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Home, Language, Loss:

An Ethnography of Language Policy in Los Angeles High Schools for Recently Arrived Immigrant Students

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Education

by

Kyle Marten Halle-Erby

2024

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2024

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Home, Language, Loss:

An Ethnography of Language Policy in Los Angeles High Schools for Recently Arrived Immigrant Students

by

Kyle Marten Halle-Erby

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

University of California, Los Angeles, 2024

Professor Teresa L. McCarty, Chair

The Los Angeles Unified School District has undertaken an experiment in the education of immigrant students learning English. Over the 2021-2023 school years, the district opened three new high school Academies for recently-immigrated students explicitly tasked with centering their home languages to support their success in school. The students and educators in these Academies are predominately Latinx and 25% of students reported a Mayan language as their home language. Recognizing that Indigenous languages and the home languages of young people from racialized communities represent knowledge- and value-systems historically excluded from and suppressed by schools, this dissertation asks what language policy in "newcomer" schools teaches about the futures we build with and for marginalized young people.

Based on two years of ethnographic research across the three Academies, this study examines the official and practiced policies governing students' home languages and the possible futures those policies facilitate or constrain.

By analyzing classroom observations, student work, more than 75 interviews with students, educators, and district leaders; and participant-observation in a youth-organizing group, this study engages the concept of relationality to argue that the enrollment of Indigenous, immigrant young people in U.S. public schools to achieve their self-determined goals is an insurgency against the colonial design of schooling. Drawing on the critical ethnography of language policy and raciolinguistic ideologies, this dissertation describes how progressive language policy can operate as a form of state counterinsurgency against immigrant young people's claims to citizenship by operating as a flexible enclosure that works in concert with carceral institutions to control the mobility and sociality of immigrant young people. Thinking with abolition, the study identifies how educators develop subversive solidarity with immigrant educational insurgency through transnational teacher organizing. These insights demonstrate contemporary interrelations between language, race, and schooling from which we can identify the specificities of shared struggle and imagine anticolonial relationships between schools, educators, and racially minoritized communities.

The dissertation of Kyle Marten Halle-Erby is approved.

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VITA

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Published Conference Proceedings

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

"And solidarity is something that's made and remade and remade. It never just is. And I think of that in terms of radical dependency. That we come absolutely to depend on each other. And so, solidarity and this radical dependency that I keep thinking about and keep seeing everywhere is about life and living together. And living together in rather beautiful ways.
– Ruth Wilson Gilmore, *Geographies of Racial Capitalism with Ruth Wilson Gilmore*, 2020.

"I've been working with an elder in Seattle for a while. He thinks that one of the things that is really bad about education systems is it tries to get everyone to know the same thing. That's never how we were. He said, "Part of the reason that [schools] have destroyed our social fabric is because if we all know the same thing, then we don't need each other."
– Megan Bang, Interview, 2/5/19

The sun is out. The rain stopped early yesterday morning in time for the Kingdom Day parade, and as I turn off my block to head east on MLK Boulevard, I glide into the left lane to make room for the garbage truck scraping away the last evidence of the celebration. I drive to Greene High School,[1] where I have been observing classrooms, meeting with teachers, and working closely with the International Academy leader since August when the school opened a new program for immigrant students. The program was tasked with embracing students' home languages in order to meet their academic needs. Today is the first day I will have formal interviews with students enrolled in the Academy.

My first interview is with Jefferson Quej Santos, a tenth grader who is 17 and has been attending Greene for a year after immigrating from Guatemala. I have spent one day each week this year with Jefferson in his geometry class, where he often tells me about biking the trails in the Santa Monica mountains on the weekends before his shifts working as a busser in a Japanese restaurant in Hollywood. Today, we sit in the school's small conference room as he recounts stories about his childhood in Guatemala, his former school, and his experiences learning Spanish, K'iche', and English. At the end of our conversation, he tells me about his future goals

[1] The names of all schools, students, and educators are pseudonyms.

to become a nurse. When I ask who supports him with those goals he says, "*Mis amigos y mis maestros. Me ayudan cuando estoy triste. Me motivan. A veces me hacen reír aunque este llorando*."[2]

After the interview, Jefferson has chemistry, and I join him in the classroom a few minutes into the period. Paula Castro, the Academy leader, meets me there so we can observe the class together. When I sit at an empty table next to Jefferson's, the room is quiet. Jefferson and the other students at his table each have a copy of the periodic table open in front of them and are working on a crossword puzzle handout with the names of the elements. 1 Down: Rf, the answer is Rutherfordium. 1 Across: Ra, Radium. And so on. There are 96 "clues" like this, and Jefferson has completed 16 when the teacher calls out, "OK, guys, *escuche*, I know you're not done. You can finish at home," and then asks the students to turn the handout over to find a second puzzle. This time, the clues require closer reading of the periodic table (2 Across: My atomic mass is 53.453, answer: chlorine). Jefferson and the other students at his table look over the page for a few minutes and then gradually all flip back to the first puzzle and continue copying the names of the elements.

After chemistry, Ms. Castro and I follow Jefferson to his English language development class. The teacher is standing at the front of the classroom and the students are at tables arranged in rows, facing forward. The bell rings and the teacher says, "OK, *bueno, ahora la sopa de palabras*," and passes out a word search handout titled "Remembering Martin Luther King, Jr." where students find the terms nonviolence, civil rights, holiday, love, Atlanta, and death amid a jumble of letters. Jefferson is sitting next to a new student, Marilyn, who arrived from Guatemala in December and is starting at Greene today. Marilyn has finished her word search and is holding

---

[2]Translation: My friends and my teacher. They help me when I am sad. They motivate me. Sometimes they make me laugh even if I am crying.

a handout titled “irregular verbs,” with a long list of words on it. I ask Marilyn what she’s doing. “*Estudiando la lista de verbos irregulares*,” she tells me. “*Te ayuda a leer la lista*?” I ask. “*Si*,” she says, “*pero es mejor escuchar las palabras*.”[3]

As Marilyn and Jefferson return to their worksheets, my mind races. Before I became a teacher in a school very much like the one I am sitting in, my first job teaching English was in the Ecuadorian Amazon when I was a college student. It was 2008 and, after having grown up in Baltimore in a family where political organizing always circled back to work with young people and struggles in schools, I was studying critical race theory and Latin American history. Noticing the ways racism and colonization converged and diverged across the Americas, I wanted to see beyond the United States. But, my scholarship did not cover study abroad. Fortunately, a college mentor connected me with one of her colleagues, and eventually I was invited by the Secoya Nation to live in one of their communities on the Río Aguarico. I took a leave of absence from college, a plane to Quito, a smaller plane to Lago Agrio, a bus to Shushufindi, and a canoe down the river to Sehuaya.

In Sehuaya, I spent the mornings with a small group of kids, ages 3–11, for English classes. We met in a one-room, cinderblock schoolhouse painted pale green with a corrugated tin roof. There was no curriculum, no English language books, no internet access, and no printers. The summer before this, I had worked in a preschool in Boston’s Dorchester neighborhood, so I did my best to emulate Ms. Raquel, the skilled teacher I worked with there, to lead the group through songs and games in English. Every day, elders in the community would stand outside the classroom peering in over the cinderblock wall. Whenever I looked around the classroom, I

[3]Marilyn says, “studying the list of irregular verbs.” I ask, “Does it help you to read the list?” She replies, “Yes, but it’s better to hear the words.”

would catch their eyes as they observed the spectacle I made; supervising me while I danced and sang and pantomimed around the room with their grandchildren.

Outside the window of the classroom at Greene High School a trail of brake lights illuminates the freeway. Imagine Jefferson and Marilyn and all of their classmates' grandparents. Picture them ringed around the classroom, suspended like an archipelago in the air above Los Angeles, looking in the windows. What a group of people they are—the languages, the lands, the experiences. What would they think? *Would they tear this building down? Are they already?*

"Womp, womp," Ms. Castro says to me as we walk into the hallway, summing up her disappointed feelings about the classes we have just observed. Like all of their classmates in the LA Academies, Jefferson and Marilyn's presence in Los Angeles classrooms is the result of incredible agency, risk, and dedication. They have separated from their families, navigated border crossings, and survived detention centers. They skip sleep and attend school directly after working a shift washing dishes or cleaning office buildings. In mundane and extraordinary ways, the students in the International Academies put their bodies on the line to achieve their goals: to become a nurse, like Jefferson wants, or to easily conjugate irregular verbs, as Marilyn hopes to do. Immigrant students and their communities' insistence on the promise of public education is a political act. Educational language policy is a clear articulation of how state governments, school systems, and educators *react* to the political demands of immigrant communities and, through the language policymaking process, dominant ideologies of nation, citizen, and student are revealed.

Scholarship in applied linguistics and language education argues that embracing students' full language repertoires is the most effective way to support language development (García & Wei, 2014). However, throughout the 1990s and early 2000s conservative movements succeeded

in creating English-only educational policy across the country that hurt students: English language learners dropped out of school at increasing rates as their math and reading test scores stagnated while anti-immigrant discrimination flourished (Gandara and Hopkins, 2010). But language policy is changing yet again thanks to ongoing organizing by Latinx communities and immigrant power–building groups. In California, voters repealed regnant English-only policy in 2016. In 2023, the U.S. federal government approved over $1 billion in funding for the Department of Education's English Language Acquisition program to meet the needs of English learners through a "greater emphasis on multilingualism that embraces students' native and home languages as a strength they bring to their school communities" (U.S. Department of Education, 2022, p.10). Although the policy context is becoming more progressive, there is no consensus among practitioners on the role of students' home languages.

In Los Angeles, the International Academies epitomize this policy shift. These schools, which began with a partnership between the LA Unified School District and the Internationals Network for Public Schools, are explicitly tasked with "centering" students' home languages. However, working on the leading edge of policy change means that curriculum, instruction, assessment, and other features of local policy have not evolved to reflect "an embrace" of home languages. This dissertation explores ethnographically how on-the-ground policymaking regarding students' home languages shapes the futures we build with and for marginalized young people. Studying progressive policy provides a window into new possibilities for solidarity and subversion that emerge despite a constellation of racialized language-restrictive ideologies and sociopolitical forces that attempt to defang demands for radical change. Language policy and planning is comprised of this complex of forces that are both overt and covert, official and unofficial, explicit and implicit. Precisely due to the fact that language policy and planning

contains these dynamic contradictions, it affords a view into the architecture of state control and (if we look carefully) the effervescent sociality that colonial governments perpetually attempt to contain. Understanding language policy and planning this way shapes the questions I ask about it and the way I choose to study it.

Research Questions and Study Design

To qualitatively study how educational policy concerning students' home languages manages and mediates the futures we build with and for marginalized young people, this study is guided by the following research questions: (1) What are the official and practiced policies governing students' home languages in the new LAUSD–Internationals Academies? (2) What possibilities for college, career, and community participation do these policies facilitate or constrain for students?

To answer these questions, I worked inside the Los Angeles Unified School district from March 2021-June 2023. During this time, LAUSD partnered with the Internationals Network for Public Schools to open three new International Academies across the city. The International Academies are high school programs exclusively serving recently-arrived immigrant students who are learning English as a new language.

Nancy Hornberger & David Cassels Johnson (2007) characterizes language policy as a "layered" phenomenon. Parallel to this conceptualization is Jill Koyama's (2018) idea of approaching educational policy studies through assemblage. Assemblage and layering highlight the fluid nature of policy and invite investigations of the way power and agency are manufactured and delimited through relationships across time and place. Working within this understanding of language policy, I took an ethnographic monitoring approach to data collection.

Ethnographic monitoring is a methodology in language planning and policy that includes participant and non-participant observation, in-depth interviews, document collection, and collaborative analysis with research participants and stakeholders (Van der Aa & Blommaert, 2011, 2017). I see ethnographic monitoring as "the application of the ethnographic paradigm and research methods to the investigation of situated sociocultural phenomena, with an eye toward policy and programme improvement and positive social change" (McCarty & Halle-Erby, 2023, p. 369). To do so in the realm of language planning and policy, ethnographic monitoring is cumulative, collaborative, critical, and comparative. In this study, this means that data collection was organized through working groups where partners and I worked together on self-study.

Over 26 months, I worked with teams of teachers, school leaders, and district officials to design the International Academies before they opened, to regularly observe classrooms, and to evaluate the impact of the Academies at the end of each school year. I joined each school for whole-staff professional development and for smaller meetings with Academy teachers to workshop curriculum and discuss student support. In partnership with the Academies, I analyzed student achievement by looking at student work, standardized test results, and overall course passage rates. I was also able to work one-on-one with many educators by serving as a leadership coach for Academy administrators and an instructional coach for Academy teachers. I worked with groups of students in their classrooms, helped conduct intake interviews when students enrolled, and interviewed students individually and in groups. I got to know some parents and families by attending monthly coffee with the principal meetings and connected with community-based immigrant power-building organizations that provide legal, medical, housing, and cultural services to the students attending the LA Academies. In addition, I conducted historical research in the school board archives to understand more about the history of

educational programs for recently-arrived immigrant students in Los Angeles schools. Overall, this approach afforded a view of the LA Academies from multiple vantage points and created opportunities for collaborative sensemaking that supported the development of the Academies in real time while contributing to the analyses and critiques contained in this dissertation.

Making Sense of Policy Change: Conceptual Frames

The policy shift away from English-only approaches and toward asset-based orientations to students' home languages is a paradigmatic shift. In fact, it is a radical change that cannot be dismissed. This policy change is grounded in hard-fought battles by immigrant, Black, and Native communities for public schools—and state resources—that meet their needs. These movements are acts of self-determination and assertions of citizenship. To understand the meaning and significance of this policy shift, I rely on a theoretical foundation underpinned by the critical ethnography of language policy, raciolinguistic ideologies, and abolition, which are summarized below and discussed more fully in Chapter 2. These concepts are woven together with the broader framework of relationality.

I bring these bodies of knowledge together because each contributes something essential about the nature and significance of language policy in the LA Academies. The critical ethnography of language policy provides a conceptualization of policy as a dynamic social process. Raciolinguistic ideologies contributes an understanding of how that process is constituted by and reproductive of colonial logics of racialization, in particular how race and language are mutually relied upon to naturalize colonial methods of control. Abolition provides the insight that because colonial governance develops in response to people's movement toward freedom the models for living beyond oppression are always, already present.

The critical ethnography of language policy

The critical ethnography of language policy reveals that the shift toward an asset-based orientation to students' home languages is a simultaneously "bottom-up" and "top-down" movement (Hornberger & McCarty, 2013). This change has opened up new "ideological and implementational space" (Hornberger, 2005), which takes shape in the LA International Academies. Of course, this ideological and implementational space exists not only within the school but also in the community, in families, and in workplaces. So engaging the critical ethnography of language policy invites inquiry into how this paradigmatic shift in educational language policy has consequences that reverberate across society. We must ask: Who are the language policymakers? Where does language policymaking take place? How and where do the consequences of language policy become visible?

Raciolinguistic ideologies

Raciolinguistic ideologies illuminate the relationships between language and race in the context of colonial governmentality (Rosa and Flores, 2017). The LA Academies are compulsory state schools for young people, almost entirely from Latin America, whose safety, security, and future life chances have necessitated transnational migration into the United States. In the language policy context, raciolinguistic ideologies underscore the past and present significance of settler colonialism and the systems of racial and linguistic differentiation and hierarchy that are among its central mechanisms. This begs the questions: What kind of people is educational language policy intending to produce? How are language and race co-constructed? How are languages differentially valued?

Abolition

Abolition is a political and intellectual imperative to understand how carcerality—the social configurations that entrench a dependence on punishment and discipline—structures our society while actively constructing alternatives (Davis, 2003; Gilmore, 2007). Abolition is an invitation to work in coalition on ways of living where safety and belonging are not contingent on exclusion, control, and domination. Abolition highlights language policymaking as an area of concern in the broader movement for im/migrant justice. Abolition helps us see that young people's unauthorized migration into the United States and enrollment in public schools can be understood as an insurgent claim to citizenship. Abolition prompts us to wonder: What are the carceral functions of language policy? How does language policy reveal connections between school and im/migrant detention? How can educators stand in solidarity with young people and their communities' acts of self-determination, particularly when these young people are deemed illegal by the state?

Relationality

Relationality (Halle-Erby, 2024; Wilson, 2008) is an onto-axio-epistemological framework that helps us to understand language policy as *both* a state attempt to manage sociality and a product of interactions between and among young people, educators, family members, and politicians across imposed geopolitical borders. Applying relationality in this context begins with the premise that, for example, Suchitepéquez, Guatemala (where Jefferson is from), and Los Angeles mutually co-construct one another culturally, linguistically, politically, and economically. If we accept this premise, it becomes obvious that the shift toward embracing students' home language is not *just* a reform nor is it *just* a failure of implementation when this

policy shift fails to disrupt the status quo. Relationality invites us to ask: Who are the members in such relationships? What is the state of their relationships? How are these relationships inflected by historical and contemporary uneven distributions of power? What would an even relationship look like?

Relationality weaves through the bodies of knowledge that shape my inquiry, analysis, and writing. Relationality's conceptual positioning beyond colonial logic guides my engagement with the critical ethnography of language policy, raciolinguistic ideologies, and abolition. Essentially, it affords the ability to shine a bright light on the violent dynamics of forced migration and family separation that is the context for language policymaking without normalizing its horrific features. When we understand that reality is constituted by the relationships among all beings, the degradation of any one of us becomes shockingly unnatural.

Context: Immigrant Educational Insurgency and State Counterinsurgency

In August 2021, the first LA International Academy opened at Cerrejón High School. At the opening ceremony, Principal Emma Sánchez ended the event by invoking the legacy of the 1968 protests, when students across East Los Angeles walked out of their schools to protest the racism and undereducation they experienced. Alongside the district superintendent and school board member representing her school, she proclaimed, "In 1968, we walked out for a better education. Today, our students are walking in. Walking in to a program that meets their needs, where all our kids are on track to graduate from the first day. Our children work hard at what all our children want: The American Dream. We will not let you down. *Si se puede*!" Eighteen months later, Ms. Mariana Canul, the Academy leader at Cerrejón, was frustrated with the way she saw the school district working against her program. "There are so many things that are in

[the district's] control. I feel like I'm failing … If I can't be true to our mission, then it's not good for me. This is not just a show for me. It's not just a facade."

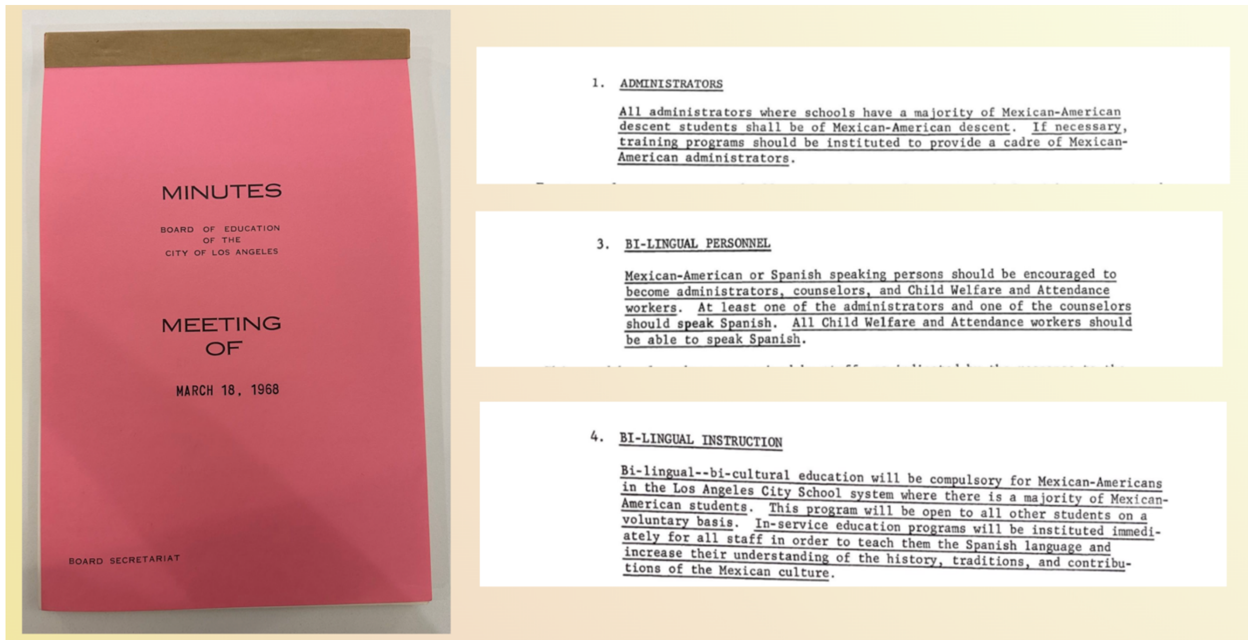
In their first years, the LA International Academies have made progress. All three high schools, Cerrejón, Greene, and Newton, have documented positive improvements—more students are enrolling in each Academy, more are staying at the Academy from year to year, and more are passing their classes. These changes have real and immediate benefits for students and the schools they attend. Of course, many challenges also persist. And to take seriously Ms. Canul's lament that the school district was treating her mission to redesign her school around the needs of recently arrived immigrant students as "a façade," we must follow Principal Sánchez's lead and look back to the Blowouts.

Tracing the trajectory from 1968, when Chicano students walked out of a Cerrejón High School staffed and led by white educators, to 2021, when Central American immigrant students walked into the very same school 55 years later now staffed and led by Latinx educators, reveals how the school district attempts to neutralize radical demands for change through progressive policy that laminates reform into existing practice. However, these attempts at counterinsurgency by the school district are never complete.

Figure 1.1: Students protest at Lincoln High School (not included in this study),1968. Source: LAPL Herald-Examiner Collection, 00041327.

The East Los Angeles Walkouts, also called "the Blowouts," took place in March 1968 and are a central part of the story of the civil rights movement and Latinx history in Southern California. In my fieldwork at Cerrejón, the International Academy was discursively identified as part of the legacy of the Blowouts, as heard in the principal's remarks during the opening ceremony. I combed through the LA School Board Archives to learn more about the district's response to the Blowouts. In the immediate aftermath, participating students, teachers, and administrators formed the Educational Issues Coordinating Committee (EICC) to communicate with the LA Board of Education. On March 18, 1968, the EICC joined a community meeting to present 39 demands to the board.

Of the first four demands, there are three that pertain directly to the International Academy: Mexican American principals in schools with majority Mexican American students, bilingual staff in schools at all levels, and bilingual instruction. The walkouts were the result of deep-seated frustration and long-standing organizing in the Latinx community that connected students and educators from the K–12, community college, and university systems with union organizers and other political entities outside of education, like the Brown Berets. The city and school district firmly opposed the blowouts and the political demands that arose from them. The board worked with LAPD to arrest key organizers of the walkouts and dismiss participants from their positions in the school district.


MINUTES

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES

MEETING OF

MARCH 18, 1968

BOARD SECRETARIAT

1. ADMINISTRATORS

All administrators where schools have a majority of Mexican-American descent students shall be of Mexican-American descent. If necessary, training programs should be instituted to provide a cadre of Mexican-American administrators.

3. BI-LINGUAL PERSONNEL

Mexican-American or Spanish speaking persons should be encouraged to become administrators, counselors, and Child Welfare and Attendance workers. At least one of the administrators and one of the counselors should speak Spanish. All Child Welfare and Attendance workers should be able to speak Spanish.

4. BI-LINGUAL INSTRUCTION

Bi-lingual--bi-cultural education will be compulsory for Mexican-Americans in the Los Angeles City School system where there is a majority of Mexican-American students. This program will be open to all other students on a voluntary basis. In-service education programs will be instituted immediately for all staff in order to teach them the Spanish language and increase their understanding of the history, traditions, and contributions of the Mexican culture.

Figure 1.2: EICC Demands from the Board of Education Archives.

In response to the walkouts and the demands, the board stationed LAPD officers on the campuses where students protested. Still, students and teachers continued to organize and demonstrate. Responding to this ongoing pressure, the board convened a special meeting on March 28, 1968, at the campus of Abraham Lincoln High School to discuss the demands brought by the EICC. Even the decision to discuss the demands with organizers was fraught. According to district records, board member J.C. Chambers "indicated that he feels the entire sequence of events in handling these demands was irregular and to some extent illegal and that the demands should be referred to the schools in question, to come to the Board in a regular order through the faculties and school administrations" (Board Minutes, 4/1/1968). Aside from their own political orientations, the board was reacting in response to strong pressure citywide among residents—including influential real estate developers—to refuse to engage with the demands for high-quality education that Latinx students, educators, and their families were making. The filed correspondence to the board immediately following the blowouts is filled with letters condemning their organizers.

On March 11, 1968, the Construction Council of Southern California wrote: "We were very much disturbed to learn of the harassment of the Board of Education at its meeting last Thursday. We feel it was an insult to elected members of our Board and to the citizens of Los Angeles as well. This is doubly true since our Board has made such great efforts to provide an adequate school system for all our people, regardless of race or color."

Mrs. James J. O'Connor was more critical of the board. Her March 18, 1968, letter opens: "When the Local School Board permitted a gang of hoodlums to take over a board meeting and [was] forced to flee out of the rear door, then the following day permit the same thing to happen with one board member being mauled by the hoodlums, that board is guilty of cowardice in dealing with the situation, what you did accomplish was more rioting, and allowed it to spread to other locations." Another resident, Mrs. Douglas Dinius, criticized student protestors as well as the board. She wrote, "I am appalled by the latest outrage of our students and lack of integrity demonstrated by our teachers in the crises befalling five high schools in the Los Angeles area. Do the students presume to know what's best for them? Over and above experienced officials who have earned the right by age and wisdom to govern and lead the schools by the laws and procedures that are set down in the charter as the official guidelines?"

Responding directly to the 39 demands put forth after the blowouts, LA attorney Hugo A. Steinmeyer wrote, "As a citizen and a taxpayer I have become concerned about the demands made by rebellious students and teachers in the East Los Angeles school area. One of the most unacceptable of these demands from any standpoint is that contained in six of the total of thirty eight, that there must be bilingual and bicultural education in all of the East Los Angeles schools." Steinmeyer goes on the explain how awful it would be to "revise" history to "glorify Mexican culture," and then concludes, "Nothing could be more harmful to our schools than to

require bilingual instruction … Bilingualism has been a source of controversy and strife and even war in every country in the world where it has been permitted to exist. It would be tragic to permit it to get started in this country whether with Mexican Americans or any other nationality."

However, by the time the LA International Academies opened, a number of the demands from 1968 had been met—at least in some form. The administrators of all three schools opening International Academies are Latinx, as are the vast majority of teachers and counselors. And the Academies describe themselves as fostering multilingualism and honoring students' identities. The Cerrejón International Academy handbook opens with a vision and mission statement that begins, "We believe in the value of the students' primary language, native culture, and prior experiences." So what happened between the 1968 walkouts and the opening of Cerrejón?

For one, the population changed. According to historian Henry J. Gutiérrez (1996), in 1967 just over 20% of LA students were Latinx, but only 3% of teachers and 1.3% of administrators could be identified as Hispanic/Latino. Today, Latinx students make up nearly 75% of all students in the district. Of the nearly 24,000 K–12 teachers who work in the district, 44.9% are identified as Hispanic/Latino. Of the 2,853 administrators, 46.2% are identified as Hispanic/Latino. These shifts in demographics and employment occur in a political context, including that of language policy and planning.

In the 1974 *Lau v. Nichols* decision (discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of a group of Chinese American parents who sued the San Francisco School Board on the grounds that their children did not receive an adequate education in schools where they were provided only English curricular and pedagogical materials. The court ruled in their favor, declaring, "There is no equality of treatment merely by providing

students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers and curriculum; for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education" (cited in Garcia, 2008, p. 247). However, the court did not specify the nature of a school district's responsibility to pupils who do not speak English. The ruling continues, "Teaching English to the students of Chinese ancestry who do not speak the language is one choice. Giving instructions to this group in Chinese is another. There may be others" (*Lau v. Nichols*, 414 U.S. 563, 39 L. Ed. 2d 1, 1974). In 1980, the Carter Administration issued the Lau Regulations, which mandated bilingual instruction in any school where at least 25 percent of students spoke a language other than English. But, not even a year later, in 1981 the conservative Reagan administration withdrew those regulations (Castagno & McCarty, 2018).

The following decade, Pete Wilson served as governor of California (1991-1999) and in 1994 introduced proposition 187, a ballot initiative banning undocumented people from the state's public services, including schools. Voters passed Prop 187, but it was challenged in court and not enacted. Still, the courts did not officially throw out the proposition until 1998. The same year that Prop 187 was officially made unenforceable, California Proposition 227 passed, which is popularly known as a statewide ban on bilingual education. Although this generalization fails to capture the nuance of the bill, it did make English-only instruction the default in California schools and required families to sign a waiver if they wanted their child in bilingual educational programs. The English-only default remained policy in California until 2016, when voters passed Proposition 58. This legislation effectively undid Proposition 227 and gave local school districts the authority to choose which kind of educational programs they wanted to offer to English learners, including bilingual programs.

In 2011, California State Assembly Bill 124 mandated changes to address the persistent failure of California schools to prepare students labeled as English learners for college and careers. From that political momentum, Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) partnered with the Internationals Network in 2019 to improve educational outcomes for a subgroup of English learners that the district and the network call newcomers. “Newcomers” are immigrant students who have been in the country for three years or less and are learning English. In LAUSD, “newcomers” have among the lowest graduation rates of any student population. Since 1985, the Internationals Network has helped districts across the country design high schools exclusively for newcomers that prioritize language and content integration. At the 30-plus schools and academies the Network has opened, the graduation rate is 79%. During the winter of 2021, LAUSD and the Internationals Network identified three high schools across the city in which to open International Academies. The following school year, the first LA International Academy opened.

This abbreviated history shows that some of the demands from 1968 were institutionalized in policy—albeit through a winding road—by the time Cerrejón International Academy opened in August 2021. Yet the learning conditions and educational outcomes for students in LA’s Latinx and immigrant communities did not significantly improve. To understand the permanence of this inequality despite the malleability of policy—and the hard-fought victories for progressive reform—the concept of state counterinsurgency is useful (Rodriguez, 2021; Sojoyner, 2013). Thinking with this framework, we can identify a number of insurgencies: the 1968 Blowouts; the transnational migrations of Salvadoran and Guatemalan people into Los Angeles; the ongoing organizing of parents, students, and educators demanding

that their schools serve their interests; and the shift in demographics among the LAUSD teaching force away from a white majority and toward a Latinx plurality.

What are the counterinsurgencies? How is state power organizing against the assertion of Latinx migrants' claim to citizenship? At the legislative level, Propositions 187 and 227 attempted to exclude immigrants and languages other than English from public schools. But state counterinsurgency also occurs informally at the community level. When we look at the International Academy at Cerrejón, we can see that one counterinsurgency is the co-opting of Guatemalan migrants' claim to public education for the purpose of strengthening a California institution. For example, just over 20 years ago, more than 5,000 students attended Cerrejón High School, making it one of the most populous high schools in the United States. Since then, enrollment has declined drastically. In the fall of 2022, the school had about 600 students enrolled in grades 9–12. In a conversation with the principal about enrollment, she pointed out the size of the new International Academy, which had 140 ninth graders enrolled, compared to only 90 freshmen enrolled outside of the Academy. "These kids are saving Cerrejón," she remarked.

What does it mean for children to save a school? What does it mean for *immigrant children* to save a school? What does it mean for recently arrived children from Central America to save a school? What does it mean for Indigenous children from Guatemala, forced to migrate due to the devastating economic and environmental consequences of U.S. foreign policy, to save a public school in Los Angeles? What does it mean for children released from an immigrant detention center and required, by law, to attend a "failing" school to save it?

Invitation: Solidarity with Insurgency

The journeys that Academy students undertook to arrive in their classrooms in Los Angeles can be described as deadly. The pathways that Jason De León (2015) and Lauren Heidbrink (2020) describe delineate the conditions of Central American migration to the United States in our current era of highly securitized immigration policy (Jones, 2016). I cannot find an appropriate adjective to encapsulate the violence that migrating people face as they move from Guatemala to Mexico to the United States. Part of that violence comes from, and is described by, the narrative failure of the commonsense interpretation of "migration pathways." This migration is not a single event nor a straight line. As detention and deportation have become increasingly common, in both the United States and Mexico, many migrants—including those who attend the International Academies—make multiple attempts enter the United States. It is difficult to imagine the conditions and the tenacity that drive a person (back) onto the migration journey to the United States even when they know, firsthand, how brutal it is.

Why make that trip? I asked dozens of students in interviews at the LA Academies. The answer always includes *for a better life*. The answer never includes *to save Cerrejón High School*. The children who survive the journey across Mexico and survive the border crossing and survive the detention center have not done so to *save U.S. schools.* But they do.

The International Academies function as indexical icons, as the nation. Meaning that the schools are places where so-called impossible or subaltern subjects are necessary (in particular ways) for the maintenance of the very place that marginalizes them. In this case, the presence of the students is necessary for the viability of the school. Part of what makes these students able to "save Cerrejón" is the state of California's Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) and the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) contained within it. Under this plan, school funding

is allocated, in part, based on the categories of students enrolled. English learners, for example, are allocated additional funding. As are students with disabilities and students experiencing homelessness, among others. The immigrant young people filling up enrollment at Cerrejón were "saving" the school, in part, because of the additional dollars they brought with them. They have a particularly high value that supports the school's continuity. Of course, these valuations are based on specific quantifications of disparity, but that disparity becomes subsumed into an asset for the school. The child's need – not the child's achievement – becomes the school's value, and the school is saved by the child's need. In this way, the school stays in business by creating, rather than ameliorating, need.

Central American children's insurgent action of migration and appropriation of public schools in service of building better lives for themselves and their families is co-opted by repositioning migrant students as the lifeblood for floundering U.S. schools. Directing these young people into a school that others have been actively abandoning in order to "save the school" is an attempt at counterinsurgency. But state counterinsurgency is, in the words of Sabina Vaught, Bryan Brayboy and Jeremiah Chin (2022), "brutal but flimsy" (p. 9). While the state and the school certainly monopolize violence, the "power in the room" (Gillen, 2019) comes from the epistemologies and practices of self-determination, refusal, and futurity that are stewarded by immigrant students and their communities.

This dissertation is an invitation to think critically about the fact that so much state power is exerted upon the regulation of language. I ask: What does the polic(y)ing of language teach us about the perpetuation of racial capitalism in settler states? What does it mean for educators to stand in solidarity with the insurgency of immigrant young people? Jan Blommaert (2009) describes language as "the architecture of social behavior itself" (p. 263). Language is also a

primary medium for imagination. How we speak—what we call things, the relationships our language opens up and forecloses upon—shapes the futures we build. Insurgency demands imagination, so we must attend carefully to the counterinsurgent functions of language policy that delimit imagination.

My research identified two diverging perspectives of students' home languages, which I label the instrumental and the fundamental views of students' home languages. In the instrumental view, languages are understood to be more-or-less universal structures for thought and communication where the components and grammars of one can transposed to another. So, students and teachers are encouraged to draw on the structures of their home languages to develop English language skills. In practice at the Academies, this looked like supporting English language development by relying on cognates, diagramming sentences to build comprehension through comparison between English and Spanish, and structuring opportunities for students to talk and write in their home languages before using English. At the schools, these practices quickly led to educators' frustrations with what they perceived to be lack of literacy skills and home language expertise among students. The fundamental view, languages are understood as a product and a producer of culture, history, and identity. In other words, language exists at the root of who one is and where one comes from. In practice, educators who took this view re-designed curriculum and instruction around students' experiences, the places they come from, and the issues they find most pressing. At the schools, this led to challenges when classrooms departed from existing curricula or attempted to include parents and families in non-traditional ways.

My analysis of the instrumental and fundamental views of students' home languages highlights the complex relationships between Spanish, English and Mayan languages in the LA

Academies, which provokes inquiry into the language policymaking process in the context of colonial U.S. statehood. In so doing, I examine the construction of *newness* that occurs at and through the LA Academies where students are ideology framed as "new Americans," or "new student populations," or "new social problems." I argue that the construction of newness is a strategy for dominating, structuring, and having authority over Indigenous and Latinx children as part of the ongoing project of U.S. state formation through conquest. Drawing on interview transcripts, California legal history, and archival data on the history of LAUSD's approach to "newcomer" education, I assert that the construction of *newness* (1) conceals the history of insurgency/counterinsurgency on both sides of the border, to which Academy students' migration and appropriation of services within the educational system belong to diminish students' agency, and (2) obfuscates the transnational political communities and kinship networks to which students belong in an attempt to deracinate and dis/member them. Ultimately, these two consequences of the construction of *newness* evident through the Academies exceptionalizes the role of school in im/migrant students' lives to conceal the relationships among carcerality, migration, and education. Overall, the dissertation describes how the dynamic process of language policy and planning (LPP) creates opportunities for solidarity among educators and immigrant communities when students' practices of futurity are centered as well as the ways LPP functions to instantiate racialized inequality and advance coloniality.

Organization of the Dissertation

Following this Introduction, in Chapter 2, Theory and Literature, I present the core concepts and foundation studies that guide by research. Throughout Chapter 2, I identify the scholarly conversations to which this study contributes. In Chapter 3, Methodology and Methods, I tell the story of my inquiry with the LA International Academies. This includes

discussion of my positionality, research questions, and ethnographic monitoring—the central methodological orientation of the study. Chapter 3 also explains the study design, data collection methods, research context and participants, and data analysis process, as well as challenges and limitations. Chapter 4, Surface Tension: Making Sense of Contradictions and Understanding Solidarity in the International Academies, introduces the metaphor of surface tension for understanding the role of contradiction in the Academies. I use the concept of surface tension to identify and analyze the instrumental and fundamental views of students' home languages. These are two diverging approaches to the role of students' home languages across the Academies, which I substantiate with evidence from curriculum, classroom practice, interviews, and observations. Engaging relationality with a raciolinguistic perspective, I interpret the instrumental and fundamental views of students' home languages and close with provocations to understand the Academies explicitly in the context of U.S. state formation through ongoing conquest.

While Chapter 4 focuses on a close, school-based analysis of the language policy process, Chapter 5 takes a more historical and legal view through an examination of the construction of "newness" at and through the Academies. In Chapter 5, New Trouble: The Construction of Newness and the Imperative to Find Solidarity with Insurgency, I argue that the construction of "newness" is a strategy for dominating, structuring, and having authority over Indigenous and Latinx children as part of the ongoing project of U.S. state formation through conquest. This argument relies on in-depth analysis of Gedeón Sacalxot Tepaz's story, which include his migration from Guatemala to Los Angeles, his experiences with work and immigration court, and with attending, leaving, and returning to school. Alongside extended excerpts from an interview with Gedeón, I include legal and policy history around immigrant education in Los

Angeles, as well as comments from administrators to present the contradictions around the construction of newness in the Academies.

These arguments draw conceptually on abolition and relationality. Both concepts are engaged to unsettle the dominant discourse around "newcomers" and the prevailing role that schools cast themselves in as institutions where students "learn America." Relationality's onto-axiological entailments refuse the narrative that Academy students' knowledge of "America" begins only once they have crossed the border. The dialectic of insurgency/counterinsurgency helps identify how the construction of newness attempts to conceal the transnational political communities and kinships networks to which students belong and which support them. Abolition is engaged to think about praxis in this context and to identify students' goals as a practice of futurity around which solidarity can be forged between educators and immigrant communities.

The dissertation concludes with Chapter 6, which includes a summary of the study, review of the findings, and commentary on contributions and significance. Chapter 6 ends with an epilogue about emerging partnerships between Academy students' current teachers in Los Angeles and former teachers in Guatemala and El Salvador. This transnational teacher organizing is a practice of solidarity that creates a political and professional community of educators that exceeds the jurisdiction of LAUSD. This transnational organizing suggests that international solidarity between educators connected by immigrant students can be an alternative to globalized educational precarity.

To return to the epigraph that opens this chapter, this work is about the necessity of solidarity, in which communities live together and depend upon one another in beautiful ways, as Ruth Wilson Gilmore says. While Los Angeles schools may be designed to intercede upon such solidarity, the people who attend, work inside, and lead the LA Academies often creatively

appropriate schooling to knit a social fabric woven with radical dependency. It is my hope that by describing the contours of the ideologies and practices that imperil solidarity alongside those that steward it, I make a small contribution to the subversive work of reclaiming state resources to live together more beautifully.

CHAPTER 2 THEORY AND LITERATURE

The schools at the center of my research are compulsory state institutions for immigrant young people from Central America, many of whom are Indigenous. The presence of displaced young people from the highlands of Guatemala into public schools in Los Angeles cannot be understood outside of the context of ongoing settler colonialism and U.S. imperialism throughout Latin America. The social construction of racial and linguistic hierarchy is a central feature of colonialism, and one of the roles schools play in settler colonial societies is to validate racial and linguistic difference and instantiate racial and linguistic stratification. Beginning with these facts, my research engages interdisciplinary empirical and theoretical scholarship to study the formal and practiced policy regarding students' home languages in these schools for recently arrived immigrant young people. Driven by the grounded theory that the study of race and language requires reaching beyond disciplinary boundaries, I am constructing a conceptual framework from the fault lines of critical scholarship on language policy and planning (LPP), applied linguistics, race, and Indigeneity. This is a precarious process. I hope to stitch together ideas that form a lens through which I can interpret the contexts, participants, and relationships I study. I begin with respect for the scholars whose work is included here, as well as humility in my emerging understanding of these fields.

This section is divided into two primary areas: theoretical frames and literature review. The theoretical frames cover the theories guiding my thinking and whose convergences, divergences, debates, and shortcomings became salient during my fieldwork and analysis. They include abolition, relationality, and raciolinguistic ideologies. The literature review discusses the most relevant empirical scholarship from which my research builds and to which it responds. This includes the critical ethnography of language policy and an attenuated review of research on

immigration and language education. This review of theory and literature alongside my experience in practice and the contexts in which I worked on this study (both of which I discuss in the next chapter) form the conceptual framework upon which my inquiry rests.

Theoretical Frames

Drawing from wider reading on race, gender, Indigeneity, migration, and language, I have selected three discreet theoretical frames that undergird the research questions and study design for my dissertation project. Abolition, as I engage with it, emerges as a theoretical and political project from critical Black feminist scholarship that has been taken up across disciplines from philosophy to geography to education (Davis, 2003; Gilmore, 2007; Meiners, 2007; Sojoyner, 2016). Relationality is a concept central to many Indigenous cosmologies, which I present here as it has been explored and theorized in scholarly writing in Indigenous education (Deloria & Wildcat, 2001; Hermes, Bang & Marin, 2012; McCarty et al., 2022; Tachine, 2022; Wilson, 2008). Raciolinguistic ideologies, or a raciolinguistic perspective, emerged from educational linguistic and linguistic anthropological inquiry with a broad range of communities of Color in the U.S., Latin America, Europe, and South Africa (Alim, Rickford, & Ball, 2016). In particular, I draw on Jonathan Rosa's and Nelson Flores's (2017) engagement with raciolinguistic ideologies, which arose from their research with U.S. Latinx communities. Although these theoretical frames cover a range of disciplines, I believe they best animate the constructs underlying my research questions and focus my data collection and analysis. Importantly, these theoretical frames are knowledge traditions from and for people like the students in the new Academies.

