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Language Ideologies and Belonging: Educational Experiences of Chicanx and Latinx University Students

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Language Ideologies and Belonging: Educational Experiences of Chicanx and Latinx University Students

By

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DISSERTATION

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Abstract

This dissertation presents findings from an ethnographic exploration of the role of language in the academic experiences of Chicanx and Latinx university students at an emerging Hispanic Serving Institution. Specifically, this dissertation presents an extensive analysis of the language ideologies encountered, enacted, and described by Chicanx-Latinx identifying students at Patwin University. The findings of this dissertation highlight the role of a space called *el centro*, a campus center designed to provide academic support to retain Chicanx and Latinx students, and in particular the importance of this space for nurturing students' sense of belonging in academia by modeling and enabling inclusive language ideologies and practices.

This dissertation relies on data collected during the 2018-2019 academic year through detailed interviews with fifteen students, participant-observation of students at el centro, and documented examples of the linguistic landscape of the focus site. Based on this data, I examine and elaborate on the role of language in contributing to students' sense of belonging in academic spaces and exchanges. The findings contribute to closing the gap in current sociolinguistic and education literature in regards to our understandings of the role that language ideologies have in the academic experiences, opportunities, and outcomes of linguistically racialized and marginalized students. In particular, this dissertation steps away from deficit views of language by not focusing on language proficiency. Instead, this dissertation examines both *exclusionary language ideologies* and *inclusionary language ideologies* and specifically their impact on students' sense of belonging as well as their use of English and Spanish in academic settings. Within these general categories of language ideologies are underlying belief systems and structures which impact how students feel about their own language identities and capacities and how such beliefs influence the exchanges and spaces that students engage.

Acknowledgments

This dissertation is dedicated to all of the students who shared their experiences and perspectives with me. This work was made possible with the support of a community of students, scholars, and mentors to whom I am eternally grateful. In this section I would like to acknowledge specific individuals whose support, guidance, mentorship, enthusiasm and encouragement nourished my mind and soul and facilitated the completion of this dissertation.

First, to the students whose voices informed this dissertation: Meli, Mirella, Destiny, Efren, Alfredo, Alberto, Juan, Jose, Melissa, Katie, Lydia, Kassandra, Jasmine, April, and Daniel. Thank you each for sharing openly about your experiences, perspectives, wishes, and concerns as they relate to language in your lives. Getting to know you, learning from you, and sharing this work with you has been one of the most meaningful periods of growth and fulfillment that I have experienced, both personally and professionally. Your tenacity and openness contributed to expanding my knowledge and reinforcing the soul growing value of the work that this dissertation aims to contribute. Thank you so much for sharing your stories and welcoming me into community with you at el centro.

There is no doubt in my mind that I would not have thrived as a graduate scholar were it not for the support of my amazing advisor and mentor, Dr. Julia Menard-Warwick. I have known Julia since 2014, shortly before I joined the Linguistics department as a graduate student. In the years that have followed, Julia has become a mentor I can always rely on to be real with me without asking me to compromise my values, passions, or ambitions. Julia never really tried to tame me the way I felt so much of the academy has tried to. Julia has always been willing to grow with me intellectually, as we continued to adopt more critical frameworks to explore the real world implications of language ideologies. Julia encouraged me to dig deeper, grow

express my gratitude and admiration for the countless ways he showed up for me through

friendship, partnership, and marriage. I love you.

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Transcription Conventions

Convention	Rationale
Italics	Indicates original emphasis of speaker
Bold italics	Indicates original emphasis of speaker that occurs with increased speech volume

Chapter 1
Introduction

About this Dissertation

This dissertation explores the language ideologies of Chicanx and Latinx university students attending Patwin University (a pseudonym). Many Chicanx and Latinx students share the in-between status of generation 1.5 students, born outside the United States while having been raised in the United States. As I illustrate, there are many features of identity and belonging in educational spaces that are linked to generational status and language background. The site for my ethnographic study, which took place throughout the 2018-2019 academic year, is a space at Patwin University (PU) called el centro[1], which serves as a campus center to provide academic support to retain Chicanx and Latinx students, empower their leadership, career and personal development, facilitate access to campus resources, and foster "community and a familia". At the time of this study, Patwin University, a large public university in northern California, was pursuing designation by the U.S. Department of Education as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI)[2]. This designation is part of the Higher Education Act, Title V, which aims to assist universities and colleges in improving higher education of "Hispanic" students, and which offers funding for this purpose.

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[1] This is the unofficial name of the space, used by community members (staff, students, and faculty) at Patwin University. "El Centro" translates to "the Center" in English, which is also another name used by the community to refer to the space. I also heard students refer to this space as "the Chi Center", with 'Chi' as an abbreviation for "Chicanx".

[2] For more details about Hispanic Serving Institution designation and eligibility visit https://sites.ed.gov/hispanic-initiative/hispanic-serving-institutions-hsi/

After operating in a smaller space in 2016, el centro opened in its current, larger space during the fall of 2017 and is part of a PU campus-wide initiative to support the recruitment and academic success of historically underserved students. El centro offers a range of resources and services to students and promotes bilingual identity as part of its mission. In this introductory chapter, I first address the terminology used throughout this dissertation. I provide a detailed description of the site, el centro. I then offer an explanation of what this dissertation aims to contribute, including the research questions explored and their rationale. To present the relevance of the research questions framing this dissertation I contextualize the dissertation within broader features of higher education. I offer a brief discussion of the overarching variables and themes that surfaced through this research related to language and education, language ideologies, and language and belonging. I then review the purpose of this dissertation. Finally, I present the theoretical framework adopted as the lens through which this dissertation approaches the questions raised and provide an overview of the subsequent chapters.

Terminology

I would be remiss to not discuss the terms used and referenced throughout this dissertation. In the title of this dissertation and the majority of its content I use "Chicanx" and "Latinx" as gender inclusive ethnoracial terms. These terms were chosen because they are used in the official title of the retention initiative space and site of this dissertation, which was titled the Center for Chicanx and Latinx Academic Student Success. The term Chicanx refers to students of Mexican origin. The term Latinx is also an American English neologism, and refers to individuals of Latin American cultural or ethnic identity in the United States. For both Chicanx and Latinx, the "x" offers a gender-neutral and gender inclusive descriptor.

I use the terms Latinx, Chicanx, Latina, Latino, Chicana, Chicano, "Hispanic", and others (e.g. Mexican), when used by the students themselves in their own narratives. I recognize that the use of the 'x' as a gender neutral and inclusive marker is not a universal convention across communities, contexts, or spaces. This is apparent in the range of terms used throughout the literature reviewed in this chapter. It is important to me that I defer to the language used by the community of focus for this dissertation: students whose voices inform this dissertation, as well as the physical community site, el centro. Throughout the dissertation I use the terms Chicanx and Latinx when providing my own summaries, analyses, and discussion.

The terms Latinx and Chicanx have received much attention and debate over their use and cultural relevance for those the terms are intended to reference. For example, a Pew Research Center study reported that around 25% of U.S. "Hispanics" have heard of the term Latinx and only about 3% use the term (2020). They found that the use of "Latinx" was mostly reported among young, U.S. born college educated female "Hispanics". However, it is not clear if survey respondents were allowed to select more than one identity label. It seems instead that study participants were asked to choose only one identifying term (e.g. Hispanic, Latinx, *or* Latino).

A more recent study by G. Cristina Mora, Reuben Perez, and Nicholas Vargas (2021) approached the question of who's using the term Latinx with intersectionality in mind. Their study found that the term Latinx is actually more widely used and known about than researchers and public commentators have contended. Mora et al also found that "those who identify with 'Latinx' also identify with 'Latino' and 'Hispanic' labels, suggesting that the labels are not mutually exclusive" (p. 16). Their study found that speakers use multiple ethnic and ethnoracial labels and that certain factors correlate with increased use of "Latinx". For example, they found

that generational birth status and political ideology are highly correlated with "Latinx"

identification. They also found that when "Latinx" is presented as a complement to other terms,

like "Hispanic" or "Latina", speakers use a term based on the situation and context, with nearly

25% of those surveyed identifying with the term. The findings presented by Mora et al (2021)

challenge those presented by Pew (2020) and make it clear that labels do matter. The important

point I hope to offer here is that the terms "Chicanx" and "Latinx" are used by some speakers of

Mexican and Latin American origin or descent in the U.S., and certainly at the site of this

dissertation. However, I also agree that facets of identity are intersectional and situational.

Therefore, because the site of this dissertation uses the terms "Chicanx" and "Latinx", those are

the terms I use when describing the site, students, and implications of this study.

