacy insufficient and unsustainable.

Once again, Ms. E saw herself between two non-ideal choices: stay in the role and risk falling into the savior/martyr mindset or leave the role with the possibility of being replaced by an "Englishy English teacher" who would be harmful for future students. Ms. E reflected on her frustration with the role as a rejection of martyrdom and implicitly refused the neoliberal

premise that if she did not do the work of saving her Newcomer students “nobody else will” or that “what you are doing is somehow better than what they would get elsewhere.” Finally, she rejected the notion that continuing in this role was the only effective way to try to change the system.

Ms. E made a conscious decision not to sacrifice her mental and emotional health, rejecting the notion that such a sacrifice was necessary to "save" anyone. Her choice underscores that leaving to rest is a viable act of resistance that educators can and should take when experiencing fatigue and burnout rather than persisting and risking contributing to more harm. Hersey (2022), whose words open this chapter, underscores the importance of recognizing rest as an act of resistance, noting that the decision to rest is often accompanied by feelings of guilt and shame. To focus solely on building teacher resilience, without addressing the dehumanizing working conditions that contribute to burnout, does a disservice to educators and surreptitiously perpetuates the status quo. By choosing to prioritize rest, Ms. E conserved her energy and explored alternative avenues for contributing to educational equity, including participating in this research-teaching collaboration. During one of our final interviews, I checked in with Ms. E regarding the data to be included in this dissertation. I inquired about her feelings on having her experiences documented in such a manner and whether she harbored any concerns.

> *Um, what are my concerns? I mean, I've been to an academic paper presentation in classical literature, and I just remember that everyone in the audience is trying to put holes in the person's presentation, right? So, if that's about my personhood, I could see that being less comfortable. But at the same time, I think ... I'm 10 years into my teaching career. I have been through a ton*

just professionally… personally… and so I think I have a thick enough skin to ride this out. And honestly, part of the reason why I'm switching my job is because I do want to get my story out there and write or continue my education so that I can be part of the solution. So, in that sense, I'm like yeah let's do it!

In some ways, Ms. E was clearly still wary, perceiving the culture of academic research as being intense or hypercritical. Opening herself up to critique in this way was at once intimidating, but was also a potential avenue for her to continue to seek solutions even when she removed herself from the SEI/ELD space. In the past, teacher participation in qualitative research has served as a means of facilitating ideology clarity and reflexivity, but also as a way to process difficult emotions and experiences from teaching (Gkonou & Miller, 2020). There is no evidence to suggest that Ms. E's decision to leave teaching was facilitated by her participation in this research-collaboration. However, her experiences and this study show that there is a need to invest in research-teaching collaboration methods and practices that not only support collaborators' well-being, but also acknowledges the structural factors that are always at play (Grayson & Willis, 2023).

7.4 Conclusion

Ms. E's autoethnographic reflections, which I have recounted here, join the research that demonstrates how personal commitment to linguistic responsivity and equitable language teaching can also be translated in practice to maintain dominant, monolingual, White-centric education paradigms (Chang-Bacon, 2020; Deroo & Ponzio, 2019; Razfar, 2012). She became aware of these paradigms through the many opportunities to engage in collective reflexivity and by seeking out supplemental professional learning. The journey to ideological awareness and racial literacy took years, with many self-admitted mistakes along the way. Yet, none of

this was central to her required training. Multicultural monolingual systems and structures claim to prioritize equity and multilingualism, but evidenced by how peripheral these things were in practice, as described by Ms. E, such statements are merely performative.

Issues of language and race were not covered in her required teacher training. Nevertheless, she discovered professional development courses that proved beneficial in those areas. However, since participation was voluntary, those who attended were effectively a self-selecting group. Collective, reflective practice was also neither a taught nor a mandated part of her teacher training, yet she was fortunate to be in the company of individuals who prompted her with critical questions and dialogue. These findings reinforce the significance of well-equipped student teaching supervisors who serve as mentors in equity (Athanases & Martin, 2006), highlighting the long-term influence they have in fostering an inclusive and reflective teaching practice.

Ms. E's openness to critical inquiries about her pedagogy and practice was grounded in her undergraduate background in ethnic studies. This underscores the importance of ethnic studies education, not only for people of color, but also for White educators and students to engage with the subject matter to critically examine the influence of Whiteness on their own lives and to understand how it may permeate their everyday interactions. Along these lines, Leonardo and Boas (2021) have made a compelling case for the integration of critical race theory (CRT)—an integral aspect of ethnic studies—into the educational framework for all teachers. They propose several CRT-informed guidelines for teacher candidates: Firstly, to undertake a critical examination of racial and gendered histories and to understand one's own involvement within these contexts. Secondly, to ensure race and its historical significance are incorporated into the educational curriculum. Thirdly, to conceptualize race as a systemic

construct that has real and unequal impacts, which are rooted in institutional processes, rather than as simple matters of personal identity. Lastly, they advise educator preparation to perceive and present race, not as an individual endeavor, but as a sociohistorical structure that influences everyone in unequal ways. A CRT approach would complement and enhance language teacher preparation to move beyond performative validation of the linguistic practices of students from language-minoritized backgrounds in the classroom, to creating opportunities for future teachers to identify and challenge the broader sociopolitical processes that disregard their students' linguistic practices, paving the way for structural transformative change (Alim, 2005; Flores & Rosa, 2015).

With over a decade’s worth of teaching experience, Ms. E's self-directed learning and reflective practice on her accumulated experiences honed her awareness of the inherent structural Whiteness within SEI/ELD programs—recognizing they were not designed to foster the success of Newcomer students or their educators. The selection process for teachers, the reactions to her pedagogical methods and voiced concerns, along with the neglect of Newcomer students’ comprehensive and linguistic needs, all pointed to the unaddressed Whiteness at the core of the challenges she faced, both at the individual and systemic levels. Ms. E herself occasionally exhibited internalized neoliberal ideologies, such as framing altruism and diligence as justifications for racist attitudes she would otherwise critique. This underscores the necessity for ongoing engagement with confronting Whiteness and advocacy for the integration of CRT as a fundamental and critical component of teacher education, rather than as an optional or peripheral consideration. Teachers must be equipped to reconcile their pedagogical commitments with the neoliberal policies and ideologies prevalent in their teaching contexts (Taylor, 2023).