Working with young people who have migrated from Latin America, many of whom speak Indigenous languages or are Afro-descendent, or both, necessitates scholarship around race, language, and Indigeneity. While academia attempts to funnel and direct knowledge into silos (*Indigenous* thought here, *Black* thought there, *feminist* thought elsewhere), Black and Latina/o studies developed concurrently— particularly in California—through student and community activist movements of the ’60s and ’70s (Bonilla, 1987; Muñoz, 1984). Twenty-one years ago, Pedro Caban’s (2003) reflection on the first 30 years of Latino/a studies ends with a refutation that the study of race leads to balkanization and encourages an approach to Latino studies that “recognizes and values the reality of difference, but which explored the prospects and opportunities for building unity and strength from this difference” (p. 33). Caban’s urging draws on a long-standing thread in Latina feminist scholarship that begins with critical examination of life and politics as lesbian, immigrant, and transnational people (Anzaldúa, 1987; Lugones, 2003). More recently, Mariana Ortega (2016) has taken up the necessity of embracing subjectivities that exist between social categories in a philosophical contribution to Latina feminism that offers “in-between” as a way to theorize the lived experience of moving through race, gender, and other categories of identification to better understand the nature of oppression, liminality, and resistance. Linking scholarship originating in Black feminist theory, Indigenous studies, and Latinx studies into a theoretical framework to observe, interpret, and analyze educational language policy in schools for—and primarily run by—immigrants from Mexico and Central America is an attempt to enact Caban’s call at the ground floor of inquiry.

Abolition

Abolition is challenging to define. It is historical and contemporary, theoretical and practical, and it belongs to scholars as well as activists. However, the magnitude of the idea should not obfuscate its meaning. Introducing "abolitionist anthropology," Savannah Shange (2019) writes that "abolition is not a synonym for resistance; it encompasses the ways in which Black people and our accomplices work *within*, *against*, and *beyond* the state in service of collective liberation" (p. 10). Abolition invites a relational praxis of collective freedom and care. In this way, it envisions an alternative to the ways that capitalism often encourages us to turn away from each other to do our jobs, make enough money to eat, stay housed, and otherwise meet our material needs. Contemporary abolitionist projects, within and beyond academia, trace their roots to antislavery movements in the United States and the Caribbean and manifest most visibly in struggle and scholarship on prison abolition. Scholarship developed in philosophy (Davis, 1983), literature (Hartman, 1997, 2007; Sharpe, 2016), and geography (Gilmore, 2007; McKittrick, 2011) has illuminated the contours of carcerality—which Beth Richie (2021) defines as "set of social arrangements that advances a reliance on punishment and the less formal apparatus that dispense sanctions" (p. 41)—to reveal how contemporary imprisonment developed from chattel slavery and how it inflects our contemporary social systems.

Abolition is driven by knowledge produced within the conditions of *un*freedom: enslavement, incarceration, and psycho-medical institutionalization among them. Due in part to the structures that abolition seeks to eradicate, much anti-carceral knowledge and practice has never been formally recorded. The emergence of abolition as an idea is not traceable to any one person. Instead, it is a shared dream of survival not yet realized. The dreams of the unfree and the enslaved have been forcefully erased from widespread public consciousness, yet, at the same

time, they surround us. As Angela Davis (2003), one of the founding leaders of the contemporary prison abolition movement, has argued, this "simultaneous presence and absence" is purposeful:

> We take prisons for granted but are often afraid to face the realities they produce. After all, no one wants to go to prison. Because it would be too agonizing to cope with the possibility that anyone, including ourselves, could become a prisoner, we tend to think of the prison as disconnected from our lives. (p. 15)

The designed obfuscation of *un*freedom shapes all aspects of abolitionist study. So I begin from the premise that study guided by abolition will always fail to adequately engage the knowledge of the unfree. In her work to write histories of enslavement, Saidiya Hartman (2008) describes this struggle: "the task of writing the impossible (not the fanciful or the utopian but 'histories rendered unreal and fantastic'), has as its prerequisites the embrace of likely failure and the readiness to accept the ongoing, unfinished and provisional character of this effort, particularly when the arrangements of power occlude the very object that we desire to rescue" (p. 14). The "impossible" I seek in my research is the tension between the oppressive and the liberatory forces at play in the International Academies: the homemaking that occurs within and beyond displacement, the language that develops from the battlefield of attempted linguicide, and the solidarities that are forged in sites of captivity. On this process Hartman (2008) asks,

> What is required to imagine a free state or to tell an impossible story? Must the poetics of a free state anticipate the event and imagine life after man, rather than wait for the ever-retreating moment of Jubilee? Must the future of abolition be first performed on the page? (p. 10)

This is where critical educational research and abolitionist theory converge. The participants in my research with the LA International Academies are shaping how young people

and their educators might work together to imagine and build alternative futures for recently arrived immigrants. Engaging studiously with such work requires examination of the roots of social harm immigrant students currently face in school coupled with careful analysis of how to address those harms. For example, about 25% of students in the LA Academies identify as Indigenous (primarily Maya) and over 33% disclosed to me that they had been held in an immigration detention center. The displacement of Indigenous people and the reach of the carceral state into the immigration system are fundamental to understanding the context of the Academies. So while the idea of eradicating the prison may seem impossible—or tangential to the focus of the International Academies—I contend that asking what we would do differently if we sought to eliminate incarceration as a solution to social problems sets into motion a novel thought process and even a paradigm shift for work in immigrant, language education.

To develop this argument, we must first consider the existence of "immigrant detention centers"—a euphemism for actual prisons—as not solely structuring subsequent schooling experiences but all aspects of relations between immigrants and the United States. In a 1995 article in *The Nation*, Mike Davis introduced to mainstream leftist dialogue the concept of the "prison industrial complex." This referred to the extensive web of social, political, and economic relationships that support and enable the prison. This framework is therefore useful in studying the relationship between schools and prisons. Michel Foucault (1977) argued that structures and practices of schooling served to train youth into the disciplinary structures of society. Education scholar Erica Meiners (2007) and others have suggested that the relationship between schools and prisons is less a linear "pipeline," as it is often described, and more of a "persistent nexus or a web of intertwined, punitive threads" (p. 32). As Meiners notes, this web includes zero-tolerance school discipline policies that mimic criminal law, the punitive surveillance of youth

and their communities, and systems of special education that are associated with negative schooling outcomes like lower graduation rates. In turn, these conditions increase a student's likelihood of incarceration, which, she emphasizes, disproportionately harm Black students.

Recent ethnographic research in education by Damien Sojoyner (2016), Sabina Vaught (2017), Maisha Winn (2011), and Connie Wun (2016) has built on Meiners's scholarship to examine the role of education, writ large, in the reproduction of carcerality in U.S. society. This emerging body of scholarship is highlighting education as a potent field from which to study abolition in multiple dimensions. Scholarship on abolition has centered Black communities and Black intellectual genealogies, while embracing inquiry by and for other communities affected by incarceration (Vaught, Brayboy & Chin, 2022). Scholars who engage abolition in study with and for Latinx communities have expanded the concept through inquiry into the political origins of incarceration in Latinx and Native American communities (Grobsmith, 1994; Hames-Garcia, 2004; Mirandé, 1987), as well as by analyzing incarceration alongside militarism (Amaya, 2013; Cruz Soto, 2020; Rivas-Rodriguez, 2005). Such inquiry interrogates race and racialization to uncover the machinations of U.S. statecraft within and beyond the nation's boundaries, with important implications for radical international power-building that supersedes borders (Gilmore, 2022; Quan, 2019; Robinson, 2019).

Engaging abolitionist frameworks to study the LA International Academies sheds light on relationships among the school, criminal/legal, and immigration systems to illustrate how carcerality is encountered, and countered, by immigrant students in the United States. This is particularly relevant given my engagement with the ethnography of language policy, which has roots in the anthropology of policy. In their anthropological analysis of policy, Cris Shore and Susan Wright (1997) write, "it is a feature of policies that their political nature is disguised by

the objective, neutral, legal-rational idioms in which they are portrayed" (p. 8). Given that a feature of policy is to hide its power, Shore and Wright note, "the problem is how to make these opaque structure[s] visible … how to become aware of the historical contingency and inventedness of our taken-for-granted present" (p. 8). Abolitionist frameworks are a way of seeing that provide conceptual scaffolding for making the structures of power visible in the language policy unfolding at the LA Academies. In particular, abolition inspires me to look beyond the surface of policy and practice at the International Academies to do two things: (1) peer into the past for the threads of conquest and insurgency that are reanimated at the Academies and (2) listen for the ways immigrant young people and their allies imagine desirable futures for themselves through strategic engagement with state services.

Relationality

Relationality, a concept present in many Indigenous cosmologies, recognizes that all life on earth is connected and interdependent (Deloria, 1988). Relationality refers to the belief that our reality, at any given moment, is constructed by the relationships between and among the people, places, and beings around us. Writing on American Indian metaphysics, Vine Deloria and Daniel Wildcat (2001) explain the primacy of relationality in Indigenous worldviews: "The best description of Indian metaphysics was the realization that the world, and all its possible experiences, constituted a social reality, a fabric of life in which everything had the possibility of intimate knowing relationships because, ultimately, everything was related" (p. 2). This worldview has epistemological, ontological, and axiological implications, as it requires a (re)orientation to see ourselves as members of a broader community in which all members, human and more-than-human, have standing (Marin & Bang, 2018). If we accept that we inhabit

a world full of relatives, then we must call our attention to the quality and state of those connections if we aspire to live in the right relationship.

With origins in philosophy and theology, relationality has long played a role in research on Indigenous education (Agbo, 2001; Alfred, 2014; Cajete, 1994; McCarty, 2002). While Indigenous perspectives on education are not limited to schooling, Indigenous researchers have presented relationality as an important component of transforming schools to serve Indigenous communities (Cajete, 2010). In Yup'ik scholar A. Oscar Kawagley's (2006) foundational example, he shares a particular Indigenous cosmology with readers as part of a broader project toward educational self-determination for Native American communities. Kawagley centers the current reality of Yup'ik people to illustrate the necessity of engaging Indigenous knowledges through schooling. He asks, "How do we counteract the depression, hopelessness, and despair that derive from the unfulfilled promises of the modern world, and what role can schooling and education play in this effort?" (p. 54). Kawagley highlights the necessity of schooling to incorporate relationality to meet the material, intellectual, and psychic needs of Native students. Kawagley and Ray Barnhardt (2005) write about the underachievement of Native students in U.S. schools, reasserting the necessity of relationality for effective education. On the current state of schooling, they write, "the curricula, teaching methodologies, and assessment strategies associated with mainstream schooling are based on a worldview that does not adequately recognize or appreciate Indigenous notions of an interdependent universe and the importance of place in their societies" (p.10). The underlying notion is that Indigenous knowledge systems have a great deal of value, both substantively and methodologically, for meeting Native students' educational needs. Barnhardt and Kawagley go on to suggest that more research into Indigenous knowledge systems will have far-reaching implications regarding "the need to reconstitute the

relationship between Indigenous peoples and the immigrant societies in which they are embedded" (p. 20). This work demonstrates how relationality has been investigated for its potential in addressing teaching and learning questions on both school and societal levels.

In a testament to the epistemological dimension of relationality, scholars have begun to explore its methodological significance in social science research. Shawn Wilson (2008), writing on Indigenous research paradigms, explains the principle of relationality by asserting that "relationships do not merely shape reality, they *are* reality" (p. 7, original emphasis). As Wilson explains, this paradigm recognizes that the relationships among and between human beings, the natural world, the spiritual world, and the social world are sacred. Ceremonies, Wilson continues, "build stronger relationships or bridge the distance between aspects of our cosmos and ourselves" (p. 11). Thus, research in this Indigenous paradigm is a ceremony in which researchers "are mediators in a growing relationship between the community and whatever it is that is being researched" (p. 106). Building on and from this framework, Brayboy et al. (2012) claim that critical Indigenous research methodologies are "an emancipatory project that forefronts the self-determination and inherent sovereignty of indigenous peoples" (p. 424). According to Brayboy et al., this work begins with relationality because "knowledge is relational and thus not owned by the individual, presenting serious considerations for how we understand the purposes of data and their analyses as well as the purposes of knowledge production and acquisition for Indigenous communities" (p. 436). As these scholars suggest, relationality has methodological implications for social justice research positioned outside of the dominant paradigm.

It is important to understand relationality in the context of the dominant ideologies that animate research. Although many scholars currently reclaim relationality in their research, the

concept and its practice were violently suppressed for centuries. As Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) explains, the emergence of social science is inextricable from colonization, and one way that relationship persists is through research *on* and *about* Indigenous peoples that provides little community benefit while offering immense utility for researchers. Cedric Robinson (2000) reminds us that European colonization depended on the enslavement of African people. So the enslavement of Africans, and the system of racial capitalism that developed around it, frames the colonization through which social science research methods emerged. As historian Claudio Saunt's (2020) examination of the mass deportations of Native peoples west of the Mississippi in the 1830s demonstrates, chattel slavery and land dispossession were simultaneous processes.

Slavery and land dispossession required attacks on relationality. As Robinson explains, chattel slavery depended on the destruction of relationality for its ideological and practical success. Ideologically, relationality was attacked to remake Indigenous African subjects into ahistorical, subhuman slave objects, even despite the long, meaningful contact between European and African civilizations during the centuries preceding the transatlantic slave trade. In practice, slavery depended on the attempted destruction of relationality among enslaved people by systematically separating families and suppressing religious, creative, and linguistic practices (Blassingame, 1972).

At every turn, enslaved people resisted this domination. Resistance is evident in the history of marronage, in which Black people at the margins of European settlement developed social and cultural practices based in their traditions but rooted in lives in the Americas *outside* the system of enslavement (Robinson, 1983; Thompson, 2008). Recent work on marronage highlights Black resistance and broader freedom struggles as they occur *within* dominating societies (Roberts, 2015). This resistance manifests intellectually, as in the maintenance of

discourse styles whose evolution scholars have traced from 18th-century West Africa to 21st-century hip-hop culture in the United States (Kopano, 2002). The intended destruction of relationality was also a key mechanism that functioned in the attempted genocide of Indigenous people in the United States. While reductionist, positivist research methodologies were developing, Indigenous worldviews based on relationality were attacked and suppressed (Deloria & Wildcat, 2001). We see this in the outlawing of Indigenous religious practices, the banning of Indigenous languages in schools, and the development of laws that delegitimize relational land practices (Adams, 1995; Johnson, 2018; Takaki, 1993). The intertwined histories of Black and Indigenous peoples reveal that their resistance stewarded the relationality we engage with today.

Although attempts to dismantle relationality failed to eradicate the connections among Black and Indigenous peoples, and between us and our knowledge systems, the fervor with which these attacks on relationality were carried out cannot be forgotten, particularly as Indigenous epistemologies gain wider currency within Western scientific communities (Cajete, 2000; Deloria et al., 2018; Tom, Sumida Huaman, & McCarty, 2019). As we work to reclaim these principles, the historical role of relationality reminds us that its adoption is not a means by which to perfect our current system, but rather an invitation to dismantle what is and imagine something entirely different. Or, in the words of Vine Deloria (2001), “Our ideas will overcome your ideas. We are going to cut this country’s whole value system to shreds” (p. 69).

Centering relationality as a theoretical frame in my work engages Indigenous research paradigms and Indigenous intellectual genealogies. As a Black researcher, I tasked myself with understanding how I am related to the concept of relationality, which was first introduced to me by Native American scholars. The conceptual lens through which I understand the connection between Blackness and relationality comes from Saidiya Hartman (2007), who writes that the

“afterlife of slavery” defines the conditions of present-day U.S. society. The persistence of slavery in present-day politics and economics underscores the intricate relationship between land and Black people in America. Hartman (2008) describes slavery as a process of estrangement. With agonizing force, slavery intended to sever the relationships between Black people and our families, languages, lands, and religions. Without diminishing the cruelty of slavery, Hartman (2007) explains how it failed. As she writes, “The unwilling and coerced migrants … created a new culture in the hostile world of the Americas and … fashioned themselves again, making possibility out of dispossession” (p. 8). Or, as Arthur Jafa, a contemporary artist and occasional collaborator with Hartman, puts it, “we [Black people] create culture in free-fall, but we also create kinship in free-fall” (Smith, Lawson, & Jafa, 2018). Following the Indigenous scholars whose work frames this project, we can understand language as an agentic force on human relationships. Thinking with Hartman’s scholarship, we can see how slavery and its afterlife have inflected our language in complex ways that include estrangement. But in taking up Jafa’s ideas in earnest, we see that Blackness is both a struggle against that estrangement and a method for reconnection.

The people at the center of this research are almost all Latinx. Many identify as Indigenous, and many do not. In the LA International Academies, this variation is one of many significant axes of identity that formed the specificities of the Los Angeles Latinidades developing in the schools. Frances Aparicio (2016) defines Latinidades as “a conceptual framework that allows me to document, analyze, and theorize the processes by which diverse Latinas/os interact with, dominate, and transculturate each other” (p. 116). As Latina/o studies shifts away from understanding Latinidad as an identity label and toward seeing it as a political act (Beltrán, 2010; Caminero-Santangelo, 2007; Rodríguez-Muñiz, 2010), new space opens up to

think with the influence of Black and Indigenous intellectual genealogies. Relationality meets this invitation, highlights the often-invisibilized presence of Indigeneity among Latinx students in U.S. schools, and refuses the homogenizing effects of Latinx as a racializing label. Instead, engaging with relationality holds open the door to begin examining the contemporary conditions and historical antecedents of the communities that make up the LA Academies in order to ask what solidarity can—and does—look like.

Raciolinguistic Perspective

Introducing *raciolinguistics*, Alim (2016) returns to Franz Boas's foundational contributions to anthropology in North America to highlight the enduring interest in the relationship between language, race and culture. Alim writes:

> Despite this long history of considering language and racial equality (Boas, Smitherman, etc.) and these more recent organizing efforts to galvanize the field of raciolinguistics at UCLA and Stanford, when it comes to broad scholarship on race and ethnicity, language is often overlooked as one of the most important cultural means that we have for distinguishing ourselves from others. At the same time, while sociolinguists have often used race as an analytic prime, and while linguistic anthropologists have produced substantive research examining race and language and continue to do so, it is only recently that there has been a focused, collective effort to theorize race and ethnicity within and across language studies (p. 5).

Broadly, the idea of jointly studying language and race the way Alim describes is a way of systematically reckoning with the question, "What does it mean to speak as a racialized subject in America" (p. 1)? Beginning from a similar concern, Jonathan Rosa and Nelson Flores

(2017) conceptualized a *raciolinguistic perspective* based on sustained inquiry with Latinx communities as a way of understanding race and language as fundamentally co-naturalized.

A raciolinguistic perspective links critical language and critical race scholarship via five essential components: "(i) historical and contemporary co-naturalizations of race and language as part of the colonial formation of modernity; (ii) perceptions of racial and linguistic difference; (iii) regimentations of racial and linguistic categories; (iv) racial and linguistic intersections and assemblages; and (v) the contestation of racial and linguistic power formations" (p. 623). A raciolinguistic perspective is a mode of analysis that seeks to unsettle dominant notions of race and language that reproduce power relations designed by racial capitalism and settler colonialism. Importantly, Rosa and Flores offer a raciolinguistic perspective as a method for careful analysis of liberal language policy, making it especially well-suited for studying the International Academies where multilingual and multicultural rhetoric are the norm.

In a theoretical paper that builds toward the concept of a raciolinguistic perspective, Flores and Rosa (2015) introduce the idea of raciolinguistic ideologies to complicate the conversation around approaches to English language education in the United States. Rather than engage in the existing debate between so-called subtractive (English *replaces* home language) and additive (home linguistic practices are a *resource* for developing *standardized* language skills) approaches to language education, Flores and Rosa argue that both approaches reify the misconception that "proper" language comprises objective linguistic practices. Instead, they "seek to highlight the racializing language ideologies through which different racialized bodies come to be constructed as engaging in appropriately academic linguistic practices" (p. 150). In a society where race is used to produce and justify the maldistribution of resources, linguistic practices must be understood as both ways that race is *made* and ways that race is *read*.

Rosa and Flores situate a raciolinguistic perspective within contemporary linguistics' approach to "debunking deficit perspectives and racializing discourse" (p. 622) through tactics of legitimation that prove ad nauseam the systematicity of nonstandard languages (Delpit, 2006; Labov, 1969; Smitherman, 1977) and the dexterity of language use among racialized speakers (Alim, 2004; Eckert & Rickford, 2001; Zentella, 1997). By focusing on the historical and contemporary co-naturalization of race and language, Rosa and Flores (2015) explain how this tactic fails to disrupt white supremacist and settler colonial logics (and the policies and practices they engender). On the historical and contemporary co-naturalization of language and race, they write, "a raciolinguistic perspective seeks to understand the interplay of language and race within the historical production of nation-state/colonial governmentality, and the ways that colonial distinctions within and between nation-state borders continue to shape contemporary linguistic and racial formations" (p. 623). They explain that racial formation, an essential tool of European colonization, occurred alongside linguistic regimentation. Importantly, as racist ideologies evolved past human/subhuman dichotomies and toward contemporary formulations, the primacy of language as racialization increased. A raciolinguistic perspective "illuminates the importance of conceptualizing contemporary debates about racial and linguistic authenticity in relation to colonial logics through which boundaries delimiting categories of race and language are co-naturalized in shifting ways as part of broader power formations" (p. 626).

Rosa and Flores build on previous scholarship in semiotics and linguistic anthropology, notably, Inoue's (2003) analysis of the role of the listening subject in the construction of women's speech in modernizing Japan, to argue that what is popularly described as racial and linguistic distinction can be better understood as interpretation and determination by hegemonically positioned subjects. Rosa and Flores (2015) write that "the interpretations of

white listening subjects are part of a broader set of hegemonic perceptions that apprehend and often overdetermine not only linguistic signs, but also a wider range of semiotic forms" (p. 630). On regimentation of racial and linguistic categories, the authors explain that "a raciolinguistic perspective seeks to synthesize these approaches by framing the co-naturalization of language and race as a process of raciolinguistic enregisterment, whereby linguistic and racial forms are jointly constructed as sets and rendered mutually recognizable as named languages/varieties and racial categories" (p. 631). Or, in other words, the categorization and governance of language is inseparable from the development of races, which is inseparable from racism. Rosa and Flores complicate the regimentation of race and language by discussing racial and linguistic intersections and assemblages. In doing so, they return to a constructivist paradigm that understands race and language as accumulations of signs that are reconfigured and reread differently depending on context. Attempting to thread the needle between the assemblage of signs and the regimentation of language, they offer that "a comparative intersectional and raciolinguistic approach necessarily considers how assemblages of signs and identities are configured in particular contexts, from particular perspectives, and with particular consequences" (p. 636).

A raciolinguistic perspective includes important entailments for critical scholarship in language and race. Functioning as a theoretical and analytical tool, a raciolinguistic perspective is consequential for research design, fieldwork, and analysis. Rosa (2019), for example, demonstrates how a raciolinguistic perspective shaped his ethnographic fieldwork at a Chicago high school when paired with the linguistic anthropological concept of enregisterment (Silverstein, 2003; Agha, 2005). On his ethnographic work, Rosa writes: "Instead of beginning by attempting to document the range of linguistic practices that are distinctive of a given racial

group, a raciolinguistic enregisterment approach involves asking how and why particular linguistic forms are constructed as emblematic of particular racial categories and vice versa" (p. 7). In my case, a raciolinguistic perspective involved asking what educators and students in the Academies identified as their home languages, how they were brought up (i.e., as problems, assets, markers for identity, or educational history), and what kind of relationships they were engaged to facilitate (i.e., asserting familiarity, constructing difference, etc.).

Considering the intellectual roots of a raciolinguistic perspective identifies its entailments concerning my critical ethnographic research in LPP. Particularly, a raciolinguistic perspective invites my research to examine educational language policy as a contested site of racial construction. Studying the LA International Academies by engaging raciolinguistic ideologies centers the fact that the language policy processes at school are a central force in the racialization of immigrant students. This is particularly important for this study because I focus exclusively on recently arrived immigrant students who exist in a broader educational context in which they are constantly compared with "long-term English learners" and other district-manufactured categories of language and race. Thinking with the co-naturalization of language and race, for example, allows me to critique discourses that exceptionalize *or* pathologize recently arrived immigrant students in ways that reinforce white supremacist hierarchies of language and race.

In my study, I engage abolition, relationality, and a raciolinguistic perspective kaleidoscopically in my fieldwork, analysis, and writing. This means layering the frameworks in multiple ways to explore distinct dimensions of the language policy process at the International Academies. This begins with my research questions, which are:

(1) What are the official and practiced policies governing students' home languages in the new LAUSD–Internationals Academies?

(2) What possibilities for college, career, and community participation do these policies facilitate or constrain for students?

Drawing on relationality and a raciolinguistic perspective, I understand that language is an architecture for social life and that the regulation of language is a political act that attempts to normalize the maldistribution of resources. Relationality and a raciolinguistic perspective have guided me to explore both the formal and practiced language policies at the International Academies so that I may observe language policy critically from both the "top down" and the "bottom up" in order to analyze how apparently progressive written policy is enacted, where plainly conservative policy is subverted, and the many iterations in between. In-laying abolition urges me inquire beyond the boundaries of schools, the institution directly governed by the policies I study, to understand how language policy in the International Academies is connected to larger issues related to citizenship. The methodological and analytic impacts of these frameworks is discussed in Chapters 3, 4, and 5.

Literature Review

This study of new high school programs for immigrant students identified as English language learners builds directly on an existing scholarly conversation on the ethnographic study of LPP. In a paradigm-shifting volume, McCarty (2011) argues that "critical ethnographic inquiry enables us to see how practitioners and students, working in the meso spaces of classrooms, communities, and schools, open up new ideological and implementational possibilities for 'counterpoised' micro- and macro-level change" (p. 16). Within this new paradigm, ethnographic approaches to LPP reflect a language and policy ideology that centers human agency, relationships, and history. In addition, this research is made possible by, and

exists in conversation with, the large body of scholarship on immigration and language education, which is a diverse area cutting across disciplines of sociology, anthropology, psychology, education, and Latinx studies. The literature review that follows focuses on the genealogy of critical ethnography of language policy as well as the foundational studies in immigration and language education that most directly inform the methodology and findings of my study.

Critical Ethnography of Language Policy and Planning

In a chapter recounting the genealogy of research in LPP, linguistic anthropologist Monica Heller (2018) describes language policy as a form of "state management of populations on the terrain of language" that is intimately tied to economic and political interests (p. 35). The question for LPP, she writes, "has thus become the legitimacy of its mission: Whose interests does it serve, and in the name of what" (37)? Heller's description of language policy highlights a few key aspects of such policy, including the power of language to organize social relations, the relationships between language and land, and the attempts by states the world over to discipline and shape citizens by controlling language. Jan Blommaert (2009) echoes this perspective when he describes language to be "the architecture of social behavior itself (p. 263). Blommaert's characterization of language and Heller's analysis of the state's interest in language management shows that there is something about language that threatens state power, which literature speaks to beautifully. Before she became a central figure in Native American Literature, Leslie Marmon Silko opened her first novel *Ceremon*y (1977), with a poem:

I will tell you something about stories,

[he said]

They aren't just entertainment.

Don't be fooled.

They are all we have, you see,

All we have to fight off

Illness and death (p. 2).

Just four years later, in a 1981 interview concerning her literary voice, Toni Morrison said, "The language, only the language. ... It is the thing that black people love so much -- the saying of words, holding them on the tongue, experimenting with them, playing with them" (LeClair, 1981).

What Morrison and Marmon Silko add to Heller's perspective on language policy is that language is a resource wielded thoughtfully and intentionally by communities in support of their own self-determination. Speaking directly to, and from, Black and Indigenous perspectives, Morrison and Marmon Silko remind us that language is a tool of revitalization and resistance for marginalized communities and that the decisions made at community and familial levels about language practice also carry the significance of policy. Such language policy, which critical LPP scholars term "bottom up" (Castagno & McCarty, 2018; Hornberger & McCarty, 2013; Levinson et al., 2009; Shore & Wright, 1997; Walford, 2001), often extends beyond state management and into efforts for self-determination (McCarty, 2002; Paris, 2016; Rosa, 2016).

An important dimension of language policy is certainly "the state management of populations on the terrain of language" (Heller, 2018, p. 35), but an exclusive focus on a top-down view of policy occludes the varied and important ways that communities rely on language to organize themselves. The ethnography of language policy centers human beings to highlight the ongoingness of both resistance and hegemony. When we understand that both of these forces

are constituted by people, we can see how they are constantly being (re)made within their historical trajectories. As McCarty (2011) writes, "policy is not a disembodied thing, but rather a situated sociocultural process—the complex of practices, ideologies, attitudes, and formal and informal mechanisms that influence people's language choices in profound and pervasive everyday ways" (p. xii). Ethnography, then, is the methodological fit for such study precisely because of its hyper focus on people and the locally significant forces that shape our beliefs and our action. Ultimately, McCarty argues, "this is what a critical ethnographic perspective gets us: a view into LPP processes in fine detail -- up close and in practice -- and the marbling of those processes as they merge and diverge, constantly configuring and being (re)configured within a larger sociocultural landscape, which they in turn (re)shape" (p. 17).

McCarty is of course not alone. In the field of education, ethnographic studies of language policy have focused on the medium of instruction policies (Baltodano, 2004; de Korne, 2016; Gándara & Hopkins, 2010), Indigenous language revitalization (Hermes, Bang, & Marin, 2012; Hornberger, 1988; McCarty, 2002), and the relationships among race, migration, and language (Ibrahim, 2014; Reyes, 2007; Rosa, 2019) in the exploration of the larger processes of de/colonization, racialization, and self-determination. As these subjects of inquiry demonstrate, LPP in education includes—and extends beyond—studying schools and schooling. LPP reflects the breadth of the field of education by examining the interaction between language policy and educational processes from multiple perspectives and varying contextual scales. Importantly, this existing scholarship demonstrates that the critical ethnography of language policy is an arena in which long-term, in situ research can attend to practices that resist, and develop alternatives to, state-imposed policy.

Like most social science inquiry, LPP has roots tangled up with colonization. After the world wars, LPP emerged as part of the complex process of national formation and independence that followed formal colonial rule for many countries across the globe. At that stage, LPP primarily responded to what were considered “language problems” of postcolonial states (e.g., Fishman et al., 1968). These included such dilemmas as choosing which language(s) would be used in governance and in education (Tollefson & Pérez-Milans, 2018). Linguists entered this complex dynamic and began developing theories of language planning, models for language acquisition, and concepts of language proficiency (Fishman, 1979; Rubin and Jernudd, 1971). Although scholars (Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1990) have made the case that such decisions about language were part of the European bourgeoisie’s attempt to craft a popular voice upon which the legitimacy of the nation-state would rest, applied LPP scholarship during this time did not explicitly address the role of power and subordination. As Heller (2018) explains, LPP during this period,

> … usually meant constructing the main languages of interaction, whether standardized, pidgins, or creoles; and/or training an indigenous elite in the language of the metropole. It also meant using ideologies of difference and inequality, most often racialized versions of social Darwinism, to devalue colonial languages, and to limit the legitimacy of colonial subjects as speakers of the imperial language. (p. 39)

These language planning efforts typically focused on three categories: corpus planning, which is concerned with the forms of language; status planning, which is concerned with the functions of language; and acquisition planning, which is concerned with the learning of language (Cooper, 1989; Johnson, 2018).

The “critical turn” in language policy and planning (e.g., Tollefson, 1991) marked a break from these objectivist epistemological foundations in which the field *solved language problems* to a focus “on how language planning leads to systemic inequality” (Johnson, 2018, p. 56). As Marilyn Martin-Jones and Ildegrada da Costa Cabral (2018) explain, the critical turn emerged in the late 1970s and early 1980s during a moment when “scholars concerned with different aspects of language in social life had turned to the ontological and epistemological spaces opened up by developments in social theory, notably the turn towards poststructuralist thought and critical theory” (p. 75). In France, Roland Barthes (1979) and Pierre Bourdieu (1991) argued for the inextricable link between language and power and thus the management of language as *primarily* an exercise in reinforcing or unsettling power relations. In the words of Barthes (1979), “This object in which power is inscribed, for all of human eternity, is language, or to be more precise, its necessary expression: the language we speak and write” (p. 5). Bourdieu (1991) meanwhile argued against the treatment of “language as an object of contemplation rather than as an instrument of power” (p. 37). Bourdieu rejected the notion of language as a simple exchange of symbols to which all parties have ascribed shared meaning. Instead, he characterized language as the “relation between linguistic habitus and the markets on which they offer their products” (p. 38), highlighting that the study of language is fundamentally a study of power. Both Bourdieu and Barthes agree that there is no *getting out* of language. Instead, both scholars urge us to get *into* language in creative and disruptive ways. Barthes advocates for *play* within language that attempts to momentarily shake the hold of power on language and, fleetingly, create space for freedom.

In the United States, Dell Hymes's[4] (1964) role in the development of educational anthropology/educational linguistics (Hornberger, 2003) was influenced heavily by emerging sociolinguistic ideas aligned with Barthes and Bourdieu. This alignment is evident in John Gumperz's and Hymes's ethnography of communication, which Hymes introduced by writing,

> … such an approach cannot take linguistic form, a given code, or speech itself, as frame of reference. It must take as context a community, investigating its communicative habits as a whole, so that any given use of channel and code takes its place as but part of the resources upon which the members of the community draw. (1964, p. 13)

Hymes's insistence on studying communities as the context for language supported educational anthropological studies of language practices and ideologies in schools. From this position, Hymes called for ethnographic monitoring of bilingual education. Ethnographic monitoring relies on Hymes's understanding of ethnography as a science that is "the most open, the most compatible with a democratic way of life, the least likely to produce a world in which experts control knowledge at the expense of those who are studied" (1980, p. 105). Nancy Hornberger (1988), widely understood to have published the first critical ethnographic study of language policy, credits Hymes for leading her and her former student David Johnson "to propose the ethnography of language planning and policy as a useful way to understand how people create, interpret, and at times resist LPP across layered ideological and implementation spaces" (Hornberger & Johnson, 2020, p. 121).

Since the critical turn in language policy and planning, ethnographic LPP studies have revealed tension and contradiction in implementation of national language education policy (Hornberger, 1988), resistance to official language policy (Canagarajah, 1995), revitalization of

[4] Dell Hymes's legacy—and my engagement with it—is discussed thoroughly in Chapter 3.

Indigenous languages (McCarty, 2002), and mediation of language policy in classrooms and schools by teachers (Menken & García, 2010). Kate Menken's (2008) monograph about No Child Left Behind (NCLB)'s testing regimes impact on language policy and pedagogy is a critical study of language policy with which my research is in conversation. Menken's ethnographic research is situated at multiple schools and moves among classrooms and educators to describe No Child Left Behind as a language policy across New York City public schools. Menken worked with 10 high schools through a "pyramid" model in which certain schools received more attention (by way of observations and interviews) than others. In this way, the larger district "provides an example of how the national emphasis on high-stakes testing is implemented at the local level, even though New York City is vast and complex, with hundreds of high schools in the city" (p. 53).

Menken finds that standardized tests influence the "daily life" of schools for teachers and students and argues that NCLB demonstrates how many different actors within the educational system become language policy makers (from legislators to teachers). She advocates for an embrace of multilingual language policy from the top to the bottom through "strong, coherent, clearly articulated and implemented schoolwide language policy" and "top-down educational policies that support local language policies and practices" (p. 185). Menken's identification of the relationship between language policy and forms of "high stakes accountability" that attempt to identify and categorize students, teachers, and entire schools in terms of achievement forms a conceptual basis from which to interrogate questions of power in the language policymaking process at the LA International Academies.

Through a range of scholarly foci, the ethnography of LPP, to paraphrase Hornberger (2020), is about the ways that individuals and societies construct or deny hospitality to those who

“pass our way” (p. 124). With this phrase, Hornberger situates LPP in the context of the migrant rights movement and points to the way language policy structures the hospitality or hostility that people who move across borders experience. Given this genealogy, we can say that language policy encompasses the complex web of decisions, relationships, and restrictions that govern language use in society. This characterization builds from McCarty’s (2011) notion that “language policy is processual, dynamic, and in motion” (p. 2). This definition calls attention to the sociocultural aspect of language policy, which “exists even where it has not been made explicit or established by authority” (Spolsky, 2004, p. 8). From this understanding, we recognize the importance of bottom-up and de facto language policy alongside formal top-down and de jure policy. Importantly, a processual view of language policy gestures to the centrality of ethnography in LPP scholarship. The nature of language policy, and ethnographic approaches to the study of it, demands we ask whose interests it serves. As McCarty (2011) writes, “The critical perspective is committed to praxis, recognizing that even as LPP is a mechanism for majoritarian control, it can crack open policy-making ‘windows of opportunity’ to galvanize social change” (p. 7). Thinking with Richard Ruiz’s (1984) orientation of “language as a resource” in mind, we can understand language policy as a consequential lever that communities use to organize one of their most valuable resources (language) and as a powerful mechanism of control exercised by states (and state actors) to manufacture and maintain oppression.

This study contributes in particular to the focus on students and teachers—and their classroom encounters—as central mediators in educational language policy. In 1996, Hornberger and Thomas Ricento edited a special issue of *TESOL Quarterly* on “Language Planning and Policy and the English Language Teaching Profession” in which they described LPP as an onion composed of distinct layers and spaces, with positioned practitioners at the center. This was

notable because it was the first time *TESOL Quarterly* explicitly addressed language policy, and it prioritized the work of teachers and students in schools in the broader process of language planning. In a related special issue of *TESOL Quarterly* in 2007 edited by Vaidehi Ramanathan and Brian Morgan, scholars examined the relationships between language policy and TESOL revealed through practice. It was in this special issue that the ethnography of language policy was formally introduced (Hornberger & Johnson, 2007). The research with the LA Academies—as well as my own findings—begins with examining relationships within the school and then spirals out into covering and analyzing the historical, political, and transnational contexts in which those relationships occur. Classroom-level interactions, however, serve as the entry point to uncovering the many layers of the language policy process.

Immigration and Language Education

The formation of borders and the construction of immigration are long-standing projects in ongoing settler colonization. Critical geographer Reece Jones's (2016) study of the borders around the European Union (EU) and the United States identifies the creation and policing of borders *as* the crisis, rather than the movement of people from one region to another in search of stability or opportunity. As Jones asserts, "the existence of the border itself produces the violence around it" (2016, p. 5). In the United States, Kelly Lytle Hernandez's (2010) and Rachel St. John's (2011) historical studies of the U.S.-Mexico border turn a similarly critical eye on the relationships among borders, colonization, and violence. St. John (2011) argues that despite its location at the periphery of the nation, the border "was central to state projects of territorial sovereignty, economic development, and the constructions of the boundaries of the body politic" (p. 6). Lytle Hernandez's (2010) history of the U.S. Border Patrol analyzes the relationships

among race, migration, and law by studying the particular form, nature, and effects of the enforcement agency that arose from and polices the U.S. borderlands. Lytle Hernandez demonstrates how the border patrol emerged as a "site of racialized state violence … for policing Mexicanos in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands" (p. 224). Lytle Hernandez's historical scholarship is an essential contribution to the study of immigration law "on the ground" rather than in the courtroom. Similarly, Jason De León's (2015) anthropological study of the prevention through deterrence policy dislodges policy from its familiar place in governmental text and instead locates it in the lives and deaths of flesh and blood humans migrating through the Sonoran Desert to "understand the complex relationship between border crossers and the many humans and nonhumans who act as agents of deterrence" (p. 37).

These studies of mobility and the state's attempt to control it recharacterize the border as an ideological construction that manufactures race and citizenship. As such, the border is not reduced to a single geographic location, and the practice of "immigration" is not bound to a single event. Harsha Walia (2021) describes the dynamic nature of this state control as "bordering regimes," explaining that "borders are not fixed lines or passive objects simply demarcating territory: borders are productive regimes both generated by and producing racialized social relations, further imbued by gender, sexuality, class, ability, and nationality" (p. 78) Walia identifies four strategies of border governance at the nexus of "working and warring, exclusion and extraction" (p.78): exclusion, territorial diffusion, commodified inclusion, and discursive control.

In the following section, I will review each strategy of border governance and discuss a related study of language education to illustrate how bordering regimes are (re)produced in schools.

Exclusion

Walia (2021) describes exclusion as the strategy to "contain and expel using walls, detention centers, and deportations" (p. 79). Exclusion is a well-documented finding in studies focused on immigrant students and, particularly, on students classified as language learners. This includes exclusion from diploma-granting coursework (Estrada, 2014; Umansky, 2016), exclusion from sports and extracurricular activities (Rodriguez & Wy, 2023), and exclusion from access to higher education (Kanno & Cromley, 2015). An emblematic study of exclusion in language education is described by Beatriz Arias and Christian Faltis (2012), who highlight Arizona as "ground zero for the most restrictive language policies" in the United States. (p. xix). Over 40% of Arizona public school enrollments are Latinx students; 11% are American Indian students representing 22 Native American nations. Many are English learners (ELs). In 2000, Arizona voters passed Proposition 203, "English for the Children," which dismantled existing bilingual education programs, replacing them with "structured English immersion" (SEI), a highly grammar- and vocabulary-based approach. The effects of this policy were later heightened by another state mandate whereby EL students were placed in four-hour-long concentrated English language development (ELD) "blocks."

As these programs got underway in the early 2000s, the University of California, Los Angeles Civil Rights Project commissioned a series of studies to investigate the policy's implementation and effects. In an ethnographic study of ELD blocks, Karen Lillie, Amy Markos, and their associates studied nine schools in five Arizona public school districts, in which 30% to 40% of the students were identified as ELs (Lillie & Markos, 2014; Lillie et al., 2010). These researchers recorded 264 observation hours in ELD classrooms, conducted in-depth interviews

with ELD teachers and administrators, and collected classroom artifacts such as lesson plans and student language proficiency data.

This ethnographic study showed that the most significant difference resulting from these medium-of-instruction policies was the complete physical, social, linguistic, and instructional isolation of EL students from their English-proficient peers. Physically, EL classrooms were isolated from the rest of the school, sometimes in separate buildings, and EL classroom work areas were “relegated to a back corner … and visibly different in … academic content from that of non-EL students” (Lillie et al., 2010, p. 11). EL students thus had little or no opportunity to interact with their English-proficient peers. Instructionally, teaching and curricula in ELD classrooms were vastly different from those of non-EL programs, focusing almost exclusively on English reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, and oral language at the expense of academic content. Age-appropriate materials were often lacking. In one high school classroom, for instance, students were reading a beginning reading instruction book for 5 year olds. Some ELD classrooms had no textbooks, forcing teachers to photocopy assignments so as not to waste workbook pages (Lillie et al., 2010).