There are times throughout the dissertation that I use other terms to refer to individuals

and groups of Mexican and Latin American descent and origin. Some studies I report on use

other terms, such as "Hispanic", Latino, Latina, Chicano, and Chicana. The enrollment and

retention data that I present later in this chapter comes from a large University database and uses

different terms depending on the year the data was added to the archive. When I am citing a

study or data presented I put the panethnic label in quotation marks. Otherwise, I will use the

terms Latinx and Chicanx when discussing and referencing the student participants of this

dissertation or when discussing the implications of this dissertation and its findings.

My Positionality

I am a first generation college graduate. My parents spent many years incarcerated during

my childhood and adolescence. I was very much aware of the obstacles in front of me as a low-

income, first-generation near-foster youth. I had computed the options that lay before me without

a degree. I knew I could have a healthy, secure, and stable life without college but I believed that academic spaces had the potential to alleviate so many of my anxieties and also help me to feel like I had people I could count on. I also felt like school was something I could do well. I believed that a four-year university degree would be my ticket out: I could have housing through the university, access to food and all my basic needs. I could break the cycle.

I think I became fascinated by and passionate about questions related to language and belonging when I was a young teen. My maternal grandfather was a first-generation American whose parents had immigrated to the U.S. from Italy. I remember asking my grandfather when I was in high school why he didn't speak Italian, his parents' native language. He explained to me that growing up in Detroit he wanted to be "American", which meant speaking English. I was perplexed and bothered by that rationale. When I attended college as an undergraduate I took up Italian as a way to learn more about my heritage and to reclaim a language I felt my family never should have lost for the sake of belonging or being "American". Growing up in California, I understood that many immigrants experience precisely what my grandfather described in regards to language and belonging. It didn't feel right to me and didn't make sense, but it was and continues to be the reality for so many in the U.S. This injustice has been the focus of my research program as a graduate scholar, culminating in this dissertation.

I share these parts of my background not at all to suggest that all first-generation college students experience the same obstacles as I did, nor to suggest that language attrition is exclusively the result of nationalization - I know this is not true. However, I share my story in order to emphasize the fact that for many first-generation college students, just making it to university is a battle, wrought with obstacles of many types. I can identify with the grit that so many students have to bring with them along with all their other knowledges. When I work with

first-generation students, particularly those from disadvantaged and marginalized backgrounds or status, I feel an obligation to take notice, to do something productive with my own education and knowledge.

I was initially drawn into spaces where I would meet Chicanx and Latinx students in order to engage with the Spanish language. While I first began studying Spanish as a 7th grade student in California, it was not until I experienced immersion and dual-language exchanges as an undergraduate at Wheaton College in Massachusetts and a graduate student at Middlebury College, as well as experiences studying and living abroad, that I began to seek out spaces beyond the classroom for the purpose of multilingual experiences. I also came into spaces where I would meet Chicanx and Latinx students as a graduate student and instructor. I have been fortunate to have many experiences interacting with Chicanx and Latinx students in my capacity as Teaching Assistant, Associate Instructor, Success Coach, coordinator, and in student support spaces and events. Through these various roles, students have shared with me about their backgrounds, ambitions, obstacles, and feelings around education at Patwin University and in California.

As a linguist and polyglot I am drawn to language. I believe, as do many linguists, that language influences human behavior, experiences, interactions and thoughts more so than we have been able to thoroughly articulate in the field of scholarship thus far. I want to contribute to our understanding of what language does for people, to people, for people, and with people. As a keystone feature of all human interaction and expression, it is necessary to seriously consider the role of language in everything: of this I am utterly convinced. I believe that speakers from all ethnic, racial, and language backgrounds ought to have equitable access to opportunities to experience the highest quality of life personally, academically, professionally, emotionally, and

materially. It is clear to me that language has been used to exclude certain individuals and groups from such opportunities and experiences.

I am also driven to this project out of concern for the impact that the Hispanic Serving Institution status will have on Chicanx and Latinx students and communities at PU. I want very much to believe that this potential for federal status and financial gain will be used for good and will benefit Chicanx and Latinx students. I would like to contribute to this endeavor by learning more about what students are experiencing in order to offer suggestions to the university about how they can best 'serve' Chicanx, Latinx, and Hispanic identifying students. My goal, if I could sum it up in a single sentence, is to contribute to fostering sustained and equitable belonging, as well as academic influence and success for Chicanx and Latinx students and community members.

Throughout my life, though most significantly during my time at Patwin University, I have been drawn to issues relating to language rights. In my view, it is evident that Chicanx and Latinx communities are linguistically marginalized from society, across a variety of spaces. While school is supposed to be an institution that fosters equity and equality, I have not observed that to be the case for all students. As I have worked with students in my various roles I have been exposed to the multiple obstacles faced by students. I do feel that it is my obligation as a linguist, community member, researcher, and white woman to contribute my time and knowledge to join the movement to eradicate social, racial, and linguistic inequities experienced by students in all spaces. Additionally, I have much to learn about what it is I don't know.

The idea for this project was inspired by conversations with my advisor, Dr. Julia Menard-Warwick. She suggested that I apply my research skills to issues impacting Chicanx and Latinx students at Patwin University. Familiar with my overarching research agenda after four

years of collaboration and getting to know me, Dr. Menard-Warwick understood the connections that I see in relation to issues around power, language, education, human rights, and bilingual reciprocity (Swift, 2016 unpublished). I am grateful to Julia for proposing to me the possibility of conducting a research project at el centro, as it aligns with my overall research imperative. I am also grateful to the staff at el centro for their support of this project and invitation to conduct my study. Lina Mendez, the Associate Director of el centro at the time of data collection for this study, mentored me and became a colleague and friend throughout this study, and beyond. I will forever cherish our relationship and her dedication to transformative equity.

El Centro

Upstairs from the main coffee spot at Patwin University is the newer and larger location of el centro. The center is accessible for all PU students and strives to support the academic, social, and personal success of Chicanx and Latinx[3] students. On any given day visitors to el centro hear students and staff speaking in Spanish and code-switching in English and Spanish – a unique feature relative to most other student support centers on the PU campus. Outside the main doors of el centro there is a large open patio where, when the weather permits, students sit for lunch, to chat with peers, or to study. Upon entering through the glass front door, visitors are greeted by a sign that says Bienvenidos[4] perched on a colorful Mexican blanket on the edge of a short cubicle wall, framing the front desk where a Student Assistant or the Office Coordinator is usually seated[i]. This signage is a significant marker of the way that Spanish is used in the linguistic landscape to foster belonging and welcoming to those in the space. Had the sign been

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[3] El centro explains the reasoning for using "x" as a way "to allow for the Chicana, Chicano, Latina, Latino community to be gender expansive, meaning it includes all those who identify and don't identify within the gender spectrum." As mentioned above, I use this spelling convention throughout my dissertation, in alignment with this same rationale and in keeping with the language used by el centro.

[4] English translation: "Welcome"

in English instead, the status quo of English would have been prioritized as the default. Instead, a single yet powerful Spanish expression of welcoming greets visitors, joined by the vibrancy of the blanket which draws a sense of nostalgia for those familiar with Mexico clothing and decorative aesthetic. The colorful woven blanket pictured below is also called sarape or jorongo in Spanish and has traditionally been worn as a shawl or cloak in Mexico. In the United States sarapes are often called Mexican blankets and are also used decoratively.

In front of the Bienvenidos sign is a sign-in station for visitors. Here, you sign-in using a campus ID card or by writing your name on a printed sheet attached to a clipboard. There are pamphlets and fliers stacked next to the sign-in area announcing scholarship opportunities, events, clubs, and campus services. The layout of el centro is a large room with an open design to accommodate various seating options for visitors. Between the front desk and the center space is a large colorful dry-erase board with the daily horario[5] and services listed. For example, advising hours, success coaching slots, community events, and student organization meetings. There are couches and a table to your left as you pass the front desk, and beyond the couches, still to the left and tucked into the corner, are six computer stations and a printer for students to utilize and print, free of charge. Filling the rest of the center of the space are numerous large round tables. On a typical day, the tables are occupied by students chatting, laughing, sharing

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[5] English translation: "agenda" or "schedule".

stories, eating, and focusing intently (with earbuds in) as they review lecture slides or work on an assignment.

Lining the walls like a banner hugging the entire space are Latin American flags and framed posters from previous La Raza Cultural Days[6], La Gran Tardeada[7], student artwork with messages like soñando sin fronteras[8], and colorful prints by artists like Diego Rivera and Simon Silva. These images (which can be seen in the following pages) contextualize the linguistic, cultural, racial, ethnic, and historical relevance of el centro and highlight realities that resonate with Chicanx and Latinx students.