Finally, Ms. E's choice to leave SEI/ELD underscores the critical importance of establishing support systems for teacher wellness (Love, 2019). As a White woman, Ms. E recognized that her challenges were distinct and perhaps less severe than those faced by teachers of color, yet she still encountered an unsupportive and exhausting work environment. The pressure to single-handedly meet student needs and the belief that she was their sole provider were, in essence, modern reflections of White saviorism, erroneously framing students as the problem rather than the educational institutions. Although resources are available to equip *educators* to be culturally responsive, humanizing, and anti-racist, equity-oriented educators face adversity and harm in structural dehumanizing workplaces. This study adds to compounding research around the need for humanizing and culturally sustaining schools for teachers (Chan Hill & Wong, 2024). Ms. E realized the necessity of prioritizing personal wellness to sustain her commitment to justice work and identified alternative strategies, such as engaging in research and sharing her experiences through public writing. Acknowledging the need for rest and resisting the associated guilt and shame highlights a fundamental flaw in the educational system: the overemphasis on teacher resilience without addressing the harmful working conditions that cause burnout. This recognition calls for a shift in focus, challenging the maintenance of the status quo and underscoring the importance of systemic support for the well-being of all educators.

8. Conclusion

"What ELT [English Language Teaching] as a broader entity isn't actually prepared for is the mass of people within it who are hungry for a field that serves different goals. Indeed, what ELT isn't prepared for is *us*." - JPB Gerald, *Antisocial language teaching: English and the pervasive pathology of whiteness,* 2022, p. 79

In this dissertation, I have presented an analysis of how an experienced teacher maintained her commitment to equitable teaching in the ideological climate of Structured English Immersion (SEI)/English Language Development (ELD) for Newcomer students. I have taken a critical ethnographic approach in collaboration with the teacher, Ms. E, to deconstruct the multicultural monolingual environment of SEI/ELD for Newcomer students. Through this analysis, I argued that teachers who are committed to humanizing and linguistically responsive practices for Newcomer students, who are designated as English learners, transgress the normative understanding of what language teachers are meant to do and what purpose "equity" is meant to serve. Neoliberal ideologies that circulate as a part of the multicultural monolingualism that pervades current language education paradigms insist that if linguistic equity or responsiveness are performatively applied, transformation of the existing monolingual structures will be unnecessary. The data in the preceding chapters show that this reactive and supplemental application of "equity" is ineffective and produces harm for students and their educators. The findings represent how this multicultural monolingualism trickles from the top (e.g., societal attitudes and policy) down to the everyday lived experiences of one teacher in one classroom.

Multicultural monolingualism is an ideology that is harmful not just for students, but for their teachers as well. This is a matter of linguistic and racial equity. The majority of Newcomer/immigrant-origin students are students of color (California Department of Education, 2024). Upon arrival to the U.S., these students are segregated from English-speaking peers and thereby socially and linguistically isolated, which ignores evidence that consistent opportunities to use the target language to make meaning is required for language development (Alvarez et al., 2022; Gándara & Orfield, 2012). Consequently, educational settings, such as SEI/ELD, that emerge from what Rodriguez et al. (2018) refer to as the "English as soon as possible" mentality struggle to support the development of English language skills and the engagement of Newcomer students to the content curriculum designed for their native English-speaking peers (Gándara, 2020). Therefore, as long as English monolingualism is enforced, the SEI/ELD teacher's job is tied to the mission of assimilation of both language and behavior. Even for those educators who are aware of the assimilationist, monolingual, White perceiving subject that underlies the education system, this awareness comes with the recognition that no amount of English language proficiency will protect their students from experiencing racial and linguistic discrimination, even upon reclassification.

As seen from the example of Ms. E, efforts to challenge multicultural monolingualism, independently and from the ground up, can feel daunting without the awareness of how labor, collectivity, and activism are connected and interdependent in this fight. While those findings may seem discouraging, her example also provides evidence that ideological commitments to equity can be translated into practice and that teachers can resist White-normative framings of what it means to be a "good" teacher, and carve out their own teacher identities. To discuss the holistic implications of this research, in this final chapter, I revisit the three research questions

that guided this study (see Chapter 1) and how each was answered. Next, I outline the theoretical contributions of this study, which inform two major implications: 1) the need to prioritize and integrate humanizing practices, including cultural and linguistic responsiveness and sustenance, as foundational elements of all schooling and 2) the need to end segregation of Newcomer students and students designated as English learners. After discussing these implications, I propose the following interrelated recommendations for research, policy, and practice: 1) build common capacity for working with Newcomer students; 2) invest in curricular materials that are designed for diverse, multilingual students; 3) decrease classroom sizes; and 4) humanize workplace conditions for educators. Before concluding the chapter and this study, I also discuss some limitations and suggest potential avenues for future research.

8.1 Summary of Findings

8.1.1 Research Question 1: How does an experienced English language educator recognize and respond to multicultural monolingualism in her teaching context?