Furthermore, EL students’ home languages and cultures were sequestered and denigrated. In addition to signage admonishing students to “Practice your English 24/7” and speak “English only!” Lillie et al. (2010) report one especially telling qualitative vignette in which a student whose primary language was Spanish remarked to his teacher that the English word “collar” is also a word in Spanish (*collar*, or necklace). The teacher scolded him: “You may think that is a Spanish word, but it is not, we only have English words in this classroom” (Lillie et al., 2010, p 22). “For this student,” Lillie et al. noted, “literacy in his primary language earned him a public

reprimand, when in fact experts in second language acquisition strongly encourage teachers to use cognates … as critical learning tools" (2010, p. 22).

Lillie, Markos, and their colleagues provide direct-use evaluative commentary and recommendations. The SEI/ELD model "is not sound in its research base," they conclude, and students do not acquire age-appropriate English proficiency within the policy's one-year time frame, leading to their placement in ELD blocks over multiple years. This has the cumulative effect of restricting EL students' access to high-level academic content and, potentially, even high school graduation. "This will almost certainly widen the achievement gap between [EL] students and their mainstream peers," these researchers warn (Lillie et al., 2010, p. 35). Similar practices of EL school segregation have been reported in ethnographic studies across the United States (e.g., Kanno & Kangas, 2014; Rosa, 2019). As this examination shows, language learner designations and the policies that develop around them often function as tools to exclude immigrant students from the resources, benefits, and capital of education.

Territorial Diffusion

Walia (2021) uses the term "territorial diffusion" to describe the internalization and externalization of border enforcement. As a border regime, territorial diffusion uses surveillance and discipline inside the state alongside militarization and policing outside the state to render the border "elastic" and make it a "magical line that can exist anywhere" (p. 84). Internalization, Walia explains, is visible in the constant act of border crossing that undocumented people engage in when local law enforcement and immigration enforcement collaborate to create the constant threat of deportation. Walia shows externalization through analysis of EU policies that deputize Morocco, Libya, and Turkey (among other nations) to police, restrict, and detain migrants

headed for Europe. Territorial diffusion identifies the way that border regimes operate as flexible and transportable structures that attempt to delimit and control migrants throughout the world. The notion of territorial diffusion appears in studies of language education in the way that scholars identify how linguistic "difference" located in communities of Color is routinely pathologized as a deficit, while the notion of "standard" or "academic" language appears to emerge from white, middle-class speech communities.

Geneva Smitherman's (1986) *Talkin' and Testifyin'* is foundational to critical language research that refuses pathological views of people of Color. Building on William Labov's (1972) linguistic research on Black English, Smitherman dispels the myth that Black language is inferior to "standard" or schooled English, examining the role of Black speech in the education of Black children in mixed race schooling. Extending from Smitherman, scholars have studied how to bridge community-based language practices found in the Black community into the classroom (Ball, 2000; Baker-Bell, 2020; Lee, 1995), as well as the creative literacy of Black young people who participate in hip-hop and poetry cultures (Alim, 2004; Fisher, 2003). Vital to these interventions is Alim's (2005) idea of *critical language awareness*, which is an approach to language education that includes practices of language-minoritized students in the classroom while providing opportunities for students to identify and critique the sociopolitical context that marginalizes such linguistic practices. Ultimately, critical language awareness aims for "students to become conscious of their communicative behavior and the ways by which they can transform the conditions under which they live" (p. 28).

Despite decades of scholarship demonstrating the worth of "nonstandard" speech practices and their value within traditional classrooms, Django Paris and Samy Alim (2014) explain that pedagogies for children of Color and those designated as language learners continue

to be “filtered through a lens of contempt and pity” (p. 86). Through a critique of the Arizona House bills mandating an “English Only” curriculum and banning ethnic studies, Paris and Alim argue for culturally sustaining pedagogies by challenging us to consider what if “the goal of teaching and learning with youth of color was not ultimately to see how closely students could perform White middle-class norms but to explore, honor, extend, and, at times, problematize their heritage and community practices” (p. 86)?

Jonathan Rosa’s (2019) ethnographic study of linguistic and ethnoracial categories at a public high school in Chicago takes up this question directly. In the context of high schools, institutions where citizenship and social stratification are (re)produced, Rosa is adopts and develops a raciolinguistic perspective to examine the complex of relationships among language, racialization, and social inequality. Rosa’s methods are ethnographic and highly participatory as he worked as classroom-based tutor where he developed relationships with the students, teachers, and administrators who participated in the research and often invited Rosa into their homes for interviews. In addition, because Rosa lived in the community, participated in cultural and political life through the Puerto Rican Cultural Center in the area, and walked to and from school with students, he was able to observe and record mundane panethnic interactions that informed and complicated what occurred at school. Rosa’s study finds, among many other things, “how Latinx practices are construed from the perspective of hegemonically positioned White perceiving subjects” (p. 6). By identifying the salience of this positioning, Rosa demonstrates how colonial distinctions between people and ways of communicating, rather than individual linguistic practices, marginalize Latinx students by positioning them as racial Others. In schools, for example, Rosa finds how such colonial rearticulations construct multilingual Latinx youth as languageless and illiterate, when, in fact, they are anything but. Smitherman, Alim and Rosa’s

studies of language show a parallel between the construction of linguistic "proficiency" and territorial diffusion. As with territorial diffusion, linguistic competence is not a *fixed good* that racialized communities can acquire, but rather an *ideological construction* than can be internalized or externalized to create and maintain social hierarchies where low-income, immigrant, communities of Color are subordinated.

Commodified Inclusion

Walia (2021) describes commodified inclusion as a strategy of border governance that constructs immigrants as "undocumented or temporary workers with deliberately deflated labor power" who contribute maximally to the capital accumulation of their bosses (p. 85). In studies of language and education, scholars have identified how immigrant students are incorporated into schools on terms that are not their own and how such immigrant students effectively have resources extracted from them. Essential to this insight is Angela Valenzuela's (1999) ethnographic study of the experiences of Mexican American students in a Texas high school. Through careful analysis, Valenzuela argues that school subtracts resources from these students by "[dismissing] their definition of education" and perpetuating "assimilationist policies and practices that are designed to divest Mexican students of their culture and language" (p. 20). Beginning with the history of Indian boarding schools, Valenzuela's research demonstrates the persistent ways that U.S. schools extract value from immigrant students and families in ways that make them more economically and socially precarious. Importantly, as Valenzuela demonstrates, the positive ethos of education makes it possible to blame immigrant students *themselves* for the diminished social capital they leave school with, rather than identifying the theft that the education system has perpetuated on them.

Educational research has also made an important contribution to understanding the notion of commodified inclusion through the critical study of immigrant childhoods. Foundational to this research is Marjorie Faulstich Orellana's (2001, 2009) ethnographic work with immigrant children in Los Angeles and outside Chicago. By identifying the specific ways immigrant children participate in their families and schools and classifying those agentic acts as "work," Orellana (2001) demonstrates "how the children of immigrants support, sustain, and sometimes change institutions" (p. 2). Orellana's research shows children participating in critical housework, wage labor outside of the home, and communicative work that supports the families' interactions with banks, social services, and healthcare. Orellana pays closest attention to the linguistic work of immigrant children and the children of immigrants. Using an asset-based framework and refusing one-dimensional portrayals of childhood, Orellana discusses immigrant children as "language brokers" who play a significant role in the task of translation, which includes requires high levels of linguistic skill and culturally specific knowledge. Orellana describes this dimension of language brokering as "public *para*-phrasing," which she defines as "a form of housework outside the home and instrumental for household reproduction" that "benefits families directly by securing resources, goods, and materials as well as access to information and services. Beyond benefiting families and households," she continues, "this labor also represents a social contribution. Children provide services that arguably could or should be provided by the state or other institutions; children served their families as well as societal institutions and the public good" (p. 67). As Orellana explains, the critical labor that immigrant children provide is filling a larger social and political need. Tellingly, Orellana focuses on two instances of public *para*-phrasing that occur in interactions with a teacher and a police officer, which highlight the way immigrant children may be especially enlisted to meet the needs of the

education and law enforcement systems. Consistently, Orellana discusses the work of immigrant children through sociocultural (Rogoff, 1994; The New London Group, 1996) and asset-based (Moll et al., 1992) lenses and in terms that highlight their agency and intelligence to counter the prevailing discourse that pathologizes immigrant childhoods. Writing directly about schooling, Orellana inverts the dominant narrative by identifying language brokering as an "accelerator" (p. 114) of learning.

Although neither scholar uses the language of commodified inclusion, the research of both Valenzuela and Orellana deals heavily with the concepts of assets, resources, and value in immigrant childhoods and adolescences—particularly as they interact with schools. From these studies, we can see the conceptual underpinnings for an analysis of the ways that immigrant young people are included in—or shoehorned into—the education system only insofar as they can be a source of value for the school system or workforce (for in-depth analysis on Central American communities, see Abrego, 2008; Heidbrink, 2020; Menjivar, 2000).

Discursive Control

The final strategy of border governance that Walia (2020) discusses is discursive control, which she describes as manufactured distinctions where some people are constructed as "fleeing persecution in search of safety," while others are constructed as "moving for economic reasons" (p. 85). The discursive formation of migrants, refugees, immigrants, asylees, and other categories has material, ideological, and legal entailments, typically dependent on whether a person or group is constructed as deserving or undeserving of protection. In education, the same discursive formations Walia discusses are relevant, but particular focus has been on immigrant children and, with that, the construction of the *unaccompanied migrant child*. Measuring largely based on

the numbers of young people ensnared in detention centers, scholars identified double-digit percentage increases in the number of children who immigrate to the United States without a family unit (Haddal, 2007; Seuling, 2004). As Lilian Chavez and Cecilia Menjivar's (2010) review of research demonstrates, although most so-called unaccompanied children are in the process of reuniting with a family member or have been separated from one during transit, new social and legal categories have developed around them. This includes special immigrant juvenile (SIJ) status for children "who have experienced any form of abuse, neglect, and/or abandonment (including street children) and who would be at risk if they returned to their home country" (p. 80). Through SIJ, some young people gain permission to work and begin working toward achieving green card status, but on the condition that they will not be able to sponsor their parents or other relatives in the future. In addition to this legal category, Chavez and Menjivar describe a social category emerging from the discursive formation of unaccompanied minors: "refugee gang youth." They write, "There is yet another type of unaccompanied minor that includes both males and females: those who are involved in gangs who are at times targeted as being terrorist suspects" (p. 89). Chavez and Menjivar describe the inconsistent and highly subjective ways that young people who migrate are identified as "gang youth" and the incredible challenges they face after being "labeled and stigmatized as criminals" (p. 90).

Brian Cabral (2022) explains how this occurs in schools and particularly through language education when discursive constructions based on purportedly objective notions of language proficiency confine students physically, intellectually, and materially. Cabral calls this "linguistic confinement," which he defines as a process whereby "schools use seemingly mundane policies and practices surrounding language designations to educationally trap, sort, and perpetuate historical forms of disposability, dispossession, and exclusion experiences by

certain racialized youth" (p. 278). Cabral analyzes the rise of the category long-term English learner (LTEL) against the backdrop of individualized student accountability that coalesced in the federal No Child Left Behind Act and California policy that "stipulated grade-level parameters" for language development "guided by specific language ideologies" and "based on students' migrant identity or at-home non-English language use" (p. 282). Cabral's scholarship demonstrates the way that top-down language education policy operates as a method of discursive control within schools.

Inmaculada García-Sánchez's (2014) study of Muslim immigrant students in Spain demonstrates how language in school can contribute to discursive control from the bottom up. Through linguistic microanalysis of student-student and student-teacher interactions recorded on video, García-Sánchez identifies a pattern of racialized othering toward Muslim immigrant students. Through everyday linguistic practices, Spanish students excluded their Moroccan peers from membership in the school community. Importantly, this pattern developed in a school context where "physical fights and overt forms of racial hostility were no longer part of daily life in the school" (p. 131), and in García-Sánchez's recordings, teachers were quick to intervene in demonstrably exclusionary practices among or statements made about their students. However, García-Sánchez argues that through linguistically facilitated forms of othering, "Spanish children construct marginal, negative social identities for their Moroccan immigrant peers in everyday practices of social exclusion … [which] are consistently ratified by other peers and even by teachers" (168). García-Sánchez's research demonstrates the importance of language in schools for the particular form discursive control takes in the lives of immigrant young people.

In this attenuated review, I have demonstrated a relationship between critical scholarship in migration studies and language education. Although I am working within distinct disciplinary

and theoretical frameworks, the highlighted scholarship reveals the way that school-based language policy plays a pertinent role in state-led efforts to control immigrant communities. This connection is particularly important for understanding the LA International Academies, where the students themselves move between and among the education system and the immigration system simultaneously. In other words, the students' lived experiences demonstrate the continuity between both systems. Although schools and educators rarely see themselves as akin to immigrant detention centers or immigration enforcement agents, the scholarship reviewed here demonstrates how the work of a school system can align with that of the immigration system.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the theory and literature that frame my study. I began by describing and defining the key theoretical frames that animate the assumptions and commitments underlying my research questions. Those frames are abolition, relationality, and raciolinguistic ideologies. Then, I reviewed key scholarship in the ethnography of language policy as well as immigration and language education. Through a delineation of the intellectual genealogies of this scholarship I situated my study in the dialogue to which I hope to contribute. The foundational research with which I am in conversation, the central theories through which I interpret the social and political dimensions of the LA Academies that I studied ethnographically, and the methodology described in the following chapter work in tandem to help form the conceptual framework for this research.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

"Facts don't necessarily reveal who we are, but our contradictions almost always do: it's the warring self—the self that's capable of both caring for others and intense self-interest—that makes the story" – Hilton Als, "Out in the Blue," 2019

Ethnography is a form of inquiry tailored to understanding and interpreting the complexity of human action in context. Methodology is the rationale for how such research should proceed. Guides to qualitative methodology often discuss methodology as "sharpening" and "honing" inquiry (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Ravitch & Carl, 2021). These words hint at the incisive dimension of qualitative research, as there is something necessarily intrusive about ethnographic fieldwork that is—as Jan Blommaert and Dong Jie (2010) put it—"aimed at finding out things that are often not seen as important but belong to the implicit structures of people's life" (p. 3). The blade of ethnography was trained on the flesh of Indigenous peoples across the globe and, for decades, has been reappropriated to cut through the obfuscations and reveal the logics, distortions, and contradictions of racism and settler colonialism (Harrison, 2010). In an essay on her own experience of racialization, Zora Neale Hurston (1928), who studied anthropology at Barnard College with Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict (both students of Franz Boas), wrote, "No, I do not weep at the world—I am too busy sharpening my oyster knife" (p. 492). Responding to Hurston nearly 90 years later in a poem titled "What I mean when I say I'm sharpening my oyster knife," educational sociologist Eve Ewing (2017) writes:

> I mean
>
> when I see something dull and uneven,
>
> barnacled and ruined,
>
> I know how to get to its iridescent everything.

I mean I eat them alive.

what I mean is I'll eat you alive,

slipping the blade in sideways, cutting

nothing because the space was always there.

In this chapter, I will describe the methodology for this study, which reached for the tradition of sight trained on slicing into the "dull and uneven" to reveal the luminous contradictions within.

To begin, I present my positionality to discuss my relationships, values, and political commitments connected to the topics of my research. Then, I review the research questions and examine ethnographic monitoring—the central methodological orientation of the study. Next, I explain the study design and data collection methods, followed by a description of the research context and participants. Finally, I describe the data analysis process and ethical considerations, before closing with a discussion of reflexivity and the challenges and limitations of this study.

Positionality

My positionality shapes my methodology, as the relationships, values, and political commitments I hold shape my perspective on what I know, what I do not know, and how I conceive of learning about and from the communities and schools with whom I have conducted research (Boveda & Annamma, 2023). I grew up in a queer, mixed race family in Baltimore—a city famous for segregation. In fact, the residential segregation designed in Baltimore was so successful that it was used as a blueprint and exported across the United States and internationally. So the parts that made up my whole didn't always rest comfortably there.

On top of that, many of the dominant narratives in my city were reproduced in my family: my white extended family had money, and with that swimming pools, vacations, and

trampolines in the backyard. My Black family did not. When I was 13, I received a scholarship to attend a private school, and what I remember most from that experience is *dissonance*. There was perpetual, vocal affirmation that "we" were smart, special, and liberal alongside the persistent reminders that I was not quite part of that "we."

And then there was the murderer.

According to the *Washington Post*, on March 20, 2017, Harris Jackson fatally stabbed Timothy Caughmann, a 66 year-old Black man, with the intention of inciting other white supremacists to begin a race war. Fifteen years earlier, I was riding on winding along roads in Baltimore County lined with freshly fallen, fire-red leaves alongside Harris and the dozen other members of our soccer team to one well-manicured campus or another to play a game. Harris and I were not friends. *Faggot* dripped off his lips easily, and I knew he was saying "nigger" close-but-not-too-close to me so he could deny it if I retaliated, but I would resent myself if I had not. Harris wasn't alone; he wasn't even an outlier. He was part of the social fabric of the school: dating, going to parties, speaking up in assemblies. In that school, at that time, Harris was normal. His horrific actions revealed a level of white supremacy that was different, I believe, by only a fraction of a degree from that of the many of the other boys I was in school with.

These early experiences vividly illustrated for me that while rich, white people who held a lot of power in my city presented their culture and politics as superior, it was their ideologies and the practices informing such ideologies that manufactured the brutal inequality that defined the place I grew up in. This inspired my belief that the knowledge, values, and relationships from which a humane—and more just—society can emerge are developed, practiced, and stewarded by liminal communities. Academically, this led me to research the literacy curriculum applied in a chain of charter schools in Baltimore for an undergraduate thesis in which I demonstrated how

scripted literacy instruction contributed to a pathological view of Black communities and subordinated historical practices of self-determined schooling dating back to Reconstruction. Following my passion to understand how language and literacy instruction shapes the material conditions of our lives, I was awarded a Fulbright grant to work in La Guajira, Colombia, a state where Indigenous (Wayuu) and Black people make up the vast majority of the population. There, I led digital storytelling projects with youth to investigate the effects of living beside the largest open-pit coal mine in Latin America. Working with university and secondary students throughout that semi-desertic peninsula jutting into the Caribbean, the boundaries between Blackness and Indigeneity were replaced by a density of relationships that challenged the U.S.-centric conceptions of race I grew up with. Inspired by the power of applied scholarship, I earned a M.A. in education from Stanford University and began teaching English and designing college and career access programs at San Francisco International High School, a public school serving exclusively immigrant youth learning English.

As a teacher, I engaged directly with the complexities of "newcomer" education within the Internationals Approach. In my classrooms, I worked with students from over a dozen home countries, but the majority of these students were so-called unaccompanied minors from Central America, like the students in the LA Academies. I learned that, for these young people, being a good teacher meant stretching the limits of a school system not designed for their success, and I saw the Internationals Approach as a method for refashioning schooling with and for recently arrived immigrants. I also felt its limitations, particularly in the areas of family and community engagement. At my school and in the schools I had the chance to visit across the network, there was a common trend: the teachers and school leaders rarely came from the same backgrounds as the students. Although many of us teachers were people of Color and were multilingual, few of

us were immigrants, Central American, or speakers of Indigenous languages. As one Internationals Network staff member put it, "the network attracts a lot of peace corps types." However, the LA Academies were different. The teachers and school leaders were predominantly Latinx and bilingual; many had immigrated themselves as teens from Mexico and Central America, and the majority were veteran teachers rather than recent college graduates; many of my colleagues at the school in San Francisco were recent college grads. So as I entered a research relationship with the LA Academies—which began with close partnership with the district's Multilingual and Multicultural Education Department (MMED) and the Internationals Network for Public Schools (INPS) before focusing primarily on the students, teachers, and leaders at each high school—I was both supportive and critical of the Internationals approach and hopeful about the ways the model would develop in the hands of LA educators and their students.

Research Questions

In recognition of (a) the relationships between language and race and (b) the role of schools as sites where the futures of displaced people are constructed, my overarching research question is as follows: What can language policy in "newcomer" schools teach us about the futures we build with and for people who are young immigrants? To investigate this broader idea, I pursued two research questions:

(1) What are the official and practiced policies governing students' home languages in the new LAUSD–Internationals Academies?

(2) What possibilities for college, career, and community participation do these policies facilitate or constrain for students?

Following the "critical turn" in LPP, I use an ethnographic monitoring approach to study the tensions surrounding home language policy at the district, school, and classroom levels (Tollefson, 1991). By investigating the sociopolitical dimensions of home language policy, my research contributes to educational linguistics and educational anthropology—transdisciplinary fields in which language education, and language education policy in particular, constitutes the terrain upon which dilemmas of inequity unfold.

Ethnographic Monitoring

Ethnographic monitoring is a methodology in LPP that includes participant and nonparticipant observation, in-depth interviews, document collection, and collaborative analysis with research participants and stakeholders. Ethnographic monitoring developed in the political context of the late 20th century where the movements for bilingual education programs were understood and discussed in terms of social justice and even racial uplift (Gilmore & Glatthorn, 1982; Trueba, Guthrie, & Au, 1981). In 1980, Dell Hymes introduced the idea of ethnographic monitoring to discuss the way that "ethnography is essential to the success of bilingual education" (p. 104). Teresa McCarty and I (2024) have since defined ethnographic monitoring as "the application of the ethnographic paradigm and research methods to the investigation of situated sociocultural phenomena, with an eye toward policy and programme improvement and positive social change" (p. 369). To do so in the realm of LPP, ethnographic monitoring must be cumulative, collaborative, critical, and comparative (Hymes, 1980; McCarty & Halle-Erby, 2023).

Ethnographic monitoring is cumulative in that it begins study at the level of individuals, families, and communities who are directly engaging with the language policy or program under

investigation and then works outward toward the relevant organizational and institutional levels (e.g., classrooms and schools) until arriving at larger sociocultural processes, their interactions, and their effects (e.g., raciolinguistic enregisterment, language brokering, and language shift). This cumulative inquiry process is recursive rather than linear, and analysis of one layer necessarily informs the others. The intended result is a depth of account that LPP ethnographers have described as slicing through the interconnected "layers and spaces" (Hornberger & Johnson, 2007) of LPP to afford "deep dish analysis" (Stritkus & Weise, 2006).

Collaboration in ethnographic monitoring means recognizing and engaging all policy actors as co-inquirers into the study of the role of students' home languages in high school programs for immigrant students tasked with "centering" and "embracing" multilingualism. This means working closely with students and their communities, who are the identified "subjects" of the language policies I study, alongside their teachers and school leaders, who are those charged with implementing the policies, as well as the officials who author and revise formal language policy across the school district. This close partnership during the data collection and analysis phases facilitated strong relationships between myself and the stakeholders best positioned to inform and benefit from this study. However, this collaborative approach also presented challenges when the various stakeholders (students, families, teachers, district administrators) interpreted the policy differently or had competing interests.

The cumulative and collaborative dimensions of ethnographic monitoring demand that the approach also be critical by attending closely to power dynamics that circulate through LPP processes and the researcher-participant relationship. Such critical techniques require reflexivity, which is ongoing self-assessment of positionality and its implications for understanding and working with participants. Marilyn Martin-Jones and Ildagrada Da Costa Cabral (2018) explain

reflexivity as developing “a keener awareness of the ways in which [our] own historically and socially situated subjectivity shapes different stages of the research process,” particularly when working with students, educators, and schools (p. 85). While reflexivity begins with self-identification, it aids criticality as it moves beyond a focus on researcher subjectivity and toward action and impact. Critical reflexivity means continually asking who benefits from this research.

Ethnographic monitoring is also comparative in its tendency to examine LPP cases across settings in search of patterns, lessons, and themes. In LPP scholarship, Hornberger and Johnson (2007) take this comparative approach in the introduction of ethnography of LPP, where Johnson’s work on bilingual education in Philadelphia Public Schools was compared to Hornberger’s studies with Indigenous educators in Bolivia. The comparative dimension of ethnographic monitoring supports studying language policy processes at three high schools across Los Angeles simultaneously to understand the nuances of the formal and practiced policy concerning students’ home languages in the Academies (for more on practiced language policies, see Bonacina-Pugh, 2024). As McCarty and I (2023) wrote, the cumulative, collaborative, critical, and comparative qualities of ethnographic monitoring combine to make it “a methodology of intervention and improvement carried out with and for the communities with whom we work” (p. 370).

Jef Van der Aa and Jan Blommaert (2011, 2017) described ethnographic monitoring as the “unfinished business” of Dell Hymes. Hymes’s legacy, however, also unfortunately includes allegations of abuse and harassment toward female students and colleagues (Durbidge, 2022; Elegant, 2018; O’Donnell, 1988; Phillips, 2010) that have caused scholars of educational linguistics to reconsider his role and impact on the field. While Hymes (1980) used the term “ethnographic monitoring” and theorized on the approach, he seems to have applied it only once

in a project with Philadelphia Public Schools, which was written about in a report to the National Institute of Education (Van der Aa & Blommaert, 2017).

However, ethnographic monitoring has been taken and applied, developed, and advanced by scholars like Nancy Hornberger (2017, with Haley De Korne) who was a colleague of Hymes, and Kendall King (2001) who was one of his students. In addition, ethnographic monitoring was developed by researchers working closely with Hymes's ideas like Samira Hassa (2012), Beatriz Arias and Christian Faltis (2012), and Bernadette O'Rourke and Pedro Castillo (2014). These studies, among others not directly linked to Hymes, form a rich body of research from which I draw. However, I choose to discuss ethnographic monitoring within Hymes's intellectual genealogy because it brings up a tension in my research with which I must engage: the tools and traditions of social science were developed through and for colonization and racialization, yet I attempt to reappropriate those ideas to support collective movements toward educational justice.

Critical scholars take up approaches and disciplines designed to oppress, and brilliantly subvert them to strengthen thought and action toward liberation. I am grateful to learn from the insight that came, for example, from Frantz Fanon's fraught relationship with psychiatry, Kimberlé Crenshaw's sustained criticism of the law, and—of course—Linda Tuhiwai Smith's enduring critique of empiricism. I strive to work in the tradition of creative reappropriation these scholars exemplify. Smith's (2012) foundational writing in *Decolonizing Methodologies* opens with perhaps the most famous Audre Lorde quote: "The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" (Lorde, 1984, p. 112), which illustrates the tension I excavate here. Thinking within the frame of that same quote, Ruth Wilson Gilmore (1993) explains that she believes the central feature of Lorde's sentence is the possessive. Gilmore writes, "The issue is not whether the master uses, or endorses the use of, some tool or another. Rather, [the issue is] who controls

the conditions and the ends [to] which any tools are wielded" (p. 70). So, I move forward with open eyes and the conviction to control the tool of ethnographic monitoring because I believe wielding its power will make me a better member in the coalition working toward radical and just educational approaches for immigrant students. And all the while I hear Billie Holiday's voice in my head singing, "blood on the leaves, blood at the root," and I remember that research may always be, in the words of Tuhiwai Smith, dirty work.

Research Context and Participants

The settings for this study are Cerrejón, Greene, and Newton high schools, all three of which are LA high schools where new school-within-a-school International Academies were designed and opened between 2021 and 2023. Although all three are Title I schools within the same district, where between 80% and 90% of students live below the poverty line, there are relevant differences. Of the three, Cerrejón is located the farthest south and is in one of the most densely populated neighborhoods in the city. Greene is in Hollywood, about five miles northwest of Cerrejón. Newton is another 15 miles northwest of Greene, over the Santa Monica mountains, in the San Fernando Valley. At Cerrejón and Greene, more than 85% of students are identified as being Hispanic/Latino, while at Newton, 67% of students are identified as Hispanic/Latino. Five hundred and ninety-nine students attend Cerrejón High School, 692 students attend Greene, and 2,323 students attend Newton. Cerrejón and Newton both have long-standing automotive career/technical education programs (with functional body shops), while Greene does not.

Figure 3.1: Summary details of the three schools hosting Internationals Academies				
	Graduation rate	Total enrollment (SY 2022–2023)	Student demographics (SY 2022–2023)	English learner (EL) population (SY 2022–2023)
Cerrejón High School	60.4%	599	97.9% low-income 91.4% Hispanic 4.1% African-American 1.4% Filipino 1.8% Asian 1.1% White	312 ELs (52% of total student population) 3.5% initial fluent English proficient 52.1% limited English proficient 32.3% reclassified fluent English proficient 2.7% unknown
Greene High School	75%	692	96% low-income 88% Hispanic 7.8% not reported 1.3% White 1% African-American 1% Asian 0.6% Filipino	222 ELs (32% of total student population) 4.8% initial fluent English proficient 32.1% limited English proficient 45.8% reclassified fluent English proficient 0.6% unknown
Newton High School	91.8%	2,323	85.6% low-income 67.6% Hispanic 21.8% not reported 4.3% White 3.4% Asian 1.4% African American 1.3% Filipino	371 ELs (16% of total student population) 9.5% initial fluent English proficient 16% limited English proficient 42.8% reclassified fluent English proficient 0.8% Unknown

Cerrejón High School

Cerrejón sits atop a small hill in a neighborhood of large apartment buildings occupying narrow streets that swell with automobiles. As the streets bend around the hill, the grid pattern of the larger neighborhood distorts so that the roads around the school have a winding, rather than rigid, quality. Amid the constant rumble of cars and buses passing by on the through-street a

block down from the entrance of the school, you can also hear roosters calling, a reminder that the urban density directly around the school is not endless. In fact, if you walk just a few minutes west, you'll find lawns, bungalow houses, and duplexes. The school building is an imposing block of concrete with a multistory pattern of narrow windows wrapped in metal shutters. Into the early 2000s, nearly 5,000 students attended Cerrejón, making it the largest high school in the United States. Now enrollment hovers around 600, with many rooms, corridors, wings, and entire floors vacant. Behind the school building is a vast, concrete quadrangle. The quad has lines of outdoor tables and large open spaces where students play catch and kick soccer balls back and forth. A new turf playing field is north of the quad, and the combined open space of the quad and the field provides a broad, panoramic view of Los Angeles climbing the hills toward the San Fernando Valley and—on clear days—the peaks of the San Gabriel Mountains.

At Cerrejón, the adult participants in this study are the classroom teachers who teach the core academic subjects in the Academy, the school's administrative team, and the counselor assigned to support Academy students. From fall 2021 to spring 2023, this was a group of 15 educators with whom I worked with closely. I formally and informally observed all teachers' classrooms, participated with teachers and administrators in Academy team meetings, and joined—and occasionally facilitated—professional development workshops. I also had a formal leadership coaching relationship with two administrators and a formal instructional coaching relationship with three teachers. I conducted eight formal, one-on-one interviews with the educators in this group and two formal group interviews. Between both interview styles, I was able to interview 13 of the 15 educators who staff and lead the Academy.

The 15 educators who ran the Academy at Cerrejón over the course of my research were a diverse group who share a number of important characteristics and experiences with their

students and with one another. Fourteen of 15 are bi/multilingual; among them, the group speaks Armenian, Mandarin, Russian, Spanish, and Tagalog. Twelve of 15 identify as people of Color, and 12 of 15 identify as women. Ten of 15 grew up speaking Spanish, and nine of 15 identify as Central American, Chicano, or Latin American. Eight of 15 immigrated to the United States themselves and learned English as a second or third language. Only three of the classroom teachers were in their first five years of teaching, and five had more than 10 years of teaching experience. Importantly, only one educator identified herself as having an Indigenous identity, and none of the educators spoke any Indigenous languages.

The students who make up the Academy at Cerrejón are young people who have recently immigrated to the United States and are learning English as a new language. At the end of the 2023 school year, there were 254 students enrolled. Of the student population, 93% come from Latin America, with the vast majority coming from Guatemala (70%). During the 2021–2022 school year, I worked with the Academy counselor to conduct intake interviews with 115 members of the founding ninth-grade class. From those interviews, 30% of students identified a Mayan language (K'iche', Mam, Q'anjob'al) as their home/primary language, nearly 85% had been in the U.S. for less than a year when they enrolled at Cerrejón, and over 50% had been held in an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) detention center. A small number, less than 5%, are U.S. citizens, and almost 50% are living with a guardian who is not their parent (i.e., an older sibling, aunt, uncle, or cousin). I got to know students in their classrooms, where I joined them at tables as they completed worksheets, conducted experiments, wrote personal narratives, and solved equations. I also spent time with students in the hallways between classes and during lunch. Indirectly, I also got to know students by analyzing their classwork. In addition to the 115 intake interviews, I

conducted 10 in-depth, one-on-one interviews and two group interviews at Cerrejón that reached 22 students.

Greene High School

Greene is in a new, multistory building that sits on a freeway overpass. Like Cerrejón, Greene opens to a quad and a large playing field, but the school itself is in a commercially dense area, and the hum of traffic passing on the freeway is persistent. The staircase at Greene is outdoors and always teeming with students making their respective ways to classes between floors. From the staircase, there is a sweeping view of the city cascading out in three directions. The Academy takes up one entire floor of the school, and the hallways are always decorated with hand-painted signs advertising seasonal school events. Around 700 students attend Greene and 140 (about 20%) of them are enrolled in the Academy.

Eleven educators at Greene were responsible for running the Academy during the 2022–2023 school year. Among this group of administrators and classroom teachers, 100% are bi/multilingual, nine out of 11 are people of Color, seven out of 11 are fluent Spanish speakers, six out of 11 immigrated to the U.S. themselves, and five out of 11 are Latinx. Three of the teachers had been in the classroom for less than five years, and the rest all had been teaching for more than 10 years. No educators had any fluency in an Indigenous language spoken by students. I worked closely with all members of this group, but to different degrees. I attended and participated in their Academy team meetings, professional development workshops, and student support meetings. I participated in meetings where the team shared and developed curriculum, analyzed student work, and discussed the students they were struggling to serve. I attended monthly coffee-with-the-principal meetings, where I met a number of families and observed the

leadership team connecting with the broader school community. I also participated in formal and informal classroom observations, including peer observations where Academy teachers were able to see one another teach and then debrief the experiences. I conducted six formal, one-on-one interviews with Greene Academy educators and one group interview. Altogether, I was able to interview nine of the 11 educators who run the Academy. I also had a formal, weekly coaching relationship with one administrator and three teachers at Greene.

As it was at Cerrejón, the Academy students at Greene, too, are all recently arrived young immigrants, coming primarily from Guatemala (over 80%). Another 10% of the students are arriving from other Latin American countries, including Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras, and Colombia. The remaining 10% come from Russia, Central Asia, and South and South East Asia. The most common home language is Spanish, but about 25% of students report a Mayan language as their home language, and smaller percentages of students in the Academy also speak Armenian, Bengali, Russian, Tagalog, and Thai. At Greene, the Academy leadership conducts intake interviews with all students to get a better understanding of their school experiences and socio-emotional needs. Students at Greene have experiences similar to those of students at Cerrejón with regard to immigration detention and family reunification. I got to know students at Greene in their classes, where I sat with them at tables, helped with assignments, and served as an audience for final presentations. I conducted 11 in-depth, one-on-one interviews and two group interviews with students. Altogether, this reached 22 students at Greene Academy.

Newton High School

Newton, one of the oldest high schools in the San Fernando Valley, has a large campus in a residential neighborhood. The main building has a columned facade, but the school, where nearly 2,400 students attend, has extended into the small neighborhood of stand-alone, two-story

buildings and dozens of portable classrooms ring the school's open, grassy quad. Despite the school's large enrollment, the campus is mostly quiet, except for the sounds of the marching band's rehearsals emanating from a football field at the edge of the grounds. But every hour when class periods change, hundreds of students move from building to building and the school's hallways and pathways exhibit the thriving social lives of teenagers. The grounds of the school are well-maintained and the interiors are worn and fully used, with every office and classroom occupied. At the end of the 2022–2023 school year, there were 142 students enrolled in the Academy in grades nine and 10.

There are 11 educators who run the Academy at Newton. As it is at Cerrejón and Greene, they are primarily educators of Color and mostly bilingual Spanish-English speakers. Ten of the 11 educators are people of Color, and 10 of the 11 are bi/multilingual, with nine educators speaking Spanish fluently. Nine of the 11 are Latinx—mostly Chicana/o—eight of the 11 are women, and four of the 11 immigrated to the United States. All but two members of this team had been working together for over five years before the Academy opened, and they had strong and supportive working relationships, where teachers often developed curriculum collaboratively, consulted one another about students, and celebrated birthdays together. I observed all Academy classrooms at Newton, sometimes by myself and sometimes accompanied by administrators or other Academy teachers. I observed and participated in regular Academy team meetings and some school-wide professional development sessions. I had a formal coaching relationship with one administrator and three teachers at Newton. I held five in-depth, one-on-one interviews and two group interviews that reached 10 of the educators at Newton.

In its inaugural year, the 142 ninth- and 10th-grade students who made up the Academy at Newton were over 90% Latin American, with the majority (about 70%) coming from Guatemala.

In addition, small but significant numbers of students also came from El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Russia, the Philippines, and Ukraine. The most common home language spoken in the Academy is Spanish, but about 20% of students reported a Mayan language as their home language. Like the students at Cerrejón and Greene, almost every student in the Academy at Newton had been in Los Angeles for less than a year when they enrolled in the program, and the majority had been held in ICE or DHHS detention centers, or both. However, a greater number of students at Newton were living with a parent (although often one with whom they were reunifying) and a smaller number were living with a nonparental relative and entirely self-supporting than at Greene or Cerrejón. I got to know students at Newton primarily in their English language development (ELD) classes, but I also spent time with them in the hallways between class periods and at lunch. I held 12 one-on-one interviews and two group interviews, which reached a total of 22 students at Newton.

Multilingual and Multicultural Education Department (MMED) and Internationals Network for Public Schools (INPS)

This study took place while the school district was experimenting with a new approach to education for recently arrived immigrant students. Over the course of the study, each of the three Academies was designed, developed, and launched with significant involvement from INPS and MMED. MMED is the office exclusively focused on LAUSD's 200,000 designated English language learners. MMED is responsible for compliance with state and federal regulations regarding English language learners, migrant education, and Indian education. In addition, MMED develops local language policy for the school district and provides guidance on best practices for language learners directly to principals, counselors, and instructional coaches. The

Academies at the center of this study function as an intervention into education for newly arrived immigrant students, which the district currently calls International Newcomers, who are one subgroup of English language learners. INPS is a national nonprofit organization that provides professional development and technical support to schools and districts across the country exclusively around issues pertaining to newly arrived immigrant students. Although MMED is neither based at any particular school nor exclusively focused on newly arrived immigrant students, and INPS is not based in Los Angeles, the Academies that are the focus of this study initially came into existence because of the partnership between these two groups.

INPS and MMED participated heavily in this research during the design sessions for each Academy, which were co-facilitated by the two organizations. After that, I was a participant-observer in quarterly check-ins between INPS and MMED on the progress of the Academies, monthly support meetings for the Academy leaders facilitated by INPS, occasional meetings with philanthropic foundations interested in the LA Academies, and a professional development series for teachers at all three Academies designed by the INPS that I co-facilitated. The staff I worked with at MMED primarily identified as Latin American (Chicana/o, Central American, and Latinx) and were all bi/multilingual. Many MMED staff had immigrated to the LA area as children and had personal experience with the district's ELD programs.

With INPS, I worked mainly with the school development and professional development teams. The staff was primarily white and, while most people were bi/multilingual, few had personal experience learning English as a new language. During fieldwork, I observed and debriefed classrooms, analyzed student work, and reviewed student data (attendance rates, standardized test scores, course passage rates) with MMED and INPS staff. I also participated in annual, two-day-long visits facilitated by INPS at each Academy that focused on evaluating the

Academy's implementation of INPS essential practices and their effects on students and teachers. In addition, I held three formal interviews with INPS staff and four formal interviews with MMED staff.

Study Design and Data Collection

In January 2020, I was invited to support the LAUSD–Internationals partnership because of my experience at an Internationals Network school in San Francisco. During fall 2020, the partnership conducted needs assessments Cerrejón, Greene, and Newton high schools. The needs assessments explored how each school serves students through their instructional approaches, professional development, academic programming, and community engagement. To better understand each school, I joined the two-person Internationals Network school development team, and together we visited classrooms; interviewed teachers, students, parents, and administrators; reviewed ninth-grade curriculum; examined bell and master schedules; and analyzed student achievement data. The needs assessments revealed that educators and leaders were grappling with what it means to support multilingualism for recently arrived immigrants. As the principal at Cerrejón put it in a question echoed by educators across the district: "A lot of us are here because we identify with our newcomers …We immigrated, or our parents did; we speak Spanish. But the students I've had from Bangladesh or the Philippines usually do better. We have so much Spanish at our school—how much is too much?"

That sentiment caught my attention because it teems with tension: educators who identify with students who they see their schools failing; bilingual, Spanish-speaking educators as an asset and a liability; and the invisibilized presence of Indigenous home languages. From this pilot data, I decided to focus my research on the home language policy developed and enacted in

the Academies to follow and address those tensions and the issues of practice and policy they raise.

In April 2021, my research formally began with participant observation of the design sessions for the Cerrejón Academy, during which a leadership team consisting of administrators, teachers, counselors, and a parent representative convened to envision the student and teacher experience in the coming Academy, and to develop the handbook, professional development calendar, and course sequence that would bring this vision to life in the fall (for observation protocols, see Appendices D and E). The design sessions involved collaborative study of current programming and practices for recently arrived immigrant students at Cerrejón alongside inquiry into the Internationals Approach. Across the sessions, the design team observed classrooms, examined portfolios of student work, and studied the master schedule and typical course sequence for recently arrived students at Cerrejón. The same team also watched videos of instruction, examined curriculum, and studied intake and student support structures from existing Internationals Network schools. During this process, the educators at Cerrejón developed an understanding of the Internationals Approach and planned how they would adopt and apply its essential practices for their Academy. During each session, I took notes—including excerpts of verbatim speech when possible—and collected the documents we studied together. I then compiled notes and documents into a single field report covering all design sessions. Following the design sessions, I interviewed three design team members to understand their visions for the Academy and what roles they expected students' home languages to play in the new program.

From August 2021 to June 2022, I conducted fieldwork during Cerrejón's inaugural year. Each week, I spent two or three days on campus observing district leadership, school administrators, teachers, and students during classes, team meetings, professional development

sessions, and lunch. During this time, I had regular meetings with the leadership team and two Academy teachers. At these formal meetings, for which we made agendas and I took notes, we continued the conversations begun during the design sessions and studied how the Academy was taking shape, where students and teachers were struggling, and what effects they observed. In other words, we had reflexive conversations about how the Academy was distinct from the practice that preceded it, what ongoing support was required to adopt and implement the Internationals Approach essential practices, and what effect these changes had on students and teachers.

During these visits, I looked for instances when teachers and administrators talked about the role of students' home languages in their academic and linguistic development. Specifically, I asked: How and when do students use their home languages in the classroom? How do teachers incorporate students' home languages (including Indigenous languages) into curriculum and instruction? How do school and district leaders discuss using home languages to improve student outcomes? I typed up my raw field notes at the end of each day, embedded relevant photographs, and called out relevant documents collected during the visit. These field reports formed a 128-page running record of my fieldwork at Cerrejón during the 2021–2022 school year.