Image A: Student artwork print (left)
Image B: Print of "Vendedora de Flores" by Diego Rivera (center)
Image C: Print of "Amor a todas horas" by Simon Silva (right)

The images also critique rhetoric around belonging in the United States. For example, the Image D is a print of student artwork that depicts a young woman wearing a floral top. In the

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[6] La Raza Cultural Days are designed to educate the campus and community about the social, cultural and political issues facing the Chicanx and Latinx community, while celebrating the traditions and contributions of Chicanx and Latinx cultures. "La Raza" means "the people" or "the community".
[7] English translation: "The Big/Great Party"
[8] English translation: "dreaming without borders"

background is the statement "los unicos criminales son los que roban niñxs y la esperanza" which translates in English to "the only criminals are those who steal children and hope".
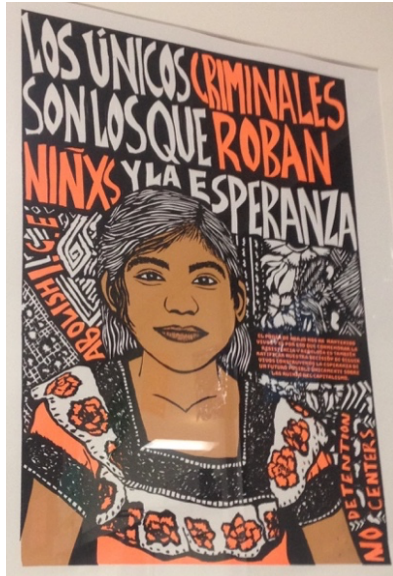
Image D: Print of student artwork.

Additional text which can be seen in the image underscore the political, social, and historical message of this artwork, "*abolish ice*" and "*No detention centers*"[9]. The use of both Spanish and English in this artwork, and the selection of such student artwork for the physical space of el centro, contributes to the linguistic landscape and efforts of inclusion.

On the Patwin University campus, outside of el centro, it is extremely rare to see such instances of multilingualism. The artwork at el centro represents the lived realities of many students at Patwin University, as well as those of their loved ones. Of those students I interviewed for my dissertation, four were born in Mexico, and moved to the U.S. during their early childhood. These students moved to the United States as immigrants with their family and

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[9] At the time of data collection (and continuing at the time of writing), migrants crossing the border from Mexico into the United States were being detained under conditions that failed to meet federal standards. This was not the first time in history that immigration policies impacted migrants so negatively, but media coverage was bringing louder attention to the situation. For example, migrants were being detained for prolonged periods and separated from family members. Detention centers were overcrowded and hygiene standards compromised the health and well-being of migrants. There were reports of migrants dying while in the care of US. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

can be considered as generation 1.5 since they arrived to the United States as immigrants as children and hold attachments to both the United States and Mexico. Some students also shared with me that they came from mixed-status families, meaning that some of their family members are undocumented. Such features in the linguistic landscape as "soñando sin fronteras"[10] (Image E), served to foster a sense of belonging, of understanding, representation, recognition and inclusion of the diverse backgrounds of Chicanx and Latinx students.

Image E: Print: Student artwork

Images F and G are photos I took of one of the main walls at el centro, which is lined along the top of the wall where it meets the ceiling with flags from Latin American countries throughout the world. Image F depicts a story of generations and highlights indigenous practices and traditions. The inclusion of all flags in this way contributes to the space as an inclusive space, recognizing the diversity among Latinx people and languages, as well as acknowledgment that not all students come from Mexico.

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[10] English translation: "dreaming without borders"

Image F: Large painting lining a wall in el centro.

Image G: Banderas/Flags lining the ceiling along a wall in el centro.

Continuing straight, with the front desk to your right and the round tables to your left, you come to a back wall where there's a mini-kitchen setup. There's a toaster, microwave, and two small refrigerators that students and staff can use. On some days there is even a plate of pan dulce[11] for visitors to enjoy. To the right of the kitchen the space opens up again and includes a long shelf of books, "the library", that students can borrow from – some are around test preparation, others are textbooks for popular courses, and many are about Chicanx and Latinx history, culture, and literature. In front of the library is another large, round table where students are seated. Behind this table at the far back wall are two small couches and a hammock – there is often a student taking a nap in the hammock. Closing off this corner of the room is a semi-

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[11] *Pan dulce* translates to "sweet bread" and is a lightly sweet Mexican bread.

enclosed cubicle with a computer, small desk, and small table. This is where student-support staff, such as academic advisors, success coaches, and librarians host their office hours for students, and where students study for more privacy. To the left of the kitchen area is a door which leads into a room where el centro hosts meetings for staff and campus partners, where some small courses meet, and where students study for an extra quiet space. To the left of the classroom door is a bulletin board with more fliers and a hallway which leads to the offices of the Associate Director, Director, and Community Counselor.

El centro's central location makes it easily accessible. It is situated upstairs from other spaces that bring students together (e.g. many food options, basic needs resources, and the campus games area). The large open layout of el centro helps create a communal environment and energy, with bright colors and artwork on every wall. El centro is a unique space on the Patwin University campus because it is the only space that actively promotes and embodies the use of more than one language in their Mission and Vision statement, as well as their physical space. Visitors to their web page can find their Mission and Vision in both English and Spanish and translanguaging (García & Wei, 2014; Smith & Murillo, 2015) with the two languages appearing throughout much of the website and physical space. The use of languages in this way models inclusive language ideologies and practices by demonstrating that both Spanish and English belong in the space and exchanges of el centro. This dissertation explores the role of language in reaching the objectives of a space like el centro, which aims for inclusivity and diversity. How does language impact the academic experiences of student in comunidad[12] with el centro?

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[12] English translation: "Community"

This dissertation strives to address these and other questions through an ethnographic exploration of the perspectives on language of Chicanx and Latinx university students at el centro. Specifically, this dissertation focuses on language ideologies, which I define as socially contrived power structures that inform one's beliefs, feelings, and values around language which influence how (and by whom) language might be used for access to and recognition in social exchanges and roles (Crump, 2014b). As the Chicanx and Latinx retention initiative space at Patwin University and as a bilingual identity-based space, el centro is an important site to gain insight and understanding about the intersections of language and student experiences and their role in sense of belonging. In the fields of sociolinguistics and education, researchers have looked at language proficiency, retention, and language ideologies of Chicanx and Latinx students. Unfortunately, many of these studies have explored the role of language in academic retention from deficit perspectives[13] which solely considered the language proficiency of speakers as the dominant cause for low retention and academic performance. Specifically, such deficit views perceive language standardization as the target for increased retention and academic performance, while viewing bilingualism as a resume booster at best and as a detrimental variable in language proficiency at worst. This dissertation steps away from such deficit views and explores the ways that inclusionary as well as exclusionary language ideologies, practices, and spaces impact higher education of "Hispanic", Latinx, and Chicanx students at an emerging HSI.

This dissertation presents student perceptions of their language experiences and ideologies prior to and at Patwin University, and explores how such experiences and beliefs interact with a key component of student persistence: sense of belonging in academia (Hurtado &

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[13] Flores, N., & Rosa, J. (2015).

Carter, 1997; Tinto, 1975, 2006). While *student persistence* refers to a student's continuation at a given institution, *sense of belonging* describes the belief and feeling of being welcomed and recognized as a part of a space, community, or exchange. *Belonging* also refers to one's sense of having access to goods and services, which in academia relate to resources and relationships that facilitate academic progress and well-being (Crisp & Nora, 2010; Crisp et al, 2015; Dayton et al, 2004).

Research Questions

This project aims to elevate understudied aspects of language in higher education and to explore the role of identity-based student support spaces in fostering a sense of belonging and thus persistence. As a linguist, ethnographer, and educator, my research is centered on the experiences and language practices of students. I have taught at the high school level, university level, and to adults in a variety of learning settings. I have also held a variety of professional roles in higher education, such as success coach and coordinator of a program for underserved first-year students. I am driven by opportunities to contribute to equity in language and education, as I feel language and education are human rights and for too long educational institutions have contributed to systems of discrimination and inequity in the United States.

The task of undoing years and years of linguistic and racial discrimination throughout educational institutions is difficult to achieve. I believe that dominant standardized language ideologies which inform the majority of educational policies, practices, and spaces have exacerbated disparities in educational opportunities and outcomes, as well as limiting opportunities beyond academia. In my professional roles and scholarship, I have learned that language is rarely included in conversations around retention efforts. This observation contributed to my motivation to write this dissertation.