Previous research has shown that many language educators can have good intentions and have transformed their own deficit beliefs about students, yet, in practice, still resort to assimilationist, White, middle-class linguist norms (Chang-Bacon, 2020; Delpit, 2006; Eryaman, 2007; Gay, 2010; Razfar, 2012; Rodriguez & Magill, 2016; Spina et al., 2019; Villegas et al., 2018). In contrast to those studies, findings in Chapter 5 demonstrate that Ms. E, an experienced English language educator, was motivated into agentive action via ideological awareness and interrupted multicultural monolingualism embedded at multiple levels of her teaching environment. By analyzing three narrative examples of her response to problematic policies, curricula, and discourses of school, district leaders, and fellow teachers, I demonstrated her strategies to enact change such as navigating power structures, drawing on

community resources and professional networks, and conducting independent research. This chapter also demonstrated that multicultural monolingualism is a pervasive reality that manifests itself at multiple levels of a teacher's teaching context and revealed neoliberal discourses about language teachers that excluded advocacy and justice work from their role. In the discussion, I provided a holistic image of Ms. E's workplace as an ideological ecosystem of multicultural monolingualism. This interconnected view across spaces is valuable for comprehensively addressing monolingualism at every level to promote lasting transformation (Hammond, 2020; McLaren & Hawe, 2005).

8.1.2 Research Question 2: What is the relationship between an equity-oriented educator's pedagogical orientation and the language ideologies in her environment?

In Chapter 6, I analyzed two vignettes that demonstrated the interaction between the multicultural monolingual environment of HHS and Ms. E's humanizing, whole-student, and linguistically responsive pedagogy. Unsurprisingly, there were challenges to enacting equitable teaching practices in a classroom embedded in this problematic environment. Multicultural monolingualism created a paradox wherein Ms. E was confined to oppositional-binary thinking about "good" and "bad" teaching that was contradictorily informed by her own equity-oriented approaches and the White perceiving subject underlying the grammar of schooling. This mismatch led to feelings of frustration, inadequacy, and emotional distress when she did not meet either standard, which accumulated over the course of the year. Fortunately, a positive outcome of this collaborative ethnographic work was that in our shared reflections on teaching, we also engaged in reciprocal coaching and learning that led to the identification of the paradox she was working under.

8.1.3 Research Question 3: How does an ideologically aware educator understand her role as an English language instructor in the larger multicultural monolingual landscape of schooling?

The findings in Chapter 7 demonstrate how having multiple opportunities for critical, collaborative reflection throughout their life (e.g., with friends, colleagues, and mentors) can encourage language educators to question power structures of language and education. These opportunities also allow them to be intentional and conscientious about their own identity and teaching practices, and to identify areas for growth. Additionally, it reveals that explicit instruction about racism and inequality (whether through an ethnic studies course or professional development) can have lasting impact for educators to draw on in their practice. I found that Whiteness was a major focus when Ms. E considered her personal and professional identities. Ms. E's reflections on Whiteness in ELD, such as differential treatment of Newcomer student and decisions around SEI/ELD teacher placement, illustrate how within the grammar of schooling, societal expectations of who makes a "good" SEI/ELD teacher include Whiteness and native-speaker status as well as prioritization of English acquisition and use over all else. All the while, there is accompanying performative insistence that multilingualism is valued (e.g., HHS' use of Emergent multilingual learner versus English learner). Given these practices, Ms. E concluded that sustainability in her professional role as an English language teacher required adherence to the White, monolingual grammar of schooling by adopting a "savior" and "English supremacy mindset." Alternative ways of being within the multicultural monolingual environment felt overwhelming and exhausting without the promise of structural change. In the end, however, her decision to leave HHS and teaching in SEI/ELD classrooms ultimately entailed the realization that persisting through the contradictory environment as a

martyr was yet another demand of multicultural monolingualism. Finally, she prioritized rest and well-being as she looked to other avenues to apply her strengths including participating in this research to “get [her] story out there.”

8.2 Implications

The theoretical insights presented here are not entirely new. Critiques of neoliberal impact on language education, the persistence of monolingualism, and the Whiteness of the grammar of schooling are all established arguments (Bauler, 2023; Chang-Bacon, 2020; Kubota, 2016; Tyler, 2023). By applying the concept of "multicultural monolingualism" to the experiences of a particular teacher and school, this study provides a new and nuanced perspective into how these ideologies overlap to create conceptual paradoxes at multiple levels. The ways that society, policymakers, community members, school leaders, students, and even teachers themselves conceptualize the nature of language teaching has significance for what language educators contend with in their classes of Newcomer students and students designated as English learners. Therefore, policy, structure, and culture-aligned transformation is required in order to generate meaningful progress towards linguistic justice in education, rather than lower-level, add-on reforms (e.g., hiring a Bilingual Curriculum Specialist, implementing culturally sustaining SEI/ELD). Jensen and Valdés (2021) have offered two means of “threading” —implementing continuously and throughout—systemic change for language equity in schools. First is the conceptual thread, that is, reconceptualizing language, race, social class, second language acquisition, and bilingualism as they are treated in policies, structures, and systems within the grammar of schooling, which also calls for efforts to change societal attitudes. Second is the value thread, which recommends addressing the values or moral commitments of teachers, school leaders, and education authorities who, as confirmed in this

study and others (see Leu Bonanno, 2023), can support or limit change. By threading language equity in schools, we can prevent situations where "school systems that are failing" trickle down into the classroom, as seen in Chapter 5.

Given the findings of this study, some additional conceptual shifts are required to contend with the ideological ecosystem that is multicultural monolingualism. First, all teachers should be considered teachers of language and of language learners, as all learners are continuously learning language. Chapter 5 demonstrates how the responsibility of educating Newcomer students was relegated to the Bilingual Curriculum Specialist (BCS) and Ms. E, corroborating prior research with similar findings (Chang-Bacon, 2020; Garza & Crawford, 2010; Wade et al., 2008). This also adds new insights into how this shifting of responsibility creates a ripple effect that reaches other classrooms and impacts teaching practices. Second, to teach a language means to teach the whole language user, including making sure that the language learning environment is welcoming, humanzing, and sustaining for all students. Chapter 6 demonstrates how, despite Ms. E's efforts to be humanizing and foster community and joy in the classroom, this conflicted with the English-only agenda of the White perceiving subject of the grammar of schooling. These findings add strength to the argument that there is a need to move beyond individual teacher beliefs and practices and to connect pedagogy to the larger teaching environment (Flores et al., 2018; García & Kleifgen, 2018; Hornberger, 2002). Furthermore, in combination with Chapter 7, these findings demonstrate how educators who do not comply with the English-only agenda of the grammar of schooling are also negatively impacted by these conditions.