These observations informed interview protocols for students, community members, teachers, and district staff (for interview protocols, see Appendix G). Modified from Seidman's (2019) three-part interview sequence, I conducted 90-minute interviews with district leaders and teachers working at the Cerrejón Academy. The interviews explored (a) participants' language education experiences, (b) their ideologies on the role of students' home languages in the new Academies, and (c) the implications of relevant formal policy concerning students' home languages. In partnership with Cerrejón counselors, I completed intake interviews with 115

students in the founding first-year class that focused on students' educational histories, linguistic backgrounds, and academic goals. Based on those interviews, I identified students who were representative of the Academy's language distribution for follow-up interviews to explore their (a) language repertoires and language learning experiences, (b) experiences as recent immigrants to Los Angeles, and (c) future aspirations.

In addition to observation and interview data, I collected and analyzed school transcripts, attendance records, and student achievement data from standardized tests (administered in English and Spanish), writing samples, and portfolios of classroom projects (for document collection protocols, see Appendix F). Together these data afford holistic information on students' linguistic and academic development from which to answer my research questions. Importantly, these documents are also the central benchmarks the district uses to evaluate schools and teachers; however, the district does not currently disaggregate these data for recently arrived students. So, for example, the spreadsheets I developed with Cerrejón focusing only on attendance data from the Academy were a measure of the school's performance that the district previously did not have access to. Collecting and sharing data this way throughout the fieldwork process was a meaningful way to practice reciprocity. In the case of Cerrejón, for example, these spreadsheets revealed much higher attendance rates among Academy students than those in the general school. This very initial finding helped the school advocate for resources from its local district to expand the Academy—even in the face of negative pressure from the district in response to low scores on the English language proficiency exam.

To better understand the language policies developing and circulating around the Academies, I partnered with CARECEN, so I would have a window into community-based language policymaking occurring beyond the schools. CARECEN is an immigrant power-

building organization that has been working in Los Angeles for 40 years. CARECEN facilitated a youth organizing program throughout the 2022–2023 school year at Cerrejón where I was a participant-observer. In the program, students discussed their experiences making home in Los Angeles, interviewed elders and family members to identify issues facing their communities, and codesigned an action project that addressed a challenge they care about. These meetings took place during the school day and were embedded in my field reports (132 pages) during the 2022–2023 school year. I also conducted a formal interview with the facilitator of the program from CARECEN, in addition to meeting regularly to plan for and reflect on the meetings.

In April and May 2022, I observed the design sessions for the Greene and Newton Academies, which followed a pattern similar to the sessions for Cerrejón, and interviewed those design team members. During the 2022–2023 school year, I conducted fieldwork at all three schools during the inaugural school year for Greene and Newton and the second school year for Cerrejón. I spent one or two days per week at each Academy. My fieldwork at Greene and Newton high schools yielded data sets analogous to those collected at Cerrejón during the 2021–2022 school year (the typed running record field reports is 238 pages long for Greene and 123 pages long for Newton). Throughout the 2022–2023 school year, I co-facilitated a six-session professional development series for all three Academies with the Internationals Network. These half-day workshops included teachers and leaders from all three schools and focused on instructional approaches for teaching language and content simultaneously across subject areas.

Although I was not able to take notes during these sessions, they were meaningful for the relationships I developed with the educators at the Academies. During these sessions, I presented ideas, research, and curriculum (including videos and artifacts from my own teaching) for their review, critique, and analysis. These workshops were also the only opportunities available for

educators in the Academies to come together and discuss common challenges and share their successes. So meeting together at regular intervals was also a way to observe in real time which discourses, topics, and concerns were circulating across the Academies. Although it was challenging, studying three schools operating across the city allowed me to examine home language policy as a process extending beyond a single institution and, as critical scholars of language policy and practice suggest, uncover its "covert motivations, embedded ideologies, and unintended consequences" (Hornberger & Johnson, 2011, p. 275).

Alongside participant observation, document collection, and interviewing, I also conducted archival research to learn more about the history of the schools I was working with and the broader context for Newcomer programs in Los Angeles in response to specific incidences during fieldwork. For example, during the district's ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Academy at Cerrejón, the 1968 Blowouts were brought up repeatedly as a historical antecedent for the Academies. And in interviews, multiple teachers talked about their experiences, or those of their parents, in LAUSD Newcomer programs as a motivation for why they wanted to work in the Academy. I worked with the special collections librarians at UCLA's Young Research Library to go through the Los Angeles History and Culture collection and the Chicana and Chicano Studies collection. From there, I identified the Los Angeles School Board Archives and the Vahac Mardirosian Papers as particularly useful resources for understanding both the 1968 Blowouts and their enduring effects on LA schools, as well as Latinx movements for higher-quality education in LA, including for recently arrived immigrants. I examined eight boxes of files from the School Board Archives and three boxes of files from the Mardirosian Papers. I took handwritten notes on the documents I found and scanned items that seemed most relevant to

my research. I then typed document descriptions so that I had an overview resource I could refer to that was more amenable to initial analysis than scans of the primary sources I collected.

During my 28 months of fieldwork, I engaged in a regular practice of memo writing. Each month, I wrote memos reflecting on my fieldwork and the ideas it was surfacing for me. Some memos were extensions of observer commentary in my notes, and others were meditations on or responses to an extended excerpt from a field report or interview transcript. Memos from my earlier fieldwork focused on my methodology, while later memos primarily connect events and comments across the Academies with theory and literature. I used these memos as the basis for quarterly fieldwork check-ins with committee members who suggested modification to data collection and reading recommendations that would help me better understand the phenomena I was curious about.

Data Analysis

Taken together, the field notes, interview transcripts, documents, and archival records collected during my fieldwork culminated in rich, textualized "inscriptions" of language policymaking processes from multiple vantage points (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011, p. 12). To make sense of this assemblage, data analysis was centered on close, critical reading and analytic memos. Given the scale of this project, I used NVivo software to manage the qualitative data and facilitate multiple rounds of reading and coding. To begin, I read the data corpus in distinct ways: first chronologically, then character-driven (wherein I read all data sources across time pertaining to a particular person), and then place-driven (wherein I read all data sources collected in the same place). The purpose of this in-depth reading was to gain familiarity with data collected over a long period of time and with a wide range of participants.

Then, as part of open coding, I began writing notes for initial theme and category identification (Bazeley, 2013). At that time, which Johnny Saldaña (2021) would describe as pre-coding, I was open to all potentially salient themes, as indicated by my frameworks, and focused on identifying striking "participant quotes or passages" (p. 30). My initial data reading and open coding were accompanied by analytic memos to record my reactions to the data corpus and any emergent analytic hunches. I then began rounds of directed coding based on the ideas surfacing in my memos. Given my research questions and initial reads, I chose in vivo, emotion, process, values, and versus coding—in addition to attribute coding, as described by Saldaña (2021).

In vivo coding is a method where "a code refers to a word or short phrase from the actual language found in the qualitative record (Saldaña, 2021, p. 137). I chose in vivo coding to record salient aspects of speech that captured my attention, specifically with regard to the research questions and other emergent themes. Emotion coding "labels the emotions recalled and/or experienced by the participant or inferred by the researcher about the participant" (p. 364). I chose to use emotion coding to identify and connect with the affective experiences within the decisions (and consequences) regarding the role of students' home languages in the Academies. Process coding exclusively uses gerunds to mark action and "imply actions are intertwined within the dynamics of time, such as things that emerge, change, occur in particular sequences" (p. 367). This approach helped me see changes in the language policymaking process over time. Values coding is focused on participants' "values, attitudes, and beliefs, representing his or her perspectives or worldview" (p. 369). Values coding allowed me to attend to the ideologies underlying participants' actions in the language policymaking process. Versus coding identifies the individuals, concepts, and phenomena "in direct conflict with each other" (p. 370). Versus

coding helped me identify difference and tension between participants, concepts, and approaches to engaging students' home languages.

Next, I began focused coding, where I clustered related codes together to create meaningful representations of the data. Guided by my research questions and theoretical frameworks, I synthesized codes into themes, which I organized via synoptic tables to show relationships between the different themes. From these tables I developed preliminary assertions and claims in response to my research questions, and I consequently read back through the data corpus looking for disconfirming evidence within what Ravitch and Carl (2021) describe as the "discovery-orientated" nature of relational research and analysis (p. 194).

In the fall of 2023 and winter 2024, I returned to the partner schools and I presented assertions during workshops to embed member checking (also called participant validation; see Ravitch & Carl, 2021, p. 197) into my analytic process. The workshops were positive and valuable experiences where I presented six preliminary assertions and selected supporting data on individual posters. Administrators and teachers from each partner school reviewed my findings in a gallery walk activity, where they annotated each poster on the basis of the following questions: What do you notice? What do you wonder? What do you agree with? What do you disagree with? What is the significance for your practice? I then facilitated open discussions on preliminary findings. To close, each participant completed an anonymous "exit ticket" with additional feedback on what they found useful and what they were critical of in the presentations. These workshops helped develop the central assertions that comprise the findings chapters of the dissertation and represent an enactment of relational accountability (Wilson, 2008).

Ethical Considerations

Many ethnographers see their fieldwork as a learning process organized by stories (Archibald, 2008; Blommaert & Jie, 2010; Speed, 2019), and stories require ethical treatment at all stages of the research process. Throughout the research process, this means respecting that participation in this study will always be voluntary and ensuring that participants never feel forced to participate. This was especially important to keep in mind, as my initial—and ongoing—role in this project is one of a researcher *and* a resource for school development. This dual role is one way I practiced reciprocity in the research process, but I recognize that it could also create dynamics in which a particular person feels that they *owe* me participation. It was my responsibility to closely monitor my research relationships through structured reflexivity (including reflective writing and dialogic engagement with other researchers) to ensure I was meeting the highest ethical standards. During the recruitment and data collection stages, an essential way to respect participants was by creating a detailed consent process and ensuring their privacy and confidentiality throughout the study (for consent forms, see Appendices A, B, and C).

Another ethical consideration was my role as a paid consultant with the Internationals Network for Public Schools. Although this is not an unusual position for educational researchers,[5] it required careful navigation to ensure that my participation *strengthened* the research I was able to conduct. For this to occur, I was guided by the ethical principles of qualitative research to "do no harm" and "aim to benefit." In this case, it was important to remember that these principles do not mean I should refrain from critiquing. Given that I have

[5]Reaching back to Harry Wolcott's early educational anthropology (Wolcott, 1967) and extending into Teresa McCarty's work at the Rough Rock Demonstration School (McCarty, 2002), many educational researchers have held paid positions in the schools and school districts they study.

developed and continue to develop close relationships with the participants of this study, I will engage in recurring meetings to discuss how the results of my inquiry can be presented anew for participants to support their work in the moment.

Reflexivity

In ethnography, the researcher is understood to be the primary medium through which they describe the research setting as well as an actor within that social setting. In the critical ethnographic tradition, where ethnography is understood to be, in Kathryn Anderson-Levitt's (2006) words, "really a philosophy of research rather than a specific method" (p. 276), the centrality of the researcher is understood as a feature of inquiry rather than a threat to it. Reflexivity is the structured process through which qualitative researchers reflect on our roles and relationships to our research. Ravitch and Carl (2021) define this aspect of qualitative research as "the systematic assessment of your identity, positionality, and subjectivities as a person and as a researcher. Researcher reflexivity refers to an ongoing awareness and active address of a researcher's role in the development and implementation of research processes and findings" (p. 13).

During the 28 months I spent actively conducting research with the Academies, I moved between many worlds that converged within the three high schools, including those of district administrators, principals and assistant principals, classroom teachers, organizers, parents, and students. I worked with each of these communities in a structured and sustained way (i.e., Academy design sessions, monthly leader meetings, CARECEN's youth leadership program) that allowed me to build trust over time. Of course, each of these entities were frequently critical of each other and sometimes in direct tension. With each group, aspects of my professional

background, identity, and political commitments positioned me differently—so that I was never entirely an *insider* but neither entirely an *outsider*.

With teachers, for example, my past experience as a high school teacher both connected and distanced me from participants. In addition, the role I played in the development and support of the Academies initially portrayed me as a "booster" for an educational reform that some teachers felt was being imposed on them. Occasionally, this turned what I hoped would be open-ended conversations with teachers into question-and-answer sessions where they wanted me to respond to their critiques of the Internationals Approach as it was unfolding in their own schools.

In one formal interview, a teacher, Ms. Cases, paused in the middle of explaining why she thinks her students need more "pressure" to speak English in the Academy to ask, "What do you think of all this?" Caught off guard, I deflected, "I have a lot of questions about all this. That's why I'm studying it, I think." Undeterred by my response, she continued, "For the international school specifically, what do you think should be the approach of the teachers? You think they should have helpers translating for the kids? Or you think it should be like what I'm thinking: all English, die or swim? Or is that swim or run? How is that?" I paused and then I answered sincerely, which mostly meant disagreeing directly with many of the ideas she had just described. Ms. Cases replied, "Yeah. I don't agree with everything you say," and she laughed. I laughed, too.

In my field notes after the interview, I wrote:

> In our interview I was surprised when Ms. Cases asked me what I think teachers in the Academy should do. I felt a few of things at once, but two stick out clearly. I felt like it wasn't my place to have an opinion (what?) and I felt like if I said my position then she wouldn't tell me honestly what she thought. I was afraid the interview would turn into a

> debate, or she would shut down and I wouldn't get "good data." I know, intellectually, that the only "good data" comes from authentic relationships, but I still have an impulse to conceal myself – even after so many months of working together (04/26/22).

After writing about the experience with Ms. Cases, I had a better understanding of how my instincts toward "diplomacy" might be inhibiting my authenticity and challenging the development of meaningful relationships with participants. So, I forced myself to begin explicitly naming one of my values or one of my opinions in every conversation with participants over the following week and then asking them directly, "What do you think of that?" This small change, developed from a reflexive memo writing practice, helped me redirect my behaviors away from pseudo-objectivity and toward deeper dialogic engagement with participants. Throughout my fieldwork, I practiced reflexivity through regular written reflection, as in this example, as well as through regular dialogic engagement with committee members, colleagues, and friends. These practices helped me pay mind to my thought processes, reactions, and behaviors in the act of ethnography. Reflexive practice does not cleanse qualitative research of "bias" or make it more "objective." Rather, it serves as a reminder that the mind and body through which I practice ethnography as "a way of being" a researcher (McCarty, 2015) also shapes the lens through which I perceive and interpret the ideologies, intentions, and actions of the participants with whom I worked.

Challenges

The greatest methodological challenges I experienced during this project were gaining access to the schools, developing trust with participants positioned in different—and often opposing—social and professional positions, and managing a large amount of qualitative data

independently. To conduct research within LAUSD, I had to complete my dissertation proposal and IRB petition in time to submit an application to the internal LAUSD research office, which required an institutional affiliation within the school district. To compile a strong application, I had multiple meetings with INPS and MMED staff members to present my dissertation proposal and discuss how it might align with and inform the MMED's priorities. Fortunately, these meetings were productive; MMED agreed to sponsor my application and my proposal was accepted—including my request to explicitly name LAUSD rather than anonymize the district.

Working closely with district officials, school administrators, teachers, and students meant I was crossing between power positions on a daily and sometimes hourly basis at each school. This sometimes made it difficult to build trust with participants, particularly when a teacher felt I was too aligned with the principals or when a principal felt I was too aligned with the district. For example, during one quarterly check-in with MMED, an Academy leader brought up the last round of classroom observations we had done together, where Academy teachers were included and able to see their colleagues teach. The MMED staff were interested and asked to be invited to the next observation rounds. The Academy leader agreed, but when word got out that staff from the central district were coming for an observation, administrators from the school's local district insisted to join them. Eventually, the group of observers swelled into double digits, and teachers' anxiety grew ahead of the visit. Unfortunately, during the observations, a local district administrator unfamiliar with the Academy and the Internationals Approach interrupted one teacher's lesson to reprimand him for providing instructional materials in Spanish. Unfortunately, the Academy leader did not intervene, and the teacher felt insulted.

When the teacher and I met after that observation, he expressed his frustration: "I'm doing all these things you all told me to do, but now I'm getting in trouble? Don't you talk to

them?" In this moment, and in many others like it, I was reminded that although MMED explicitly tasked the Academies to embrace students' home languages, the idea that recently arrived immigrant students should be exposed *only* to English was still widespread in the district. So the teachers who worked most visibly on this reform were also made vulnerable because of their engagement with a controversial educational approach. And while some teachers chose to work in the Academies, others were simply assigned to the schools, which meant that they were essentially conscripted into a controversial teaching position without clear consent.

To navigate this fieldwork environment, I relied on transparency, generosity, and forgiveness. I reminded participants frequently about my study and my role as a researcher in the Academies, and I pushed myself to speak up consistently about my values and ideas about teaching and learning in the Academies so that I was honestly sharing my thoughts regardless of the audience I was working with. I offered support to participants whenever I could, particularly resources that were useful from my experience teaching, such as curriculum, meeting protocols, and professional development materials. I also apologized to participants when they expressed frustration with my limitations or disappointment in my actions. And when participants canceled meetings, rescheduled interviews, or took a few weeks off from working with me, I gave them grace and welcomed them back warmly if and when they chose to engage again.

Limitations

Methodologically, the theoretical and empirical scholarship that this project is based on highlights the role of research (and researchers) to affect the systems and communities studied. Abolition, in particular, underscores the possibilities and limitations of the role research can play in creating transformational change. Abolitionists ask us to imagine a different society grown

from the detritus of our present world. In many ways, this is a fantastic process of dreaming that occurs alongside the scrupulous process of looking closer for the seeds of change already being cultivated. For me, as a researcher, this is a reminder that I must integrate the pull toward abolitionist reimagining, or the appropriation of the master's tools described by Ruth Wilson Gilmore at the beginning of this chapter, alongside the responsibility to critically render realities obfuscated by white supremacy. To achieve this synthesis, I rely on dialectical thinking, which Robin Kelley (2018) describes as a practice in which contradiction is understood as constitutive of all methods of effective struggle for self-determination. One way I engaged with this tension and moved toward synthesis was through structured reflexivity and partnership with local activists and organizers already working to build power in immigrant communities.

While this study intentionally works at multiple sites and on multiple scales, it has significant limitations. Perhaps most importantly, although the Internationals Approach serves students across the country, it is not reflective of the kind of educational experience that *most* English learners experience. So this study should not be interpreted as an attempt to characterize the prevailing educational language policy processes as *most* educators, students, and communities experience them. Instead, this project asks what language policy in newcomer schools can teach us about the futures we build with and for marginalized youth through ethnographic study of state-authored language policy alongside the informal language policy created by immigrant youth that is shaped by their everyday experiences navigating life as newcomers in Los Angeles. The focal schools are ideal settings to study these interactions since, ostensibly, they are not designed to superimpose state language policy on diverse students. Rather, they aim to educate and engage students in an environment with increased freedom and autonomy.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I began discussion of the methodology of this study through a reflection on my positionality to illuminate the central commitments, alliances, and experiences that shape the lens through which I saw the participants in this research. I then introduced ethnographic monitoring, which is the guiding methodology for this study, before introducing the research participants and context as well as the study design and data collection methods. In total, the data corpus included 59 interviews, 86 formal classroom observations, 703 typed pages of field reports, 10 document collections, and four archival document collections. I described the data analysis process and ethical considerations, and I closed with a note on reflexivity that addressed the challenges and limitations of this study.

CHAPTER 4 SURFACE TENSION: MAKING SENSE OF CONTRADICTIONS AND UNDERSTANDING SOLIDARITY IN THE INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIES

Figure 4.1: Image of the red carpet rolled out for the opening of the International Academy at Cerrejón, August 24, 2021.

At the beginning of the 2021–2022 school year, the International Academy at Cerrejón opened its doors with Hollywood-style flair. The sun was bright and the day was already hot at 7 a.m. when I left my house in Leimert Park to drive to Cerrejón. It was the first day of in-person instruction in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) since March 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic first emptied out schools in California. On my drive, I noticed that the sidewalks and intersections near the schools I passed were all populated by large groups of students waiting in lines to complete paperwork at outdoor tables to register for LAUSD's Daily

Pass system and to present negative COVID-19 test results before they could enter each of their respective buildings. The bureaucracy of reopening the state's largest school district in the midst of an ongoing public health crisis created a new system of barriers and documentation that spilled out into public spaces for all to see.

But the International Academy at Cerrejón was different. Past the familiar check-in tables, a thick red carpet was rolled out in front of the Academy wing (see: figure 4.1). As I approached Cerrejón, I watched students enter the building; some walked along the red carpet and others avoided it. I thought back to a conversation I had with the principal there in June. We were discussing enrollment, and at that point only 30 students had signed up for the Academy. "Ninety percent of these kids are coming from detention centers," the principal had said. Two months later, for these students, the pathway from a cage to the classroom was lined with a red carpet. The dichotomy between entering the United States through a jail and then entering public school on a red carpet was displayed right on the surface.

Two weeks before the red-carpet ceremony, the Cerrejón Academy's teachers met as a group on campus, for the first time, for four days of professional development. Although they would be teaching in person the following week, a marked change from the prior year when all instruction was virtual due to COVID-19 restrictions, everyone was anxious about the surging Delta variant, so the group met outside in the school courtyard. The professional development sessions were designed in partnership with the Internationals Network and included an introduction to the Network's instructional and programmatic approach. The teaching team analyzed videos of classrooms from other Network schools, had workshops on language and content integration, and spent time revising unit plans.

On the final professional development day, the leadership team was inside the Academy wing decorating classrooms and hallways. Outside, teachers were discussing the programmatic components of effective Internationals Network schools, including the team-based approach to professional development they would spend the year working toward during common planning time. One teacher interjected, “Is the common planning time during the school day?” Without any school leadership present to speak to the specifics, an Internationals Network school development team member responded, “My understanding is that you will all have a common planning period so you can meet during the school day.” The teacher shook his head. “That won’t work,” he said. He explained that on the school’s current 4×4 block schedule, it was impossible for the entire Academy team to have a common planning period. “Where will the students be if we’re all in a conference period?” As the question hung in the air, a crew rolled out and began taping down the red carpet. He continued, shaking his head, “They haven’t made a master schedule yet.” He was right. And school was opening in three days.

The unfinished schedule meant Academy teachers could not have a common meeting time during the school day. In response, the principal had the teachers meet together on minimum days when the rest of the staff works with their departments. These meetings occur three to four times per month, which is less frequently than the biweekly team meetings that are the norm in Internationals schools elsewhere. Meetings in lieu of department time also meant Academy teachers lost paid time to complete departmental planning required by the school, which resulted in the filing of a formal union grievance during the second month of the school year.

The unfinished master schedule also meant that the school leadership had an unintended teacher vacancy in the Academy. To compensate, each cohort was made larger. In August 2021,

this work-around appeared effective, but as students continued to enroll in the Academy, classrooms filled up. By November, Academy classes had 30–35 students (despite a commitment from the school and district to cap class size at 25 for the first two years of the Academy).

On the school's opening day, while students and teachers got to know each another inside the Academy, a handful of local news camera people recorded the speeches at the ribbon-cutting ceremony. The interim superintendent spoke first: "As the daughter of an immigrant, I know what it means to say: welcome, we love you." The local district superintendent followed: "This is a day our ancestors would be proud of." Then the school board member representing the school added, "Through this Academy, we embrace the world languages that are our *home* languages." The school principal spoke last, concluding her remarks by invoking the 1968 LA Blowouts in which Chicano students walked out of schools across the city, including at Cerrejón, in protest of the racism and undereducation they were experiencing. "In 1968, we walked out for a better education. Today, our students are walking in. Walking into a program that meets their needs, where all our kids are on track to graduate from the *first* day. Our children work hard at what all our children want: the American Dream. We will not let you down. *Si se puede!"*

Figure 4.2: Students and administrators at the International Academy at Cerrejón's inauguration ceremony in August 2021.

How can we interpret this public discourse? The women who gave these speeches are all people of Color, some immigrated themselves, and all but one identify as Latina. In their remarks, they drew on notions of shared racial and ethnic identity—often signaled through phrases in Spanish—to demonstrate their affiliation with the Academy students. They loudly and publicly identified themselves with the Academy students—"our kids"—aligning their pride and their success with the success of the Academy. One month after the ribbon-cutting ceremony, I asked the Academy leader how she would describe the current role students' home languages were playing in the Academy. She shared, "It's essential, very important, but there's also that danger of ... What is the word? Keeping them away from learning English, because in our situation right here, they're exposed to—and you are already in conversations, you probably heard my frustrations—that the Spanish is so much, the opportunities for English is not there. So

there is that danger where home language is overused, where English, access to English is limited. That's very dangerous."

The Academy leader's characterization here is important. Students' home languages are both "essential" and "overused." The leader identifies Spanish as the home language of the Academy students and worries its presence in the Academy somehow edges out opportunities for English language development. However, K'iche and Mam, which 25% of students reported as being their home languages, are essentially rendered invisible. So, more tension. The school and district leaders share discourses of love and identification with students rooted in the valorization of their home languages—"the world languages that are our *home* languages," as the school board member put it—alongside language ideologies that reproduce "English-only" arguments.

At Cerrejón, the congruence between the students, the adults who educate them, and the adults who manage their school district—in terms of racial identification, linguistic background, and migration experience—is important. Nationwide, the teaching force is predominantly white, yet public schools increasingly serve more students of Color. Researchers have identified the many positive effects that Black and Latinx teachers have on Black and Latinx students; such students experience increased socioemotional support and have higher reading and math test scores (Bristol & Martin-Fernandez, 2019). A school for Latinx migrants staffed and run almost exclusively by Latinx educators jumps out for its transformative potential (see figure 4.2). At the material and public discourse levels, this school seems like it could provide an incredible education. At the same time, at the academic and language ideological levels, we can also see how the Academy upholds the existing practice in public education that underserves racialized and minoritized students.

“Surface tension” is the metaphor I use to describe the coexistence of these contradictions at the Academies. In physics, surface tension is a phenomenon you can observe in the round shape of water droplets, or in the way that some insects can stand on the water’s surface. Surface tension makes a liquid surface act as if it is an elastic membrane because of the greater attraction of liquid molecules to one another at the point where the liquid and air meet. It is a phenomenon where opposition gives form, holds a unit together, and makes new interactions possible (e.g., like a razor blade resting atop water). Surface tension is an apt metaphor for the new Academies because it describes how the coexistence of contradictory ideologies, discourses, and practices *structures* the appearance of the Academy and *facilitates* the relationships and practices that develop within it. In these opening vignettes, surface tension describes the coexistence of discourses of love and belonging alongside linguistic ideologies, like those expressed by the Cerrejón administrator, of hegemonic monolingualism and Indigenous language erasure.

In this chapter, I develop the notion of surface tension to address research question 1 (What are the official and practiced policies on the role of students’ home languages in the LAUSD International Academies?) by describing a tension that emerged between “instrumental” and “fundamental” views of students’ home languages (defined in the section that follows). I use ethnographic evidence from classroom observations, student work samples, teacher interviews, and observations of Academy teacher meetings to examine what the instrumental and fundamental views of students’ home languages looked like in practice across the Academies. I then interpret the significance of each perspective through the dual lenses of raciolinguistic ideologies and relationality. The idea of surface tension is the product of ethnographic attention to the material and discursive practices within the International Academies, which revealed that the progressive policy and asset-based pedagogies that animate the Academies exist within a

language ideological context where multilingualism is pathologized and Indigenous languages are suppressed. Understanding how these contradictions *structure* the Academies is necessary for the talented and dedicated educators running the schools to practice solidarity with their students and succeed in their ambitious goals of providing high-quality education to immigrant students.

The constellations of practices, attitudes, and beliefs that constitute the instrumental and fundamental views of students' home languages appeared at all three Academies—Cerrejón, Greene, and Newton. To represent each perspective's reach across the Academies, I begin each subsection on the instrumental and fundamental views of students' home languages with a collection of voices from educators across the Academies. Then, to describe each perspective in detail, I zero in on one teacher each at two of the Academies—Amanda Velasco at Greene and Ana Jimenez at Cerrejón—to present the instrumental view and fundamental view, respectively, through closely examining one instructional unit. In this way, readers may see each view broadly across the three Academies and in fine-grain detail in one classroom. I selected Ms. Velasco and Ms. Jimenez to represent each perspective because they are strong teachers: students, colleagues, and administrators recognized each educator for her skill and commitment in the classroom. Both teachers planned for their classes intentionally and reflected on their work critically. In addition, they both participated consistently in Academy meetings, including optional professional development workshops on Saturdays. Focusing on effective teachers makes it easier to focus on the meaning and impact of their perspectives on the roles of students' home languages.

The Instrumental View

"What I've taken away is that we treat students' home languages, whatever they bring to the classroom, as assets. So not downplaying or preventing them from expressing themselves in their

home language or what they're comfortable in but trying to use their language as a way to help them learn and honoring where they come from."

– Amanda Velasco, Greene International Academy (Interview, November 2022)

"I feel like their home language is a very big part of them. This is the language that they know, that they grew up speaking, that their inner dialogue is all about. I feel like for us teachers that are in this very small academy that's just starting, we try to use as many of the resources as we can of their home language to try to help them out in accessing content and also trying to see if there is a way we can bridge this to their acquisition of this new language."

– Cristina Arroyo, Greene International Academy (Interview, November 2022)

"Their languages are their platform in this classroom to communicate, to feel comfortable. And, eventually, they just kind of spring off and they move on their own."

– Jessie Corona, Newton International Academy (Interview, May 2023)

"Most kids would say, 'I came here for a better future. I came here to make more money or live a comfortable life.' And I think what's going to be needed with the kids is to say, we respect and we encourage you to embrace your culture, but we also have to recognize that standard English is what's needed if you're going to be successful in college and on the job. It doesn't mean you have to hate, or completely isolate yourself from, your culture and your language. But if you're going to be taking an English placement test in college, then you need to work on that English. Ultimately, I don't think you can be successful, truly, in the United States without really knowing the [English] language. It's always a handicap. And [English is] not a formal language,

I know, it's not a national language, but it is a language that's going to get you a comfortable life."

– Emma Sánchez, Cerrejón International Academy (Interview, November 2021)

This chorus of educators' voices across the three Academies begins to illustrate a pedagogical approach to students' home languages that I label the "instrumental approach." Teachers working across schools and content areas who have years of experience demonstrated this approach. To elaborate on the approach more thoroughly, I will focus here on one teacher, Amanda Velasco, and how the instrumental view of students' home languages appeared in practice in her classroom. Ms. Velasco is an effective representative of the instrumental approach concerning students' home languages. Like the majority of teachers in the LA Academies, she is a woman of Color, the daughter of immigrants, and multilingual, with some proficiency in Spanish. She is a core teacher at Greene International Academy and she attended the summer institute—a week of professional development seminars facilitated by the Internationals Network before the school year began—as well as all Saturday professional development workshops the Network facilitated during the 2022–2023 school year. At Greene, Ms. Velasco attended all Academy team meetings and met with me weekly to design curriculum and discuss relationships with students. I formally observed Ms. Velasco's classroom 14 times and came with her to observe her colleagues' classrooms twice. Ms. Velasco also participated in a one-on-one interview and a group interview, in addition to helping me identify students to interview. She also analyzed her students' work with me. Ms. Velasco is a strong teacher whose classroom was often highlighted as an exemplar of the Academy's approach when district observers came to visit Greene.

By the time Ms. Velasco and I sat down for a one-on-one interview, we had already developed a relationship, she had significant exposure to the Internationals approach, and I had spent considerable time in her classroom. She clearly expressed that she understood that the Academy takes an asset-based approach to students' home languages and that her job as an Academy teacher involved figuring out how to use her students' home languages "as a way to help them learn" that "honors where they come from." Elaborating on this, Ms. Velasco said, "I'm supporting them by using their language and background and trying to bring that into the lesson so that it helps … a lot of it is just supporting students and where they're at, like meeting them where they're at, but also challenging them so that they are learning in an optimal way. What I've taken away from a lot of the sessions is support, scaffolding, like anything we can do to differentiate in positive ways for the students."

Ms. Velasco is not alone in using the language of optimization when discussing the role of students' home languages. In the Academies, across the Internationals Network, and in wider discussion of recently arrived immigrants, students are commonly described as facing the dual challenges of learning English and learning high school course content simultaneously (Finn, 2023). In other words, recently arrived students are understood as having to learn and accomplish *more* than students who are not identified as learning both language and content. Ms. Velasco's colleague, Ms. Arroyo, echoes this sentiment when she describes students' home languages as a "bridge" that connects students' prior knowledge to the content she teaches in her class.

In the comments of Ms. Velasco and Ms. Arroyo, we can discern how they are contending with the traditional framing of language learners as "disadvantaged" by their language status. Richard Ruíz (1984) described this framework as a "language-as-problem orientation" wherein language diversity is construed as a crisis that threatens modernity and

nationalism that must be "solved" through language education (p. 18). While Ms. Velasco and Ms. Arroyo recognize the challenges their students face in meeting the district's language and content requirements for graduating from high school, the teachers identify students' home languages as a resource for overcoming these obstacles. This gestures toward Ruíz's language-as-resource orientation, in which he proposes an alternative framework where language planning begins "with the assumption that language is a resource to be managed, developed and conserved [and] would tend to regard language-minority communities as important sources of expertise" (p. 28). For Ms. Velasco, rather than repeat the traditional approach to educating recently arrived immigrants where they spend multiple years focused primarily on English language development before beginning coursework in English language arts, social studies, mathematics, and science, students' home languages are presented as resources to accelerate learning—as I aim to demonstrate in the section that follows. As she explains, however, this acceleration requires support, scaffolding, and positive differentiation.

Ms. Velasco has embraced the idea that fostering a highly collaborative, student-centered classroom would create the conditions to use students' home languages effectively. To do so, she designed a project-based unit that her students needed to complete in groups. Throughout the unit, students assumed four different groupwork process roles to structure their collaboration (Cohen & Lotan, 2014). The roles were group manager, communications manager, resource manager, and task manager. Ms. Velasco planned a two-day "role roll-out" where students were introduced to the group roles, practiced using them, and applied them to a short content-based task. The content objective for this lesson was "I can use a theorem to prove that two angles are congruent," and the language objective was "I can give directions and ask questions to work in a group." The period opened with a warm-up where Ms. Velasco projected an illustration of a

team of workers at a jobsite using specialized tools to do things like lay bricks, put down tiles, and paint. Below the image was a prompt: "What are the roles in this picture? Why do we have roles when we work in groups?" Underneath the prompt were two sentence frames written in italics: *The roles I see are ____, ____, and ____. We use roles when we work in groups to* ______. Students were supposed to answer independently and then share their answers with a partner.

During this lesson, I observed one group of four students: Lorenzo, Maria, Gabriel, and Carlos. Lorenzo, 18, grew up with his mother in Guatemala City, where he had studied computing in secondary school before he migrated to California. Lorenzo describes his home language as Spanish, but he speaks K'iche' with his father. Lorenzo has curly black hair tapered into a fade and wears round glasses. Maria is 16; her parents migrated to Los Angeles in the early 2000s, but they were deported in December 2006 while Maria's mother was six months pregnant with her. Three months later, Maria was born in Quetzaltenango, where she was raised by her grandmother, speaking Spanish and K'iche', after her parents returned to LA when she was very young. Maria is a fantastic storyteller who laughed aloud at the punchlines of her own jokes. Carlos, 15, identifies as Ladino, speaks Spanish at home, and grew up in Guatemala City. He finished the equivalent of seventh grade in Guatemala, but when the COVID-19 pandemic closed schools, his family could not afford the technology required for virtual learning. So he sold water with his uncle before he and his younger sister traveled north together to join their parents in LA. Gabriel, 17, was from El Salvador; he wore a black, flat-brimmed New York Knicks hat, and a gray hooded sweatshirt. Whenever I observed Ms. Velasco's class, Gabriel was a lively participant. I had previously interviewed Lorenzo, Maria, and Carlos, so the three of us were familiar with one another before this particular observation.

In Ms. Velasco's class, each student responded to the prompt on their own paper and then Lorenzo spoke first.

Lorenzo: ¿Ustedes que ven?

Carlos: Son trabajos primarios. Son necesario para que la sociedad funciona normal. Hay técnicos de electricidad.

Ms. Velasco approaches the table

Ms. Velasco: So, what did you talk about?

Ms. Velasco points to one of the workers in the illustration.

Ms. Velasco: How do you say it in Spanish?

Lorenzo: Oh, el soldador?

Ms. Velasco: What is the name of the top one?

Maria: Un soldador

Ms. Velsaco: Yeah, we have that word in English, too. To solder. But I think it's also called …

Gabriel: … Welder?

Ms. Velasco: Yes! Welder.

Ms. Velasco: Why are their jobs important? Why are there so many people working?

Maria: Porque cada uno tiene su profesión.

Ms. Velasco: Why can't just one person do it? Can someone translate that [question] into Spanish?

Lorenzo: ¿Por que no solo una persona puede hacer todo el trabajo?

Maria: Porque es mucho (laughs).

Ms. Velasco: Can you say that in English?

Lorenzo: Maria says because every person needs to study their profession.

Maria: Every person needs to study first to learn the profession.

Ms. Velasco: Right. Good point. They are experts in different things.

In the design of this short, opening activity and the moments of dialogue represented here among students and between students and their teacher, we can observe a number of factors about the role of students' home languages. First, the image-intensive activity is designed to introduce students into the focus of the class period without relying on much language. A primary objective of the class is to introduce the groupwork roles that the students will use throughout the upcoming unit, and Ms. Velasco has chosen an image of a group of people—in this case, people who work on a construction site—using various roles and tools to complete a large task. The directions for the initial task were in English and sentence frames were provided to support students. When the students talked to each other, Lorenzo spoke first, addressing the group in Spanish and asking, "What do you see?" Carlos responded to Lorenzo's question saying, "They are essential jobs. They are necessary for society to function normally. There is an electrician." However, Carlos did not respond precisely to the prompt Ms. Velasco had written nor did he use the sentence frames (in English or Spanish) that she provided.

When Ms. Velasco approached the group, she spoke in English and the students were momentarily quiet. Ms. Velasco's question to the students was different from the warm-up prompt and did not invite them to use their sentence frames directly. Instead, she pointed to one of the characters in the illustration and asked a new question, in English: "What is the name of the top one?" Lorenzo and Maria responded, in Spanish, but using a word that has an English cognate, while Gabriel responded in English with a clarifying question. Interestingly, Ms. Velasco did not respond to Gabriel's question in English, but to Maria and Lorenzo's remarks in

Spanish and points out the similarity between the noun *soldador* in Spanish and the verb "to solder" in English. Although Ms. Velasco spoke to the group only in English, in this exchange she demonstrated that students can respond to her in Spanish and still receive a response. In other words, even though she only spoke English, English is not the only language she responds to or engages with.

Next, Ms. Velasco prompted the group to identify the world *soldador* (welder) in English, which Gabriel knew and offered. Following this, Ms. Velasco returned to the spirit of the original question behind the activity (Why are their jobs important? Why are there so many people working?) albeit with different words. Maria responded immediately in Spanish, but Ms. Velasco did not respond to her. Instead, Ms. Velasco offered another question and, before the group could respond, asked if someone could translate her question, which Lorenzo immediately did in Spanish. Maria responded promptly, in Spanish, jokingly and accurately that one person cannot do all the work shown in the illustration because it would be too much. Although Maria did not respond to Ms. Velasco in English, Maria stayed directly engaged in the interaction, even though Ms. Velasco did not reply to Maria's previous comment. When Ms. Velasco asked Maria if she could express her thought in English, Lorenzo translated the initial idea she offered earlier in the interaction (rather than her joke), and then Maria repeated her comment, translated by Lorenzo, to Ms. Velasco. Ms. Velasco responded affirmatively in English and the conversation ended.

In this short interaction, we see an illustration of what it means to Ms. Velasco to approach students' home languages as assets. First, she designs a warm-up activity that her students can participate in regardless of their level of English language ability. Then, she participates in a bilingual discussion with a group of students in which she makes connections

between English and Spanish by identifying cognates. In addition, she prompts students to translate for one another, which indicates that she wants them to think, process, and discuss their thoughts in multiple languages. At the beginning of the interaction, Ms. Velasco prompts the students to respond to her in Spanish, but by the end she wants them to translate for one another so that they can answer her question in English. We might understand this as a manifestation of the "bridging" concept that Ms. Velasco's colleague, Ms. Arroyo, described. Through Ms. Velasco's participation style in this bilingual discussion, she establishes a kind of process/product distinction between Spanish and English where students are encouraged to actively use Spanish to process and develop ideas but eventually formulate them into English.

For Lorenzo and Maria, who also speak K'iche', at least one of their home languages is absent from this classroom discussion. When Ms. Velasco approaches the group initially and the students do not respond to her first question, she follows up immediately by pointing to the image of the welder and asking, "How do you say it in Spanish?" This is a way for Ms. Velasco to stimulate conversation with the group and it also introduces a Spanish word with an English cognate into their conversation, which she uses as a "bridge" between the languages. Ms. Velasco does not ask "How do you say it in your language/s?" This small reframe would have recognized the presence of multiple home languages among the group and may have invited K'iche' words into the classroom. In an interview, I asked Ms. Velasco directly about the role that Indigenous languages play in her classroom. She responded:

> I don't know. I do know some of my students, they've told me they speak another language, but maybe because Spanish is just so predominantly spoken among their peers, they use the Spanish. But they like sharing their own language, like when we ask them, 'Oh, how do you say it in your language?' They really like sharing that, being

acknowledged, recognized in that way. It's something I hope they don't lose being here (Interview, November 2022).

Ms. Velasco shares that even though she does not fully understand the role that Indigenous languages play in her classroom, she knows they are present. She also recognizes that students like to share information in their Indigenous languages when given the opportunity. The fact that Ms. Velasco identifies students' pride in their languages is significant. In McCarty, Romero-Little, Warhol, and Zepeda's (2009) research on Indigenous young people as agents of language policy, they identify a meaningful gap between educators' assessments and Indigenous students' self-reports of proficiency and interest in their languages at Beautiful Mountain Community School in the southwestern United States. This mismatch, they explain, stifles the agency of Indigenous young people in language revitalization efforts. "The conditions in which young people's decisions about language are made," McCarty et al. write, "can alternately empower them to take the risks necessary to sustain a minoritized language or constrain their choices and imagined futures" (p. 304). Ms. Velasco's recognition of the presence of Indigenous languages in her classroom at Greene, and her positive assessment of her students' pride in using them at school, indicate she has a positive stance toward students' home languages—but those attitudes must also be reflected in action.

Interestingly, Ms. Velasco suggests that the predominance of Spanish may be the reason students do not speak Indigenous languages in her classroom. Luis Pentón Herrera's (2021) case study of two Maya students classified as English learners at a high school in the eastern United States found, like McCarty et al. (2009), that the Maya students wanted their languages and cultures included in the classroom and that a significant barrier to that inclusion is that students "are forced to use resources (for example, dictionaries, etc.) in Spanish, not in their native

Indigenous languages, to learn English" (p. 14). Drawing on Pentón Herrera's research, we can see how the unequal distribution of educational resources between Spanish and Indigenous languages contributes to the exclusion of Indigenous languages in classrooms.