The beginning era of retention research (circa the 1960s and 1970s) viewed student attrition through the lens of psychology and individual deficits. According to Tinto (2006), at that time it was argued that retention in higher education "required students to break away from past communities", and pushed for more assimilationist practices to support student success. However, Tinto (2006) proposed that "we now know that for some if not many students the ability to remain connected to their past communities, family, church, or tribe is essential to their persistence." (p. 4). The present dissertation evaluates the role of language in student sense of belonging in academia. Particularly, I discuss ways that language ideologies contribute to both inhibiting and permitting connections and sense of belonging for students. This dissertation evaluates how language ideologies influence the ways language interacts with and impacts academic experiences. Through interviews, observations, and participation in the comunidad of el centro I explore the relationship between space, language ideologies, and belonging. How do language ideologies play a part in the academic experiences of Chicanx and Latinx students who are part of the comunidad del centro? While this dissertation does not analyze academic outcomes of the focal students, it does contribute insights about the retention efforts of multilingual student support services and spaces along with their role in fostering belonging at an emerging Hispanic Serving Institution.

Importantly, this dissertation strives to challenge and disempower deficit explanations for the disparities throughout higher education that continue to impact Chicanx and Latinx students. I offer insight about the potential for equity and humanization in higher education by showcasing el centro. I see the issue of disparities in academic outcomes similarly to Roithmayr (2004) as cited by García (2010), who said "When disparities exist between students such as differences in retention among different racial and ethnic groups, it is the institutional rules that need to be

reviewed and not the students that need to be fixed" (p. 846). I agree with this statement because I believe institutions and educational systems are the source of malignancy that needs to be reviewed, and not features of students. I believe scholarship on the topic supports this position. I also propose that addressing "rules" firstly involves addressing ideologies and practices which inform and reflect the potent beliefs and values embedded within any rule. Therefore, in addressing any institutional policies contributing to barriers for equity in opportunity and outcomes for all students, we must first address their underlying ideologies and practices. For such a task, we can think of "institutional rules" as what they become (institutional practices and norms, which may also include policies) and what they are built from (ideologies). As such, this dissertation addresses the following questions:

1. What are the language ideologies of Chicanx and Latinx students at el centro?
2. How do students at el centro perceive the role of language in their academic experiences?
3. What is the role of language for a student support and retention initiative center in fostering a sense of belonging for Chicanx and Latinx students?

The student perspectives presented throughout this dissertation suggest that el centro fosters a sense of belonging as a space where students can be their full linguistic selves without judgement. The findings also suggest that language ideologies develop in part through academic experiences, and point to ways some students do, at times, try to "fix" their language to fit the prescriptive standardized varieties of both English and Spanish prioritized in academia. While some students described efforts to (or beliefs that they should) assimilate their language to such standardized varieties, other students described ways that el centro contributed to their development of inclusive beliefs and values around language, identity, and belonging in

academia. Specifically, some Chicanx and Latinx students described "transformative" experiences through community with el centro (or similar spaces) that contributed to shifting language practices and beliefs. Such students resisted exclusionary language ideologies which uphold inequitable standards for belonging in academia. Instead, students identified and enacted inclusionary language ideologies which enabled increased sense of belonging and positive sense of self. Through inclusionary language ideologies and practices, students described feeling able to and supported in building and sustaining connections, as well as challenging language norms. While exclusionary language ideologies dictate division of languages and insist that only certain ways of speaking belong in certain spaces, inclusionary language ideologies and practices humanize speakers as intersectional individuals that bring with them multiple forms of community cultural wealth, such as linguistic capital (Yosso, 2005). For example, students embraced non-standardized varieties of English and Spanish, as well as translanguaging and code-switching (García & Leiva, 2014). They also pushed back on ideas that say if you look a certain way you ought to speak a certain way. To summarize, the findings presented in this dissertation show how inclusionary language ideologies positively impact students' personal language ideologies, language practices, and sense of belonging.

The goal of this research project is to contribute to literature in the fields of sociolinguistics and education by providing insights about an understudied aspect of the student experience. An additional goal of this dissertation is to add to the growing body of literature about Hispanic Serving Institutions. I explain this goal more fully in the next section. This dissertation also aims to offer understanding about how a retention initiative space contributes to student sense of belonging and inclusive language ideologies and practices. This includes its linguistic landscape, mission and values, and language use. My hope is that this dissertation

contributes to university retention efforts and programming to increase student persistence and well-being.

The following chapters offer detailed observations of language ideologies of Chicanx and Latinx students at el centro. Throughout my analysis, I unfold the layers of beliefs that students have about English, Spanish, and the roles of language in their educational experiences and exchanges. I also explore the features of el centro that foster space for student language identities to be articulated. In the next section I provide more details about Patwin University and the importance of its status as an emerging Hispanic Serving Institution to contextualize the relevance of this dissertation and its research questions.

Contextualizing this Dissertation

As a campus like Patwin University gains recognition as an HSI and strives for potential federal funding to support the aims of such a title, I and many others at Patwin University wonder, what does it mean to be a Hispanic Serving Institution? And what is the role of language in serving students? In this dissertation, I start by exploring the underlying language ideologies present in the academic experiences of those so-called "Hispanic" students on behalf of whom the federal government certifies HSI status.

Despite absolute gains in college enrollment over the past three decades for "Hispanic" students, when these students are compared to their non-"Hispanic" peers, retention and graduation rates still remain significantly lower for Chicanx and Latinx students (Crisp et al, 2015; Pew Research Center, 2012; Postsecondary National Policy Institute, 2019; Solórzano et al 2005). Scholars have noted that the increase in Chicanx and Latinx college enrollment is most prominent in Community Colleges, and that first-generation college students are most likely to be Latinos (*Excelencia* in Education, 2019). Between 2010 and 2020 Patwin University has

enrolled more Chicanx and Latinx students annually, likely in part related to their goal to become an HSI which requires that 25% of undergraduate enrollment be "Hispanic" students. California is also home to many Chicanx and Latinx students and there is a great emphasis in schools and communities on the value of college. Institutions of higher education, especially in a diverse state like California, have worked to diversify campus affiliates (students, faculty, staff). As such, PU's emerging HSI status and goals are reflected in the increase in enrollment of Latinx and Chicanx students. In fact, the Postsecondary National Policy Institute reported that "Hispanic" enrollment in higher education rose by 18% throughout the United States from 1996-2016 and during this timeframe Latino enrollment increased by 284% across HSIs (2019, p. 5). This upward trend at Patwin University is reflected in table 1, below.[14]

Table 1: Comparison of undergraduate freshman and transfer enrollment trends at Patwin University, fall 2013 to fall 2018 (including both first-generation and non first-generation students).

Fall 2013

Race/ethnicity

African American	3.1%
Hispanic/Latino(a)	17.9%
American Indian	0.8%
Pacific Islander	0.4%
Asian	35.2%
White	29.7%
Domestic unknown	2.5%
International	10.4%

Fall 2018

Race/ethnicity

African American	3.8%
Hispanic/Latino(a)	22.1%
American Indian	0.5%
Pacific Islander	0.3%
Asian	30.1%
White	22.5%
Domestic unknown	2.1%
International	18.5%

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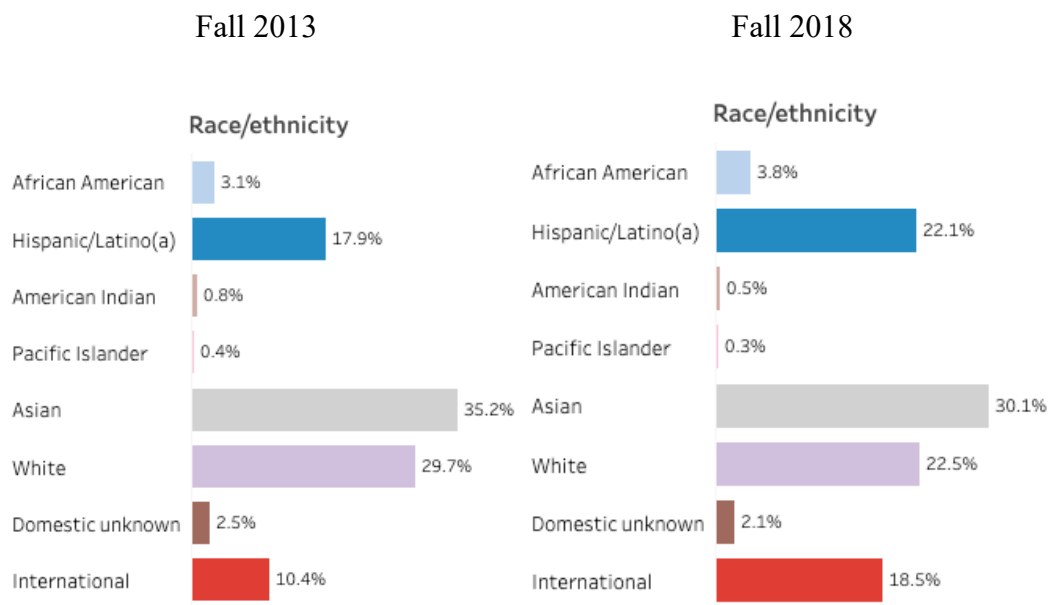
[14] Note that the Information Center that archives this information for public access used the terms "Hispanic" and Latino(a). These tables were sourced from https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/infocenter/fall-enrollment-glance.