Finally, teaching language is a job—not a moral calling—and should be understood within its neoliberal and capitalist confines. Based on findings from this study, it is time to do

away with discourses that suggest any teacher should feel obligated to stay in jobs in which they are ideologically conflicted, mistreated, or think they are "saving" their students. To be an effective language teacher, one must understand how one's labor is valued or not in a neoliberal system. This entails not only learning how to identify and critique neoliberal ideologies, but also understanding the methods for opposing them. Teacher education programs should guide teachers in investigating ways that resistance can extend beyond isolated classrooms by engaging in collective actions and fostering collective agency (Taylor, 2023). Ultimately, to be an effective language teacher requires a deep understanding of language, but also sustainable working conditions where they are treated with respect. It also requires a recognition that in the U.S., we educators are all working within a White, racist system and no job title can absolve us of being complicit with such a system.

Putting this all together, I have identified two major related takeaways from this study. First, schools can no longer afford to make humanizing practices—including cultural and linguistic responsiveness and sustenance—a supplemental or tacked-on reform. Second, students should not be segregated on the basis of their language—for the benefit of both students and teachers. As demonstrated in this study, multicultural monolingual language education reforms that are implemented without complete transformation of the White monolingual foundations of education will continue to fail. It is truly time for Ladson-Billings' (2020) "hard reset," which calls for a break from past norms to radically imagine alternative purposes and practices for education Putting this idea in conversation with language justice scholars, I would argue that imagined alternatives include humanizing language education by allowing students to draw on all their linguistic resources for school and searching out ways to center joy and community in education (Flores et al., 2020; Love, 2019) compared to the

compliance and competition demanded by the current grammar of schooling. As suggested by Gerald (2022) in the epigraph of this chapter, it is time to shake up the foundations of English language teaching. He goes on to say that small-scale adjustments "will only satisfy those who feel the field is inherently virtuous and only in need of small reforms" (p. 80).

Perhaps the closest, current US model for a linguistically integrated classroom is dual language (two-way) immersion (DLI). A DLI setting is an educational approach where students are taught literacy and content in two languages. Extensive evidence demonstrates that DLI models are more effective for students designated as English learners than those that take an English-only approach such as SEI/ELD (Collier & Thomas, 2017). Specifically, research shows that DLI programs provide the greatest academic improvement for linguistically minoritized students compared to other types of bilingual or English-as-a-second-language programs (Shannon & Milian, 2002) and that there are academic, linguistic, cognitive, and social benefits for contact between students learning English and students whose primary language is English (Lucas et al., 2008). Importantly, the social benefits include greater awareness of cultures and identities outside of one's own and improved socioemotional well-being. Because Newcomer students are not being segregated, this model may also mitigate the risk of internalized stigma or otherness.

However, DLI is not without flaws. DLI program models are only sustainable if there are effective bilingual educators, extensive parental involvement, and leadership that is supportive and knowledgeable about the processes of bilingualism (Chan Hill & Wong, 2024; Leu Bonanno, 2023). Without these components, even dual immersion programs can revert to deficit-based remedial practices that can harm students designated as English learners (Alanís & Rodríguez, 2008; Flores et al., 2021). Specifically, the way that some dual language

programs have evolved within the White racial framework of the US grammar of schooling ends up falling back on deficit views of racialized speakers and/or reinforcing raciolinguistic hierarchies in practice, rather than serving their original purpose of providing multilingual, multicultural education for all (Flores et al., 2021). Furthermore, research about racialized teachers in DLI programs demonstrate that they face experiences of exclusion, othering, and dehumanization at multiple levels; this has been attributed to the prevailing English-centric monolingual mindset, policies, and practices (Chang Hill & Wong, 2024) in spite of the multicultural and monolingual imperative that DLI programs proclaim to carry out. Thus, it is imperative to continue to question the ways that neoliberalism and monolingualism invade education spaces and how they are covertly smuggled into supposedly equity-oriented reforms.

That is not to say that all SEI/ELD programs should close their doors immediately. In fact, rushing to such an action with "impulsivity or a failure to plan," as articulated by Gerald (2022), would be an instinct of Whiteness and would expose an insincere attempt to disrupt the White supremacy culture that grounds the grammar of schooling. In the short term, researchers, leaders, and teachers who care about educational equity in this domain can work to create safe and welcoming community spaces for Newcomer students in schools, while maintaining the long-term goal of working towards system-wide inclusion. In line with this argument and based on the findings from this study, I propose the following short-term recommendations, but with recognition that the implications may reach far beyond these: 1) build common capacity for working with Newcomer students; 2) invest in curricular materials that are designed for diverse, multilingual students; 3) decrease classroom sizes; and 4) humanize the workplace conditions for teachers. In the following section, I explain each recommendation further and connect them with each other and to implications for research, policy, and practice.

8.2.1 Recommendation 1: Build Common Capacity for Working with Newcomer Students

Based on the findings in Chapter 6, there is a need to prepare all teachers with the knowledge and skills to work with Newcomer students, rather than just their English language teachers. This recommendation is made more difficult by the research that has found limited focus on Newcomer students in both research and teacher preparation (Finn, 2023; Goodwin, 2017; Sattin-Bajaj, 2023). Therefore, there should be concerted investments in research, policy, and practice, to center the needs of Newcomer students and to explore best practices for preparing all of their teachers to meet those needs. Desegregation certainly will not and should not take place overnight, but some adjustments can be made in the meantime toward that end. For instance, in the short term, research and policy efforts should be directed at ensuring teachers' optimal and appropriate collaboration with BCS in the content classroom. Additionally, teachers who already have Newcomer students in their classrooms should be supported to build their capacity to work with those students. This work can include opportunities and means for collective reflexivity; fostering positive relationships with students by making sure they are seen and heard in the classroom, and ensuring that all activities are linguistically scaffolded and accessible. These items also require interrogation of one's own biases. Researchers should support these teacher practices, while states, districts, and school leaders should consider identifying and supporting professional development programs, such as those described in Chapter 7, that are already effectively fostering long-term change in teacher attitudes and practices.