As critical studies of language planning demonstrate, this maldistribution is the result of—and a contributor to—settler colonialism across the Americas (De Korne, 2016; Guerrero-Arias, 2019; McCarty, 2013). However, in the sociolinguistic context of Los Angeles, Spanish has long been denigrated in and excluded from public schools (Sánchez, 1993). In LA, the co-naturalization of language and race sometimes functions to identify the Spanish language with the marginalization of low-income, Latinx communities, so the presence of Spanish in classrooms at Greene Academy can be seen as resistance to white supremacist English-only policy and practice. But the presence of Mayan communities in LA highlights the role of Spanish- and English-language educational systems in the colonization of the Americas and the dispossession of Indigenous communities. In the way that these overlapping systems converge in Academy classrooms, we can see the versatility of colonialism and how its place-based practices have stretched beyond their original borders and converge in U.S. classrooms. It is true that the use of Spanish in the United States in the 2020s can be seen as a measure to resist white supremacy. But, just as true is that as some deem Spanish to be the "stand-in" to "resisting" English-only instruction, privileging Spanish over Indigenous languages in public high school classrooms has the negative effect of serving to erase some students' home languages. Inside this contradiction, we find expanding and contracting colonial wounds; it is here we can locate the aforementioned surface tension in which resistance of dominant ideologies exists but only through the potential erasure of another (Indigenous) ideology. Positive possibilities open up, while others contract.

The broader context for this interaction is the beginning of an instructional unit in which students will learn about geometric transformations through a group project where they will create models that propose rearrangements for different areas in the school. According to Ms. Velasco's unit plan, the objectives for the unit were that students would be able to:

- Understand rotation, reflection, and translation;
- Use understanding of rotation, reflection, and translation to draw transformed figures;
- Write rules for rigid transformations of a figure;
- Describe the movement of geometric figures using rotation, reflection, and translation (e.g., the triangle is reflected across the *x*-axis);
- Identify when rotation, reflection, and translation have occurred and justify that position (e.g., this is a translation because the points moved 3 units to the right); and
- Use sequence words to describe the steps of transformations applied to an object (e.g., This transformation is a rotation and a reflection. *First, the figure rotated* __. *Then, the figure reflected* ___.).

During the semester, Ms. Velasco presented this unit to her colleagues for feedback at a team meeting.

At this meeting, Mr. Lee, a multilingual, veteran ELD teacher who immigrated to LA as a teenager; Ms. Arroyo, an early-career science teacher who grew up in a Mexican American family in California; and Ms. Castro, an Academy administrator born in Mexico who immigrated to LA as a child, sat at a table to review Ms. Velasco's unit plan. The group offered feedback on the unit and discussed implications for their own planning. In the discussion, Ms. Castro, asked "Is the expectation that students will write in English?" Ms. Velasco replied:

> They can do it first in Spanish and then do it in English. There are a few places on the handouts where it says "ML," and that's for "My Language." So, if they are ready for English they can go ahead, but if they want to they can do it in Spanish first. I'm hoping the language will be English, but I'm more focused on the content. If they can express themselves in Spanish, I'm OK with that. The language will come, but I want to make sure they are learning the content.

Like the opening activity, the larger unit Ms. Velasco has designed is focused on the mastery of content standards alongside pre-identified language that supports those domain-specific academic skills. Students are expected to produce final projects in English and are encouraged—with explicit scaffolding and planning along the way—to use their background knowledge and their home languages in grappling with the new academic content.

Academy educators saw the instrumental view of students' home languages as being positive. After discussing Ms. Velasco's unit plan, her colleagues reflected:

> **Ms. Castro**: I see embedded differentiation, language and content integration, and gradual release.
>
> **Ms. Arroyo**: I see a lot of opportunities for engagement and communication—not just writing and listening.
>
> **Mr. Lee**: Maybe with a lesson like this I would have been better in math back in the day. (Field notes, 02/14/23).

Ms. Velasco's colleagues recognized the way her planning for the use of students' home languages would create greater access to the math concepts she wanted to teach. The other teachers also saw how she was designing for collaboration and conversation between students in ways they believed would help students learn.

In interviews, students also positively described practices like those Ms. Velasco developed through the instrumental view of their home languages. In a group interview with students at Greene, I asked what things teachers in the Academy do that help them learn.

> **Angel**: We work in groups. I like it because I can practice my English, and when I work with people from different countries, we can learn more languages.
>
> **Estefany**: Almost everyone in my classroom speaks Spanish. In groups, it helps us to speak and write. The teacher gives us something and we practice in Spanish and then speak to each other so we can improve our English.
>
> **Violeta**: Working in groups is more fun. We divide the work between each other. Then, we practice speaking. (Field notes, 05/01/2023)

The instrumental view of students' home languages supported teachers to develop curriculum that satisfied content standards and helped students feel successful in the classroom. Across the Academies, it is a way that an asset-based view of students' home languages was enacted in curriculum and instruction that helped students learn the concepts outlined by the course standards as well as to gain exposure to English language development by using their home languages as a "scaffold" or a "bridge." However, there were also frustrations with and limitations to the instrumental view of students' home languages.

In a group interview with Greene teachers at the end of the school year, Ms. Velasco, Ms. Arroyo, Ms. Carrasco, Ms. Gagosian, and Mr. Lee reflected on their first year in the Academy. Ms. Gagosian and Ms. Carrasco are both multilingual, veteran teachers, and immigrants. Ms. Gagosian immigrated to LA as a teenager, and Ms. Carrasco was recruited from her home country to teach in LAUSD. After all five educators discussed the changes they made in their curriculum and instruction, they were asked about the role of students' home languages.

Mr. Lee: What we're finding here is that their home language is not strong enough. When a student checks in here in the ninth grade, if they had been in school for 9 years, then our jobs would be so much easier. But that's not the case. Many students come here with only 2 years of spotty education in their home country. And we are trying to teach them all of these languages at the same time. Compared to when I was an ELD student 30 to 40 years ago, the academic richness that students are bringing is much lower.

Ms. Gagosian: Even [less] than 5 years ago.

Ms. Carrasco: We ask them to read an article and make a summary. Then they just take the article and copy sentences. Then they get very frustrated because they don't understand that this is not acceptable. They are puzzled and they say, "Why? I've done it." (Interview, June 2023).

Here, Mr. Lee, Ms. Gagosian, and Ms. Carrasco assert that students' "home language is not strong enough," which they attribute to interruptions in their schooling and note that this is a major obstacle to student learning. The educational histories of recently arrived immigrant students have also become an increasing concern for researchers. The Center for Applied Linguistics's (2022) review of studies on young people identified as students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE) explains that, although there is no common definition or identification procedure for SLIFE, 20 states currently have their own definitions. Importantly, since Fleischman and Hopstock (1993) first attempted to estimate the number of students with interruptions in their schooling using survey data from program coordinators, all subsequent measurements concluded that the population of SLIFE in U.S. schools is growing, which aligns with Academy educators' perceptions. However, thinking with raciolinguistic ideologies draws attention to the complexities of such classifications. Young people who migrate to the United

States often belong to low-income families and come from lower-income countries where educational resources are frequently available only to upper-class families. While these dynamics are old, the SLIFE label is new—and its use is growing. We cannot accept SLIFE as a neutral label. We instead must attend to the ideas about language, race, and intellectual capacity that it instantiates (or potentially subverts).

Ms. Carrasco, who teaches Spanish at Greene, went on to describe her view of students' home languages and their impact on students' success:

> It's always a misconception that these students aren't advancing fast because they don't know English. They are in my [Spanish] class and some of them can't read, write, or put a period at the end of a sentence in Spanish. I have a student who just arrived last week, and I gave him the final exam—it was a reading comprehension. It was questions where you have to think and elaborate. He was looking at me like, I don't know how to do all of this. I asked him if he could read it; he said yes, but I don't understand. So they don't know reading comprehension. (Interview, June 2023).

In this anecdote, Ms. Carrasco questions the idea that English language proficiency is the primary obstacle to students' progress and suggests, instead, that the central issue is "reading comprehension." Ms. Carrasco's focus on literacy skills is important, because she is identifying a concrete academic ability that students need in order to "advance." Interestingly, when this focus is mediated through the instrumental view of students' home languages, it reveals a significant shortcoming: that classroom practices emerging from the instrumental view of students' home languages assume—or require—students' home languages to conform to a preexisting standard.

In this case, knowledge of written grammar conventions (like putting a period at the end of a sentence) and experience with certain academic tasks (like writing a summary or answering

reading comprehension questions) became representative of what it means to have a “strong” home language. In other words, the instrumental view relies, in part, on the assumption that inside every student is a speaker who already knows the conventions of school-approved language, albeit in a language other than English. So, proceeding from this logic, if and when the instrumental approach to students’ home languages fails to “advance” students, then it can be attributed to their “weak” home language skills. Even more troubling is that when educators identify that a foundational academic skill is absent (e.g., reading skills, in Ms. Carrasco’s example), the instrumental view construes that lack as evidence for why students *will not* advance, rather than serving as a diagnosis of what the school needs to teach. In the instrumental view, students’ home languages are an essential component of their success in school, but they are understood to be either sufficient (and then a student may succeed) or deficient (when a student fails).

Remarkably, when I asked how the Academy helps students develop their home languages, these same teachers often believed that was not possible. Ms. Velasco said:

> Like develop the academic part? Sorry, I’m not quite sure about that. Maybe for teachers who are fluent in the student’s home language, maybe they can help out with giving them the academic language that they need in their home language. But for me as a math teacher, I haven’t really been told like, “Oh, you need to make sure they know these math words in Spanish, too.” So I guess I haven’t really been developing their home language academically. Yeah, certain things I would like them to know in math. Like, if I were fluent in their home language, which is primarily Spanish, I probably would try to help them know the concepts in Spanish, too, or their home language, since that’s really

> beneficial for them to know, to be bilingual in an academic content area. But I think that's more maybe what a dual language program would be, which we're not, at Greene.

Ms. Velasco recognizes the value of developing students' home languages so that they continue to learn "math words" in Spanish and become "bilingual in an academic content area." However, she believes this would be possible only if she had that kind of "academic" fluency in another language herself and could teach math concepts in English and another language. In addition, Ms. Velasco identifies this kind of language development—"academic bilingualism"—as the purview of dual language programs, which is not the Academy's designation. Again, we see hierarchical beliefs about language proficiency wherein "academic language skills" occupy the top position undergirding the instrumental view of students' home languages.

The approach represented in this review of Ms. Velasco's planning, teaching, and reflection exemplifies the instrumental view of students' home languages. The instrumental view, which was prevalent in classrooms across the International Academies, is characterized by a belief that languages are more or less universal structures for thought and communication where the components and grammars of one language can be transposed to another language. In other words, languages exist on the surface and students and teachers are encouraged to draw on the structures of their home languages to learn disciplinary course content and develop English language skills. In practice, this looked like supporting English language development by relying on cognates, diagramming sentences to build comprehension through comparison between English and Spanish, and structuring opportunities for students to read, talk, and write in their home languages before using English. Although teachers, administrators, and students praised this approach, it also led to educators' frustrations with a perceived lack of literacy skills or expertise among students in their home languages.

Returning to Ruíz (1984), we can see how the instrumental view exemplifies the challenges Thomas Ricento (2015) notes to the promise of the language-as-resource orientation. While Ruíz suggests that a language-as-resource orientation can "have a direct impact on enhancing the language status of subordinate languages … [and] ease tensions between majority and minority communities" (1984, p. 25), Ricento highlights the outlawing of bilingual education programs in multiple U.S. states to identify the limitations of this promise. By tracing the historical development of language rights and language education programs in the U.S., Ricento shows how the English language was tethered to ideas of American citizenship grounded in whiteness and how the language-as-resource discourse was focused on the recognition of heritage languages only as far as they aided the development of English. As Rosa and Flores (2017) argued, the co-naturalization of language and race often precludes racially minoritized students from being *heard* as speaking the language of ideal American citizenship, regardless of the speech they produce. So when an instrumental view of students' home languages leads us down a circular path where educators ultimately "discover" the inferiority of students' language repertoires, we must ask: Who benefits?

Some teachers were aware of the limitations and the political implications of taking an instrumental approach to students' home languages. At the end of the same interview where her colleagues identified a lack of "strong" home language skills as a major obstacle in their classrooms, Ms. Arroyo said:

> I don't know. This brings me back to what I was learning all about in my master's. I just remember in my master's education getting very angry, because we're talking about things in a broader sense, and how academic language is technically, essentially, how middle-class white people speak, right? That's academic English. So bringing that

> perspective in, I see my students being forced into that [academic English], where we're telling you, "You need to write this formal essay. And you can't be using slang, you can't be using this, you can't be using that." So, I feel like they already have that idea in their head, because in the education system, that's where they're pushing you to go. Whereas my newcomer students, they're like, "My home language is Spanish, K'iche', Russian" whatever language. "It's still my language." Whereas the other students, it's like, "This is my nonacademic language." So I feel like our newcomer students, I find it difficult to push them just to speak English because I don't want them to be like, "English is the only way to succeed." But I want them to learn that English. To be able to use that as a tool, but also realize and keep in mind that their home language is also a tool. I think that's where I'm at with them.

There was a moment of silence as Ms. Arroyo's colleagues nodded thoughtfully. And then Ms. Gagosian spoke, "But how? They speak so many languages and there's just one of me." Ms. Arroyo's comment counters the notion that students' home languages are somehow deficient, and that linguistic deficit is the root of their academic struggles. Instead, she suggests that students in the Academy are firmly rooted in their home languages ("it's still my language" vs. "[it] is my nonacademic language") and that she wants a way to teach that offers her students' English "as a tool" without marginalizing, denigrating, or sacrificing their home languages. In other words, Ms. Arroyo is asking how we can take an *instrumental* view of English and a *fundamental* view of students' home languages. Ms. Arroyo was not alone in this question and, across the Academies, an instructional approach based on a fundamental view of students' home languages was also developing.

The Fundamental View

"So the idea here is that we see the child and if they speak another language, whether it's Spanish or any Native language, that's an asset because they already have language and we recognize that, whether it's K'iche', Zapoteca, or whatever language is spoken. It's valued and it is important. The challenge here, though, is how do we take that understanding and make it live in our schools, in our classrooms? Because you have the old mentality, '*learn English and you'll be fine*.' So [the old mentality] means *I don't see you, Ramón. I don't see you, but if you learn English, then I will see you.* Right? So that's the opposite of asset-based. – Ramón Refugio, Multilingual and Multicultural Education Department (Interview, February 2023)

"If I am an educator who is fully immersed in the culture, language, and history, then I will be able to relate better. I will see things in a different way when I understand things about a culture, a people. That's what is coming out. It's not just being able to teach, but it's being able to relate on a human aspect." – Paula Castro, Greene International Academy (Interview, March 2023)

"I'm interested in understanding the world. I'm interested in epistemology. I'm interested in ontology. In Tagalog, there's two we's. There's *tayo*, which is you and me, and then there's *Kami*, which is me and them, and you're not included. There's all these words for taste, sweet, sour, bitter, salty, and we have a word in Tagalog, *mapaklá*; it is an adjective to describe the taste of an unripe banana, that nasty thing it does, how it puckers chemically the inside of your mouth … All these things have to do with all the important things that humans have to do, like not destroying the earth, like not engaging in war, all of those things globally. It is vitally important for kids to develop concepts in all of the languages that they speak, because you knowing how to

do something or say something or think something in Arabic might give you insight in[to how] an engineering team … [might] … solve a problem because it makes you see the world differently. The social epistemology mediated by language is what allows you to process input from the world in order to accomplish certain tasks, which is why teams that are multidisciplinary should be multiethnic should be multiperspectival, because we see reality in different ways. And if we want to move reality, if you want to shape it, if you want to do things to help people, you need that kind of pluralism. It's vitally important for the existence of the species for us to figure out how to do this stuff." – Vic Alexander, Newton International Academy (Interview, June 2023)

In addition to the instrumental view of students' home languages, there is also a perspective I call the fundamental view. While the instrumental view is characterized by understanding students' home languages as a framework to accelerate English language proficiency and course content knowledge, the fundamental view understands language to be central to who a student is, where they are from, and how they think. As the quotations at the beginning of this section demonstrate, the fundamental view is shared by educators working across the Academies, and even across the district. Like the instrumental view, the fundamental view was in the conceptual and implementational mix in all three schools. However, to illustrate it most effectively, I present a case of a curriculum planned but never implemented from Ms. Jimenéz's classroom at Cerrejón.

Ms. Jimenez is an English teacher who grew up in LA and was raised by parents born in Latin America. Ms. Jimenez's mother attended Cerrejón shortly after she immigrated to Los Angeles when she was a teenager. Ms. Jimenez participated in the design sessions for the

Academy and often took on leadership roles among her colleagues. During winter 2022, Ms. Sandy Alameda, one of the school counselors, connected Ms. Jimenez with Kitzia Marroquín, an organizer with a city-wide immigrant rights group with an office near the school. Ms. Alameda played an important role in developing and maintaining relationships with outside organizations that helped support Cerrejón students with meeting their basic needs. This included partnership with medical, legal, and housing services as well as coordinating an on-campus food and wardrobe bank where students who needed to could get clothes and food to take home. Kitzia, the organizer, also grew up in LA; her parents were born in Guatemala, and she graduated from Cerrejón. Ms. Jimenez and Kitzia worked on designing a unit together with the expectation that Kitzia would come to campus and co-teach at some points.

In June 2022, at the end of the Cerrejón Academy's first year, Ms. Jimenez and I sat in her classroom after school. The shades on the large windows were up, and the low, June gloom clouds had burned just a few hours earlier, but the haze blowing in from the east diffused the sunlight and created a twilight effect inside the room. After discussion of Ms. Jimenez's background, her experiences with language learning, and how she came to teach at Cerrejón, I asked about the roles students' home languages play at her Academy. This is what she shared:

> Their home language is how they navigate their entire community. And then when they enroll in school—and it's always Cerrejón—even before we had the Academy, we were a hub for immigrant students. But their language helps them find their community in the school. I feel like that's the first big importance of their native language, because a lot of them who speak dialects find other people who speak dialects. And it's not just K'iche´; there's Mam and others I don't know. That's so fascinating that a little girl who primarily speaks a dialect will come to Los Angeles where there's a lot of Spanish-speaking

> people, but then also find the community of kids who can speak her dialect. Some of them even find people form their towns, from where they live, from the *departamentos*. Some of them even know each other from before but came at separate times. We had a new student start and another boy said, "Oh, I knew him at home." And I'm like, "Really?" And I don't know if they're just messing with me, but I think, wow, what a small world that both of you ended up in LA and at Cerrejón high school.

As Ms. Jimenez understands it, students' home languages are central to students' sense of belonging. It is through their languages that they "navigate" and "find their community" in the city as well as inside the school. As she explains, students' home languages allow them to maneuver through LA, including finding their way to Cerrejón, while helping them find and connect with people from their home places. K'iche' and Mam, in this example, are evidence to Ms. Jimenez that the students belong to a community that stretches between LA and Central America. The "small world" she sees is understood by Andre Dyrness and Enrique Sepúlveda III (2020) as a transnational community from which Latinx young people practice "transgressive citizenship" (p. 10) that exceeds the nation-state and creates anticolonial possibilities.

Translating this idea into curriculum, Ms. Jimenez and Kitzia developed a unit plan in which students would produce a "leadership plan" for addressing a challenge in their community. To begin, they worked through a series of activities guided by the following questions: Where do we live? Who do we live with? What challenges does our community face? What leadership do we want to take? During the time when students explored the first question (Where do we live?), they participated in a mapping exercise and shared their reflections on their neighborhoods by talking and writing about what they see in their communities, what they like, and what they do not like or what they want to change. During the period when students explored the second

question (Who do we live with?), Ms. Jimenez and Kitzia prepared material for them to learn about the history of the Black, Latinx, and Indigenous Central American communities in LA. The material included readings, videos, and guest speakers. In the unit, Ms. Jimenez and Kitzia intentionally sought out and developed material in students' home languages that they would learn from. This included audio recordings from conversations Kitzia had with community members who speak K'iche' and Mam talking about their neighborhoods, as well as local news articles from Spanish and Armenian language papers. Throughout the unit, students were given assignments to complete that directly engaged their home languages. For example, students worked in groups to come up with ideas to ask people in their families, households, or neighborhoods about the challenges they think residents faced. Then, students were supposed to use the questions to interview people and record their replies using their home languages.

The curriculum that Ms. Jimenez and Kitzia designed included a number of features of humanizing pedagogy that Dyrness and Sepúlveda (2022) describe as central to border thinking—which they offer as a conceptual framework to understand diasporic and transnational "young people's transgressive citizenship practices" that exceed imposed political and linguistic boundaries (p. 10). Sepúlveda (2020) identified humanizing pedagogy from his study of Mexican migrant students at a public high school in Northern California, where the researcher had formerly been a bilingual teacher and school administrator. At the school, Sepúlveda identified a group of "border educators" who understood that the challenges facing Mexican migrant students were not exclusively academic or technical. Rather,

> border educators knew that what was plaguing Mexican migrant students was also plaguing them—namely, the ongoing negotiation of a conflictual, neocolonial past shaped by conquest and complex global economic violence on both sides of the border,

> and a present where social, political, and economic marginality positioned them as the Other, dispossessing them of their language, cultural moorings, and economic security and negating their stories and connections to a past filled with relations, histories, and memories of a ruptured and disappearing world" (p. 47–48).

Like the border educators that Sepúlveda identified, Kitzia and Ms. Jimenez were engaging directly with questions of belonging by engaging the knowledge and expertise in the LA immigrant community using English, Spanish, and Mayan languages.

In Sepúlveda's study, he describes the border educators' practice as a humanizing pedagogy that begins with "insurgent moves" like abandoning approved curriculum and organizing dialogue groups on issues of racial discrimination and displacement (p. 48). Kitzia and Ms. Jimenez's curriculum was similarly understood to be operating outside of school and district norms in ways that were potentially threatening to the status quo. Unfortunately, this unit was never implemented because of two main obstacles. First, the school district requirements for having community-based organizations, and their representatives (like Kitzia), working inside schools required a formal application with approval from the principal and a background check for incoming volunteers. Although Kitzia and Ms. Jimenez completed this process, it required final approval from the local district and the time line for when that approval would come was unclear. Second, the school administration was making a push for teachers to prepare students for the battery of standardized tests scheduled for later in the spring. At that time, Ms. Jimenez told me about a discouraging conversation she'd had with the principal about her partnership with Kitzia. "When we met last week, she [the principal] told me [Ms. Jimenez] she was concerned about having classroom presentations that would take away from 'instructional time.'

It's frustrating because this is instruction, but I've gotten into trouble with her about this before" (Field notes, 04/20/2022).

Despite the obstacles that prevented Ms. Jimenez from teaching the unit she'd developed with Kitzia, students across the Academies were clear that maintaining and developing their home languages was important to them. This was made particularly clear by Indigenous-language-speaking students whose home languages were rarely acknowledged nor explicitly invited into the classroom.

Gedeón Sacalxot Tepaz is a Cerrejón student whose primary language is K'iche'. When I asked him about his home language, he told me, "*K'iche' es el idioma con el que nací. Nunca lo va a perder. Cuando yo vine a la frontera no pude hablar español, no sabia ninguna palabra. Llegué aquí y entré aquí en la escuela, y aquí casi ya nadie habla en K'iche*'" (Interview, January 2023). As Gedeón explained, K'iche' is his birth language, and he spoke no Spanish when he arrived at the border. When he arrived in Los Angeles and began attending Cerrejón, he found that almost no one spoke K'iche'. When I asked Gedeón whether he wanted opportunities to develop his K'iche' language skills through school, he was surprised. "*Pues no sé*," he said, "*Nunca les he dicho que hablo k'iche'. No saben porque ellos hablan puro español y hablamos así. Casi no pienso de eso, de cómo hablarlo en k'iche'. Nunca había pensado*" (10/10/23). Gedeón noticed that Spanish was the default language for communication in the Academy and thus never told his teachers he speaks K'iche'. Once again, we can locate the idea of surface tension in this situation where the use of Spanish in the Academy, which is intended to build connections between students and teachers, effectively limits the opportunity for a student to more fully engage with his own home language.

The suppression of K'iche' in and through the processes of crossing the border and attending school that Gedeón describes has historical roots and hemispheric significance. Throughout Latin America, including in Guatemala, "Castilianization," the process whereby people living in areas Spain was colonizing were forced to engage with, adopt, and adapt to the language and culture of Imperial Spain, was central to colonization (Cerrón-Palomino, 1989; Mar-Molinero, 2000). In Guatemala, social movements for self-governance, peace, and land reform have been imbued with demands for education and Indigenous language rights and revitalization (French, 2010; Jonas & Rodríguez, 2014). This was true in Guatemala's movements for independence from Spain (in 1821) and Mexico (in 1847) and the long struggle to end Guatemala's civil war (Wasserstrom, 1975; Yashar, 1998). Guatemala's civil war (1960–1996), also referred to as the Maya Genocide, was fueled by U.S. military intervention and is described by historians as the western hemisphere's "bloodiest armed conflict in the twentieth century" where most victims were Indigenous civilians (Rodríguez, 2016, p. 245).

LPP scholars understand the connection between educational movements for Indigenous language revitalization and broader political struggles over land redistribution via the concept of "Indigenous sociolinguistic ecologies" (Hornberger & McCarty, 2012, p. 2). In McCarty and Nicholas's (2012) ethnographic case studies of Native American language planning in Hopi, Navajo, and Yup'ik schools, they show how Indigenous languages are tied to local land use practices, specialized knowledge, and spiritual beliefs. Drawing from this idea that "places are geographies of social meaning" (p. 51), Indigenous language revitalization—or Indigenous language exclusion—necessarily entails direct engagement with settler colonial land theft and the struggle to develop anti-colonial relationships with place. In Gedeón's movement from

Sololá, Guatemala, to Los Angeles, we can intuit the hemispheric scope of U.S. imperialism and its attendant war on Indigenous people and Indigenous languages.

Gedeón was not the only student who told me they felt they needed to conceal their Indigenous language, despite many comments from educators and administrators claiming to encourage the use of *all* languages in the Academy classrooms. The Cerrejón Academy leader, for example, while hosting educators and administrators from across the district who were observing her program, explained that one of the Academy's features was that it "encourages students to be proud of their primary languages. We tell the students—let me hear your Spanish, let me hear your K'iche', let me hear your Q'anjob'al, let me hear your Arabic" (Field notes, May 24, 2022). In addition, Cerrejón's principal, Ms. Sánchez, was also aware of the way Indigenous languages were rendered invisible in the Academy. Speaking about students whose primary language is a Mayan language, she said, "it disappears in the shadow of the Spanish. We think in our head they're Spanish speakers, but they don't even know Spanish, and we have them sitting here [in Spanish for Spanish speakers classes]." Despite a rhetorical commitment to Indigenous languages and an awareness of the way speakers of Indigenous languages were underserved in the Academy when they were misrecognized as Spanish speakers, the school's leadership undermined the implementation of curriculum that would have brought Indigenous languages explicitly into the classroom.

In addition to students who felt the need to conceal their Indigenous languages and heritages, there were students who advocated for them. During the inaugural year of the Academy at Cerrejón, Chana Balam, a student who immigrated from Sololá, Guatemala, whose primary language is K'iche', was invited to speak on a student panel to the school board where she could represent recently arrived immigrant students. Chana migrated without her parents and

was living in foster care with a family who spoke only Spanish and English. She was a dedicated student and was admired by her teachers, with whom she was quick to open up. Chana was proud of K'iche' and took it upon herself to teach the Academy leader, Ms. Canúl, her language. Chana would write out K'iche' language worksheets by hand that she would bring to the office and review after school with Ms. Canul, who proudly displayed the handouts behind her desk (see figure 4.3).

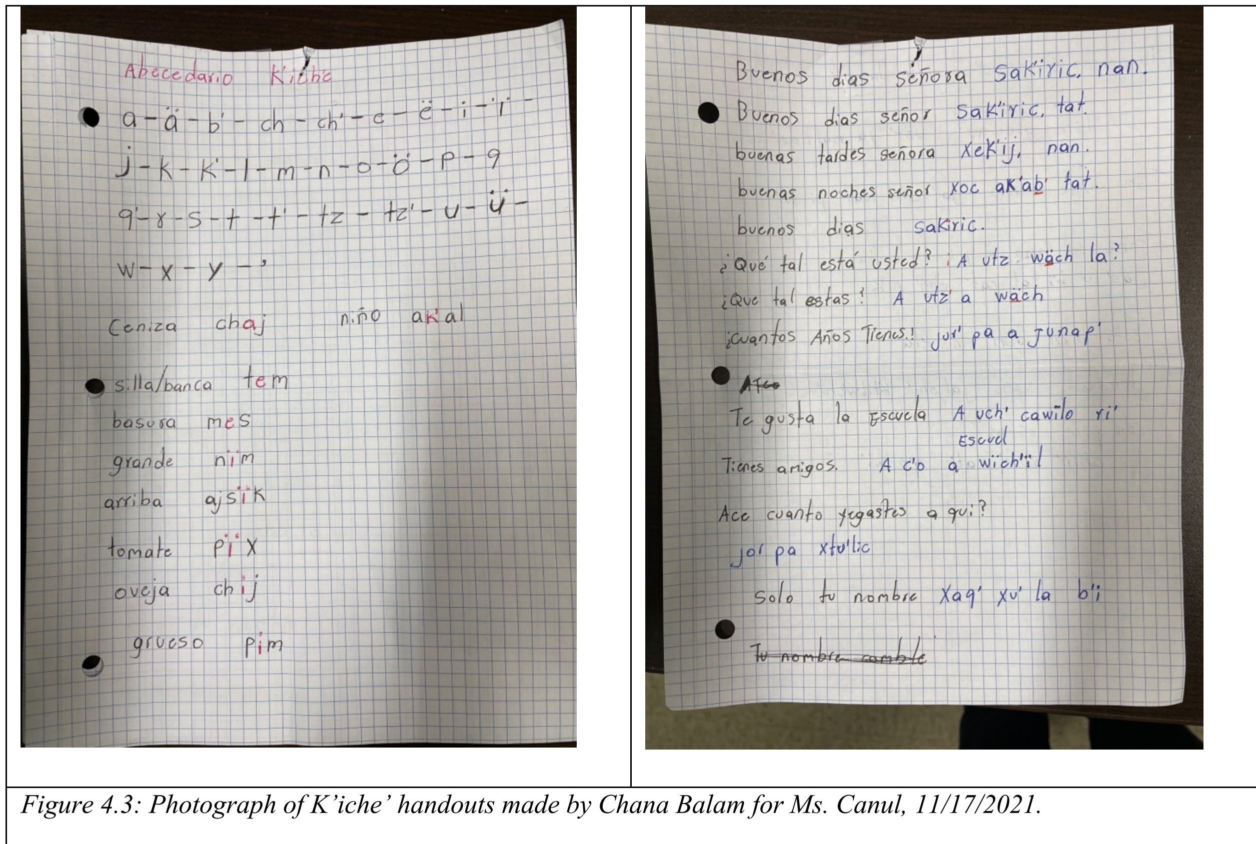


Figure 4.3: Photograph of K'iche' handouts made by Chana Balam for Ms. Canul, 11/17/2021.

Chana felt strongly about having her language included in school and wanted to use her time at the school board meeting to ask for classroom libraries with material in Mayan languages. When Chana was in school in Guatemala, she had K'iche' language and culture classes facilitated by books printed in K'iche', which itself is evidence of a complex history of Mayan resistance to Spanish colonial and Guatemalan national efforts to exterminate Indigenous

languages as a means to control people. Upon Guatemala's independence from Spain, the 1824 Decree of the Congressional Congress called for the "'extinction' of the Indian languages due to the fact they were so 'diverse, incomplete, and imperfect,' and 'insufficient for enlightening the people or perfecting civilization'" (Lewis, 1993, p. 40). As Martha Bitar, Charise Pimentel, and Ana Juarez (2008) explain, this policy did not change until the 1940s, when the Instituto Indigenista Nacional was created and permitted the use of Indigenous languages in Mayan education in a transitional model designed to increase Spanish literacy—not to maintain or revitalize Mayan languages. During this period, a Roman character alphabet was developed for a number of Mayan languages (and has been much critiqued; see Richards, 1999) from which the first official Guatemalan educational texts in K'iche' were developed. In 1985, during the civil war and genocide against the Mayan people, the constitution was revised to make Spanish the official language and mandate Spanish-only instruction in schools (Helmberger, 2006). Mayan communities, however, joined together in a sustained struggle that achieved the historic 1996 Peace Accords, which included an explicit commitment to continuing Mayan languages and the subsequent formation of the Academia de Lenguas Mayas de Guatemala, Programa Nacional de Educación Bilingüe, from which educational material, like those Chana was taught with, were developed (Bitar, Pimentel, & Juarez, 2008).

During one of my visits to Cerrejón in December 2021, Chana and I had lunch together, and she asked me to help her prepare her statement for the panel. She wrote:

> *K'iche' es una idioma que hablamos. No queremos perder nuestra idioma. K'iche' es parte de nuestra cultura. Es importante hablar K'iche' porque hay muchos personas que solo hablan K'iche'. Por ejemplo, los abuelos. K'iche' es una conexion a nuestros abuelos y antepasados. Me gustaría tener libros en K'iche' en la escuela. Es que los*

libros en K'iche' no solo benficiarian a nosotros, los inmigrantes a esta pais, pero tambien a personas nacidos aqui que tienen familia en Guatemala que hablan K'iche' y con quien no puden hablar en K'iche' ahora. (Field notes, 12/14/2021)

For Chana, having books in K'iche' at school is a way to prevent the loss of her language; it is a way to hold on to her culture and maintain connections with elders. She believes K'iche' books will benefit not only immigrant students like her but also U.S.-born students who have K'iche'-speaking relatives with whom they cannot currently speak. Books, Chana believes, are a vehicle for bringing Indigenous languages into schools. Through Chana's advocacy for K'iche' books in LAUSD schools, we can see how she carries pride for her home language along with the struggles and strategies for Indigenous language recognition from Guatemala into California.

The fundamental view of students' home languages comes into focus through these statements from Chana and Gedeón and also when examining the curriculum Ms. Jimenez and Kitzia designed. In the fundamental view, students' home languages are understood to be connected to their identities, histories, and ways of knowing. In the fundamental view, language and culture are often spoken of together—and sometimes collapsed. As one Greene Academy teacher put it during a data sharing meeting in fall 2023: "I see how important language and culture are, and I understand how important these two are to the essence of an individual" (Field notes, October 10, 2023). When home languages are seen as fundamental to the "essence" of an individual, centering them in the Academy looked like advocating for academic material in Indigenous languages and designing instruction in partnership with community organizations where students engaged in self- and community-based study. This also meant inviting members of students' communities—including speakers of their home languages—into the school and into the curriculum in creative ways. However, when teachers approached curriculum this way, they

often faced bureaucratic obstacles imposed by the district (i.e., Ms. Jimenez's struggle to get Kitzia permission to co-teach) and pressure to align curriculum with standardized tests.

In addition, taking the fundamental view of students' home languages invited students to serve as resources for one another's learning through collaborative structures where they discussed and wrote in their home languages, relied on their relatives and community members to complete academic tasks (as in Ms. Jimenez and Kitzia repeated interview structure), and presented their backgrounds and experiences as the substance of classroom analysis. During the same data sharing meeting at Greene, one teacher critically identified the way that this approach can appropriate the labor of students and their families. The teacher said, "I've noticed there is a *huge* emphasis on students' labor to support their peers. This can not only create possible strain between students but also that expectation of labor from teacher to students" (Field notes, 10/10/23). As this teacher's comment illustrates, enacting the fundamental view of students' home languages necessitates recognizing that the labor of teaching is not performed exclusively by the teacher (or district) and requires the effort, partnership, and contribution of students and their communities.

This teacher's identification of the way that taking a fundamental view of students' home languages can "strain" students—and may even create exploitative conditions—raises questions about what ethical and equitable partnership between schools, students, and families could look like in the Academies if they adopted the fundamental view. If the Academies operated from the premise that effective teaching requires the collective labor of students, families, teachers, and community members, then how would funding, salaries, and resource distribution need to change? How would we begin to think differently about necessary qualifications for working in

the school? What kind of paid positions in the school might need to be reserved for families or community members?

Surface Tension, Relationality, and Raciolinguistic Ideologies

Surface tension describes the way that the presence of competing and contradictory beliefs, intentions, and practices shapes the International Academies. How the Academies appear, what happens within them, and the challenges they face are the result of these coexisting contradictions brushing up against each other, working in concert, reopening and suturing colonial wounds. Ultimately, surface tension is a metaphor that responds to my research questions by resting on ideas of relationality. Rather than seeking to understand language policy in the Academies from a single vantage point, surface tension allows me to explore the various agents, ideas, and histories present and to understand the policymaking process as the relationship among those actors. In this chapter, surface tension helped me to identify and understand the coexistence of discourses of love and belonging alongside language ideologies of hegemonic monolingualism and Indigenous language erasure.

Responding directly to research question one (What are the official and practiced policies governing students' home languages in the new LAUSD–Internationals Academies?), surface tension revealed the instrumental and fundamental views on students' home languages. The formal policy regarding students' home languages in the Academy is one of inclusion. Academy leaders, district officials, and school handbooks state plainly that students' home languages are honored and encouraged within the International Academies. To understand the practiced policy, I took an in-depth look at classroom activity across the Academies, including student-to-student and student-to-teacher talk, student commentary on instruction, teacher commentary on

instruction, and teacher-to-teacher feedback on curriculum, and I identified the instrumental and fundamental views of students' home languages.

The "instrumental view" understands students' home languages primarily as a resource to facilitate their development of English language skills and course content standards. In this view, students' home languages were described as a vehicle for accelerating learning so that students could make up for the disadvantaged academic positions they are often understood as occupying. By examining Ms. Velasco's classroom, we can see how this perspective manifested in several curricular and instructional changes that teachers and students viewed positively. These included designing tasks to increase student-to-student communication and collaboration, planning intentionally for students to use their home languages to draw on prior content knowledge, and developing hands-on projects so students could learn and demonstrate core content concepts without relying on English. However, listening to the teachers' reflections, we can assert that the instrumental view maintains hierarchical ideas about language proficiency in which "academic language" remains a precondition for success in school and students' perceived inability to perform "academic language" is taken as evidence of their limited language proficiency. In this way, the instrumental view was able to both improve teaching practice (by increasing student collaboration and making content standards accessible) and contribute to ideologies of languagelessness that pathologize students and individualize failure in school.

The "fundamental view" is characterized by the understanding that language is central to students' identities, ways of knowing, and ways of navigating their worlds. In this view, students' home languages were taken up as both a subject of study and a method of learning. By examining the nuances of the partnership between Ms. Jimenez and Kitzia, we see how this perspective inspired explicitly political self-study as the center of curriculum, the development of

school-community collaborations, and the inclusion of speakers of Indigenous languages as experts and teachers. The fundamental view connected with students' desires to maintain and develop their home languages, and created the intentional space necessary to do so for Indigenous languages that were understood to be easily overshadowed by Spanish. However, the adoption of the fundamental view brought up questions about *how* teaching should take place in the Academies, as well as *who* should be responsible for it, that diverged from sanctioned curriculum and required community members to participate. Administrators and district processes discouraged these provocations, which inhibited enacting the fundamental view of students' home languages. Within both the instrumental and fundamental perspectives, we see how written policy, language ideology, and working conditions interacted to structure the role of students' home languages in the International Academies.

Raciolinguistic ideologies help us to understand the racial politics of the instrumental and fundamental views to think critically about the possible futures facilitated and constrained by these language policies and better respond to research question two (What possibilities for college, career, and community participation do these policies facilitate or constrain for students?). In particular, Rosa and Flores's (2020) concept of the co-naturalization of language and race indicates some of the probable outcomes of the instrumental and fundamental views of students' home languages. "The co-naturalization of language and race," Rosa and Flores (2020) write, "is a process where linguistic and racial forms are jointly constructed as sets and rendered mutually recognizable as named languages/varieties and racial categories." Co-naturalization draws our attention to the way that language is used to reify the legitimacy of race and to normalize the effects of racism. Conversely, race is similarly used to reify the differential

cultural value attached to language variation and normalize the sub- and superordinating impact of language policies, assessments, and classifications.

Co-naturalization allows us to see how it is possible for educators in the Academy to perform a racial solidarity with students that does not conflict with educators' actions as institutional authorities who fulfill their duties within a school district that has historically undereducated "their kids." When educators can identify racially and linguistically with students in this way, such educators can use the language of pride and assets when discussing students' home languages without unsettling racialized ideas of language proficiency. When home languages are engaged with this way, ethnographic studies of language policy reveal that language learners and language-minoritized students often struggle to learn the "target" language *while also* being denied opportunities to develop their home languages at their schools (Bartlett and García, 2011; Valenzuela, 1999; Zentella, 1997). The co-naturalization of language and race highlights the way that this so-called underachievement can later be *explained* or *justified* by race.

Importantly, both the instrumental and fundamental views reveal the way that Spanish and Indigenous languages are understood to be in conflict with each other in a way that allows English to go unmarked. The tension between Spanish and Indigenous languages among immigrant communities in the U.S. is not unique to Cerrejón. As William Perez, Rafael Vasquez, and Raymond Buriel (2016) note in their research with Zapotex, Mixtex, and Purepecha young people, "anti-indigenous beliefs, sentiments, and old prejudices migrate to the United States along with immigrants" (p. 259). Drawing on Perez et al., I maintain that the pressure that speakers of Indigenous languages, like Gedeón, feel to conceal their home languages or assimilate to Spanish is rooted in Latin American history and continues beyond migration into

the U.S. However, it is inaccurate to observe this tension at the Academies solely in terms of Spanish and Mayan languages.

Educators in the Academies identify the incompatibility of Latinx and Indigenous racialization, as we see when the Cerrejón Academy leader describes the educational injustice of putting students who speak K'iche' into "Spanish for Spanish Speakers" classes. But educators recognize this tension in a way that allows English to go unmarked. In a way, the visibility of the Spanish-K'iche' tension recreates the raciolinguistic context of Guatemala, where Ladinos, for whom Spanish is iconized as an identity marker in opposition to Indigeneity, have led campaigns to suppress Mayan languages to advance minority rule by a handful of elite families. However, thinking within the confines of this raciolinguistic rehearsal obscures the presence of English and the broader context of white supremacy in the U.S. that forms the social cauldron in which the Academies exist.

Yes, the young people and adults working together in the Academies may be versed in the particular kinds of racial and linguistic discrimination against Indigenous languages that developed in Latin America. But if we privilege that heuristic, we can easily misunderstand the Academies as a site where Latinx educators oppress Indigenous students. This interpretation rests on an individualized analysis based on identity rather than structure. Furthermore, it is inaccurate and insidious in the way that it repositions the presence of Latinx, multilingual, immigrant teachers and school leaders at the Academies as *obstacles*, rather than as potential allies, to recently arrived students. So if we resist a simple story of heroes and villains at the Academies, we are left to make sense of an institution made up of young people and adults navigating precarity that is structured politically and economically by the specificities of white supremacy in Southern California.

Alim (2016) characterizes the imperative of studying language and race jointly as the need to "work as a collective to produce knowledge that eradicates racism, linguistic or otherwise, at home or abroad" (p. 25). To respond to this call, we must investigate the relationships between having authority over Indigenous and Latinx students and educators and the ongoing project of U.S. state formation. What strategies for control are revealed at the Academies? What do these strategies reveal about the nature and instability of U.S. settler colonialism? What can the Academies teach us about solidarity beneath the surface level in the collective struggle against the structures of inequality that Latinx and Indigenous communities in LA face?