Table 2: Enrollment trends at Patwin University, number of students enrolled by ethnicity.
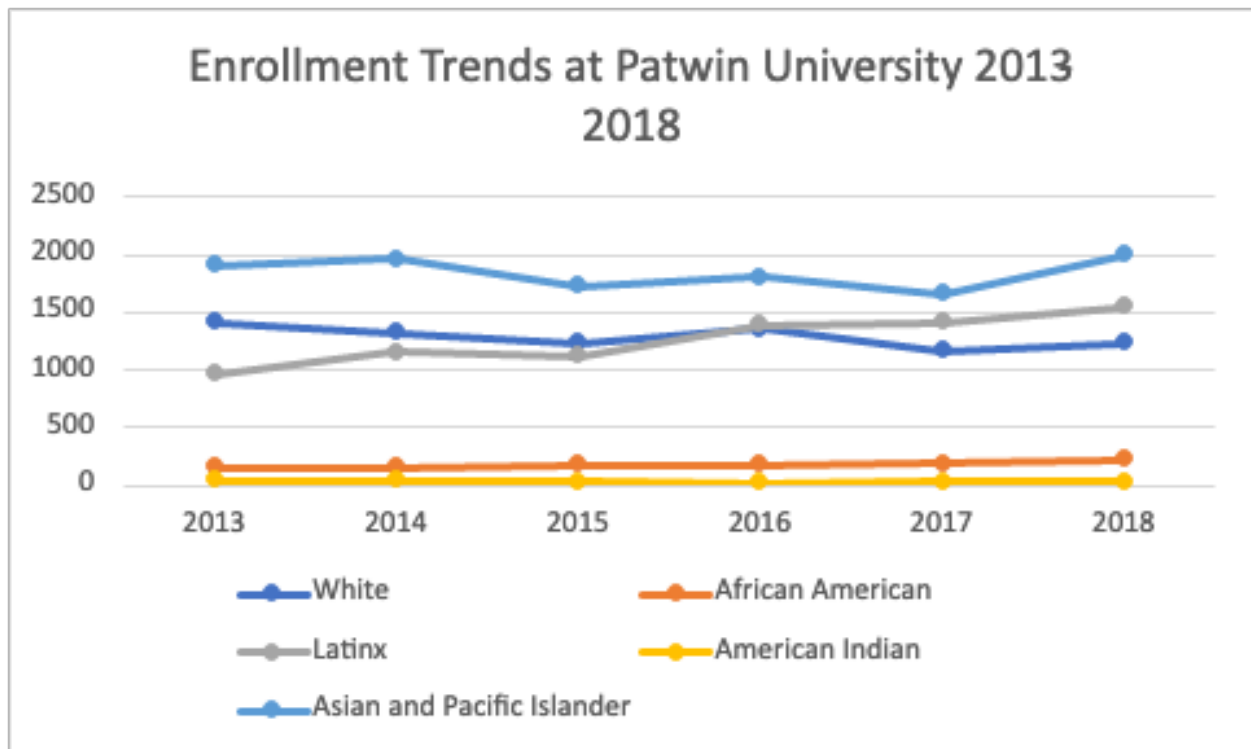
Another important factor to consider is that many Chicanx and Latinx students attending Patwin University identify as first-generation college students. Scholars have found that generational status (in the United States as well as college attendance) interact with other features of Latina/o undergraduates' identities and impact academic persistence decisions (Aguinaga & Gloria, 2015). In fact, research shows that cultural and ethnic enculturation is particularly beneficial for first-generation college students, who experience increased persistence to the extent that they are supported in maintaining a connection and orientation to their Latina/o or Chicana/o identity. In terms of college attendance, the majority of first-generation college students in higher education throughout the United States are Chicanx and Latinx (*Excelencia* in Education, 2019). They are also more likely to have a first language other than, or in addition to,

English (Balcacer, 2018; UC Corporate Student System and UC Information Center Data

Warehouse, 2015). For the present study I was unable to collect disaggregated information about

the linguistic diversity of Patwin University enrollees but I present this information for the

participants of my study in Chapter 3. Of the 2,327 total "Hispanic"/Latinx undergraduates

enrolled as first year students at Patwin University for fall 2018, 74.95% were first-generation

college students. The percentage of enrolled first-generation "Hispanic"/Latinx students

increased from 2013 to 2018 by over 10%. Table 3 shows the enrollment numbers of entering

undergraduates who were first-generation college students in 2018. The data below shows that

"Hispanic"/Latinx students at Patwin University are more likely than their peers to be first-

generation college students.

Table 3: Proportion of first-generation first-year undergraduate freshman and transfer enrollment by reported ethnic identity, fall 2018[15].

Broad Category	Entering Fall 2018	First-Generation	Percentage first-generation/enrollees
African American and Black	373	204	54.69%
American Indian/Alaska Native	104	48	46.15%
Asian	4,494	1,571	34.95%
"Hispanic"/Latinx	2,351	1,755	74.64%
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	97	52	53.61%
Southwest Asian and North African	376	125	33.24%
White	2,919	831	28.46%

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[15] Source: https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/infocenter/disaggregated-data

As of 2020, when these statistics were provided, the most recent available graduation data related to the entering cohort of 2013. The entering cohort of 2013 included 27.31% "Hispanic"/Latinx students (1,103 freshman and transfer). The information provided in the tables below is relevant to contextualize the retention and graduation trends among first-generation students at Patwin University. Table 4 shows the first-year retention rates of first-generation PU students who entered during 2013, which indicate the percentage of students who returned after their first year at Patwin University. Table 5 shows the first-year retention rates for the entering 2018 cohort. As these tables show, the first-year retention rates did not change very much from 2013 to 2018 for first-generation college students.

Table 4: First year retention Freshman vs. Transfer (first-gen, entering cohort 2013)

First year retention Freshman vs. Transfer (first-gen, entering cohort 2013)					
	White	Hispanic/Latinx	African American	American Indian	Asian/Pac Isl
Freshman	90.2%	86.7%	87.0%	84.6%	94.1%
Transfer	92.7%	91.6%	88.7%	85.7%	92.2%

Table 5: First year retention Freshman vs. Transfer (first-gen, entering cohort 2018)

First year retention Freshman vs. Transfer (first-gen, entering cohort 2018)					
	White	Hispanic/Latinx	African American	American Indian	Asian/Pac Isl
Freshman	87.8%	87.9%	85.5%	81.8%	93.4%
Transfer	93.8%	90.7%	91.7%	84.2%	92.5%

Tables 6 and 7 (below) present the graduation rates for the entering cohort of 2013. Table 6 reflects the graduation rates for non-first generation enrollees, while table 7 reflects graduation rates for first-generation students. As a reminder to the reader, the language used to describe the data presented in Tables 6 and 7 is that of the institution that provided the data and not my own.

Table 6: Graduation rates for non-first-generation students for the 2013 entering cohort[16].

Graduation Rates (non-first-gen, entering cohort 2013)					
	White	Hispanic/Latinx	African American	American Indian	Asian/Pac Isl
2 years - Freshman	-	-	-	-	-
2 years - Transfer	51.1%	60.6%	47.4%	84.6%	53.4%
3 years - Freshman	2.4%	2.5%	3.9%	0.0%	2.1%
3 years - Transfer	83.6%	81.9%	81.6%	84.6%	84.5%
4 years - Freshman	70.2%	63.0%	64.5%	60.9%	71.5%
4 years - Transfer	88.6%	90.0%	89.5%	84.6%	88.5%
5 years - Freshman	90.0%	85.2%	90.8%	87.0%	87.8%
5 years+ - Transfer	89.6%	92.5%	92.1%	84.6%	89.7%
6 years - Freshman	91.7%	87.0%	90.8%	91.3%	90.4%
6 years - Transfer	-	-	-	-	-
7+ years - Freshman	92.0%	87.7%	93.4%	91.3%	91.3%
7+ years - Transfer	-	-	-	-	-

Table 7: Graduation rates for first-generation students for the 2013 entering cohort