In the meantime, policymakers and teacher educators could explore educational and financial pathways for BCS and other bilingual support staffs' credentialing to facilitate their transition into content-teaching roles. To better serve the growing number of Newcomer

students, as well as the increasingly diverse student population in general, it is imperative to cultivate a teacher workforce that is not only multilingual, but also reflective of various racial and immigration backgrounds. Teachers who share similar life experiences and cultural understandings with their students can offer unique insights and foster a more inclusive learning environment. Additionally, training for teachers across all content areas should encompass a comprehensive curriculum that includes theories and research on language acquisition, along with differentiated instructional practices derived from this knowledge. Additionally, this professional development should integrate humanizing pedagogy, critical race theory, and trauma-informed practices. This training should not be squeezed into their already rushed credentialing programming, but as part of the recommendation to humanize the teaching profession (8.2.4), teacher education programs should allow preservice teachers to slowly and deeply engage with the knowledge and skills that they require.

8.2.2 Recommendation 2: Invest in Curricular Materials that are Designed for Diverse, Multilingual Students

Currently, English-only curriculum, as seen at HHS, operates as a gatekeeping mechanism of education, as it creates the requirement of English proficiency for Newcomer student learning and success in US schools. This upholds an assimilationist model that maintains adherence to White, middle-class values and promotes “model immigrant” stereotypes (Estrada et al., 2020; Yukich, 2013). By their continued separation and exclusion from the core activities of learning and participation in school communities, Newcomer students are explicitly and implicitly figured within the racial field (Kim, 1999) as outsiders and limited from the educational access and privilege afforded to White-normative insiders. Therefore, it is imperative for educational equity that the curriculum is designed to provide

challenging, engaging, and linguistically accessible content to all students. This is not just an issue of a single school. Current California Department of Education policy states that reclassification for students designated as English learners should be based in part upon "[c]omparison of the performance of the pupil in basic skills against an empirically established range of performance in basic skills based upon the performance of English proficient pupils of the same age, that demonstrates whether the pupil is sufficiently proficient in English to participate effectively in a curriculum designed for pupils of the same age whose native language is English." This criterion exposes that the general standards and curriculum for all students has, in fact, not been designed with all students in mind. The grammar of schooling makes disciplinary content inaccessible for students whose primary language is not English, and multicultural monolingualism falsely equates English grammar and isolated vocabulary instruction as equitable access. As an afterthought, some guidance and curriculum providers suggest that this type of content could be made "culturally sustaining" if educators simply put in enough work.

Findings from this study suggest that if teachers truly are to be responsible for the equitable access to disciplinary content for Newcomer students, more material support must be provided to that end, in addition to adequate time for planning (8.2.4). Researchers have an important role to play in this recommendation, as they are optimally positioned to offer theoretical and applied content area expertise, capacity-building, and infrastructure for designing such materials; however, they must first be willing to position themselves as learners and be receptive and responsive to the perspectives and practical knowledge of teachers, schools, communities, families, and most of all, students (Xiong et al., 2021). If educators and education and linguistics scholars could collaborate on curricular materials that are adaptable

enough for teachers to be responsive to their multilingual learners of diverse backgrounds, this can help to alleviate the extra burden placed on teachers to accommodate those students. This could involve built-in language scaffolds, metalinguistic content, genre analysis across subjects, multimodal, technology-supported ways of accessing multilingual content, and emphasis on linguistic production. However, this recommendation also requires the common capacity of all teachers to work with Newcomer students, therefore, it should not be implemented without the recommendation in 8.2.1 above. Until these recommendations are put into place, educators already in the classroom with Newcomer students can draw on existing research on linguistic responsiveness (see for instance Lucas & Villegas, 2008; Paris & Alim, 2014) and build on the strategies that proved effective in the short term for Ms. E, such as finding community connections, drawing on professional networks of support, and sharing resources with others.

8.2.3 Recommendation 3: Decrease Classroom Sizes

Extra learning time and high-quality differentiated instruction is needed to ensure equitable integration of students designated as English learners into content classrooms (Gamoran, 2010; 2017). Additional learning time and the capacity to differentiate instruction was certainly a need for Ms. E, even in SEI/ELD. In either case, both learning time and differentiation would be more easily accomplished by decreasing class sizes. The need for this recommendation is made most evident by the findings in Chapters 5 and 6. In spite of the non-ideal teaching conditions, Ms. E never resorted to dehumanizing, authoritarian classroom management strategies that aligned with the White perceiving subject of the grammar of schooling. Multiple studies have shown that lowering class size as an intervention is effective for narrowing achievement and opportunity outcome disparities of economically

disadvantaged and racialized students (Schanzenbach, 2014). Opponents argue that good teachers can handle large classes (Strauss, 2023), which may contribute to the research findings that the most effective teachers are often placed with the largest class sizes in the hope of increasing test scores for more students (Barrett & Toma, 2013; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Guarino et al., 2006). But even when teachers can “manage” to teach larger classes, it does not mean that they should. This is just another neoliberal argument that prioritizes cost-cutting and efficiency over student and teacher well-being. In an era of extreme teacher shortages, there should be efforts to make this job more sustaining.