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I responded to my research questions: (1) What are the official and practiced policies governing students' home languages in the new LAUSD–Internationals Academies? (2) What possibilities for college, career, and community participation do these policies facilitate or constrain for students? I responded by introducing the idea of "surface tension." Surface tension is a metaphor for understanding the role of contradiction in the Academies, and I used this metaphor to identify and analyze the instrumental and fundamental views of students' home languages. These are two diverging approaches to the role of students' home languages across the Academies, which I substantiated with evidence from curriculum, classroom practice, interviews, and observations. Engaging aspects of relationality with a raciolinguistic perspective, I interpreted the instrumental and fundamental views of students' home languages and closed with provocations to understand the Academies explicitly in the context of U.S. state formation through ongoing conquest.

CHAPTER 5 NEW TROUBLE: THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEWNESS AND THE IMPERATIVE TO FIND SOLIDARITY WITH INSURGENCY

Ms. Canul, the Cerrejón Academy leader, is always on the move: a walkie-talkie murmurs on her hip and a thick ring of keys jangles from a lanyard around her neck. She is juggling at least two tasks and in the middle of three conversations, always. The bell rings and she moves into the hallways, talking amid the steady hum of white sneakers tapping against linoleum tile, palms slapping against each other, and bass lines bumping out of headphones. Her head swivels, following calls for "Miss!" that come from every direction. *I need to change my class. I lost the paper. My charger stopped working*. "You tell students to advocate for themselves," Ms. Canul says, over her shoulder, "and then I almost wish I hadn't because it makes so much more work!" She's laughing as she opens a door. Then she stops. "I'm going to talk to the family of the missing girl now." The mask muffles my confused expression and the *excuse me?* I let out. "These families are so new, they don't know the services. Her family didn't even know to call the police. They just come here to the school. See? We have a big job to do with our newcomers. They learn America here." And then the door closes.

The family Ms. Canul was going to speak with was from Guatemala, and their missing daughter spoke K'iche' and Spanish. Scholars, humanitarian organizations, and national research centers show that gender-based violence is a crisis impacting Indigenous communities across the Americas (Amnesty International, 2008 [United States]; Canada National Clearinghouse, 2008; Comisión Nacional para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas, 2016 [Mexico]; Keel 2004 [Australia]; Observatorio Nacional de la Violencia de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras, 2018) and that missingness is a central dimension of the gender-based violence to

which Indigenous women and girls are disproportionately subjected (Deer, 2005; Speed, 2019). Although Ms. Canul presents the missing girl's family's presence in her office as evidence of their lack of knowledge of "America," history demonstrates that an Indigenous family looking for their missing daughter is a fundamentally American experience.

Shannon Speed's (2019) research on Indigenous migrant women held in immigration detention centers shows that the violence that Indigenous women migrants experience is "profoundly rooted in the settler state" (p. 43). Their knowledge of the settler state's intricacies begins with experiences in their home countries and continues through the immigration journey and immigrant detention into homes, workplaces, and public spaces in the U.S. In particular, Speed (2019) explains how U.S. immigration policies and criminal laws converge to create an "overarching structure of vulnerability" (p. 110), which affects people of all genders, albeit drastically unevenly. Within this structure, local police forces are rarely effective at preventing or responding to violence against Indigenous migrant women and often are sources of violence against them. So, while we could understand the decision of the missing girl's family to seek support at Cerrejón rather than call the police as evidence of their knowledge and experience with America, it is recast as ignorance.

During fieldwork, my attention was continually drawn to moments like these where language policies made it possible for educators to render the experiences of students and families as naivete or assume there was ignorance about the United States when there was actually intimacy. These persistent contradictions called my attention to the construction of *newness* at the LA Academies as a feature of language policy. The Academies are a specialized educational program for students who the district labels as *English language learners* as well as *recently arrived immigrants*. Inclusion in and eligibility for the Academies depends on meeting

both criteria: *learning* English and *being* new. Although much has been written on the construction of language proficiency, the construction of *newness* within the community of students identified as English language learners is an equally consequential yet undertheorized category of settler state identification in which language policy plays a central role.

The construction of "newness" is a strategy for dominating, structuring, and having authority over Indigenous and Latinx children as part of the ongoing project of U.S. state formation through conquest. In this chapter, I center the story of Gedeón Sacalxot Tepaz[6], a Cerrejón student, to depict the construction of newness in the LA Academies. The chapter proceeds in three parts. The first part, The Construction of Newness in the Context of Conquest, makes three related points. First, immigrant students are not new to the district and constructing them as such is a way to conceal how the district relies upon immigrant students without taking responsibility for their educations or practicing accountability with their families and communities. Second, school is not Academy students' first contact with the United States. Rather, it is one of many carceral and legal institutional entanglements students navigate. The fantasy of school as *the* gateway through which students enter U.S. society conceals the relationships among incarceration, migration, and education. Third, the migration of Indigenous young people from Guatemala into Los Angeles and their claim to public education is an insurgency against imperial U.S. power that is met with violent counterinsurgent tactics.

The second part, Language Planning and Policy Complicity, begins with the legal foundations of California language policy for students identified as English learners. Through

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[6]I interviewed Gedeón in Spanish and had the recording professionally transcribed. To honor Gedeón's voice as I represent the story he told, his comments in this chapter appear in Spanish, rather than translated into English. Gedeón explained that he learned Spanish during his migration to the United States, and aspects of the Spanish transcription may be considered nonstandard for Spanish-speaking readers. I am grateful to have been told Gedeón's story, and I do not feel it is my place—or within my skill set—to attempt to translate his words. Instead, I paraphrase his comments in English, following the example of Leigh Patel (2013) in *Youth Held at the Border*, a method by which I hope to provide access to Gedeón's quotations for readers who do not understand the Spanish transcriptions.

analysis of three foundational cases, I show the way race and language were imbricated to mediate the expansion of social services in ways that do not challenge status quo. Then, I present data from district officials to show how the racist logics of the legal jurisprudence that establishes California policy for English learners lives on in the administration of the Academies. The third part, New Trouble, engages relationality and abolition to identify alternatives to reproducing the construction of newness and the racial and linguistic hierarchies it upholds by engaging in solidarity with the insurgent actions of immigrant young people and their communities.

The Construction of Newness in the Context of Conquest

The Ellis Island of LAUSD: Manufacturing novelty to refuse responsibility

I can hear it almost before she says it. Emma Sánchez, Cerrejón's principal, is leading me through the school on one of our first tours of the building together. "We've always had newcomers; we're the Ellis Island of LAUSD." Ellis Island. It's a chorus, nearly a script. Repeated by administrators and teachers during the two years I spent at Cerrejón, the refrain also appears in news coverage of the school over the past five decades, including in a 1986 article on the school's "comeback," which ends with remarks from the principal at the time. "This place should make you cry," he said.

Principal Sánchez's comment signals two important ideas that make up the context in which I eventually met Gedeón. First, she brings up the imaginary of migration to the U.S., which is always idealized as a positive experience to obscure the violent facts of immigration (Sánchez, 1993; St. John, 2011; Takaki, 1993). Ellis Island is emblematic of this contradiction: It serves as a symbol for idealized American immigration as a landmark that represents a "gateway

of hope" (Burdick, 1997) and a physical point where European immigrants became "Americans," when in fact it was an immigrant inspection station where people arriving in U.S. territory were inspected mentally and physically by U.S. officials, who would decide to admit them to the country or immediately deport them. While Ellis Island was America's most active immigration processing station for the first 20 years of the 20th century, it was transformed in 1924 into an immigrant detention center and deportation site (García Hernández, 2020). In fact, C.L.R. James, the Trinidadian social theorist and a father of the Black Radical Tradition, began to write *Mariners, Renegades and Castaways* while he was incarcerated on Ellis Island after being accused of subversive political activities because of his communist political organizing (Eakin, 2001).

Second, in addition to conjuring up the contradictions of idealized immigration to the U.S., Principal Sánchez also points to the fact that while the students are continually constructed as *new*, their presence at Cerrejón is anything but. In 1989, Cerrejón High School opened a Newcomer Center that was discussed in a 1993 study by Lorraine McDonnell and Paul Hill of the RAND Corporation, and funded by the Mellon Foundation, titled "Newcomers in American Schools," as well as in a 2004 report by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) on "Immigrant Students and Secondary School Reform: Compendium of Best Practices." McDonnell and Hill's (1993) report describes newcomer schools as a "new model for immigrant education" (p. 92) where the objective is to "help immigrant students experience success and thus develop a positive self-image and to gain a firm foundation in English-language development" (p. 94). According to the CCSSO (2004) report, the Cerrejón program was a transitional setting where "primary languages are systematically used to improve students'

communication faculties in their own languages while exploring and learning academic content" (p. 22).

At the same time as the Newcomer Center at Cerrejón opened, at least two other specialized newcomer high schools opened across the district, including Bellagio Road Newcomer Center, a stand-alone school exclusively for recently arrived immigrant students. Bellagio Road occupied a campus in Bel Air, one of the city's whitest and richest neighborhoods, that had sat vacant because, according to the *LA Times*, "most of the neighborhood families sent their children to private schools" (Moore, 2002). When Bellagio Road opened, educating immigrant students in Bel Air revitalized the campus and maintained the school system's presence in an affluent neighborhood that had withdrawn from participation in the district. However, in the wake of the anti-immigrant and anti-bilingual education measure, Proposition 227, in 1998 and amid the rise of charter schools in the city, the school board voted to close the newcomer school in June 2002. Some officials argued that immigrant students should be educated in their neighborhood schools, noting that this would be cheaper and that newcomer schools were segregating recent immigrants. The school board member who represented the area around the school, however, said the facility would "be better used as a charter school to lure middle class families away from private schools" (Moore, 2002). Despite research demonstrating that newcomer schools succeed when they use customized curricula that integrate language and content to meet students' academic and linguistic needs—and respond to gaps in their educational history—Bellagio Road was critiqued for failing to use the district's reading program and ultimately closed (Chang, 1990; McDonnell & Hill, 1993). Today, a magnet elementary school called Community operates on the former Bellagio Road campus. Community is a sought-after school that admits students from across the city by lottery.

There are significant differences in the academic program and instructional approach of the LA Newcomer Centers of the past and the International Academies of the present, but their similarities point to the long-standing presence of recently arrived immigrant students at Cerrejón and across LAUSD. The construction of *newness* allows the policy history of educational programs for recently arrived immigrant students to hide in plain sight. When immigrant young people are understood as "new" the schools that they attend can be perennially new as well. As a result, educational approaches for new immigrants in Los Angeles are perpetual innovations that open and close frequently and rarely benefit from consistent reflection on sustained practice.

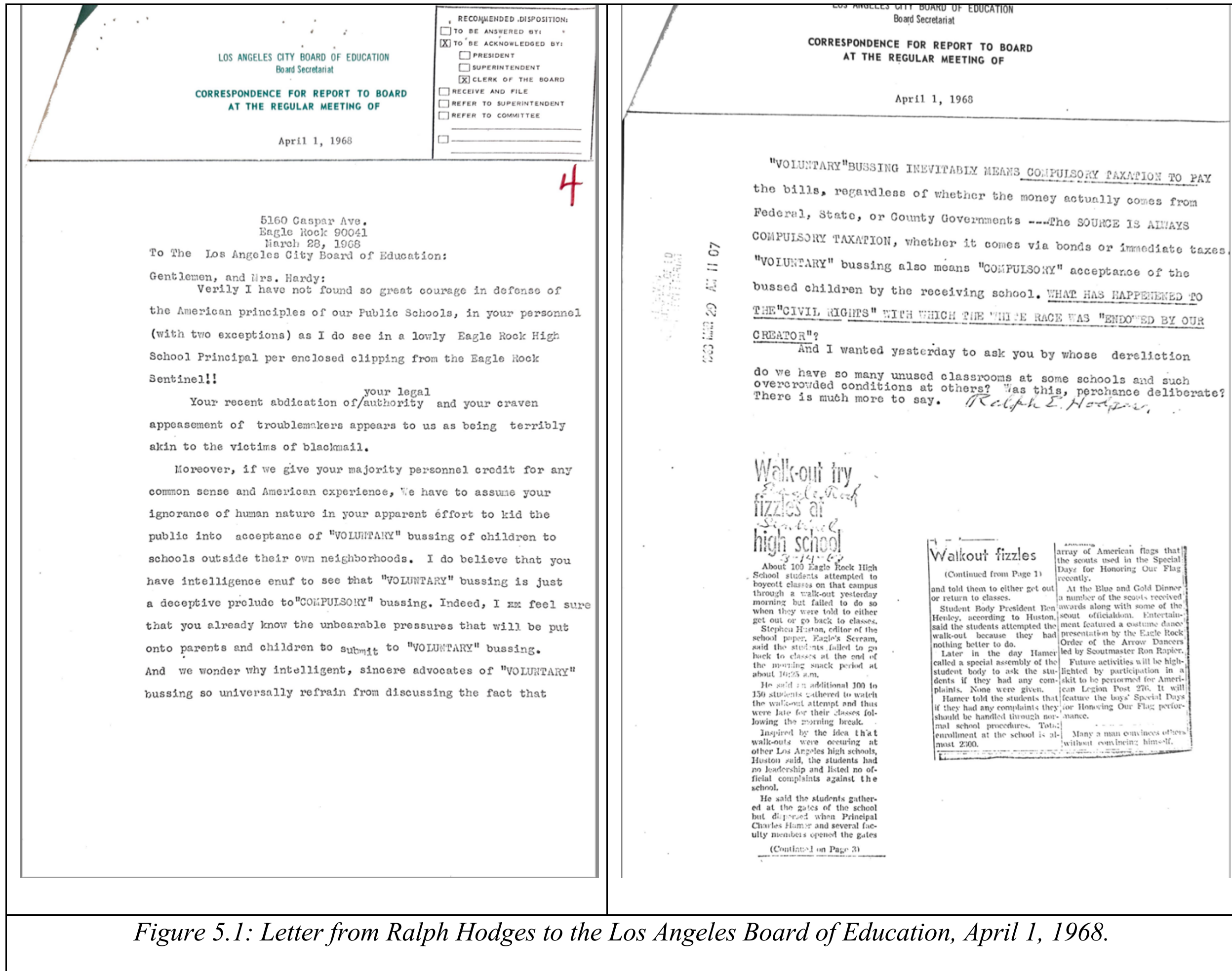
In addition, when the focus is continually placed on the newness of students, the long-standing relationships between immigrant communities and LA schools fades into the background. In the case of Bellagio Road, we can see that the district invested in educational opportunities for immigrant students up until the point that that investment was at odds with the interests of middle-class, nonimmigrant, and predominantly white constituents. At that point, the district prioritized the interests of middle-class families over the continuation of an effective educational program for recently arrived immigrant students. Importantly, the closure of Bellagio Road was ultimately justified by accusations that the school was segregating recently arrived immigrant students from their peers. However, Bellagio Road was more racially diverse than any of the high schools where the International Academies currently operate. There, approximately 60% of students were identified as Central American and Mexican, 18% were identified as Korean, and the rest were identified as immigrants from China, Armenia, and East Africa (Moore, 2002). At the time Bellagio Road opened, the school district was about 70% Latino, 12% Black, 10% white, and 5% Asian, so the Newcomer Center was not significantly out of

alignment with the district at large (Straus, 2004). So while the program was not racially segregated in name or in practice, its focus on recently arrived immigrant students meant that the school—and the campus it occupied—were unavailable to white, nonimmigrant, English-dominant families.

Community, the elementary school that now occupies the Bellagio Road campus, is one of the district's magnet schools. In LAUSD, as in districts across the country, magnet schools were a voluntary approach to desegregation. Across the country, white communities opposed integration, and it was no different in this respect in Los Angeles (Wollenberg, 1976; Straus, 2004). At the height of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s, Black and Latinx communities across the city were organizing in and around schools to demand better quality education. This activism included the aforementioned and well-known school walkouts in spring 1968, which the Cerrejón principal referenced in her comments at the opening ceremony for the International Academy. At the same time, filed correspondence to the school board overflows with fierce opposition to student activism and school desegregation.

The connection between the dismantling of effective schooling for immigrant students and opposition to school integration is epitomized in an April 1, 1968, letter to the school board from Ralph Hodges, a white resident of the middle-class Eagle Rock neighborhood (see figure 4.4). Mr. Hodges begins his letter by shaming the board and celebrating Eagle Rock High School's principal, who was described in an *Eagle Rock Sentintel* article as thwarting an attempted walkout at his school by demanding that students return to classes. Hodges writes, "Verily I have not found so great courage in defense of the American principles of our public schools, in your personnel (with two exceptions) as I do see in a lowly Eagle Rock High School Principal per enclosed clipping from the Eagle Rock Sentinel!" Student protest, according to Mr.

Hodges, is not a national principle of public schools. He continues, “Your recent abdication of your legal authority and your craven appeasement of troublemakers appears to us as being terribly akin to the victims of blackmail.”



LOS ANGELES CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION
Board Secretariat

CORRESPONDENCE FOR REPORT TO BOARD
AT THE REGULAR MEETING OF

April 1, 1968

RECOMMENDED DISPOSITION:
- [ ] TO BE ANSWERED BY:
- [x] TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED BY:
  - [ ] PRESIDENT
  - [ ] SUPERINTENDENT
  - [x] CLERK OF THE BOARD
- [ ] RECEIVE AND FILE
- [ ] REFER TO SUPERINTENDENT
- [ ] REFER TO COMMITTEE
- [ ] ______

4

5160 Caspar Ave.
Eagle Rock 90041
March 28, 1968

To The Los Angeles City Board of Education:

Gentlemen, and Mrs. Hardy:

Verily I have not found so great courage in defense of the American principles of our Public Schools, in your personnel (with two exceptions) as I do see in a lowly Eagle Rock High School Principal per enclosed clipping from the Eagle Rock Sentinel!!

Your recent abdication of/your legal authority and your craven appeasement of troublemakers appears to us as being terribly akin to the victims of blackmail.

Moreover, if we give your majority personnel credit for any common sense and American experience, We have to assume your ignorance of human nature in your apparent éffort to kid the public into acceptance of "VOLUNTARY" bussing of children to schools outside their own neighborhoods. I do believe that you have intelligence enuf to see that "VOLUNTARY" bussing is just a deceptive prelude to"COMPULSORY" bussing. Indeed, I xx feel sure that you already know the unbearable pressures that will be put onto parents and children to submit to "VOLUNTARY" bussing. And we wonder why intelligent, sincere advocates of "VOLUNTARY" bussing so universally refrain from discussing the fact that

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April 1, 1968

"VOLUNTARY"BUSSING INEVITABLY MEANS COMPULSORY TAXATION TO PAY the bills, regardless of whether the money actually comes from Federal, State, or County Governments ---The SOURCE IS ALWAYS COMPULSORY TAXATION, whether it comes via bonds or immediate taxes. "VOLUNTARY" bussing also means "COMPULSORY" acceptance of the bussed children by the receiving school. WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THE"CIVIL RIGHTS" WITH WHICH THE WHITE RACE WAS "ENDOWED BY OUR CREATOR"?

And I wanted yesterday to ask you by whose dereliction do we have so many unused classrooms at some schools and such overcrowded conditions at others? Was this, perchance deliberate? There is much more to say. Ralph E. Hodges

Walk-out try fizzles at high school

About 100 Eagle Rock High School students attempted to boycott classes on that campus through a walk-out yesterday morning but failed to do so when they were told to either get out or go back to classes.

Stephen Huston, editor of the school paper, Eagle's Scream, said the students failed to go back to classes at the end of the morning snack period at about 10:25 a.m.

He said an additional 100 to 150 students gathered to watch the walk-out attempt and thus were late for their classes following the morning break.

Inspired by the idea that walk-outs were occuring at other Los Angeles high schools, Huston said, the students had no leadership and listed no official complaints against the school.

He said the students gathered at the gates of the school but dispersed when Principal Charles Hamer and several faculty members opened the gates

(Continued on Page 3)

Walkout fizzles

(Continued from Page 1)

and told them to either get out or return to classes.

Student Body President Ben Henley, according to Huston, said the students attempted the walk-out because they had nothing better to do.

Later in the day Hamer called a special assembly of the student body to ask the students if they had any complaints. None were given.

Hamer told the students that if they had any complaints they should be handled through normal school procedures. Total enrollment at the school is almost 2300.

array of American flags that the scouts used in the Special Days for Honoring Our Flag recently.

At the Blue and Gold Dinner a number of the scouts received awards along with some of the scout officialdom. Entertainment featured a costume dance presentation by the Eagle Rock Order of the Arrow Dancers led by Scoutmaster Ron Rapier.

Future activities will be highlighted by participation in a skit to be performed for American Legion Post 276. It will feature the boys' Special Days for Honoring Our Flag performance.

Many a man convinces others without convincing himself.

Figure 5.1: Letter from Ralph Hodges to the Los Angeles Board of Education, April 1, 1968.

In fact, the school district responded harshly to the 1968 walkouts. Police officers were immediately sent to schools and stationed on campuses for weeks following the demonstrations. Meanwhile, key organizers of the walkouts were arrested—including LAUSD teachers and staff who participated (García and Castro, 2011). However, Hodges identifies the presence of protest as a failure of the board’s leadership. He does not read the anger and frustration of so many students as evidence of the board’s shortcoming; instead, Hodges reveals that he believes the

board's duty is to suppress dissent and enforce compliance, particularly among Latinx and Black students. From this perspective, any engagement with the protesting students' actions is "craven appeasement of troublemakers." To Hodges, the board's "abdication" to protesting Black and Latinx students indicates a fundamental misunderstanding that he ties directly to desegregation through busing. He writes, "We have to assume your ignorance of human nature in your apparent effort to kid the public into acceptance of 'voluntary' bussing of children to schools outside their own neighborhoods." In Hodges's view, the board's underlying failure is a misunderstanding of the "nature" of difference between white communities and communities of Color. Black and Latinx communities, according to Hodges, must remain isolated and controlled, and attempts at integration are ultimately ignorant of the need to keep white children in schools of their own.

Nevertheless, LAUSD pursued mandatory busing for another 10 years before white voters ultimately put a stop to it first by recalling school board president Howard Miller and then through the 1979 passage of Proposition 1, which ended forced busing on a constitutional basis (Blume, 2019; Straus, 2004). At that point, the district pursued integration through the creation of magnet schools. According to a 2021 Learning Policy Institute report, "the goal of magnet schools has been to achieve voluntary desegregation through parental choice rather than mandatory student assignment by offering unique and innovative specialized instruction and rigorous academic offerings designed to draw students to the school from various surrounding geographic areas" (p. 4). Community, which opened in 1977 in a central neighborhood called Mid City, followed this model successfully. In 1999, after nearly 25 years serving a racially diverse group of students and families, the school was LAUSD's only winner of a U.S. Department of Education National Blue Ribbon award. At the same time, however, the board told the school it would be relocating to the west side (Groves, 1999). Despite protest from

parents and staff at Community, the school was relocated temporarily to a new campus in Venice before moving to its permanent location on Bellagio Road after the closure of the Newcomer Center. As part of its desegregation mandate, Community maintains racial quotas so that students who are identified as white (non-Hispanic) make up 40% of the student population. Because of this, Community has a disproportionately higher enrollment of white students. So when the campus shifted from being a Newcomer Center to a magnet school, it became an educational resource for white families in a way it had not previously been. Through this brief look into LAUSD history, we begin to see the district's relationship to immigrant and Latinx communities more clearly. The construction of *newness* conceals the way the district relies on immigrant communities at certain points—whether to increase enrollment, justify renovation of school buildings, or maintain its image as a social good—without committing to enduring responsibility or accountability.

Ella me mandó a la escuela y me pidió $2,500: Detention, debt, and school

The sounds of the lunch period bounce along the concrete quad. Gedeón and I, sitting on opposite sides of a metal picnic table, lean toward each other. Gedeón rounds his shoulders when he sits, but he makes direct eye contact when we talk. He can be reserved, even shy, but he's not timid. Gedeón began at Cerrejón in ninth grade and we got to know each other slowly throughout the year. He was born in Sololá, Guatemala, and grew up speaking K'iche' Maya. Gedéon talked and joked in class with his friends and teachers in Spanish, but he told me he did not speak Spanish until he arrived at the U.S. border. We met in his ELD and Spanish classes but did not sit down for a formal interview until the winter of his sophomore year. Prior to our interview, Gedéon had been absent for weeks and had only just returned to school.

When I asked him about his arrival in LA, he began with the two days and two nights he spent in immigration detention at the border. "*Primero me quedé como dos días y dos noches con migraciónes en la frontera. La hielera*." Gedeón continued, "*Y después, me mandaron a un albergue en Texas como por menos de un mes. Como 27 días. Y después vine directo a Los Angeles. Aquí yo conecté con la abogada. Ella me mandó a la esceula y me pidió $2,500*." As Gedeón explains, he was held in a detention center for two days at the border before he was sent to a shelter for nearly one month. The ICE detention centers at the border, which Gedeón and many migrants call "the icebox," are notorious for terrible, dangerous conditions. While these detention centers were exposed in mass media reports in 2018 in conjunction with the outcry against former President Donald Trump's policies of family separation at the border (Garcia Lawler, 2018; Levinson & Cooke, 2018), they have been a focal point of immigrant rights advocacy since the early 2010s (Cantor, 2016; Redden, 2014).

From *la hielera*, Gedeón was sent to a facility for migrants under 18 who are apprehended at the border without a parent. Although euphemistically called "shelters," these facilities are overseen by the DHHS and are, in effect, detention centers, as the young people held inside cannot leave (Zayas, 2023). These detention centers for children operate all over the country, including in converted nursing homes on the South Side of Chicago (Cohen, Eldeib, and Sanchez, 2018), a former Walmart in Brownsville, Texas (Fernandez, 2018), and—during the initial COVID-19 pandemic quarantine—at the Pomona fairgrounds[7] in east LA County (Anaya-Moraga, 2021). These detention centers are operated by nonprofit organizations that subcontract

[7]When the Pomona Fairplex initially was repurposed as a migrant detention center, Asian-American Studies Professor Kathy Yep and archivist Summer Espinoza (2021) wrote an opinion piece in the *LA Times* explaining that the Fairplex was used to temporarily detain Japanese Americans before they were forced into internment camps across California and Oregon during WWII. As they explain, the site is marked with a plaque that describes this history and ends with the inscribed words "May such injustice and suffering never recur."

with DHHS, and they typically include mandatory hours of "school" with English language instruction. For Gedeón, his incarceration in the U.S. marks his enrollment in our schools.

The co-location of "school" and jail in Gedeón's experience underscores the necessity to engage abolitionist scholarship and practices in immigrant education. While the presence of "school" inside detention centers for migrant children is sometimes presented by officials as evidence of the social good that these jails provide, incarcerated schooling links directly to the long history of schools as an ideological state apparatus, particularly for Indigenous and Black children. Residential boarding schools epitomize the imbrication of education, carcerality, and U.S. colonial conquest. The boarding school era, which continued until 1978, was explicitly a front of warfare against Native people in which children were forcibly abducted from their families by U.S. government agents, sent to schools hundreds of miles away from their homes, and abused horrifically (Adams, 1995; Szasz, 1999). The mission of the boarding schools was to "Kill the Indian, save the man," and the extermination of Indigenous languages and their replacement with English was a central weapon toward that genocidal intention (Deloria, 1988; Spring, 2001).

Although Gedeón's incarcerated schooling took place decades after the dismantling of the boarding school system, the intricate relationship between school and prison persists. Sabina Vaught (2017) examines this relationship in her critical ethnographic study of public schooling inside a public juvenile prison, Lincoln Treatment Center. Vaught examines the school-prison nexus and uncovers the ways that schooling "on the outside," schooling "on the inside," and broader practices of family policing converge to dispossess the Black and Latinx children—and their families—of their citizenship and their kinship. Through careful engagement with critical race theory, Vaught demonstrates that "school was the conduit and context for information and

containment and for ideologically bankrolling the appearance of the whole thing as a democratic, protective, benevolent endeavor" (p. 140).

To give some insight into the school-prison nexus, I draw on Vaught, Bryan Brayboy, and Jeremiah Chin's (2022) extended analysis of the story of Jakes, a Black and Native young person incarcerated at Lincoln. In this analysis, the writers advance the conceptualization of schooling as a form of colonial conquest. By drawing on the legal relationship of trusteeship that the U.S. government imposed upon American Indian nations in the Marshall Trilogy, the authors conceptualize the school-prison trust, which they understand as a war technique, to describe "the network of discovery, property and Trust [as] ideological and material systems administered by endemic necessity on young Native people" (p. 21). Importantly, by beginning their analysis with the ongoing war against Native Americans, Vaught et al. argue that school is a central institution dedicated to dispossessing Indigenous people's futures through attacks on their children. "Through schooling," Vaught et al. write, "Native children were placed in the Trust of the United States, Congress dictating their reeducation and subordinated labor assimilation, death, or banishment, while dispossessing, dividing, and reselling their Homelands to white colonists" (p. 39). In Gedeón's entry into U.S. jails that house U.S. schools, we can see the extension and persistence of this ideology of conquest wherein Mayan people are displaced from the highlands of Guatemala—itself a result of imperialism in Latin America—and engage in transnational migration into the United States. Subsequently, children are often separated from their families and are captured in detention centers, where they are enrolled in a "school"—the academic focus of which is English language development.

When Gedeón was released from detention into the custody of his older brother, he arrived in Los Angeles and began working with a lawyer who directed him to enroll at Cerrejón

and charged him $2,500, a punishing sum he was responsible for repaying in monthly installments. Debt plays an organizing role in the lives of many migrants, and Lauren Heidbrink's (2019) scholarship on debt-driven migration examines the particular role of debt in the "cycle of (re)migration and deportation among Mam and K'iche' youth" (p. 263). Heidbrink's examination of debt that originates in Guatemala, as in when families mortgage land or take on unregulated loans to fund irregular migration, demonstrates the coercive role of debt in fueling Indigenous young people's migration from Latin America into the United States. Heidbrink argues that in light of this debt, these young people do not "voluntarily migrate as a result of their own wishes or motivations" (p. 278), yet are not entitled to the legal protections available to forced migrants. As Gedeón's story illustrates, debt-driven migration has multiple focal points and may originate at home in Guatemala, as in the case of loans taken to finance the journey to the U.S, but may also accumulate upon arrival in the United States.

Again, school plays a nuanced role in this relationship. Gedeón's migration is marked by dispossession—of his homeland in Guatemala, of his citizenship through immigration detention, and of his financial resources through the debt-financed legal services necessary to gain legal residence in the U.S. Gedeón's lawyer instructed him to enroll in school *while* giving him a bill. As Gedeón goes on to explain, regularly attending school interferes with his ability to earn money to repay his debt, but withdrawing from school, he believes, will hinder his ability to earn more money in the future and achieve the goals that motivated his migration to Los Angeles in the first place. In Gedeón's case, rather than arriving first at Cerrejón, as Principal Sánchez imagines when she refers to the school as "the Ellis Island of LAUSD," he was already well into a relationship with the U.S. government and legal system. However, the fantasy of the school as students' first point of contact with the United States in which they "learn America" attempts to

conceal the relationships among incarceration, migration, and education that rearticulate historic relations of racialized conquest present at the Academies.

La verdad es que no quiero contar esa historia, pero siempre me sale: The construction of newness as a tactic of state counterinsurgency

"*Yo nunca he pensado venir aquí cuando estaba en Guatemala, porque pensaron otras personas que me iban a quitar mi vida ahí. Y sí, tengo muchas cicatrices: tengo una aquí muy grande y tengo una aquí, tengo una aquí,*" Gedeón's thumb, index, and middle fingers move across his arms and torso, landing softly with each *aquí* where a scar lies beneath the burgundy fabric of his sweatshirt. "*La verdad es que no quiero contar esa historia, pero siempre me sale*." Gedéon takes off his black face mask. "*No tienes que contar*-" I begin, but don't finish the sentence before Gedéon continues. "*También mi papá siempre me pegaba mucho,"* he says as the quad empties and the lunch period comes to an end. *"Él ya no quería que siguiera estudiando ahí, y también yo sentí que no hay mucha oportunidad ahí y por eso vine a buscar oportunidad, no a buscar problemas*."

Gedeón opens his hands toward the sky and raises his shoulders. The gesture skips us through the story, across hundreds of miles and dozens of days. "*Llegué en Los Angeles en mi cumpleaños, en el 14 de Agosto*," but just as quickly we skip again in time and geography. This time to southern Mexico near the Guatemalan border. "*Tardé porque me metí en un trailer. No sé qué pasaba, porque estaba encerrado. Pensé que me iban a mandar a Guatemala, pero no. Tardé en el camino como un mes y medio, como un mes con 10 días. Viaje en grupo con personas de Honduras y El Salvador. No conocía a nadie. Todos son buenos … si las personas*

son buenas. *Todavia estoy en contacto con dos amigos. Ellos están en, no sé si Nueva York o creo que en Nueva Jersey*."

The mistreatment that Gedeón recounts is indescribable. He is a survivor of violence within his family, his community, by the police in Mexico, and, as we learned from his earlier description of crossing the southwestern U.S.-Mexico border, by U.S. Customs and Border Patrol. Although Gedéon identifies—and is identified—as male, there is a direct link to the violence he suffered and the missing girl Ms. Canul mentions at the beginning of this chapter. Shannon Speed's (2019) study of violence in the lives of Indigenous migrants theorizes the relationship between domestic violence and state violence. Speed writes, "the violence (often but not necessarily gendered) unleashed during wartime or counterinsurgency leaves in its wake emotional damage that may be acted out through the perpetuation of violence against family members" (p. 30). Following Speed's assertions, we can see how the gendered violence of the settler state imperils Indigenous people across the gender spectrum.

Gedéon describes being locked in a trailer while migrating through Mexico. This is not an experience unique to Gedeón's journey and, for people at all points in their migration journey, can be a death sentence. In 2022, fifty-three people attempting to immigrate into the U.S. died after being abandoned on a road outside San Antonio, Texas (Melhado, 2023). In November 2023, the Associated Press reported that Mexican authorities rescued 123 people from Central and South America who were locked inside a trailer in the state of San Luis Potosi. The vulnerability that Gedeón and other people who migrate are subjected to becomes hypervisible through these tragic, harrowing stories. Often, journalists and politicians vilify "smugglers" and "traffickers" for the death of migrants, but U.S. policy has more blood on its hands than people do; policies have made migration increasingly more fatal (De León, 2015). Rather than reduce or

regulate immigration, prevention through deterrence and border militarization policies endanger migrants and reveal the violence and abuse that is constitutive of the relationship the United States has with immigrants—particularly when they arrive from Latin America.

Scholars of migration have delineated the ways that rich nations export their border enforcement to developing nations (Jones, 2017; Walia, 2021). In the U.S., this is evident in policy and practice based in Mexico and throughout Latin American countries but shaped by U.S. political interests, like former U.S. President Donald Trump's "Remain in Mexico" policy. U.S. imperial outsourcing is a bipartisan project, however, and in 2011, former U.S President Barack Obama's Defense Department launched a Mexico-Guatemala-Belize Border Region Program about which homeland security officials declared, "the Guatemalan border with Chiapas is now our southern border" (Isacson, Meyer, & Morales, 2014)

As the scholarship, news articles, and Gedeón's own experience demonstrate, the extension of U.S. border enforcement into Mexico and throughout Latin America imperils the lives of people long before they reach official U.S. territory. This is policy that critical scholars have argued is more accurately understood as conquest and warfare (Brady, 2022; Walia, 2021). This fact is particularly important when we think about Indigenous communities, like Gedeón's, because the construction of borders has long been a strategy for advancing U.S. imperialism, which has always relied on warfare against Indigenous people (Simpson, 2014; Walia, 2021).

While the interpersonal and state violence Gedeón was subjected to cannot be overlooked or diminished, the systems and structures through which such violence operates are *reactions* to the agency of people like Gedeón. Gedeón belongs to the long tradition of Mayan people, for whom mobility is a survival strategy. By analyzing Guatemala's armed conflict (1960–1996) and the economic policies that formed in its aftermath, Lauren Heidbrink (2020) argues that seasonal,

regional, and transnational migration has been a collective and "historically rooted survival strategy" for Mayan young people (p. 16). Gedeón's presence echoes this tradition when he says that he came to Los Angeles to find opportunities.

Scholars working in the Black Radical Tradition have developed the language of state counterinsurgency to describe the mode and function of U.S. empire (Rodriguez, 2021). Counterinsurgency refers to how state power constitutes itself flexibly—and often sloppily—in response to insurgent demands for sovereignty, mobility, and self-determination by communities exploited by racial capitalism. I use the concepts of insurgency and counterinsurgency to describe the dialectic underlying the Mayan tactic of migration and increasingly militarized, brutal U.S. border regulation and enforcement that extends into Latin America.

The Black Radical Tradition, as framed by Cedric Robinson (2000), proposes a theory of race that has been adopted by critical readings of Black radical activism—from labor movements, prison abolition, and artistic innovation— within our period of capitalism (see Kelley, 2015; Gilmore, 2007; João Costa Vargas, 2018). Robinson's scholarship locates the development of the construction of race within European history, where whiteness and racial capitalism formed through violent traditions of conquest and nationality. Robinson explains that the Black Radical Tradition "is not a variant of Western radicalism whose proponents happen to be Black. Rather, it is a specifically African response to an oppression emergent from the immediate determinants of European development in the modern era and framed by orders of human exploitation woven into the injustices of European social life from the inception of Western civilization" (p.73). Given this, the Black Radical tradition is rooted in deep knowledge of the limits of liberalism.

Working in the Black Radical Tradition, anthropologist Damien Sojoyner's (2013, 2016) ethnographic research on the relationships between schools and prisons engages the dialectic of insurgency and counterinsurgency to argue that the policies, practices, and ideologies we observe that link public school with prisons in the U.S. are a *response* to "actions taken by Black students that are perceived to threaten the status quo." Sojoyner continues, "the criminalization of Black youth is not only intentional, but it is in response to direct agitation on the part of Black people" (p. 245, 2013). According to Sojoyner, the *central action* is the insurgency by young people and their communities. The controlling and carceral functions of schools is a counterinsurgent *reaction*. Sojoyner's scholarship is a compass that allows us to remain focused on the collective revolutionary work that precedes forms of state violence and control.

The insurgency to which Gedeón and many of his classmates belong is transnational economic migration, which requires an examination of and inquiry into Guatemalan history to understand more fully. In Guatemala, the exploitation of Indigenous people has been a central tool for ruling minorities to establish and protect their power. During the 300-year-long period of Spanish conquest (1524–1821), legally enshrined slavery was the central method for exploiting Indigenous people. As Crosby and Lykes (2011) explain, colonization "disrupted Indigenous people's way of life and limited their access to land and productive labor, forcing seasonal migration and slave labor conditions for entire families" (p. 460). Castro and Picq (2017) argue that such methods of Mayan dispossession in Guatemala were a key means of state-making. For example, the national Registry of Property required land titles to be registered with the state as private property. Castro and Picq explain that "Maya peoples who sought to protect their land titles by registering them were forced to give up communal land titles to accept titles of private property" (p. 793). Through this process, Maya territories were divided and stolen, as the

Guatemalan government could seize unclaimed lands it deemed “vacant” or “unproductive.” As Castro and Picq point out, a similar approach to land theft occurred in the U.S. at the same time through the 1887 General Allotment Act. Alongside dispossessing land reforms came laws that forced Mayan people to cultivate land for hacienda (or plantation) owners. This created a multigenerational system of debt peonage as well as a highly developed system of internal economic migration among Indigenous communities in Guatemala that lasted nearly 100 years.

This system of exploitation was seized upon by German colonizers in the later 19th century and by U.S. corporations in the early 20th century. Of course, resistance was constant and intensified in the 1940s, culminating in the ouster of Guatemalan Dictator Jorge Ubico and the passage of Decree 900, which expropriated land from large plantations and redistributed it primarily to Indigenous farmers. This reappropriation included approximately 400,000 acres claimed by the U.S.-based United Fruit Company (UFC).

To retaliate, the UFC enlisted former U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower and the CIA to overthrow the democratically elected Guatemalan government behind these reforms. This U.S. intervention marked the beginning of Guatemala’s brutal armed conflict occurring from 1960 to 1996, during which time Guatemalan migration to Los Angeles began—and particularly to the neighborhoods surrounding Cerrejón. For young people in Guatemala over the last six decades, one method of resisting exploitation has been transnational migration to Los Angeles, where they can earn dollars, pay off debt, and purchase property—in the U.S. as well as in Guatemala.

I understand this movement—which scholars call “economic migration”—to be an insurgent practice around which U.S. law, from immigration policy to education policy, responds. While the dominant interpretation of global migration—from Central and South America across the U.S.-Mexico border as well as from Africa across the Mediterranean Sea—

typically individualizes migration into a narrative of particular people and families "seeking a better life," the Black Radical Tradition offers an alternative reading. Contextualized by the history of Guatemala, we see that dispossessing Black and Indigenous peoples of the rights to their land while simultaneously forcing them to labor on those same lands has been a central tool of colonial, state, and corporate power since the 16th century.

Legal scholar Tendayi Achiume's (2019) analysis of international law argues that such "economic migration" is a form of decolonization. Drawing on postcolonial theory, Achiume re-narrates European colonialism throughout the Third World as economic migration that was made possible through "international legal and imperial regime[s] that facilitated, encouraged, and celebrated white economic migration" (p. 1518). Thus, Achiume argues that Third World peoples became, and remain, politically interconnected with imperial nations, making them "co-sovereign members of neocolonial empire" who are entitled to "operative equality within this association" (p. 1520). By centering the political and economic relationships between colonizing and colonized states, Achiume rejects the contemporary framing by international law of Third World migrants as political strangers and instead asserts a legal and ethical orientation toward transnational migration based on citizenship.

Drawing on Achiume's scholarship, we can understand mass migration from Guatemala into the United States as a refusal: it refuses the limits on life chances imposed by ongoing colonization and global capitalism as practiced in the home country. And it asserts the right to move freely across political borders. Importantly, mass economic migration also asserts Guatemalans' right to shape the cultural and political landscape of Los Angeles while benefiting from social and economic conditions of the United States. In other words, migration in this context is an assertion of citizenship. The counterinsurgent policies and practices responding to

this insurgent claim are a kind of citizenship education. Understood that way, we can see the migration journey that Gedeón describes as a kind of state schooling, writ large, through which migrants heading to the U.S. are learning what their relationship to the country is and will be. Through the many forms of detention that Gedeón describes, the state is attempting to teach, through brutal force, what their citizenship in the United States will mean. This education, however, runs counter to the dominant narratives of idealized migration and America as a land of opportunity, which are invoked when Cerrejón is described as the "Ellis Island" of LAUSD.