Graduation Rates (first-gen, entering cohort 2013)					
	White	Hispanic/Latinx	African American	American Indian	Asian/Pac Isl
2 years - Freshman	-	-	-	-	-
2 years - Transfer	58.9%	44.5%	30.6%	47.6%	52.7%
3 years - Freshman	1.7%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%
3 years - Transfer	84.0%	77.6%	62.9%	85.7%	82.9%
4 years - Freshman	81.4%	45.9%	31.9%	38.5%	61.3%
4 years - Transfer	88.7%	83.2%	80.6%	85.7%	90.2%
5 years - Freshman	78.0%	73.3%	68.1%	76.9%	85.1%
5 years+ - Transfer	91.7%	85.0%	82.3%	85.7%	91.4%
6 years - Freshman	81.4%	78.0%	78.3%	76.9%	87.4%
6 years - Transfer	-	-	-	-	-
7+ years - Freshman	81.8%	80.2%	78.3%	76.9%	89.5%
7+ years - Transfer	-	-	-	-	-

As Tables 6 and 7 show, the graduation rates across racial and ethnic identity markers reflect disparate outcomes. A comparison between Table 6 and Table 7 shows that first-generation students experience lower graduation rates than their non-first generation peers,

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[16] As Tables 6 and 7 show, there is either a mistake in how the University of California Information Center collects data for American Indian student graduation rates, or the graduation rates for American Indian students are the same for every year – which is highly unlikely. I am presenting these data as they are reported by the Information Center.

across all racial and ethnic identities. This information is significant for the present study given the proportion of first-generation students who are "Hispanic" or Latinx. Hopefully future studies can dig deeper into the nuances of these archives. Specific to my dissertation, all but two of the 15 students I interviewed identified as first-generation college students. I provide more demographic details about my dissertation participants in Chapter 3.

So, the situation is this: at Patwin University there is an increased enrollment of predominantly first-generation Chicanx and Latinx students who are experiencing lower retention and graduation rates, on average, than peers who are not first-gen and not Chicanx/Latinx. El centro exists to mitigate this disparity in retention. At PU, Chicanx and Latinx students are speakers of English, Spanish, and indigenous languages such as Mixteco and Nahuatl. In terms of Spanish, students bring to campus a rich spectrum of varieties spoken throughout North America and Latin America. Some Chicanx and Latinx identifying students are monolingual English speakers. At the time of this study, I was not able to locate any official tracked information about the linguistic diversity of students at Patwin University but I learned of the diverse representation of languages through conversations with students, staff, and faculty.

What does language have to do with persistence?

In California, about 42.3% of students enrolled in the public school system speak a language other than English at home (California Department of Education, 2018). The case of language and student persistence is not as simple as a discussion of language barriers, though the literature does reveal various types of language barriers that impede post-secondary completion (Becerra, 2010; García, 2010; Hernandez & Lopez, 2004; Oseguera et al, 2009; Parker et al, 2016). Studies have looked at academic achievement of Chicanx and Latinx students and the

intersection of language spanning the educational spectrum, from preschool through high school (Schneider et al, 2006). These studies report a trend, in that English language proficiency, bilingualism, languages spoken at home, and literacy practices throughout childhood and schooling contribute to Chicanx and Latinx student achievement (Llagas & Snyder, 2003; Parker et al, 2016;). Given the breadth of reports on the barriers to access to education for Chicanx and Latinx students that relate to language, it would follow then that language may continue to play a role in student persistence and achievement at the university level. However, while it is certainly true that there are opportunity gaps in terms of proficiency and access to language instruction and resources, research has not sufficiently demonstrated that English language proficiency is the main variable contributing to disparities in academic opportunities and outcomes. Issues around proficiency are not the focus of this dissertation and language proficiency was not measured in my data collection. Instead, I focus on language ideologies. What is the role of language ideologies in the persistence and retention rates of Chicanx and Latinx students, at all stages of the educational pipeline?

Language Ideologies

Throughout this dissertation, I explore exclusionary and inclusionary ideologies as described through student narratives about their personal experiences with language and education. I define exclusionary ideologies as those beliefs which work to create and maintain systematic and discriminatory hierarchies of belonging. As they relate to language, exclusionary ideologies rely on prescriptivist notions of what language is "good" and "correct" and which speakers are recognized as "good" or legitimate speakers. A result of exclusionary ideologies is the perpetuation of inequality in whichever spaces such beliefs are embraced. In the realm of

education, exclusionary language ideologies work to compartmentalize languages, language practices, speakers, and access to spaces and resources in order to maintain a hierarchy of languages and speakers and sustain the myth of academia as a place for certain people and certain ways of languaging. Exclusionary ideologies instill in students a sense of doubt about their language abilities and capacity to excel in academia. Such ideologies also contribute to students' internal conflict around language and identity, resulting in pressure to negotiate language use and prove belonging through language use and assimilation to standardized forms. While linguists can certainly demonstrate ways that all speakers across languages negotiate language use for belonging, not all speakers experience these internal conflicts or sense of self betrayal that such negotiations elicit. Also, language has been and continues to be used as a proxy for race and is used in the racializing processes of individuals and groups (Bucholtz et al, 2018; Rosa, 2016a). The connection between language and racializing processes are implicated in academic exclusion. I expand on these issues later in the dissertation.

I also explore inclusionary language ideologies, which I define as beliefs and feelings that foster belonging without calling for assimilation. Inclusionary language ideologies aim to dismantle inequities around language, belonging, and education. These ideologies necessarily involve identity because to feel a sense of belonging students must feel their identities recognized in the spaces and exchanges with and within which they engage. As this dissertation demonstrates, student language identities are not fixed. Rather, as I discuss in Chapter 4, student language identities are multifaceted, multilayered, and impacted by many different experiences, exchanges, and spaces. The beliefs underlying inclusionary ideologies call for recognizing students as the intersectional individuals that they are. Chapter 5 explores the ways that academic

experiences informed students' feelings around English and Spanish in a way that invited a sense of belonging, resilience, and persistence.

I will elaborate on these ideologies in my review of the literature and provide detailed examples and analyses in Chapters 4 and 5. I focus my dissertation on language ideologies, as opposed to other aspects of language that might affect retention—because when I spoke with students about language use they very quickly started talking about ideologies. I believe that the underlying beliefs and feelings around language are influential indicators of belonging. Furthermore, neglecting to address the underlying belief systems which dictate what counts as "proficient" or "good" or "correct" further contributes to gaps in our understanding about the structures and systems which perpetuate issues of inequity in education. Additionally, analyses about language ideologies afford insights into the role of a space such as el centro in the academic experiences of Chicanx and Latinx students at an emerging Hispanic Serving Institution. Such analyses offer insights about what it means to serve "Hispanic" students.

As the experiences of the students show and my analyses support, exclusionary and inclusionary language ideologies are not neatly separated. The distinct ideologies that fall within the broader categories of exclusionary and inclusionary ideologies are complex and best described on a continuum in terms of how they appear in speakers' lives. For some ideologies I will show that there are both exclusionary and inclusionary facets that may exist at the same time. Importantly, both exclusionary and inclusionary language ideologies coexist within students' personal language ideologies. As such, student language practices, such as negotiating how to speak across contexts and spaces, are impacted greatly by their personal language ideologies and those of speakers they come into contact with. Likewise, students' sense of

belonging in academia is influenced and framed by both exclusionary and inclusionary language ideologies.

Language and Belonging

The power in language ideologies lies in their impact on one's language practices and sense of belonging. This dissertation presents a student-centered view of ways that inclusionary and exclusionary language ideologies weave into the fabric of identity: of how students view themselves. The student stories you will hear throughout this dissertation reveal the imprint that language ideologies have on sense of belonging in academic spaces, as well as perceived language abilities. The relationship between language and identity is as layered as the ground beneath our feet. Just as the terrain changes when traversing the Pacific Crest Trail as the seasons change, from dry hard desert floor to powdered snowcaps, so do the connections and expressions between student language identities. From conversing in a mezcla[17] of Spanish and English among friends at el centro to monitoring English for any signs of "accent" when waiting to order a coffee at the campus coffee shop, to selecting just the "right" Spanish vocabulary when speaking with academic Spanish speakers or abuela[18] in Mexico – the terrain (i.e. spaces) contribute to both developing and diminishing layers of identity presented through and with language. The findings of this dissertation attempt to unravel these intricacies of the role that language plays in students' sense of self and the push and pull of academic identity formation that relies, in part, on language as a qualifying identity marker. The exclusionary language ideologies that I examine, as expressed and retold by students, point to ways that students feel

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[17] English translation: "Mixture"
[18] English translation: "Grandmother"

pushed to adapt, assimilate, and prove their identity through language. On the other hand, the inclusionary ideologies that students share address ways that identity can be nurtured and permitted to exist and grow through language, thus contributing to sense of belonging and positive academic experiences.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to learn more about the academic experiences, feelings, and beliefs around language of Chicanx, Latinx, and Hispanic identifying students at el centro. In thinking about the potential of an HSI in closing opportunity gaps, I want to contribute to conversations about what it means to *serve* "Hispanic" students. My hope is that this research will help inform policy making decisions at Patwin University so that a title like "HSI" is student-centered and meets the students where they're at, rather than asking students to assimilate. I also hope to learn what it is about a place like el centro that draws students in and makes them feel at "home". My dissertation aims to bring the Patwin University community closer to understanding the role a bilingual space, community, and retention initiative contributes to and mitigates for Chicanx and Latinx undergraduates.