To support this effort, researchers should find strategic ways of marketing evidence that small class sizes are effective in order to build public consensus. In the short term, there are multiple documented forms of school-university and school-university-community collaboration for the support of Newcomer students’ educational experiences that can be used as models (Leonard & Reardon, 2021). Those interventions are often targeted at meeting Newcomer students’ needs, but in combination with that, understanding and responding to teacher needs is vital to those students’ educational experiences and outcomes. Interventions could include aligning teachers with a shared vision of language justice concepts and values, along with collaborating on and providing useful resources as previously described. To alleviate the immediate issue of large class sizes, school-university collaborations can provide human support by creating opportunities for undergraduate service learning which, as seen in chapter 7, can also have long-term benefits for undergraduates’ development of linguistic and racial ideological awareness. In chapter 6, Ms. E had the most support for her large class size in the spring, when teacher candidates in a local teacher education program (TEP) began regular fieldwork and student teaching. With this in mind, another implication could be for

TEPs to strategically modify their student-teaching model to a residency model, for instance, which would help provide teachers with more planning time, mitigate the extreme teacher-student ratio, and increase capacity for more educators to work with Newcomer students. In residency models, pre-service teachers work in tandem with an experienced teacher-mentor for a year of training, rather than the typical half-year. Adoption of this model would increase the presence of adults in the classroom to provide differentiated support for all students. However, even with investments in such models in California, the uptake has been slow as many aspiring teachers cannot commit to the length of residency programs, the additional tuition fees, and the limited hours remaining for them to earn a living in the meantime (Lambert, 2023). This stalemate is evidence of how closely tied educational (in)equity is to other symptoms of Whiteness and capitalism, such as soaring costs of living and rates of tuition for higher education—a relationship that future educators would benefit to learn about.

8.2.4 Recommendation 4: Humanizing Workplace Conditions for Teachers

Findings from Chapter 7 demonstrate how educators who do not comply with the English-only agenda experience job-related stress and struggle with difficult emotions. However, teaching is not an existential test of one's fortitude. Teaching is a job, and therefore should be treated as one, with attention to how it has been shaped by neoliberal and capitalist interests. Leaving teachers to wade through discourses that insist they remain in positions where they experience ideological conflict, mistreatment, or a sense of false moral obligation is harmful to them and their students. Thus, humanizing the teaching profession includes building an understanding of the way in which teacher labor is de-valued within a neoliberal capitalist system. This can be supported by fostering critical understanding of neoliberal theory and/or introducing histories of collective agency and action in the teaching profession. In my

own practice as a teacher educator, I have attempted this by staying abreast of national headlines announcing teacher strikes and making these contemporary events the subjects of class discussions. On this note, while it was not a part of the data analyzed for this study, in the spring semester, teachers in HHS's district held a rally to protest the factors contributing to high teacher turnover in their district, especially in relation to insufficient pay and large class sizes. Ms. E was among them.

Humanizing the teaching profession is also a matter of representation and recognition. The way teachers are represented societally in the media, but also in research and TEPs, is problematic in a number of ways. In the media, teachers are often framed as White saviors or martyrs (Matias, 2013; Stanley & Schroeder, 2023). In research, as argued by Lampert (1985), teachers are often positioned as mere passive recipients of theory and detached from their environment. Relatedly, research focusing on teachers' classroom missteps adds to what Duncan-Andrade (quoted in Pappano, 2019) refers to as "documentation of dysfunction" that pervades education scholarship. That is not to say that research should not consider practices that are failing students or point out areas for improvement. Instead, I seek to highlight how a focus *only* on teachers' shortcomings results in few, easily accessible models of what equitable teaching can look like.

Presenting instances of effective teaching alongside areas for growth, while considering the context of the teaching environment, can help to diminish the reductive "good" versus "bad" dichotomy that often characterizes the political discourse around the teaching profession (Stacey et al., 2022). Partly, this would involve more research examining teachers' experiences and practices from an ecological perspective that takes into account the local and societal context (Flores et al., 2018; García & Kleifgen, 2018; Hornberger, 2002; Razfar, 2012).

Finally, in order to build the trust required in research-teaching collaborations, researchers should engage in teaching research as innovation rather than evaluation. Furthermore, when formulating research-based recommendations, they should be pragmatic and tailored to fit within the broad spectrum of teachers' roles and responsibilities. For instance, advocating for increased planning time and enhanced material support to enable the practical application of pedagogical adjustments.

Research, including this study (Chapter 7), demonstrates how qualified instructors are increasingly experiencing burnout and subsequently leaving the field. Decreasing workload through smaller class-size and modifying curriculum can help to alleviate the added labor. But much more work is required to humanize the teaching profession, retain and sustain teachers, and bring more into the field. Improving working conditions and increasing compensation are essential for humanizing the teaching profession, for example, by elevating the status of teaching and contributing to teachers' standard of living and wellness overall. This would help to bring more educators to the field, where there is already a shortage, and would help to fill the need to accommodate smaller class sizes. Compensation can be provided in a number of different forms: salary, health benefits, retirement packages, loan forgiveness, housing stipends, affordable childcare, etc. Based on the findings of this study, making mental health resources and consistent therapy affordable and accessible is also necessary because, as Ms. E articulated, personal work is professional work.

Teaching is one of the most stressful occupations in the country. In conjunction with affordable and accessible therapy, recommendations such as increasing pay, lowering class sizes, and providing more materials and planning time will aid in addressing the stress that teachers experience. Chambers and Willis (2023) outline some approaches that can help

implement and sustain increased teacher compensation, but all approaches require buy-in across multiple levels. To that end, I argue that teacher pay, too, is a matter of inequity. This is not just an economic issue but a matter of gender inequality: women overwhelmingly comprise the teacher workforce and the gendered role of teaching continues to go underpaid. Paying teachers more would not just benefit teachers, but students too. Increased teacher pay has been associated with a 5-10 percent increase in student performance, especially for students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (Loeb & Page, 2000), and can reduce teacher turnover, which also supports students' academic performance (Hendricks, 2014). Finally, if teachers are paid more, they would receive a better return on investment in a more comprehensive and longer teacher credentialing program. With extra time spent in training, they could gain more in-class experience and become familiar with foundations of language acquisition that would allow them to adequately differentiate instruction for every student, rather than falling back on decontextualized language and watered-down content. This would only be possible as long as increased pay does not coincide with increased workload, as teachers' ability to administer differentiated instruction is dependent on a reasonable assignment in a small classroom.