The lessons of this conquest pedagogy leave literal scars, like those Gedeón pointed to across his chest and arms. In 2017, a coalition of civil rights organizations sued the U.S. Department of Justice for infringing on the rights of immigrants, largely based on the cruel and dangerous conditions of detention centers at the southwestern border. The lawsuit, *Flores v. Sessions*, includes direct testimony from people who survived this abuse. In one case, a woman named Mayra S., who was imprisoned in Nogales, Arizona, with her child, explained:

> My son is badly traumatized. He has been wetting his bed and is fearful all the time. He saw someone bound with chains and asked me whether I would be chained in the same way. He also overheard a woman say that she had been separated from her children, and asked me whether we would be separated as well. He wonders when we will get to the United States. I do not tell him that we are already here. He wouldn't believe that the United States would treat us this way (*Flores v. Sessions*, 2018, Exhibit 3, p. 244).

For Mayra and her son, for Gedeón, and for so many others, they are not "learning America" for the first time, or exclusively, in the freshly waxed hallways of Cerrejón. Rather, they are learning the meaning of their belonging in and to the United States throughout their migration journeys as they navigate incarceration, a type of violence perpetrated directly and indirectly by the state.

Back at Cerrejón, in a still moment, at the end of a semester Ms. Canul joins the Academy teachers for a meeting to reflect:

> We need some systems. Our kids have so much trauma. I cannot tell you how much is in these guys' backpacks. Principal Sánchez calls it God's work, and I truly do believe that. I think we're saving lives. These parents who are in Guatemala, they have no idea what their kids are going through, but I know that someone here is paying attention. Whatever this is, is working. We are saving lives. I truly believe that. The work is hard, but the reward is huge. (Field notes, 5/10/2022).

Ms. Canul's reflection on her program, and her characterization of the work she and her colleagues do, is representative of the way that the construction of *newness* functions. Ms. Canul knows her students and the hardships they experience well. She is also speaking earnestly when she characterizes the work of the Academy as "saving lives." However, the discursive control exerted by the construction of *newness* makes it possible for Ms. Canul to be able to know her students well, individually, while obscuring the transnational (and historical) lives her students lead. The construction of *newness* sets the caring attention of Academy educators *against* students' parents "who are in Guatemala" and "have no idea what their kids are going through." This is another way that the construction of *newness* attempts to conceal the history of insurgency to which Academy students' migration belongs, which severs potential ties between public schools and transnational immigrant communities.

Language Planning and Policy (LPP) Complicity

The ideological construction of newcomers illuminated in the previous sections is supported by the history of educational language policy for students labeled as English learners.

To understand how language planning and policy (LPP) has been complicit in the construction of *newness* around recently arrived immigrant students, I examine the history of English learner language policy in California by analyzing three important legal decisions: *Piper v. Big Pine School District* (1924), *Mendez v. Westminster* (1946), and *Lau v. Nichols* (1974). In addition, I include some analysis of the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) decision as context for the *Lau* decision that followed 20 years later. Taken together, the three California-based cases reveal the way educational language policy extends from and reinforces the racialization of Latinx, Native, and Asian students through the law as well as the role of U.S. schools in developing and maintaining inequality based on those racial constructions. These legal decisions represent a formal method of state counterinsurgency that occurs with and through the courts. Following analysis of the cases, I return to the present and examine how language policy continues to operate in the LA Academies as a way to instantiate inequality based on the racist jurisprudential logic established in *Piper, Mendez,* and *Lau*. These analyses represent the informal ways that state counterinsurgency occurs in everyday actions through schooling.

"To exclude children of filthy and vicious habits": The legal foundation of language policy in California

The 1924 State Supreme Court ruling in *Piper v. Big Pine School District of Inyo County*—which Nicole Blalock-Moore (2012), Teresa McCarty (2018), and Charles Wollenberg (1976) have analyzed thoroughly—was the culmination of a legal battle between a California school district south of Yosemite National Park and the family of Alice Piper. Alice Piper was a Paiute teenager who was denied admission to her town's public school along with six of her Native peers based on California's School Law, which stated that "the governing body of the

school district shall have power to exclude children of filthy or vicious habits ... and also to establish separate schools for Indian children and for children of Chinese, Japanese or Mongolian parentage" (cited in McCarty, 2018, p. 279). However, the court sided with Piper, determining that the exclusion of these Native students from public education was a violation of the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

Importantly, the ruling hinged on the court's particular assessment of Alice Piper's relationship to U.S. government services. The court wrote that "both parents and petitioner are citizens of the United States and of this state and that neither the petitioner nor either of her parents has ever lived in tribal relations with any tribe of Indians or has ever owed or acknowledged allegiance or fealty of any kind to any tribe or 'nation' of Indians or has ever lived upon a government Indian reservation or has at any time been a ward or dependent of the nation" (*Piper v. Big Pine School District of Inyo County*, 193 Cal. 664, 666 [Cal. 1924]). In addition, the court explained that Piper was entitled to public education because of her lack of need for any additional medical or educational services—which of course includes what we would now call language support.

The decision in Alice Piper's favor was due in part to the court's understanding of what being denied public education meant. According to the court:

> the common schools are doorways opening into chambers of science, art and the learned professions, as well as into fields of industrial and commercial activities. Opportunities for securing employment are often more or less dependent upon the rating which a youth, as a pupil of our public institutions, has received in his school work. These are rights and privileges that cannot be denied. (*Piper v. Big Pine School District of Inyo County*, 193 Cal. 664, 673 [Cal. 1924])

Piper was fundamentally a challenge to the precedent of "separate but equal" established in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896). However, the ruling did not challenge *Plessy's* separate but equal doctrine. Instead, the decision reinforced *Plessy's* dominance while carving out an exception for a particular kind of Indigenous person—in this case, one who did not claim tribal identification, required no specialized educational services, had never been incarcerated, had never received state welfare, and did pay taxes to the U.S. government.

The relationships between educational policy for English learners, Black people, Indigenous people, and Latinx people are important to highlight. In the case of *Piper*, we see how the court was able to side in favor of a Native family while entrenching the legitimacy of educational denial to Black students. Importantly, the court also used this "win" for Alice Piper to enshrine additional conditions for which the state could lawfully deny other Indigenous children access to public schools. In other words, Alice Piper's inclusion did not make public education more accessible to marginalized communities. Given this history, it is important to ask how the construction of the students in the LA International Academies as "newcomers" reduces their right to an adequate education to identification with a narrow set of criteria. As we know from *Piper*, California has a history of "siding" with marginalized people in a way that entrenches inequality.

The 1946 *Mendez v. Westminster* case, analyzed by Aguierre (2005) and Moll (2010), tells the story of the Méndez family of Orange County, California, whose four children were denied enrollment in a local school where the administrators found them to be "too dark-skinned and disapproved of their Spanish surname" (Moll, 2010, p. 451). Although the initial rulings in the case determined that the discrimination the Méndez family faced violated the Fourteenth Amendment, the regnant U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit decision did not challenge

"separate but equal." Instead, the court ruled in favor of the Méndezes "based on state law, which allowed the segregation of Asian and Native American children but did not specify the segregation of Mexican children" (Moll, 2010, p. 452). Again, the legal argument for the inclusion of Mexican Americans in schools allowed for the continued exclusion of other young people (namely, Asian, Black, and Indigenous youth). Importantly, the terms of inclusion also implicated the role of language education. As Gonzalez (1999) explains, "Americanization" through schooling was identified as a primary way to remedy the "tangle of pathologies" the Mexican community was presumed to be—with language standing in a primary signifying of inferiority (p. 71).

The precedent of "separate but equal" was legally overturned in the 1954 Supreme Court ruling of *Brown v. Board of Education*. Although much has been written about *Brown*, understanding it here is important for its implications on language policy. *Brown* allowed for the first time federal involvement in the protection of equal access to educational resources for a wider range of groups than *Piper* or *Mendez* permitted. As Gándara, Moran, and Garcia (2004) explain, the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act "broadened the scope of *Brown* and ultimately extended it to include members of language minority groups under the national origin provision" (p. 28). *Brown*'s integration mandates provided the platform upon which language education could be fought for on the grounds of equal access to education.

It was in this context, exactly two decades after *Brown*, that a group of Chinese American parents sued the San Francisco School Board on the grounds that their children did not receive an adequate education in schools where they were provided only English curricular and pedagogical materials. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in their favor, declaring, "there is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers and

curriculum; for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education" (cited in Garcia, 2008, p. 247). Importantly, the court did not specify the nature of a school district's responsibility to pupils who do not speak English. The ruling continues, "Teaching English to the students of Chinese ancestry who do not speak the language is one choice. Giving instructions to this group in Chinese is another. There may be others" (*Lau v. Nichols*, 414 U.S. 563, 39 L. Ed. 2d 1, 1974). As Castagno and McCarty (2018) report, "five years later, the government issued the Lau Regulations, mandating bilingual instruction where at least 25 percent of students in a school spoke the same language. Within a year, those regulations would be withdrawn by the incoming conservative Reagan administration" (p. 8). In many ways, the *Lau* decision reflects the broader rise and fall of bilingual education policy in the U.S. For this discussion, I want to highlight the fact that the *Lau* decision represents an expansion of educational access for English learners (Chinese speakers, in this case) that proceeds directly from the dismantling of racial segregation of Black, Latinx, and Indigenous students.

The legal decisions forming the foundation for contemporary policy toward California students who are identified as learning English demonstrate the complex ways that race and language are imbricated to mediate the provision of government services in ways that do not challenge the racialized status quo. Threaded throughout these decisions are racial tropes upon which the legal decision to provide or deny educational resources is, in part, justified. In the LA Academies, this same pattern of reliance on racial tropes is present in constructing "newness."

"What do we do with students that are non-nons?": The continuation of legally enshrined logics of racial inferiority and languagelessness

On the 25th floor of the district headquarters, Michael Lozano, a specialist with the MMED, is framed by plate-glass windows looking east where a thick layer of smog obscures the San Gabriel Mountains. Lozano worked with Cerrejón throughout the inaugural year of the Academy and supported the planning and design of the Academies at Greene and Newton. Before this interview, Lozano and I had observed classrooms and participated in regular meetings with Cerrejón administrators together. Midway into the interview, I asked him whether there was anything distinct about supporting the International Academy. Lozano responded:

> This is the hot topic right now: What do we do with students that are non-nons? Who do not currently possess literacy skills in English or in their L1? I had a teacher say, "Well, when the students get here, why can't we be teaching them life skills or survival skills or laws of the United States?" Which I also have to agree with, because having been at my site that had high newcomer students, some young gentlemen did not know the laws in terms of interacting with young ladies, and they had arrived when they were 17, 18. And I'm not going to dive deeper into that because you can assume, but it's not their fault. Where are they going to learn certain laws and rules and regulations and social norms and morays and all these things? Where is that space? (04/05/2022).

Lozano's reply begins with him acknowledging that there are students in the Academy who he and his colleagues believe are illiterate in both their home languages and in English. Other educators in the Academies, in MMED, and in the Internationals Network agreed that there are students who are still learning to read in their home languages, as well as in English. Typically, such students are identified by their educational histories and labeled as students with

limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE). Although the research is still emerging, studies on students experiencing interruptions in schooling has described the great difficulty schools have retaining and educating young people with this experience (Advocates for Children of New York, 2010; Browder, 2014; Potochnick, 2018). Potochnick's (2018) quantitative analysis concluded "that students with interrupted schooling face cumulative academic disadvantages" that necessitate unique policy and support programs (p. 886). However, Lozano calls these young people "non-nons," which takes the focus away from their specific needs for literacy instruction and defines them as students who lack *everything*.

In Lozano's comment he quickly transitions from a specific observation (i.e., students who need to learn to read) to a general impression of overall ignorance to "social norms" that is buttressed by and reinforces the construction of *newness*. "Life skills," as Lozano suggests, are not a literacy intervention and neither are "survival skills." In fact, these ideas contradict the many ways that educators working in the Academies identify students' robust life experiences, navigational skills, and resilience. Gedeón's account, re-presented in this chapter, reveals his wealth of survival skills. However, the jump from recognizing a need for literacy to "teaching them life skills" is legitimized by insinuating that recently arrived immigrant students, who are disproportionately male and typically "over-age" for their grade level (Finn, 2023; Sugarman, 2023), present a sexual threat. Importantly, students' *newness* is enlisted to absolve them from responsibility for being potential sexual predators, while casting the school as playing an essential *social role* when it teaches "life skills" to students who, in fact, need a literacy class.

Embedded in California legal decisions throughout the 20th century and reproduced again in the comments from a school district specialist, ideologies of racial inferiority, and the tropes upon which they rely, intertwine with educational language policy. LPP is inseparable

from the process of colonial state formation (Tollefson, 1991; Johnson, 2018). In Los Angeles, the specific shape of the relationship between colonial state formation and LPP becomes evident when examining the legal history of English learner policy and the construction of *newness* at the LA Academies in the context of one another. In doing so, we observe how colonial state formation in Los Angeles relies on exploiting and excluding Black, Indigenous, and Latinx communities. However, the selective inclusion of members of all of these communities into full citizenship in the region is essential to maintaining the legitimacy of the state—as well as perpetuating its racial capitalist accumulation. So when the state is forced to concede full citizenship to Black, Indigenous, and Latinx communities, it does so on terms that continue to justify exclusion and exploitation and on racial and linguistic terms that validate supremacist hierarchies. This is not the end of the story, however. This process of colonization presses on human beings who are always already acting in a multiplicity of ways toward building individual and collective futures—which is another way to say they are practicing freedom. The policies and court rulings recounted in this chapter are demonstrable counterinsurgencies against those practices of freedom.

New Trouble

The students in the International Academies are constructed as being "new." They are identified in policy documents as a "new problem," by the Internationals Network as "new Americans," and by the school district as a "new student population." The circulation of this discourse of *newness* is evident in policy and practice circles at the classroom, district, state, and federal levels. The construction of *newness* at and around the International Academies is important to analyze, rather than to simply debunk. Newness is more than a structure of myths

and misconceptions that can be dispelled by simple facts. I argue that the construction of *newness* is a strategy for dominating, structuring, and maintaining authority over Indigenous and Latinx children as part of the ongoing project of U.S. state formation through conquest.

The construction of *newness* (1) conceals the history of insurgency/counterinsurgency on both sides of the border, to which Academy students' migration and appropriation of services within the educational system belong to diminish students' agency, and (2) obfuscates the transnational political communities and kinship networks to which students belong in an attempt to deracinate and dis/member them. Ultimately, these two consequences of the construction of *newness* evident through the Academies exceptionalizes the role of school in im/migrant students' lives to conceal the relationships among carcerality, migration, and education.

"We need to know what they want out of life": Countering the construction of newness by practicing relationality

While the LA Academies reveal and (re)produce the construction of *newness* to deleterious ends, the Academies are also places where folks develop and rehearse alternatives. In particular, educators and students indicate relationality as a conceptual and practical alternative to the discursive control of *newness*. In response to a question about what it takes to operate from an assets-based view of students' home language, Paula Castro, leader of the Greene Academy, shared the following:

> I think, one, you really have to understand beyond demographics. You really have to understand the *why* for the students. And you have to have this really solid foundation, a relationship, with each student. In the Academy, the students understand that we all want

> what *you* want, the goal that *you* want, that's what *we* want for you. And so we're going to work with you to get there. Because this is a partnership.

According to Ms. Castro, establishing strong relationships is key to building a program that centers the linguistic skills, prior knowledge, and life experiences of recently arrived immigrant students. In her perspective, students should be able to set goals, and the Academy should work to help the students achieve them. However, that does not always happen, as she later explained:

> Oftentimes, we forget that, as adults. We forget that our students are young adults themselves that can think for themselves, that have desires of things they want to do and things that they want to acquire and goals that they have. And we don't oftentimes allow for an exchange in that, we just think that we know what's best and this is how you're going to get there. But the reality is that that's not the best way to help them achieve their goals.

Ms. Castro points out that is easy for educators to presume they know why students are in school or assume they know what is best for them. The construction of *newness* makes it more difficult for educators to recognize students' agency and impedes the development of relationships that allow for the "exchange" that she highlights as essential to helping students achieve their goals.

Eddie Adu, a teacher at the Greene Academy, expressed similar ideas when discussing his frustration with seeing recently arrived students struggle in school. "I was a newcomer, and I could compete with anybody else when I first came in. So if you look at me and say, 'Oh, he's a newcomer so he can't do anything,' there's something wrong." As we talked more about the obstacles that Academy students face, Adu explained:

> We have this one thing [referring to the rigid structure of school], and [we] try to fit all the kids in it. But when the kids come in, we need to know about them. We need to know

> about the environment they're going to go to, the environment they're coming from. We also need to know "What does this kid want?" Because a lot of times, we think, *every kid wants to go to college. We going to put everybody in college*. Every kid wants to be successful. We need to listen to them. We need to hear about their life. We need to know what they want out of life, that way we can better help them get there.

Like Ms. Castro, Mr. Adu points out the importance of building relationships and understanding where students are coming from in order for them to be successful in the Academy. Mr. Adu also identifies the way that students' *newness* is used to justify their failures in school, or excuse schools from effectively teaching them, and how his own immigration and school experiences help him reject that narrative. Importantly, Mr. Adu discusses the necessity of working to understand students' environments, which includes learning about the historical and contemporary conditions of the communities where they and their families live. Relationships, as Ms. Castro and Mr. Adu assert, are the basis of knowledge-building at the interpersonal and sociopolitical levels that facilitate solidarity between educators and recently arrived immigrant students.

Practicing relationality this way brings new political possibilities into view. On the first day of school at the Cerrejón International Academy, I spent a class period in Ms. Jimenez's room while she led students through an activity completing a short handout answering questions about themselves and then interviewing one another in English to practice new phrases and get to know each other. I joined a table with five students, and we all introduced ourselves according to the activity and then chatted in Spanish once we finished. At the table with me was Esteban, who was 17, had arrived in LA from Guatemala two months earlier, and asked his classmates for help to spell every English word he wrote down on his handout. Next to him was Robin, 16, also from

Guatemala, who eagerly volunteered to practice the conversation in front of the class. Then there was Manuel, 17, and from El Salvador, who got to LA two weeks before school began. Kristín, who was 15, came from Guatemala over the summer and was reuniting with her parents, whom she had not seen since she was young. Jennifer, 17, also came from Guatemala as the eldest of four sisters, the rest of whom were still back home. She arrived in LA the previous spring with her father and had been working full time before she enrolled in school.

Robin arrived in Los Angeles five months before we met in Ms. Jimenez's classroom, but he was born in Nebraska. After they left Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, in search of work, his parents worked in a meat processing plant. Quetzaltenango is one of Guatemala's majority Indigenous provinces, where many K'iche' Maya people live. Robin and his parents belong to this group, and he told me that he, his parents, and his older sisters speak K'iche'. In the early 2000s, Robin's parents were among the Mexican and Central American migrants who contributed to the 155% increase in the Latinx population in Nebraska (Gouveia and Powell 2005; Wortham et al. 2002). But when Robin was 5 years old, his parents, who did not have legal status, were deported and the family returned to Guatemala. Robin remained in Guatemala until he was 15, when he and his family decided he would return to the United States.

For Indigenous Guatemalan communities like Robin's, transnational migration to Southern California has been an essential survival strategy. Increasingly, though, that migration includes deportation. According to Lauren Heidbrink (2020), between 2012 and 2018, approximately 1.7 million Guatemalans were deported from the United States and Mexico. That is 10% of the entire population of Guatemala. For Robin, and the other young people affected by this dimension of the immigration experience, community is a transnational phenomenon.

For example, in Nebraska in 2007, just two years after Robin was born there, a group of Mayan immigrants from Guatemala living in the state formed an organization called Comunidad Maya Pixan Ixim, or CMPI. According to its website, CMPI's mission is "to improve the health and well-being of Mayan people through community development strategies in Omaha, Nebraska, the United States, and Q'anjob'al Maya territory consistent with the Q'anjob'al Maya system of social organization, in honorable relationships with U.S. sovereign tribal nations, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples" (www.pixanixim.org). CMPI's work currently includes offering language classes, legal and medical interpretation services, and arts and culture programming. In 2018, CMPI members and leaders of the Omaha Nation traveled to Guatemala, where they established a binational agreement between the Omaha and the Akateko, Chuj, Popti, and Q'anjob'al Maya. This included a commitment to "strengthen each other through sacred ceremonies; to implement a program of economic development based on regenerative agriculture; to organize youth exchanges; to strengthen ancestral music and arts; and to seek recognition from the City of Omaha and the State of Nebraska for the Maya Nation within the city and state level Commission of Nebraska for Indigenous Issues" (www.pixanixim.org). The partnerships that CMPI and the Omaha Nation are creating exceed the colonial authority of the United States and assert the sovereignty of Indigenous communities throughout the Americas.

In Los Angeles, Indigenous people from southern Mexico and Guatemala have also been organizing. One example is Communidades Indigenas en Liderazgo (CIELO), an organization founded by two Zapotec women that is dedicated to "combating racism toward Indigenous people by bringing visibility and resources to Indigenous migrant communities" (https://mycielo.org/). Like CMPI, CIELO offers Indigenous language interpretation services and

cultural programming. CIELO also obtains from larger organizations grants that it distributes as economic relief to Indigenous people in LA who are often ineligible for government assistance. During the winter and spring of 2024, CIELO sponsored a billboard campaign across Los Angeles to make the presence of Indigenous languages and speakers of these languages more visible across the city.

Figure 5.2: CIELO billboard on Crenshaw Boulevard in Los Angeles.

This kind of organizing is not new. Within walking distance of Cerrejón is a parking lot at the former site of El Congreso del Pueblo de Habla Española, one of the first national Latinx civil rights organizations (Pulido, Barraclough, Cheng, 2012). El Congreso was established in 1938 by Luisa Moreno, an organizer from Guatemala who immigrated to the United States in

1928. Moreno was a communist and labor organizer who was active in coalition movements against police brutality and racial segregation. Her activist work revolved around building coalitions among Latinx communities and between Latinx and the communities with whom they shared working and living conditions across Southern California (Smith, 2018). Moreno's advocacy was based on her sharp analysis of the way California politicians waged anti-Mexican and anti-immigrant campaigns while the state's economy depended on their labor. Moreno built Latinx political power via union and civil rights organizing by asserting the community's sovereignty and right to citizenship. Rather than accept the narrative that Latinx workers depended on California, Moreno "pointed out that they contributed more to the public coffers in taxes than what they took from the region" (Larralde & Griswold del Castillo, 1997). Moreno's activism began with assessing the material conditions of the region to assert Latinx communities' rights to citizenship based on their contributions to California. In this way, she made a relational argument that linked Southern California with Latin America and highlighted how Southern California is indebted to Latin America—and the communities that migrate between the regions. Beginning with the relationship between Southern California and Latin America, Moreno's activism provoked workers to ask how their local governments and industries might repay the debt they owe migrant communities.

During the anti-communist McCarthy era, Moreno was deported from the United States and, with her Nebraska-born husband, made her way back to Guatemala City, where she lived until the 1954 CIA-sponsored coup ousted then-Guatemalan President Arbenz Guzmán. Once again endangered by U.S. efforts against socialism and communism, she was able to flee to Cuba, where she remained for years after the success of the revolution on the island. Hundreds of thousands of Moreno's compatriots, the majority of whom were Mayan, died in the armed

conflict following the coup. In the years since the coup, hundreds of thousands of Guatemalans have been forced to leave their country. Many, like Robin and Gedeón, headed north, arriving in the neighborhoods and working in the industries where Moreno was organizing 100 years earlier.

The work of activists like Moreno and collectives like CMPI and CIELO indicates ideological perspectives on and approaches to language and citizenship that recognize the depth and complexity of immigrant communities' relationships. This perspective leads to questions about and practices of solidarity that we see in El Congreso's labor organizing across racial and linguistic lines and CMPI and CIELO alliances between Native Nations across the Americas. However, these long-standing political activities are often disconnected from schools.

"Hay muchas personas que sufren más que nosotros": Recognizing and supporting metas as a practice of freedom

It's time for Gedéon to get to class. As he stands, he tells me about his most recent return to school:

> *Apenas hablé con los consejeros el martes. Yo no he venido a la escuela y por eso estoy muy atrasado de aprender inglés. Es que cuando yo llegué, en el mes aquí empecé a pagar. Me dijo que yo voy a pagar 150 cada mes, porque yo pagué 300 cada mes y por eso terminé muy rápido. Trabajé en arreglar apartamentos, como poner drywall y pintura. Trabajé ahí, pero trabajé de siete a siete de noche. Y por eso no he venido a la escuela. Siempre me he preocupado porque necesito aprender más español e inglés también, y por eso regresé*." I nod and ask what keeps him motivated to continue in school. "*Quiero aprender inglés porque tengo una meta, que necesito aprender inglés. Y por eso quiero aprender más rápido. Quiero ser piloto. Yo pensé eso, que ya nunca iba a*

regresar a la escuela, pero mi meta, siempre pienso: Si no estudio, lo pierdo. Y pensé también, porque trabajar en el mismo, ganar lo mismo, para siempre lo hace ganar así y el trabajo es algo difícil. Y por eso no voy a dejar la escuela." Y también, ayudar a las personas que más necesitas, cuando yo sea piloto. Eso es lo que pido a Dios para que pueda llegar a esa meta. Porque hay muchas personas que sufren más que nosotros.

Gedeón has a goal, and that goal is flight. As he explains, he left school to work a full-time job renovating apartments so he could repay his debts, but he returned to school because he has a goal: to become a pilot, and he believes he needs to know English to do so. The decision to return to school was not easy. The pressure to get out of debt and the promise of being able to help his family members is immense. But, as Gedeón says, while away from school he kept thinking that if he does not study, he loses out on his goal. His *meta*.

Gedeón's *meta* is a practice of freedom. Melissa Adams Corral and Sarah Gallo's (2024) examination of the speculative narratives crafted by parents leading transborder families suggest that the people who meet their social, political, and economic needs beyond and across borders are "*soñadores diaspóricos*" (p. 2). Diasporic dreamers, like Gedeón, necessarily mix cultural signs and languages. So their exertion of freedom may also be understood as a literacy practice indigenous to struggle against U.S. empire—and well-stewarded by Black communities—that dares to "see the future in the present" (Kelley, 2002, p. 9).

The construction of *newness* is a feature of counterinsurgent policy that relies on language designation. As the stories of Gedeón and Robin demonstrate, the violence that im/migrant young people survive and the kinship networks to which they belong and through which they organize politically and socially are neither new nor restricted to national boundaries. Rather, the conditions of violence, land dispossession, and economic insecurity are transnational

and historical. Equally, the knowledge, relational resources, and navigational practices that im/migrant students and their communities use to build futures transcend imposed geopolitical boundaries and refuse enclosure. As LAUSD constructs *newness* as a counterinsurgent strategy to contain young people, it is en/countered by human beings who act in their own interests, with their own deep knowledge, to make *more life*, which is another word for *freedom*. In other words, while the district constructs *newness* as part of an effort to contain, the young people construct *metas.* They set goals, which is another way to say futurity. And in setting goals, the fabrication of futurity, the district's policy recedes into the periphery of their imaginary—it becomes irrelevant. Loses power.

In Gedeon's goal-setting, his practice of futurity, we see evidence of the worlds that counterinsurgency can never destroy. So the question is this: Given that state power is not absolute, how could people who work in schools build solidarity with the goals of the young people and their families to support a realignment of power across borders? When we put the *metas* at the center, what conflicts will arise between educators and their state employers and what support will they need to resolve these conflicts while remaining in solidarity with their students? How might the linguistic and racial identifications students and educators share become a resource for diasporic dreaming?

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I responded to research question two by examining the role of language policies on a societal level. I identified the construction of *newness* as a strategy for dominating, structuring, and maintaining authority over Indigenous and Latinx children as part of the ongoing project of U.S. state formation that occurs through language policy. Through careful analysis of

an interview with Gedeón Sacalxot Tepaz', a review of California legal history that forms the basis of contemporary language policy, and archival data on the history of LAUSD's approach to "newcomer" education, I argued that the construction of *newness* (1) conceals the history of insurgency/counterinsurgency on both sides of the border, to which Academy students' migration and appropriation of services within the educational system belong to diminish students' agency, and (2) obfuscates the transnational political communities and kinship networks to which students belong in an attempt to deracinate and dis/member them. Ultimately, these two consequences of the construction of *newness* evident through the Academies exceptionalizes the role of school in im/migrant students' lives to conceal the relationships among carcerality, migration, and education. This chapter closes with a focus on the goals, or *metas*, of Academy students, which are described as a practice of futurity around which solidarity is—and can be—forged between educators and im/migrant communities.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION

Summary of the Study

The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) has undertaken an experiment in the education of recently arrived immigrant students learning English. Over the 2021–2023 school years, the district opened three new high school Academies explicitly tasked with centering students' home languages to support their success in school. From April 2021 through June 2023, I conducted ethnographic fieldwork with all three schools and the district office supporting their development. During that time, I closely examined what it means to teachers, administrators, and students to center home languages and how their beliefs on the subject show up in educational practice, classroom interactions, and the day-to-day outcomes of teaching and learning. At all three International Academies, the students are primarily young people from Central America, and approximately 25% speak Mayan languages. Across the schools, many teachers and administrators are also Latinx and many are multilingual, but none speak Mayan languages. Recognizing that Indigenous languages and the home languages of young people from racialized communities represent knowledge and value systems historically excluded from and suppressed by schools, I understood that questions about on-the-ground policymaking at the Academies were inextricable from questions about futurity. The LA Academies are contested sites where young people creatively appropriate an institution designed to control them in order to meet their own goals.

To explore these ideas qualitatively, my research questions were (1) What are the official and practiced policies governing students' home languages in the new LAUSD-Internationals Academies? (2) What possibilities for college, career, and community participation do these policies facilitate or constrain for students?

In April 2021, my research formally began with participant observation of the design sessions for the Cerrejón Academy, during which a leadership team from the school and district convened to envision the student and teacher experience in the coming Academy and to develop the handbook, professional development calendar, and course sequence that would bring this vision to life in the fall. I interviewed the design team members to understand their vision for the Academy and the roles they expected students' home languages to play in the new program.

From August 2021 to June 2022, I conducted fieldwork during Cerrejón's inaugural year, observing district leadership, school administrators, teachers, and students in classes, in team meetings, in professional development, and at lunch. During these observations, I looked for instances when they talked about the role of students' home languages in their academic and linguistic development. Specifically, I asked: How and when do students use their home languages in the classroom? How do teachers incorporate students' home languages (including Indigenous languages) into curriculum and instruction? How do school and district leaders discuss using home languages to improve student outcomes?

These observations informed interview protocols for students, community members, teachers, and district staff. Modified from Seidman's (2019) three-part interview sequence, I conducted 90-minute interviews with 15 district leaders and teachers working in the Cerrejón Academy. The interviews explored (a) participants' language education experiences, (b) their feelings on the role of students' home languages in the new Academies, and (c) the implications of relevant formal policy concerning students' home languages. In partnership with Cerrejón, I completed intake interviews with 115 students in the founding freshman class that focused on students' educational histories, linguistic backgrounds, and academic goals. Based on those interviews, I identified 15 students who were representative of the Academy's language

distribution for follow-up interviews to explore their (a) language repertoires and language learning experiences, (b) experiences as recent immigrants to Los Angeles, and (c) future aspirations.

In addition to observation and interview data, I collected and analyzed school transcripts, attendance records, and student achievement data from standardized tests (administered in English and Spanish), writing samples, and portfolios of classroom projects. Together, these data afford holistic information on students' linguistic and academic development to answer my research questions. To better understand the informal community-based language policies, I partnered with the Central American Resource Center (CARECEN), which facilitated a youth organizing program through the 2022 –2023 school year at Cerrejón. There, I had the opportunity to discuss with students their experiences making homes in Los Angeles, interview elders and family members to identify issues their communities were facing, and co-design an action project that addresses a challenge they care about.

In April and May 2022, I observed the design sessions for the Greene and Newton Academies and interviewed those design team members. During SY22–23, my fieldwork at Greene and Newton High Schools yielded data collections analogous to those collected at Cerrejón during SY21–22. Studying three schools operating across the city allowed me to examine home language policy as a process that extends beyond a single institution and, as critical scholars of language policy and practice suggest, uncover its "covert motivations, embedded ideologies, and unintended consequences" (Hornberger, 1997, p. 275).

Summary of Findings

I responded to my research questions in two chapters. In chapter 4, I introduced the metaphor of "surface tension" to address the coexistence of contradictions in the Academies. Surface tension describes how the coexistence of contradictory ideologies, discourses, and practices structures the appearance of the Academy and facilitates the relationships and practices that develop within it. I introduced the concept of "surface tension" through a story about the red-carpet ceremony at Cerrejón to demonstrate its presence at the inception of the Academies. Through that extended vignette, I point toward the coexistence of discourses of love and belonging that exist alongside linguistic ideologies of hegemonic monolingualism and the erasure of Indigenous languages. Then, I developed that notion of surface tension to describe a strain that emerged between two distinct policies toward students' home languages at play in the Academies, which I named the "instrumental" and "fundamental" views of students' home languages.

To describe the instrumental view of students' home languages, I began with a collection of excerpts from interviews with educators across all three Academies that exemplified the ideas behind the practice. This discourse illuminates to the way the instrumental view of students' home languages spans all three Academies and is not limited to a particular school, classroom, or grade level team. Then, to describe the instrumental view in detail, I focused on one teacher, Ms. Velasco, and one instructional unit in her classroom. Ms. Velasco was selected to represent the instrumental view because of her sustained and thoughtful engagement with the International Academy (e.g., attending optional professional development workshops on the weekends) and her recognition by her peers and administrators as a strong teacher. The nuances of the instrumental view were presented through a triangulation of sources, including interviews with

Ms. Velasco, field notes from meetings when she workshopped her curriculum with colleagues, interviews with Ms. Velasco's students, a group interview with Ms. Velasco and her colleagues, and recordings from student-to-student and student-teacher talks in her classroom.

Based on this descriptive work, I defined the instrumental view of students' languages as a belief that languages are more or less universal structures for thought and communication where the components and grammars of one can be transposed to another. Students' home languages were understood primarily as vehicles for accelerating learning to make up for the disadvantaged academic positions they are often understood as occupying. In practice, this policy toward students' home languages was enacted when teachers supported English language development by relying on cognates, diagramming sentences to build comprehension through comparison between English and Spanish, and structuring opportunities for students to read, talk, and write in their home languages before using English. Ultimately, while teachers, administrators, and students praised many elements of this approach, I argue that the instrumental view reifies hierarchical ideas of language proficiency and relies on students' ability to demonstrate school-specific language skills (e.g., summarization, responding accurately to reading comprehension questions). If and when students were seen as not possessing these skills, educators became frustrated with a perceived lack of literacy—or even a lack of *language* (Rosa, 2016)—among students, which was understood as a deficit beyond the purview of their curriculum and instruction.

I took a parallel approach to describe the fundamental view of students' home languages, beginning with a different collection of voices echoing the policy and practice to demonstrate its prevalence across all three Academies. Then, I focused on one teacher, Ms. Jimenez, and her partnership with a community organizer to describe the fundamental view in detail. As with Ms.

Velasco, Ms. Jimenez was selected to represent the fundamental view because of her engagement with the Academy and her high status among her colleagues. The fundamental view was represented through an array of data sources, including interviews with Ms. Jimenez, examination of her curriculum, and interviews with Ms. Jimenez's students, Chana Balam and Gedeón Sacalxot Tepaz.

I defined the fundamental view as policy and practice where students' home languages are understood to be central to their identities, their ways of knowing, and their ways of navigating. In practice, the fundamental view looked like advocating for academic material in Indigenous languages and designing instruction in partnership with community organizations where students engaged in self- and community-based study, as well as inviting members of students' communities—including speakers of their home languages—into the school and into the curriculum in creative ways. While administrators voiced their rhetorical support for this view, when teachers attempted to revise their curriculums and modify their classroom practices around this policy, they often faced bureaucratic obstacles and pressure to align curriculum with standardized tests, both of which were imposed by the school district.

Throughout Chapter 4, I engaged with theory and the scholarly literature on relationality and raciolinguistic ideologies. Relationality, in particular, was represented epistemologically and methodologically in the metaphor of surface tension, whereby the relationship between differing, even contradictory, policy and practice is what constitutes the Academy. In other words, it is the relationships among progressive pedagogies and critical teacher practice within a sociocultural context of hegemonic monolingualism and anti-Indigeneity that *forms* the Academy. From raciolinguistic ideologies, the idea of the co-naturalization of language and race was engaged to understand how it is possible for educators in the Academy to perform a racial solidarity with

students that does not conflict with educators' actions as institutional authorities who fulfill their duties within a school district that has historically undereducated "their kids." In addition, drawing on the co-naturalization of language and race unsettled the relationship between Spanish and Mayan languages at the Academies, where an attempted rehearsal of the sociolinguistic context of Guatemala obscured the presence of English and the broader context of white supremacy in the U.S. that forms the social cauldron in which the Academies exist. These theoretical engagements conclude with provocations on the relationship between settler colonialism and schooling at play in the Academies, and the possibilities for solidarity in that context.

Chapter 5 responds primarily to research question two through an extended examination of the construction of newness at and through the Academies. In this chapter, I argued that the construction of "newness" is a strategy for dominating, structuring, and having authority over Indigenous and Latinx children as part of the ongoing project of U.S. state formation and capital accumulation through conquest. This argument relies on in-depth analysis of Gedeón Sacalxot Tepaz's story, which includes his migration from Guatemala to Los Angeles, his experiences with work and immigration court, and with attending, leaving, and returning to school. Alongside extended excerpts from an interview with Gedeón, I included legal and policy history around immigrant education in Los Angeles as well as comments from administrators to present the contradictions that coil around the construction of newness in the Academies.

Chapter 5 draws conceptually on relationality and abolition. Both concepts are engaged to unsettle the dominant discourse around "newcomers" and the prevailing role in which schools cast themselves as institutions where students "learn America." Relationality's onto-axiological entailments refuse the narrative that Academy students' knowledge of "America" begins only

once they have crossed the border. The dialectic of insurgency/counterinsurgency, which belongs to the Black Radical Tradition, is used to identify how the construction of newness attempts to conceal the transnational political communities and kinship networks to which students belong and which support them. Both concepts are engaged to describe the construction of newness, analyze its impact, and identify students' goals, or *metas*, as a practice of futurity around which solidarity can be forged between educators and immigrant communities.

Significance

Some scholarship in applied linguistics and language education argues that embracing students' full language repertoires is the most effective way to support language development (Garcia & Wei, 2014). In a marked shift from previous policies (Baker, 2001), the U.S. federal government has proposed over $1 billion in funding for the Department of Education's English Language Acquisition program to meet the needs of English learners through a "greater emphasis on multilingualism that embraces students' native and home languages as a strength they bring to their school communities" (U.S. Department of Education, 2022, p.10). Qualitative and quantitative research on the Internationals Network's approach demonstrates positive impacts for newcomers (Fine, Stoudt, and Futch, 2005), including higher graduation rates (Jaffe-Walter and Lee, 2011), increased college acceptance and enrollment (Lee, 2012), enhanced English literacy (Lee and Walsh, 2012), and experiences of culturally responsive schooling (Lee, 2012). However, unlike the approach taken in many bilingual education models, students' home languages are not the medium of instruction in the Internationals Network approach. This absence alongside the Network's documented success led me to ask how educators and students

in the Academies affect and are affected by the current effort to “embrace” the home languages of teenagers who immigrate to the U.S. as a pedagogy for teaching them English.

In addition, recently arrived immigrant students are a growing and underserved student community. Research from RAND Corporation found that about 575,000 school-aged children were apprehended by U.S. Customs and Border Protection officials at the southwestern border alone between 2017 and 2019. Of this group, nearly 500,000 remained in the country and entered public schools (Culbertson et al., 2021). While these numbers account for only a portion of recently arrived immigrant students, they gesture to the growing presence of this community of students in public schools. Nine states (California, Texas, Florida, New York, Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, Georgia, North Carolina, and Louisiana) account for about 75% of the population of recent arrivals; more recently arrived immigrant students attend school in California than in any other state (Culbertson, et al., p. 24). In California, it is estimated that one in 40 students is recently arrived, and 25% of those students attend school in LAUSD. These numbers indicate that recently arrived immigrant students are enrolling in schools across the country and that Los Angeles is a particularly meaningful place to understand how cities, districts, and communities relate to those changes.

Demography is often enlisted to justify research on and with Latinx communities. However, the study of language policy in schools where most students have recently immigrated from Guatemala is significant beyond enrollment trends. Public high schools, as government institutions, are endowed with a last-chance responsibility for shaping people on the verge of adulthood while manufacturing and reproducing the racial, linguistic, and social class differences they claim to regulate and ameliorate. Public schools have played this contentious role since their founding in the United States. The development of schooling as a “sophisticated war technique”

against Indigenous and other minoritized children (Vaught, Brayboy, Chin, 2022, p. 21) is inseparable from the ongoing struggles these same communities experience in attempting to use schools as vehicles to redistribute state resources and build individual and collective political and economic power. Due in part to legal challenges to explicitly race-based discrimination, language education policy increasingly constitutes the terrain upon which these dilemmas of inequity unfold. So the focused study of language policy in a school for recently arrived immigrants reveals a contemporary mode in which a racialized population is positioned vis-à-vis whiteness. These insights demonstrate contemporary interrelations between language, race, and schooling from which we can identify the specificities of shared struggle and imagine anticolonial relationships between schools, educators, and racially minoritized communities.

Contributions

Methodological Contributions

This study makes two major methodological contributions to the study of educational language policy. First, I developed strong relationships and was given rare access with research partners who occupy differing—and often contentious—institutional positions: district administrators, school-based educators, a community-based organization, and a national nonprofit. During fieldwork, I not only was able to observe and interview members of each group but also to collaborate closely with them on their projects. For example, at the community level I worked closely with the Central American Resource Network (CARECEN) as they built relationships with the New Academies and redesigned their student leadership programming to meet the specific needs and requirements of each school. At the school level, I met regularly with Academy leaders to discuss the development of their programs and, for example, develop

classroom observation protocols that administrators and teachers would use to gain a clearer understanding of how teaching and learning was occurring in Academy classrooms. I also worked with teachers who were new to leading classes composed entirely of recently arrived students to design and revise curriculum. Building strong, collaborative relationships at many polarities meant crossing lines of power. As I discussed in Chapter 3, this required extensive reflexivity and ongoing communication with research partners. However, moving across powered boundaries as a researcher kept me focused on the way that language policy radiates through individual, social, and historical contexts and the tensions between those contexts. Furthermore, working at multiple sites as well as multiple locations of power allowed me to heed Nancy Hornberger's (2020) call for the "exploration of ideological and implementational LPP spaces as scalar, layered policies and practices influencing each other mutually reinforcing, wedging, and transforming ideology through implementation and vice versa" (p. 122).

Second, this study contributes to the ethnography of language policy by advancing contemporary practice in ethnographic monitoring. LPP scholars Jef Van der Aa and the late Jan Blommaert (2011) suggested that ethnographic monitoring was "unfinished business" in the field of LPP. LPP scholars suggest ethnographic monitoring's utility for studying progressive policy reforms (since its original in relation to the Bilingual Education Authorization act) as well its potential for critical research praxis to disrupt extractive relationships between researchers, schools, and communities (McCarty & Halle-Erby, 2024; Van der Aa & Blommaert, 2011). Ethnographic monitoring declares that "the fundamental position of the researcher [is] as an actor of change" (Van der Aa & Blommaert, 2011, p. 333) and insists that making change means participating in ongoing, collaborative work. Such sustained partnership requires ongoing consent and enduring commitment from the researcher as well as the research partners.