Some at Patwin University have joined the conversation about the role of language in serving students at an HSI. As one Associate Professor said:

"Students at [Patwin University] bring with them incredible linguistic and intellectual abilities... [Patwin University] must be ready to be more than an English-speaking enclave in a multilingual state... Becoming an HSI will mean more than giving an education to an increasingly diverse student body; it must also mean that we are ready to be changed by our students. Our openness to these changes will indicate how well we can serve our students as an HSI". (John Slater, personal comment as testimonio, 2020).

My hope is to contribute to conversations and scholarship which critically and holistically examine the academic experiences of linguistically marginalized students in higher education to eliminate disparities of inclusion, including degree attainment. Sense of belonging is intrinsically tied to inclusion. An HSI can serve students by addressing beliefs and practices that have led students to doubt their abilities and question their worth based on the way the speak. An HSI can help students to enjoy their time in academia, to feel inspired and confident. An HSI can strive to recognize students as their whole selves, in whatever languages that make up their identities. I believe my dissertation demonstrates ways that a student support center such as el centro contributes to such possibilities, humanizes academic experiences, and fosters access to opportunities for marginalized students. My research shows this clearly, as students have many nicknames for el centro, including "home".

Theoretical Framework

I analyze my ethnographic findings through the lens of a recent theoretical contribution to the fields of linguistics, language, literacy, and education called Critical Language and Race Theory. This framework is also referred to as LangCrit and offers a lens through which to examine the social norms and language boundaries experienced by Chicanx and Latinx students at Patwin University. Alison Crump (2014b) proposed LangCrit as a theoretical and analytical framework in order to understand how linguistic identities intersect with racial(ized) identities (Crump, 2014b, p. 216). According to Crump, this framework is necessary in order for critical race and language scholars to examine "the ways in which race, racism and racialization intersect with issues of language, belonging, and identity" (2014b, p. 207-208). Put very simply, LangCrit is interested in what people do with language and how it relates to systems of power. A related

framework that I also utilize in this dissertation is Raciolinguistics which comes out of linguistic anthropology. I address the connection between LangCrit and Raciolinguistics in Chapter 2.

A feature of social norms is experience, both of the individual and group. LangCrit views language as a social practice that intersects with race and identity, often assigned value by dominant structures and informed by language ideologies of both the individual and larger community or society. For this, LangCrit asks "how power has come to be clustered around certain linguistic resources in certain spaces" and explores how such language boundaries inform what individuals can and cannot do with language in daily life, as well as the values associated with language use and possible identities (Crump, 2014b, p. 209). Here, language boundaries are not language barriers--rather boundaries refer to the socially constructed ways of *doing* language: interacting with others, communicating needs, expressing knowledge, identifying membership in a group, and integrating with the institution. As an example, students are often expected to speak English-only during class. This may elicit a language boundary for some students, because limiting language use may inhibit students' access to their full academic potential and opportunities to make connections with others. Furthermore, such a language boundary determines that only a certain language is permitted. For Chicanx and Latinx students, and multilingual students in particular, language boundaries may exclude access to 'doing language' – to full expression of self, social integration, and belonging. LangCrit focuses my study on the conditions, individual and social, that contribute to interactions between language and belonging among Chicanx and Latinx university students.

Overview of Chapters

In this chapter I explained the purpose of this dissertation and contextualized the questions this study seeks to address. I also briefly introduced the focus of each subsequent chapter to present how I contribute to conversations around language ideologies and academic experiences of Chicanx and Latinx students. In the following chapters, I elaborate on the topics I introduced throughout this chapter and present a case for further studies into the role of language ideologies and student support spaces for student sense of belonging at Hispanic Serving Institutions.

Chapter 2 is a review of relevant literature that highlights the intersections of language ideologies, language and identity, and belonging. Additionally, I present previous scholarship that has contributed to discussions around retention and persistence to situate this dissertation within a larger conversation. This chapter aims to convey the importance of ethnographic work at the intersections of linguistics, education, education policy, and equity.

In Chapter 3 I outline the steps I took in preparation for this study and the methods I used throughout data collection and analysis, as well as *why* I used the approach I did. I also talk about my role at *el centro*. Importantly, I introduce the student voices that informed this dissertation by providing a brief profile of each student and details about how I got to know them.

Chapter 4 explores the exclusionary ideologies described by students. The ideologies that emerge are standardization ideologies, particularly ideologies of Languagelessness (Rosa, 2019). Students' experiences and feelings demonstrate ways such ideologies contributed to students doubting the appropriateness of their language repertoire. The stories students share reflect ways these ideologies insist that speakers "blend in" to "fit in" in certain academic spaces and exchanges, as well as with family and peers.

In Chapter 5 I present inclusionary ideologies as described, experienced, and practiced by students at el centro, which they frequently describe as *home.* In particular, students describe Spanish language use as providing opportunities to connect with others, feel welcome, and explore Chicanx and Latinx identities without judgment, negotiation, or monitoring.

In Chapter 6 I provide a summative discussion of the findings and the role of language in academic experiences for Chicanx and Latinx university students. I offer some initial implications for student persistence as well as opportunities for retention efforts at emerging HSIs.

Chapter 2
Literature Review

Chapter Introduction

In this chapter I present literature which situates the contribution of this dissertation and demonstrates the ways that belonging as a concept, experience, and ideology is interdisciplinary. As is now well understood by scholars in education who focus on retention and persistence, *belonging* is an integral component to the academic opportunities and outcomes of students (Davis et al, 2019; Hausmann et al, 2007; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Tinto, 2017; Velasquez, 1999; Museus et al, 2018). Belonging signals connections between self (identity) and others, as well as between self and environment. In linguistics, we know that language is a facet of identity and interacts with other aspects of identity, such as race and ethnicity. Scholars like Alison Crump (2014a, 2014b), Jonathan Rosa (2016a, 2016b) and Nelson Flores (Flores & Rosa, 2015) have discussed the intersection between language ideologies and practices, identity, belonging,

and racialization processes. Such scholarship builds on our understanding that language and identity also interact with and reflect features of society. Relevant to this dissertation are the contributions from scholars such as Crump (2014b) and Rosa (2016a, 2016b) who have discussed ways that individuals perform acts of identity and belonging, including race, through language. Importantly, such acts reflect underlying beliefs about how language ought to index certain ways of being and belonging, particularly in academia. Thus, it is valuable to understand more about the underlying language ideologies that catalyze the relationship between language and sense of belonging, and thus affect academic persistence and educational equity.

Scholarship in linguistics has focused on the role of language in acts of belonging, as well as ways that beliefs around language can create conditions for belonging. This chapter presents relevant literature to situate the interconnectedness between language, belonging, and education to further contextualize the questions posed in this dissertation. I begin with a review of literature focused on the factors believed to contribute to the educational experiences and outcomes of Latinx students, revealing disparities which hinder equitable opportunities for Latinxs throughout the educational pipeline. I then discuss scholarship around language ideologies, particularly in educational settings. I focus on scholarship which has placed the experiences of students at the forefront in order to unpack the dynamics between language, belonging, and education.

A thread connecting many facets of positive educational experiences and outcomes is a sense of belonging, which manifests in different ways for speakers and groups. If we are to better understand the persistence of Chicanx and Latinx students, we must examine the beliefs and practices which inform belonging. To stay or to go, to be retained or pushed out - these are binary metrics that ultimately relate back to the question of belonging. Who belongs in higher education? What language or languages belong, and in what spaces and contexts? How do

speakers talk about belonging and what do speakers believe about belonging? Belonging is not entirely a result of agentive behavior on behalf of an individual. Rather, belonging is an affective experience that is influenced in a dialogic way between an individual, their community, broader society, policies, and the ways in which an individual and all within their space interact, engage, and perceive one another. As Tinto (2017) claims, sense of belonging "is most directly shaped by the broader campus climate and the perceptions of belonging students derive from their daily interactions... and the messages those interactions convey about their belonging" (p. 258). Belonging is a salient theme in the academic experiences of students, particularly for students who have been historically excluded and marginalized in the U.S. education system. Language is a part of the daily interactions and messaging students receive and contribute to as it relates to belonging in academia. The word *language* has multiple meanings and referents, all of which are relevant to this dissertation. Throughout this chapter I talk about *language* to refer to languages like English and Spanish. I also talk about *language* as a way to refer to the linguistic practices of speakers. *Language* also refers to discourse, which Norman Fairclough (2013) defines as complex sets of communicative relations and events, including intersections between communication and objects, which constitute social meaning.