As Love (2019) has argued, "For schools to be well, educators need to be well [...] [and] Teacher wellness is critical to creating schools that protect students' potential and function as their homeplace" (p. 161). Many of the pushes for change in the education of Newcomer students centers on their socioemotional needs and trauma-informed teaching practices, but much like ideological awareness, teachers cannot support the well-being of their students if they are not well themselves. Therefore, future research on supporting Newcomer and other minoritized students, and educational equity should examine language teacher mental health and well-being (Gkonou, 2020; Mercer & Kostoulas, 2018). Along those lines, García (2019)

has called for an ideological "unraveling" of teacher identity and healing for teachers across the profession, saying that while within socioemotional-learning and trauma-informed research there is guidance for teachers to teach youth about responding to their emotions and prioritizing mental health, there is little suggesting that teachers do the same for themselves. Teacher healing, wellness, and humanization of the profession are all necessary steps towards humanizing and responsive education for students, and an important factor in that priority is to confront ideologies associated with the teaching profession.

8.3 Limitations & Future Directions

In this dissertation, I have shown how an equity-oriented educator navigates a multicultural monolingual environment of SEI/ELD and have discussed the implications of my findings. The analyses I presented have some limitations that should be noted. With regard to methodology, this study was limited in that the data was gathered with only one teacher and in only one school; in addition, it included primarily the teacher's perspective and, as a result, student perspectives were only selectively included. A data set including classroom video data, more than one school site or context, or more perspectives from students, support staff, and school leaders would provide additional nuanced insights about how multicultural monolingualism operates in different spaces and for different actors involved.

Future research could contrast the experiences of a teacher in SEI/ELD working with Newcomer students, with the experiences of an educator who works with students designated as long-term English learners to see if or how discourses about their labor and their role differs within the context of multicultural monolingualism. Another valuable line of research would include students' perspectives to explore the ways in which they understand ideologies of

multicultural monolingualism, and in collaboration with a teacher-researcher, identify means for students to disrupt those logics and claim multilingual spaces in their schools.

8.4 Conclusion

Throughout this dissertation, I explored how an experienced, equity-oriented teacher stays committed to her vision of equitable language education while navigating the larger ideological ecosystem. Across the year, Ms. E and I worked together to understand her experiences of teaching Newcomer students in the SEI/ELD context. What emerged was a shared understanding of the performative neoliberal multicultural discourses that obscured the persistent monolingual, White-perceiving practices of people and policies in schools. Referring to this as "multicultural monolingualism," we also came to the realization that this intersection of neoliberal and monolingual ideologies was not just harmful for students, but also contributed to the paradoxical teaching conditions that created intense professional pressure and emotional strain for Ms. E. The value of this concept as a lens for educators and researchers is that it makes visible the environmental factors and ideologies that worsen teaching conditions for educators at large and obstruct equity-oriented educators' efforts towards educational liberation for linguistically minoritized students.

Overall, I found that even if teachers are committed to humanizing and linguistically responsive practices for Newcomer students who are designated as English learners, to do so means to challenge the traditional understanding of what language teachers are supposed to do. Indeed, the prescriptive understanding of what it means to teach Newcomer youth in SEI/ELD needs to be shaken up. This work is daunting, so we need to show the same care for teachers who work with these youths every day. We—researchers, policymakers, fellow educators, and community members—should collaborate with the growing number of teachers who are doing

this important work. We should critically reflect on our own positions and ideologies alongside these teachers and support their efforts to carve out humanizing and linguistically responsive spaces in their monolingual schools—one space at a time, until every classroom is transformed. No one should have to do this work alone.

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Appendix A: Efrain Tovar Reading Template - Landmarks

LITERARY/TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Template Created by Efraín Tovar, M.A.Ed. | @efraintovarjr | v.2.6 *"Docendo discimus, excellentiam. By teaching we learn, excellence."* | ***P3***

Topic/Objective:	**Name:**
	Class/Period:
	Date:
	Did you... ❑Listen ❑Speak ❑Read ❑Write today?

ANCHOR STANDARDS: R.1, R.2, R.6, R.8; W.1; SL.1 ELD STANDARDS: P1.C.1, 2, 3; P1.I.6, 7, 8; P1.C.9,10,11,12

<table>
<tr><td>WC/L</td><td colspan="2">Essential Question:
Why is it important to have landmarks?</td></tr>
<tr><td>
12
23

31
45
51

60
66

77
90

100</td><td>LEVEL 2

A landmark is a special place. A building can be a landmark. Something outside can be a landmark. Objects can be landmarks, too.

Landmarks are places where something important happened. Later, the government says that it is a landmark. They put up a sign. They make sure to protect that place.

Many people visit landmarks. They learn what happened there. Landmarks help us remember the past.

Latinx people are people from Latin America. Maybe they lived in Latin America, or their families did long ago. There are many places in the United States where Latinx people made history. They did important things. Their actions changed the country. Many do not have</td><td>OTS: The facts, summary, details, you can point to it. One OTS (e.g. who, where, when, what) per paragraph.

IDK Words: I

Don't Know OR I

Do Know</td></tr>
</table>

110 121 125 134 141	landmarks, though. People say this should change. They want to see more Latinx landmarks. Landmarks are important. They are a way to remember important people. They help us honor our history. **SOURCE: https://newsela.com/read/latino-historical-sites/id/2001013243/ adapted 2/9/2023**	

CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE:

ACER: Answer the question. Cite the evidence. Explain the evidence. Restate the question.