Developing and maintaining such relationships is not easy. In this study, I gained the consenting partnership of the LAUSD, CARECEN, and Internationals Network for Public Schools. Specifically, CARECEN's Youth Leadership Program; Internationals' School Development team; LAUSD's office of Multilingual and Multicultural Education; the principals and assistant principals at Cerrejón, Greene, and Newton high schools; the teaching teams at each Academy; and the students who agreed to work with me. These relationships allowed for a comprehensive examination of language policy process in action, rather than an analysis of only policy outcomes. In addition, these relationships allowed me to listen to what the human beings who make up these institutions describe as the real problems they contend with, observe the resources they drew upon to respond to those problems, and collaboratively review my observations and interpret significance together. This attention to individuals within institutions makes it possible to understand how a particular person on a particular day is affected by and affects history and politics in a way that exceeds national boundaries. As we more carefully understand the tethers between the mundane and the political, I hope that it becomes easier to recognize the immensity and complexity of the global systems within which we live as evidence of *our* power.

Theoretical Contributions

The theoretical contributions of this study come from a reorientation of the study of "newcomers" in schools as the study of ongoing U.S. colonization. Rather than studying language policy to identify the contours of assimilation and identity formation among a particular group of people, my orientation asserts that what "newcomers" in American schools show us is where and how U.S. empire is constructed, how the brutality of that empire collides with a specific community, and how that collision is navigated and resisted. This dissertation

asserts that immigrant students enrolling in U.S. public schools as a means to accomplish their individual and collective goals is an act of insurgency. It is insurgent to claim the resources of the metropole for the benefit of colonized peoples. It is insurgent to refuse the restriction of geopolitical borders and move without authorization to regions where there is greater stability, higher wages, and more public services.

Importantly, this insurgency is ongoing and occurs in a sociopolitical landscape shaped by previous insurgencies and attendant state counterinsurgencies. In Los Angeles, the presence of Latinx teachers and administrators as well as the existence of progressive language policy is the result of this insurgent-counterinsurgent dialectic during the decades before the International Academies opened. By studying educational language policy through a conceptual framework underpinned by the ethnography of language policy, relationality, raciolinguistic ideologies, and abolition, this dissertation identifies colonial ideologies circulating through progressive reform. In doing so, the dissertation illuminates the way the school system attempts to appropriate a previous insurgent demand (i.e., Latinx educators in schools with many Latinx students) into its existing structures of racialized inequality. Beyond this identification, the dissertation argues that ongoing support of and identification with insurgency is a method for practicing solidarity with immigrant students, rather than succumbing to complicity with state counterinsurgency.

I hope that this dissertation contributes toward heeding the call in Chicana/o studies for relational studies of race and racism and that it further illuminates the relationship between language policy and carcerality/conquest. Natalie Molina (2013) explains that a relational treatment of race "recognizes that the construction of race is a mutually constitutive process" (p. 522). In her own research on how the category of "Mexican" was shaped through discourses of public health, this necessitates understanding how constructions of Blackness, Asianness, and

Indigeneity inflected the meaning of "Mexican" as a racial category. Taking a relational approach to the study of race means looking at the experience of a racialized group in relation to the other communities with whom they live, work, and attend school. Rather than operating comparatively, a relational approach explores how racialization can differ depending on the specific group being targeted. The major advantage of this approach is to uncover colonial logics as they shift across time, place, and communities to reveal where solidarity is needed and what coalition might look like. In this study, looking at race relationally underscores the importance of paying close attention to the presence of Mayan students in the predominantly Latinx Academies. Furthermore, this attention resists simple narratives where Chicano educators are cast as oppressors of Guatemalan students. Instead, taking a relational approach to the study of race and language at the International Academies foregrounds colonialism and the vulnerabilities it structures for the students and educators with whom I worked.

This research contributes to the scholarly conversation on the role of educational language policies in structuring captivity among young people (Cabral, 2022; Cushing, 2020). The role of language surveillance in the formation of colonial governmentality has a long intellectual history (Bourdieu, 1991; Foucault, 1979), and scholars have been increasingly studying the relationship between schools and prisons (Meiners, 2007; Sojoyner, 2016; Vaught, 2017; Winn, 2011). Specifically, by thoroughly examining the construction of "newness" among students in the International Academies, this study highlights the way that educational language policy can operate as a flexible enclosure that works in concert with carceral institutions to control the mobility and sociality of immigrant young people. Examining language policy this way reveals it to be another front for organizing against colonial power and its injunction against free movement.

Directions for Future Research: Transnational Teacher Solidarity

At all three International Academies, teachers engaged in regular student support meetings. During these sessions, a team of teachers who share the same cohorts of students would use a protocol to discuss concerns about a student, share what they observed about the student's background and strengths, and develop plans to better teach them. Organically, the Academy teachers began to invite students' former teachers to join these meetings virtually, when possible. These meetings connect students' past and present teachers across borders and, through dialogue and ongoing collaboration, begin to weave together otherwise disparate threads of students' social networks and support systems.

This partnership is possible in large part because of the shared language, racial identity, and immigration experiences among the educators and the students at the Academies. Academy teachers are able to speak with students' former teachers because of their Spanish language skills, but just as important was their cultural knowledge as members of the Chicano and Central American communities and, in some of their cases, as former students in Central American schools. The primary fact of these burgeoning transnational relationships could be understood in terms of Tara Yosso's (2005) idea of community cultural wealth or, thinking with a frame of educational and applied linguistics, in terms of a local practice of linguistically facilitated community-building identified at "the locus of enunciation" in Latinx community at the LA Academies (Flores & Rosa, 2022, p. 287). This connects back to the demand for bilingual personnel the students and educators who walked out of Cerrejón in 1968 had made. Without the richness of the particular bilingualism of the Academy teachers, this transnational teacher organizing could not take place.

Transnationalism, in this case, is being activated as a framework for teachers in Los Angeles to understand the context and history alive within their students. Transnationalism is also being activated as a potential method for disruption and counterinsurgency. As these educators work together from different positions within the same diasporic region, they create a professional and political community that exceeds the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles Unified School District. In other words, by thinking and organizing transnationally, educators who are located solidly within LAUSD dig into the cracks and crawl spaces carved out by the dialectic of insurgency and counterinsurgency—from the 1968 Blowouts to the 2021 opening of the International Academies and begin to create something new.

Appendix A: Research Information Sheet - English

University of California, Los Angeles

RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET

Talking Past: Excavating the Future through an Ethnographic Study of Language Policy in Los Angeles Schools

INTRODUCTION

Kyle Halle-Erby, MA and Teresa McCarty, PhD from the School of Education and Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles are conducting a research study. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because of your work with new International Academies in LAUSD. Your participation in this research study is voluntary.

WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT A RESEARCH STUDY?

- Someone will explain this research study to you.
- Whether or not you take part is up to you.
- You can choose not to take part.
- You can agree to take part and later change your mind.
- Your decision will not be held against you.
- You can ask all the questions you want before you decide.

WHY IS THIS RESEARCH BEING DONE?

This study is designed to establish a record of the role that students, teachers, principals, and community members play in the language education of recently-arrived immigrant students. This study will assess how students' home language(s) and prior school and work experiences are incorporated into their high school education and what impact that inclusion has on learning.

HOW LONG WILL THE RESEARCH LAST AND WHAT WILL I NEED TO DO?

Participation will take a total of about 1-10 hours, over the course of eighteen month, depending on participation level.

If you volunteer to participate in this study, the researcher will ask you to do the following:

- Teacher/Principal/School Staff participants
    - Observe staff, department, team meetings
    - Observe classroom 1-5 times over eighteen months, if applicable
    - Participate in a 45-60 minute, one-on-one interview, one-three times.
- School District Staff participants

- Observe planning and design meetings relating to the International Academies
- Participate in a 45-60 minute, one-on-one interview, one-three times.

All research activities will take place virtually or at your school or district office, safety precautions permitting.

ARE THERE ANY RISKS IF I PARTICIPATE?

There are no anticipated risks or discomforts.

ARE THERE ANY BENEFITS IF I PARTICIPATE?

You will not directly benefit from this study. Although participation will allow you time to reflect critically on your education and/or work with immigrant students, the benefits of this research will primarily be for students and educators to come.

The results of the research may improve the way schools and communities design the education of immigrant students so that more students develop the language and content skills they need for the lives they want.

HOW WILL INFORMATION ABOUT ME AND MY PARTICIPATION BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

The researchers will do their best to make sure that your private information is kept confidential. Information about you will be handled as confidentially as possible, but participating in research may involve a loss of privacy and the potential for a breach in confidentiality. Study data will be physically and electronically secured. As with any use of electronic means to store data, there is a risk of breach of data security.

Use of personal information that can identify you:
If identifying information is collected it will be replaced with code. A codekey will be created to keep track of coded data that will be kept in a secured location separate from the coded data files.

How information about you will be stored:
Information about you will be stored on a password protected, encrypted database.

People and agencies that will have access to your information:
The research team and authorized UCLA personnel may have access to study data and records to monitor the study. Research records provided to authorized, non-UCLA personnel will not contain identifiable information about you. Publications and/or presentations that result from this study will not identify you by name.

Employees of the University may have access to identifiable information as part of routine processing of your information. However, University employees are bound by strict rules of confidentiality.

How long information from the study will be kept:
Coded data from this study will be kept indefinitely.

USE OF DATA FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Your data, including de-identified data, may be kept for use in future research.

WHO CAN I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS STUDY?

The research team:
If you have any questions, comments or concerns about the research, you can talk to the one of the researchers. Please contact: Kyle Halle-Erby at 510-646-0867 or kmhe@ucla.edu. Teresa McCarty at 310-206-2569 or Teresa.McCarty@ucla.edu.

UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program (OHRPP):

If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, or you have concerns or suggestions and you want to talk to someone other than the researchers, you may contact the UCLA OHRPP by phone: (310) 206-2040; by email: participants@research.ucla.edu or by mail: Box 951406, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1406.

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS IF I TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

- You can choose whether or not you want to be in this study, and you may withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time.
- Whatever decision you make, there will be no penalty to you, and no loss of benefits to which you were otherwise entitled.
- You may refuse to answer any questions that you do not want to answer and still remain in the study.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Appendix A: Research Information Sheet – Spanish

University of California, Los Ángeles

HOJA DE INFORMACIÓN SOBRE LA INVESTIGACIÓN

El pasado habla: Excavamos el futuro por medio de un estudio etnográfico de la política de idiomas en las escuelas de Los Ángeles

INTRODUCCIÓN

Kyle Halle-Erby, MA y Teresa McCarty, PhD de la Facultad de Educación y Estudios sobre la Información de la University of California, Los Ángeles están realizando un estudio de investigación. Usted fue seleccionado como posible participante en este estudio debido a su trabajo en las nuevas International Academies en LAUSD. Su participación en este estudio de investigación es voluntaria.

¿QUÉ DEBO SABER SOBRE UN ESTUDIO DE INVESTIGACIÓN?

- Alguien le explicará este estudio de investigación.
- Depende de usted decidir si participará o no.
- Puede elegir no participar.
- Puede aceptar participar y, más tarde, cambiar de parecer.
- Su decisión no será utilizada en su contra.
- Puede hacer todas las preguntas que desee antes de decidir.

¿POR QUÉ SE ESTÁ LLEVANDO A CABO ESTA INVESTIGACIÓN?

Este estudio está diseñado para establecer un registro del rol que cumplen los estudiantes, los maestros, los directores y los miembros de la comunidad en la educación en idiomas de los estudiantes que inmigraron hace poco tiempo. Este estudio evaluará el modo en que el (los) idioma(s) que se habla(n) en el hogar del estudiante y sus experiencias escolares y laborales previas se incorporan en su educación secundaria y el impacto que tiene dicha inclusión en el aprendizaje.

¿CUÁNTO TIEMPO DURARÁ LA INVESTIGACIÓN Y QUÉ TENDRÉ QUE HACER?

La participación llevará un total aproximado de 1 a 10 horas, en el transcurso de dieciocho meses, dependiendo del nivel de participación.

Si se ofrece como voluntario para participar en este estudio, el investigador le pedirá que haga lo siguiente:

- Participantes maestros/directores/personal de la escuela

- Observar las reuniones de personal, departamento, equipo.
    - Observar el salón de clase entre 1 y 5 veces durante el transcurso de dieciocho meses, si corresponde.
    - Participar en una entrevista individual de 45 a 60 minutos, entre una y tres veces.
- Participantes miembros del personal del distrito escolar
    - Observar las reuniones de planificación y diseño relacionadas con las International Academies.
    - Participar en una entrevista individual de 45 a 60 minutos, entre una y tres veces.

Todas las actividades de investigación tendrán lugar en su escuela u oficina del distrito.

¿HAY ALGÚN RIESGO SI PARTICIPO?

No se prevén riesgos ni molestias.

¿HAY ALGÚN BENEFICIO SI PARTICIPO?

No se beneficiará en forma directa de este estudio. Si bien la participación le dará tiempo para reflexionar en forma crítica sobre su educación y/o su trabajo con estudiantes inmigrantes, los beneficios de esta investigación serán principalmente para los futuros estudiantes y educadores.

Los resultados de la investigación pueden mejorar la manera en que las escuelas y las comunidades diseñan la educación de los estudiantes inmigrantes, de modo que más estudiantes desarrollen las habilidades de idioma y contenido que necesitan para la vida que desean tener.

¿CÓMO SE MANTENDRÁ LA CONFIDENCIALIDAD DE LA INFORMACIÓN SOBRE MÍ Y MI PARTICIPACIÓN?

Los investigadores harán todo lo que puedan para garantizar que su información privada se mantenga de manera confidencial. La investigación sobre usted se manejará con la mayor confidencialidad posible, pero participar en una investigación puede involucrar una pérdida de la privacidad y la posible violación de la confidencialidad. Los datos del estudio se mantendrán seguros de manera física y electrónica. Como sucede con cualquier medio electrónico para almacenar datos, existe un riesgo de violación de la seguridad de los datos.

Uso de información personal que puede identificarlo:
Si se recopila información que lo identifica, esta será reemplazada por un código. Se creará un código para realizar el seguimiento de los datos codificados, el cual se conservará en un lugar seguro por separado de los archivos con datos codificados.
Cómo se almacenará la información sobre usted:
La información sobre usted se almacenará en una base de datos cifrada protegida con contraseña.

Personas y organismos que tendrán acceso a su información:
El equipo de la investigación y el personal autorizado de la UCLA pueden tener acceso a los datos y registros del estudio para monitorear el estudio. Los registros de la investigación

proporcionados al personal ajeno a la UCLA autorizado no contendrán información sobre usted que pueda identificarlo. Las publicaciones y/o presentaciones que se produzcan a partir de este estudio no lo identificarán por su nombre.

Los empleados de la universidad pueden tener acceso la información que lo identifique como parte del procesamiento de rutina de su información. Sin embargo, los empleados de la universidad están obligados por estrictas reglas de confidencialidad.

Cuánto tiempo se conservará la información del estudio:
Los datos codificados de este estudio se conservarán por tiempo indeterminado.

USO DE LOS DATOS PARA INVESTIGACIONES FUTURAS

Sus datos, incluidos los datos que no incluyen su identificación, pueden conservarse para utilizar en investigaciones futuras.

¿CON QUIÉN PUEDO COMUNICARME SI TENGO PREGUNTAS SOBRE ESTE ESTUDIO?

El equipo de la investigación:
Si tiene alguna pregunta, comentarios o inquietudes sobre la investigación, puede hablar con uno de los investigadores. Comuníquese con: Kyle Halle-Erby al 510-646-0867 o a kmhe@ucla.edu. Teresa McCarty at 310-206-2569 o a Teresa.McCarty@ucla.edu.

Oficina del Programa de Protección de Seres Humanos en Investigaciones (*Office of the Human Research Protection Program,* OHRPP) de la UCLA:

Si tiene preguntas sobre sus derechos como sujeto de una investigación o tiene inquietudes o sugerencias y desea hablar con alguien además de los investigadores, puede comunicarse con la OHRPP de la UCLA por teléfono: (310) 206-2040; por correo electrónico: participants@research.ucla.edu o por correo postal: Box 951406, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1406.

¿CUÁLES SON MIS DERECHOS SI PARTICIPO EN ESTE ESTUDIO?

- Puede decidir si desea o no participar en este estudio, y puede retirar su consentimiento y dejar de participar en cualquier momento.
- Cualquiera sea la decisión que tome, no habrá sanciones para usted, y no perderá ningún beneficio al cual tenga derecho de otro modo.
- Puede negarse a responder cualquier pregunta que no desee responder e igualmente continuar en el estudio.

Se le entregará una copia de esta información para sus registros.

Appendix B: Adolescent Assent Form – English

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

ADOLESCENT (Ages 13-17) ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Talking Past: Excavating the Future through an Ethnographic Study of Language Policy in Los Angeles Schools

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Kyle Halle-Erby, MA and Teresa McCarty, PhD from the School of Education and Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a student in the new International Academy. Your participation in this research study is voluntary.

Why is this study being done?

This study is designed to document the role that students, teachers, principals, and community members play in the language education of recently-arrived immigrant students. This study will assess how students' home language(s) and prior school and work experiences are incorporated into their high school education and what impact that inclusion has on learning.

What will happen if I take part in this research study?

Please talk this over with your parents before you decide whether or not to participate. We will also ask your parents to give their permission for you to take part in this study. But even if your parents say "yes" you can still decide not to do this.

If you volunteer to participate in this study, the researcher will ask you to do the following:

- Observe classroom participation 1-5 times over eighteen months
- Participate in a 45-60 minute interview, either in one-on-one or in a small group, one-three times.
- *6-12 student student participants*: Join a weekly, lunch-time student leadership group about supporting the immigrant community in Los Angeles.

How long will I be in the research study?

Participation in the study will take a total of about *3*-18 hours *eighteen months***.**

Are there any potential risks or discomforts that I can expect from this study?

There are no anticipated risks or discomforts.

Are there any potential benefits if I participate?

You will not directly benefit from this study. Although participation will allow you time to reflect critically on your education and/or work with immigrant students, the benefits of this research will primarily be for students and educators to come.

The results of the research may improve the way schools and communities design the education of immigrant students so that more students develop the language and content skills they need for the lives they want.

Will information about me and my participation be kept confidential?

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that identify you will remain confidential. It will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of using a code instead of your name, your school, or any other personal information about you. The researchers will do their best to make sure that your private information is kept confidential. Information about you will be handled as confidentially as possible, but participating in research may involve a loss of privacy and the potential for a breach in confidentiality. Study data will be physically and electronically secured. As with any use of electronic means to store data, there is a risk of breach of data security. Your data, including de-identified data may be kept for use in future research

What are my rights if I take part in this study?

You may withdraw your assent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty or loss of benefits to which you were otherwise entitled.

You can choose whether or not you want to be in this study. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may leave the study at any time without consequences of any kind. You are not waiving any of your legal rights if you choose to be in this research study. You may refuse to answer any questions that you do not want to answer and still remain in the study.

Who can answer questions I might have about this study?

If you have any questions, comments or concerns about the research, you can talk to the one of the researchers. Please contact Kyle Halle-Erby at 510-646-0867 or kmhe@ucla.edu. Teresa McCarty at 310-206-2569 or Teresa.McCarty@ucla.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, or you have concerns or suggestions and you want to talk to someone other than the researchers, you may contact the UCLA OHRPP by phone: (310) 206-2040; by email: participants@research.ucla.edu or by mail: Box 951406, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1406.

Appendix B: Adolescent Assent Form – Spanish

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ÁNGELES

ASENTIMIENTO DE ADOLESCENTES (13 a 17 años) PARA PARTICIPAR EN UNA INVESTIGACIÓN

El pasado habla: Excavamos el futuro por medio de un estudio etnográfico de la política de idiomas en las escuelas de Los Ángeles

Te solicitamos que participes en un estudio de investigación dirigido por Kyle Halle-Erby, MA y Teresa McCarty, PhD de la Facultad de Educación y Estudios sobre la Información de la University of California, Los Ángeles. Fuiste seleccionado como posible participante en este estudio porque eres estudiante en la nueva International Academy. Tu participación en este estudio de investigación es voluntaria.

¿Por qué se realiza este estudio?

Este estudio está diseñado para documentar el rol que cumplen los estudiantes, los maestros, los directores y los miembros de la comunidad en la educación en idiomas de los estudiantes que inmigraron hace poco tiempo. Este estudio evaluará el modo en que el (los) idioma(s) que se habla(n) en el hogar del estudiante y sus experiencias escolares y laborales previas se incorporan en su educación secundaria y el impacto que tiene dicha inclusión en el aprendizaje.

¿Qué sucederá si participo en este estudio de investigación?

Habla sobre esto con tus padres antes de decidir si participarás o no. También les pediremos permiso a tus padres para que tú participes en este estudio. Sin embargo, incluso si tus padres dicen "Sí", tú igualmente puedes decidir no hacerlo.

Si te ofreces como voluntario para participar en este estudio, el investigador te pedirá que hagas lo siguiente:

- Observar la participación en el salón de clase entre 1 y 5 veces durante el transcurso de dieciocho meses
- Participar en una entrevista de 45 a 60 minutos, ya sea individual o en un grupo pequeño, entre una y tres veces.
- *Participantes estudiantes de 6 a 12 años:* Unirse a un grupo semanal de liderazgo estudiantil, a la hora del almuerzo, que tratará sobre el apoyo a la comunidad de inmigrantes en Los Ángeles.

¿Cuánto tiempo estaré en el estudio de investigación?

La participación en el estudio llevará un total aproximado de 3 a 18 horas, *en dieciocho meses*.

¿Hay algún riesgo o molestia potencial que pueda prever por participar en este estudio?

No se prevén riesgos ni molestias.

¿Hay algún beneficio si participo?

No te beneficiarás en forma directa de este estudio. Si bien la participación te dará tiempo para reflexionar en forma crítica sobre tu educación y/o tu trabajo con estudiantes inmigrantes, los beneficios de esta investigación serán principalmente para los futuros estudiantes y educadores.

Los resultados de la investigación pueden mejorar la manera en que las escuelas y las comunidades diseñan la educación de los estudiantes inmigrantes, de modo que más estudiantes desarrollen las habilidades de idioma y contenido que necesitan para la vida que desean tener.

¿Se mantendrá la confidencialidad de la información sobre mí y mi participación?

Toda información que se obtenga en relación con este estudio y que pueda identificarte se mantendrá de manera confidencial. Se divulgará solo con tu permiso o según lo exija la ley. Para mantener la confidencialidad, se utilizará un código en lugar de tu nombre, tu escuela o cualquier otra información personal sobre ti. Los investigadores harán todo lo posible para asegurarse de que si información privada se mantenga confidencial, pero participando en una investigación puede incluir una perdida de privacidad. Los datos del estudio estarán protegidos física y electrónicamente. Los datos del estudio estarán protegidos física y electrónicamente. Al igual que con cualquier uso de medios electrónicos para almacenar datos, existe el riesgo de violación de la seguridad de los datos. Sus datos, incluidos los datos no identificados, pueden conservarse para su uso en investigaciones futuras.

¿Cuáles son mis derechos si participo en este estudio?

Puedes retirar tu asentimiento en cualquier momento y discontinuar tu participación sin sanciones ni pérdida de beneficios que te correspondan.

Puedes decidir si deseas o no participar en este estudio. Si te ofreces como voluntario para este estudio, puedes abandonar este estudio en cualquier momento sin consecuencias de ningún tipo. No renuncias a ninguno de tus derechos legales si eliges participar en este estudio de investigación. Puedes negarte a responder cualquier pregunta que no desees responder e igualmente continuar en el estudio.

¿Quién puede responder las preguntas que pudiera tener sobre este estudio?

Si tienes alguna pregunta, comentarios o inquietudes sobre la investigación, puedes hablar con uno de los investigadores. Comunícate con Kyle Halle-Erby al 510-646-0867 o a kmhe@ucla.edu. Teresa McCarty at 310-206-2569 o Teresa.McCarty@ucla.edu.

Si tienes preguntas sobre tus derechos como sujeto de una investigación o tienes inquietudes o sugerencias y deseas hablar con alguien además de los investigadores, puedes comunicarte con la OHRPP de la UCLA por teléfono: (310) 206-2040; por correo electrónico: participants@research.ucla.edu o por correo postal: Box 951406, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1406.

Appendix C: Parent Permission Form – English

University of California, Los Angeles

PARENT PERMISSION FOR MINOR TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Talking Past: Excavating the Future through an Ethnographic Study of Language Policy in Los Angeles Schools

Kyle Halle-Erby, MA and Teresa McCarty, PhD from the School of Education and Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles are conducting a research study.

Your child was selected as a possible participant in this study because they are enrolled in the new International Academy. Your child's participation in this research study is voluntary.

Why is this study being done?

This study is designed to establish a record of the role that students, teachers, principals, and community members play in the language education of recently-arrived immigrant students. This study will assess how students' home language(s) and prior school and work experiences are incorporated into their high school education and what impact that inclusion has on learning.

What will happen if my child takes part in this research study?

If you agree to allow your child to participate in this study, we would ask him/her to:

- Have their classroom participation observed 1-5 times over eighteen months.
- Participate in a 45-60 minute interview, either in one-on-one or in a small group, one-three times.
- *For 6-12 student student participants*: Join a weekly, lunch-time student leadership group about supporting the immigrant community in Los Angeles.

How long will my child be in the research study?

Participation will take a total of about 1-15 hours, over the course of eighteen month, depending on participation level.

Are there any potential risks or discomforts that my child can expect from this study?

There are no anticipated risks or discomforts.

Are there any potential benefits to my child if he or she participates?

Your child will not directly benefit from the study. Although participation will allow your child time to reflect critically on their education, the benefits of this research will primarily be for students and educators to come.

The results of the research may improve the way schools and communities design the education of immigrant students so that more students develop the language and content skills they need for the lives they want.

Will information about my child's participation be kept confidential?

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that identify you will remain confidential. It will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of using a code instead of your name, your school, or any other personal information about you. The researchers will do their best to make sure that your private information is kept confidential. Information about you will be handled as confidentially as possible, but participating in research may involve a loss of privacy and the potential for a breach in confidentiality. Study data will be physically and electronically secured. As with any use of electronic means to store data, there is a risk of breach of data security. Your data, including de-identified data may be kept for use in future research.

What are my and my child's rights if he or she takes part in this study?

- You can choose whether or not you want your child to be in this study, and you may withdraw your permission and discontinue your child's participation at any time.
- Whatever decision you make, there will be no penalty to you or your child, and no loss of benefits to which you or your child were otherwise entitled.
- Your child may refuse to answer any questions that he/she does not want to answer and still remain in the study.

Who can I contact if I have questions about this study?

- **The research team:**
  If you have any questions, comments or concerns about the research, you can talk to the one of the researchers. Please contact:

Kyle Halle-Erby at 510-646-0867 or kmhe@ucla.edu. Teresa McCarty at 310-206-2569 or Teresa.McCarty@ucla.edu.

- **UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program (OHRPP):**
  If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, or you have concerns or suggestions and you want to talk to someone other than the researchers, you may contact the UCLA OHRPP by phone: (310) 206-2040; by email: participants@research.ucla.edu or by mail: Box 951406, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1406.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Appendix C: Parent Permission Form – Spanish

University of California, Los Ángeles

PERMISO DE LOS PADRES PARA QUE EL MENOR PARTICIPE EN UNA INVESTIGACIÓN

El pasado habla: Excavamos el futuro por medio de un estudio etnográfico de la política de idiomas en las escuelas de Los Ángeles

Kyle Halle-Erby, MA y Teresa McCarty, PhD de la Facultad de Educación y Estudios sobre la Información de la University of California, Los Ángeles están realizando un estudio de investigación.

Su hijo fue seleccionado como posible participante en este estudio porque está inscrito en la nueva International Academy. La participación de su hijo en este estudio de investigación es voluntaria.

¿Por qué se realiza este estudio?

Este estudio está diseñado para establecer un registro del rol que cumplen los estudiantes, los maestros, los directores y los miembros de la comunidad en la educación en idiomas de los estudiantes que inmigraron hace poco tiempo. Este estudio evaluará el modo en que el (los) idioma(s) que se habla(n) en el hogar del estudiante y sus experiencias escolares y laborales previas se incorporan en su educación secundaria y el impacto que tiene dicha inclusión en el aprendizaje.

¿Qué sucederá si mi hijo participa en este estudio de investigación?

Si usted acepta permitir que su hijo participe en este estudio, le pediremos que haga lo siguiente:

- Dejar que alguien observe la participación en el salón de clase entre 1 y 5 veces durante el transcurso de dieciocho meses.
- Participar en una entrevista de 45 a 60 minutos, ya sea individual o en un grupo pequeño, entre una y tres veces.
- *Participantes estudiantes de 6 a 12 años:* unirse a un grupo semanal de liderazgo estudiantil, a la hora del almuerzo, que tratará sobre el apoyo a la comunidad de inmigrantes en Los Ángeles.

¿Cuánto tiempo estará mi hijo en el estudio de investigación?

La participación llevará un total aproximado de 1 a 15 horas, en el transcurso de dieciocho meses, dependiendo del nivel de participación.

¿Hay algún riesgo o molestia potencial que pueda esperar mi hijo por participar en este estudio?

No se prevén riesgos ni molestias.

¿Hay algún beneficio potencial para mi hijo si participa?

Su hijo no se beneficiará en forma directa del estudio. Si bien la participación le dará a su hijo tiempo para reflexionar en forma crítica sobre su educación, los beneficios de esta investigación serán principalmente para los futuros estudiantes y educadores.

Los resultados de la investigación pueden mejorar la manera en que las escuelas y las comunidades diseñan la educación de los estudiantes inmigrantes, de modo que más estudiantes desarrollen las habilidades de idioma y contenido que necesitan para la vida que desean tener.

¿La información sobre la participación de mi hijo se mantendrá de manera confidencial?

Toda información que se obtenga en relación con este estudio y que pueda identificarlo se mantendrá de manera confidencial. Se divulgará solo con su permiso o según lo exija la ley. Para mantener la confidencialidad, se utilizará un código en lugar de su nombre, su escuela o cualquier otra información personal sobre usted. Los investigadores harán todo lo posible para asegurarse de que si información privada se mantenga confidencial, pero participando en una investigación puede incluir una perdida de privacidad. Los datos del estudio estarán protegidos física y electrónicamente. Los datos del estudio estarán protegidos física y electrónicamente. Al igual que con cualquier uso de medios electrónicos para almacenar datos, existe el riesgo de violación de la seguridad de los datos. Sus datos, incluidos los datos no identificados, pueden conservarse para su uso en investigaciones futuras.

¿Cuáles son mis derechos y los derechos de mi hijo/a si participa en este estudio?

- Puede decidir si desea o no que su hijo participe en este estudio, y puede retirar su permiso y discontinuar la participación de su hijo en cualquier momento.
- Cualquiera sea la decisión que tome, no habrá sanciones para usted ni para su hijo, y no perderá ningún beneficio al cual tengan derecho de otro modo usted o su hijo.
- Su hijo puede negarse a responder cualquier pregunta que no desee responder e igualmente continuar en el estudio.

¿Con quién puedo comunicarme si tengo preguntas sobre este estudio?

- **El equipo de la investigación:**
  Si tiene alguna pregunta, comentarios o inquietudes sobre la investigación, puede hablar con uno de los investigadores. Comuníquese con:

Kyle Halle-Erby al 510-646-0867 o a kmhe@ucla.edu. Teresa McCarty at 310-206-2569 o Teresa.McCarty@ucla.edu.

- **Oficina del Programa de Protección de Seres Humanos en Investigaciones (*Office of the Human Research Protection Program*, OHRPP) de la UCLA:**

Si tiene preguntas sobre sus derechos como sujeto de una investigación o tiene inquietudes o sugerencias y desea hablar con alguien además de los investigadores, puede comunicarse con la OHRPP de la UCLA por teléfono: (310) 206-2040; por correo electrónico: participants@research.ucla.edu o por correo postal: Box 951406, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1406.

Se le entregará una copia de esta información para sus registros.

Appendix D: General Ethnographic Observation Protocol

General Ethnographic Observation Protocol

Observation Purpose:		
Observer:	Obs. #:	Date/Time:
Location/Scene:		
Visual Map:		

Participants:	No. of Attendees:
Key Participants* & Roles:	
Key Activities:	

Running Record:

Time	Observation	Observer Comments
	(Continue on additional pages)	

Appendix E: Classroom Ethnographic Observation Protocol

Classroom Ethnographic Observation Protocol

<table>
<tr><td>Observer:</td><td>Obs. #:</td><td colspan="2">Date/Time:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Observation Purpose:</td></tr>
<tr><td>School Site:</td><td>Teacher:</td><td>Subject/Grade:</td><td>No. of Students:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Visual Map:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Additional Participants (aides, coaches, etc.) & Focal Students (if applicable)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Content Objectives:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Language Objectives:</td></tr>
</table>

Running Record:

Time	Observation	Observer Comments
	(Continue on additional pages)	

Appendix F: Document Analysis Protocol

Talking Past: Excavating the Future through an Ethnographic Study of Language Policy in Los Angeles Schools

Document Analysis Protocol

Document Title ____________________________ Date____________Language_____________

Written Observation	*Reflective Commentary*
Themes	***Quotes***
Analytic Memo	

Appendix G: Interview Protocols

The Role of Home-Language in Public High Schools for Newcomers

Research Team:
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Semi-Structured Interview Protocol: Students

Part 1: Focused Life History

- Tell me about your background. Where were you born? Where did you grow up?
- Tell me about the role of language in your life. What languages do you speak? How/where did you learn them? What languages did you see/hear in your home country? What languages do you see/hear now?
- What language do you use to talk to your family? What language do you use at home? What language do you use to talk to your teachers?
- Tell me about your experiences in school. Did you attend school in your home country? What kind? What was your experience with teachers? What did you like and dislike about school?
- Tell me about your experience in Los Angeles.
    - When did you arrive in Los Angeles? How did you get to Los Angeles? Who do you live with in Los Angeles?
    - What do you like about Los Angeles? What do you dislike about Los Angeles?
    - Do you work? How/where do you work? What language/s do you use at work?

Part 2: Home Language, English & The New Academy

- How do you use English at school?
- How do you see your teachers use English at school?
- How do you use your home language at school?
- How do you see your teachers use your home language at school?
- Who speaks your home language at school?
- What language goals do you have for yourself?
- What do you do to learn English? Who/what helps you learn English? How do you feel about learning English?
- What are your goals in school? What motivates you to come to school? What are your goals after graduation?
- What do you hope for yourself in the future?

El papel de la lengua materna en las escuelas secundarias públicas para inmigrantes recién llegados

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Protocolo de entrevista semiestructurada

Parte 1: Historia de Vida Enfocada

- Háblame de tus antecedents o tu fondo. ¿Donde naciste? ¿Dónde creciste?
- Cuéntame sobre el papel del lenguaje en tu vida. ¿Qué idiomas hablas? ¿Cómo/dónde los aprendiste? ¿Qué idiomas viste/escuchaste en tu país de origen? ¿Qué idiomas ves/escuchas ahora?
- Háblame de los idiomas que usas ahora. ¿Qué idioma usas para hablar con tu familia? ¿Qué idioma usas en casa? ¿En el trabajo? ¿Qué idioma usas para hablar con tus profesores? ¿Tus amigos?
- Cuéntame sobre tus experiencias en la escuela. ¿Asististe a la escuela en tu país de origen? ¿Que tipo? ¿Cuál fue su experiencia con maestros? ¿Qué te gustaba y no te gustaba de la escuela?
- Cuéntame sobre tus experiencias en Los Angeles.
    - ¿Cuándo llegaste a Los Ángeles? ¿Cómo llegaste a Los Ángeles? ¿Con quién vives en Los Ángeles?
    - ¿Qué te gusta de Los Ángeles? ¿Qué no te gusta de Los Ángeles?
    - ¿Trabajas? ¿Cómo/dónde trabajas? ¿Qué idioma/s utilizas en el trabajo?

Part 2: Home Language, English & The New Academy

- ¿Cómo usas el inglés en la escuela?
- ¿Cómo usas la lengua materna en la escuela?
- ¿Cómo ves que tus maestros usan tu lengua materna en la escuela?
- ¿Quién habla su lengua materna en la escuela?
- ¿Qué metas o objetivos lingüísticos tienes para ti mismo?
- ¿Qué haces para aprender inglés? ¿Quién/qué te ayuda a aprender inglés? ¿Cómo te sientes al aprender inglés?
- ¿Cuáles son tus metas en la escuela? ¿Qué te motiva a venir a la escuela? ¿Cuáles son tus metas después de graduarte?

- ¿Qué esperas para ti mismo en el futuro?

The Role of Home-Language in Public High Schools for Newcomers

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Semi-Structured Interview Protocol: INA Members

Part 1: Focused Life History

- Tell me about your background. Where were you born? Where did you grow up? What kind of schools did you attend? What was your experience with teachers, principals, and school districts?
- Tell me about the role of language in your life. What languages do you speak? How/where did you learn them? What languages did you hear growing up (at home, at school, in the community)? What languages currently play a role in your life?
- Tell me about the high school/s you attended. What was your relationship then to immigrant students, to English language instruction, to language learning?
- What is your professional title? Who are you supporting/serving in your work now?
- When did you begin working with immigrant students? With language learners? What was the context of that work?
- How did you come to your current position? What key events led you to do the type of work you do today? Who were/are the influential people that led you to do the type of work you do?

Part 2: Home Language & The New Academy

- Based on what you see so far, what is the role of students' home languages in the new academy (for students, for teachers, for leaders)? How is that role similar to/different from the school outside of the academy? How is that role similar to/different from the schools that students may have attended previously?
    - What factors do you think contribute to the role of home language that you observe?
    - What questions about home language are directed toward you? What messages about home language are you sending?
- What is the role of English in the new academy (for students, for teachers, for staff)? How is that role similar to/different from the school outside of the academy?

- How would you describe the academy's relationship to students' home languages? What responsibilities does the academy have?
- How are students' English language skills being developed in the new academy? Outside of the academy?
- How are students' home language skills developed in the new academy? Outside of the academy?
- Who/what do you think has the biggest impact on students' English language development?
- Who/what do you think has the biggest impact on students' home language development?
- What are the barriers to developing home language in the new academy? What role do you play in responding to those barriers?

The Role of Home-Language in Public High Schools for Newcomers

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Semi-Structured Interview Protocol: Design Team Participants

Part 1: Focused Life History

- Tell me about your background. Where were you born? Where did you grow up? What kind of schools did you attend? What was your experience with teachers, principals, and school districts?
- Tell me about the role of language in your life. What languages do you speak? How/where did you learn them? What languages did you hear growing up (at home, at school, in the community)? What languages currently play a role in your life?
- Tell me about the high school/s you attended. What was your relationship then to immigrant students, to English language instruction, to language learning?
- What is your professional title? Who are you supporting/serving in your work now?
- When did you begin working with immigrant students? With language learners? What was the context of that work?
- How did you come to your current position? What key events led you to do the type of work you do today? Who were/are the influential people that led you to do the type of work you do?

Part 2: Home Language & The New Academy

- What will be the role of students' home languages in the new academy (for students, for teachers, for leaders)? How is that role similar to/different from the school outside of the academy? How is that role similar to/different from the schools that students may have attended previously?
- What message do you think the design sessions sent about the role of home language in the new academy?
- What is the role of English in the new academy (for students, for teachers, for staff)? How is that role similar to/different from the school outside of the academy?
- How would you describe the academy's relationship to students' home languages? What responsibilities does the academy have?
- How will students' English language skills be developed in the new academy? Outside of the academy?
- How will students' home language skills be developed in the new academy? Outside of the academy?
- Who/what do you think has the biggest impact on students' English language development?
- Who/what do you think has the biggest impact on students' home language development?
- What are the barriers to developing home language in the new academy? What role do you play in responding to those barriers?

The Role of Home-Language in Public High Schools for Newcomers

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Semi-Structured Interview Protocol: District Leaders

Part 1: Focused Life History

- Tell me about your background. Where were you born? Where did you grow up? What kind of schools did you attend? What was your experience with teachers, principals, and school districts?
- Tell me about the role of language in your life. What languages do you speak? How/where did you learn them? What languages did you hear growing up (at home, at school, in the community)? What languages currently play a role in your life?
- Tell me about the high school/s you attended. What was your relationship then to immigrant students, to English language instruction, to language learning?
- What is your professional title? Who are you supporting/serving in your work now?

- When did you begin working with immigrant students? With language learners? What was the context of that work?
- How did you come to your current position? What key events led you to do the type of work you do today? Who were/are the influential people that led you to do the type of work you do?

Part 2: Home Language & The International Academies

- Under the current EL Master Plan, what is the role of students' home languages in the new academies? How/when/and for what are students' home languages to be used? How are students and teachers expected to use home languages?
- Based on what you see so far, what is the role of students' home languages in the new academies (for students, for teachers, for leaders)? How is that role similar to/different from programs outside of the academies?
- The EL Master Plan aims for "bilingualism and biliteracy." What structures/supports for newcomers make bilingualism and biliteracy happen? What are the challenges for developing bilingualism and biliteracy?
    - What policies and practices can address those challenges?
- Many students in the International Academies speak Indigenous languages. How are Indigenous languages accounted for in the EL Master Plan? What roles can/do Indigenous Languages play in LAUSD schools?
- What responsibilities does LAUSD have to developing students' home languages? Who/what else is responsible for developing students' home languages?
- The students in the International Academies are just a fraction of the English Learners in the District. How are these students different from other kinds of language learners (i.e. Long Term English Learners, Standard English Learners, etc.)? How are they similar?

The Role of Home-Language in Public High Schools for Newcomers

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Semi-Structured Interview Protocol: Community Organization

Part 1: Focused Life History

- Tell me about your background. Where were you born? Where did you grow up? What kind of schools did you attend? What was your experience with teachers, principals, and school districts?

- Tell me about the role of language in your life. What languages do you speak? How/where did you learn them? What languages did you hear growing up (at home, at school, in the community)? What languages currently play a role in your life?
- Tell me about the high school/s you attended. What was your relationship then to immigrant students, to English language instruction, to language learning?
- What is your professional title? Who are you supporting/serving in your work now?
- When did you begin working with immigrant students? With language learners? What was the context of that work?
- How did you come to your current position? What key events led you to do the type of work you do today? Who were/are the influential people that led you to do the type of work you do?

Part 2: Home Language & Recently Arrived Immigrant Students

- Tell me about the goals of your organization. What does your organization help people do?
- Tell me about your goals in the organization. Who do you work with? What do you try to accomplish together? What does your partnership with clients/members/students look like?
    - What is the role of clients/members/students home languages in this work?
- Who are your partners in accomplishing your goals (churches, shelters, business owners, politicians, other community groups, etc.)?
- How does your organization relate to schools currently?
    - How could you envision partnering with schools? Teachers?
- If schools were to join you in achieving the goals of your organization, what would you want them to do?

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