LEXILE TEXT ANALYZER ANALYSIS
The Analyzer selects up to 10 words from the text that have been identified as having significant consequence or relevance and can be used to help inform instruction.

appear, clam, nature, difficult

FLUENCY GRAPH:

# OF WORDS PER 30 SEC.	*1-10*	*11-20*	*21-30*	*31-40*	*41-50*	*51-60*	*61-70*	*71-80*	*81-90*	*91-100*	*111-120*	*121-130*	*131-140*	*141-150*	*151-160*	*161-170*
# of Words																
# of Skips																
# of Errors																
# of WPHM																

***KEY**: For "Expression," "Phrasing," "Intonation," and "Retelling," use a plus (+) for "excellent," a check (√) for "good," and a minus sign (-) for "needs work."*

Fluency given on: ____

something
important
people
landmark
past
later
united
protect
learn
history
can
building
long
made
country
families
way
see
places
many
happened
actions
ago
outside
states
changed
landmarks
sure
put
change
make
help
honor
remember
maybe
say
government
things
america
sign
place
latinx
special
though
latin
says
objects
visit
want
lived

Appendix B: "Spanish" from Red Hot Salsa by Gary Soto (2005) and Handout

Spanish
by Gary Soto; transcribed from Red Hot Salsa

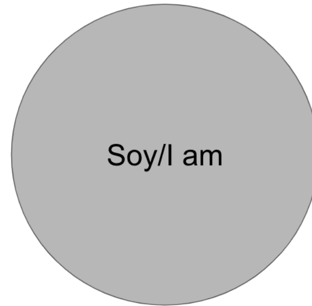
Spanish is a matter of rolling *rrrrrs* Clicking the tongue, And placing Your hands on your hips When your little brother Pours cereal Into your fishbowl. Spanish is a matter 10 Of yelling "¡Abuela, Teléfono! Una vendedora De TV Guide." It's a matter Of Saturdays, too. You enter the confessional And whisper To the priest First the sins You did in English 20 Like screaming at the boy On the blue bike, and then muttering Your sins in Spanish, Like when you Put on lipstick and had bad thoughts about Mercedes López, That big show'off in new jeans. Spanish is a matter Of "¡Ay, Dios!" 30 When the beans burn Or "¡Chihuahua!" When the weakest kid Hits a home run Spanish is a matter of your *abuelo* and his *compa* Chuckling about their younger dats While playing checkers Under the grape arbor, 40 Their faces lined and dark as the earth At their feet. Spanish words march across a bag of Chicharrones	El español es cuestión de echar a rodar las *rrrrrs* Pulsar la lengua y poner tus manos en las caderas cuando tu hermanito vierte cereal en tu pecera. El español es cuestión 10 de gritar "¡Abuela, Teléfono! Una vendedora De TV Guide." También es cuestión de sábado. Entras al confesionario y le susurras al sacerdote primero los pecados que cometiste en inglés 20 como gritarle al chico de la bicicleta azul, y luego mascullar tus pecados en español, como cuando te pusiste pintalabios y tuviste malos pensamientos de Mercedes López, ese gran alarde en jeans nuevos. El español es cuestión de exclamar "¡Ay, Dios!" 30 cuando se queman las habichuelas o "¡Chihuahua!" cuando el chico más débil batea un cuadrangular. El español es cuestión de tu *abuelo* y su compa riéndose entre dientes de su juventud mientras juegan damas bajo la parra, 40 sus caras arrugadas y oscuras como la tierra a sus pies. Las palabras españolas marchan en una bolsa de chicharrones, esos palitos salados que podrían facilmente clavar una puntilla a través del muro

Those salty clubs
That could easily hammer a nail
Through the wall
They're so hard. 50
You've always known
Spanish, even
Behind the bars
Of your crib
When you babbled
Mami, papi, flor, cocos-
Nonsense in the middle of the night.
At school, your friends have to learn Spanish,
Tripping over *gato,*
Y perro, easy words 60
You learned
When you looked out
The back window.
You're good at Spanish,
And even better at math.
When you walk home,
Dragging a Stick
Through the rain puddles,
Spanish is seeing double.
The world is twice the size, 70
and, with each year,
With one more candle
On a crooked cake,
Getting bigger.

son tan duros.
Siempre has sabido 50
español, incluso
detrás de las rejas
de tu cuna
cuando balbuceabas
Mami, papi, flor, cocos--
incoherencias en el medio de la noche.
En la escuela, tus amigos
tiene que aprender español,
tropezándose con gato
y perro, palabras fáciles 60
que aprendiste
cuando mirabas
por la ventana de atrás.
Eres bueno en español,
y aún mejor en matemáticas.
Cuando caminas a casa,
arrastrando un palo
por los charcos,
El español es ver doble.
El mundo es dos veces más grande 70
y, con cada año,
con una vela más
en un pastel torcido
sigue creciendo.

name ________________________________ date ____________ period ___________

El poema sobre la identidad/Poem about identity

Brain storm/lluvia de ideas


Memorias	Personajes	Imagines/Sonidos/Cosas

English	Spanish
__________ is a matter of	El/La _______ es cuestión de
___________ words march across	Las palabras ____________ marchan
You've always known _________	Siempre has sabido ___________

Appendix C: Language Mapping Activity adapted from Martínez & Mejía (2020)

Language Mapping Brainstorm

What are the places and social spaces you are in on a daily or weekly basis? ¿Cuáles son los lugares y espacios sociales en los que se encuentra a diario o semanalmente?	**Who is in those spaces? (can write names or categories of people)** ¿Quién está en esos espacios? (puede escribir nombres o categorías de personas)	**How do you use language in this space with the different people you identified?** ¿Cómo usas el lenguaje en este espacio con las diferentes personas que identificaste?

Adapted From Martínez, R. A., & Mejía, A. F. (2020). Looking closely and listening carefully: A sociocultural approach to understanding the complexity of Latina/o/x students' everyday language. Theory into Practice, 59(1), 53-63.