Whether we are highlighting discourse, linguistic practices, or the choice between named languages, it is clear that students engage in a range of language interactions throughout their educational experiences that involve other speakers, too. Despite this reality, little research has explored the role of language in the educational experiences of Chicanx and Latinx university students in the U.S. beyond the focus on English proficiency or language pedagogies. One exception to this lack of attention comes from the contributing authors in *Feeling It: Language, Race, and Affect in Latinx Youth Learning* (Eds. Bucholtz et al, 2018), which I discuss in detail

later. For purposes of this dissertation, existing scholarship helpful in developing our understanding of the role of language in educational experiences is that which has explored language ideologies (Flores & Rosa, 2015; García & Torres-Guevara, 2010; Rosa, 2016a, 2016b; Rosa & Flores, 2017; Kroskrity, 2004; Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994; Zentella, 1997) and the ways that language ideologies interact dialogically with identity construction and performance (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004; Martinez-Brawley & Zorita, 2008; Norton, 1997). Language ideologies are foundational to the language practices of speakers and groups across spaces and contexts. As such, we can glean much about the role of language in the academic experiences of students through examinations of language ideologies.

In the first section of this chapter, I review literature on the retention and persistence of Latinx students. This literature is important because it makes clear the imperative of the present dissertation and similar scholarship in addressing the continued disparities in academic experiences and opportunities of students in the U.S.

In the second section, I present relevant literature on language ideologies, and specifically, on the ideologies of standardization. Related to ideologies of standardization are the raciolinguistic ideologies of languagelessness (Rosa, 2016a) and transracialization practices (Alim, 2016). These language ideologies rely on and interact with ideologies of standardization by presuming that there is a right or correct way of languaging that also interacts with racial and ethnic identities. Also related to these language ideologies is the concept of *affective agency* (Bucholtz et al, 2018; Zarate, 2018), which represent forms of ideological resistance. The literature reviewed presents the connection between what individual speakers believe and feel about languages, the beliefs of educational agents, and the language practices that uphold or challenge standardization ideologies. In the third section, I review literature at the intersection

between language, identity, and belonging. Together, these sections aim to frame the lens through which I explore the research questions presented in chapter 1.

Sense of Belonging and Persistence in Higher Education

This dissertation aims to challenge deficit views of belonging in academia which tend to frame Chicanx and Latinx students as culturally and linguistically disadvantaged. According to Yosso (2005), "deficit thinking" is defined as perceptions which position minority students and families as at fault for poor academic performance ostensibly because "students enter school without the normative cultural knowledge and skills" and because parents "neither value nor support their child's education" (p. 75). Such deficit thinking perpetuates inequities in the academic experiences and outcomes of marginalized students and also places the focus on reinforcing certain forms of cultural knowledge which are deemed valuable by dominant society. Furthermore, deficit thinking suggests that students are entities or objects that simply need to be molded a particular way in order to succeed academically and socially.

The goal of this section is to highlight research which has focused on the barriers to academic success and belonging for Chicanx and Latinx students along the educational pipeline, though particularly in higher education. Important terms to note for this dissertation are "retention" and "persistence". The latter refers to a student's decision and action(s) to remain in college, while the former refers to the actions taken by an educational institution to retain a student or group of students (Tinto, 1975, 2017). To begin the chapter, I address some aspects of retention and persistence that have received attention in education research. I then focus the section on the notion of *sense of belonging* as it has been discussed in current scholarship as a relevant and salient factor which contributes to student persistence and institutional retention

efforts. As it relates to student persistence and retention, sense of belonging is connection to racial and ethnic identity, language identity, language ideologies and exchanges, and the campus climate around these topics.

In this dissertation I aim to build upon Tara Yosso's (2005) framework of community cultural wealth to demonstrate the array of skills and identities possessed by Chicanx and Latinx students to leverage belonging in academia. Yosso's contributions help frame the relevance of this dissertation within scholarship around retention and persistence, as well as future scholarship which seeks to address disparities in the academic experiences and outcomes of Chicanx and Latinx students. To complement a discussion of literature related to academic retention, I first provide a synthesis of Yosso's cultural capital wealth model.

Yosso's proposal of community cultural wealth is framed by Critical Race Theory (CRT) and challenges deficit views of students by focusing on the expansive cultural knowledge, skills, and connections that students bring with them to academic spaces and endeavors. By "culture", Yosso refers to "behaviors and values that are learned, shared, and exhibited by a group of people... evidenced in material and nonmaterial productions of people" (2005, p. 75). Yosso defines community cultural wealth as "an array of knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts possessed and utilized by Communities of Color to survive and resist macro and micro-forms of oppression" (p. 77). Through the lens of Critical Race Theory, this model expands upon traditional Bourdieuean cultural capital theory, which offered a limited, White-centric and middle-class view of assets and resources. Instead, Yosso's community cultural wealth model (2005) describes dynamic processes that are dialogic as they build upon one another to survive and challenge oppression. These include the following:

1. *Aspirational capital:* resiliency through the capacity to sustain ambitions for the future, even when current circumstances do not yet reflect or provide "objective means to attain those goals" (p. 78)

2. *Linguistic capital*: "the idea that Students of Color arrive at school with multiple language and communication skills" (p. 78). Linguistic capital can refer to multilingualism as well as other communicative social skills and knowledge. Linguistic capital also relates to students' capacity to communicate through a range of mediums, such as "visual art, music or poetry" as well as different language registers or styles to communicate with different community members and other audiences. (p. 78-79).

3. *Familial capital*: "cultural knowledges nurtured among *familia* (kin) that carry a sense of community history, memory, and cultural intuition." (p. 79). Familial capital acknowledges the privileged traditional understandings of 'family', which tend to reflect racialized, classed, and heteronormative inferences and models, but Yosso's community cultural wealth model recognizes a more inclusive understanding of who and what constitutes *familia*, to include extended family as well as other groups and community settings (p. 79).

4. *Social capital*: networks of peers and other social contacts which provide support in navigating social exchanges and institutions (p. 80). Importantly, social capital recognizes ways that Communities of Color transcend adversity and enact supportive and regenerative social networks.

5. *Navigational capital*: resilience in the ability to maneuver through social institutions, such as school, including "structures of inequality permeated by racism" (p. 80).

Navigational capital also acknowledges individual agency as well as connections to social networks which support navigation across and through places and spaces.

6. *Resistant capital*: knowledges and skills "fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality" (p. 80). Resistant capital also refers to ways that the dynamic dimensions of community cultural wealth are passed on through individuals and communities. This form of capital is transformative because it also includes "cultural knowledge of the structures of racism and motivation to transform such oppressive structures" (p. 81).

Since Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth model steps away from deficit views of students, it challenges much of the literature reviewed throughout this chapter. Yosso's model provides a foundation from which to explore ways students enact particular forms of capital in order to feel a sense of belonging and success in academic spaces and exchanges. Relevant to this dissertation are linguistic capital, social capital, navigational capital, and resistant capital. This dissertation explores these forms of community cultural wealth as they present through student narratives, and contributes to Yosso's insistence that scholars and educators "transform education and empower People of Color to utilize assets already abundant in their communities" (p. 82). By challenging deficit thinking and instead embracing a community cultural wealth perspective, scholarship around retention and persistence might contribute more positively to the academic experiences and outcomes of linguistically and racially marginalized students.

Unfortunately, much of the literature on retention and graduate rates of Chicanx and Latinx students reveal continued disparities in the academic experiences and outcomes of Latinx students. While scholars have identified both internal and external factors impacting the

disparities in educational experiences and attainment of students, few studies have approached these issues as Yosso proposed. Many findings rely on a deficit view of student academic attainment, which places the onus on students and their families to close the gaps, thus hindering equitable academic outcomes and positive educational experiences. Such studies also, perhaps unintentionally, employ a deficit view by suggesting there is something lacking in students. As these findings may relate to language, the expectation is that students must adjust their language beliefs and practices to succeed in academia. Other studies have more convincingly addressed the underlying systems and power dynamics that contribute to the disparate academic outcomes experienced by Latinx students, such as the campus racial climate and community building through mentorship that, when adequately available, can contribute to a sense of belonging (Kuh et al., 2005; Gloria et al, 2005; Hernandez & Lopez, 2004; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Hurtado, 1992; Tinto, 2006; Yosso et al, 2009).

One widely cited scholar on university persistence is Vincent Tinto, despite confusion and criticism around the implementation and applicability of his theoretical models (1975, 2006, 2017). His theoretical dropout model proposed in 1975 was actually inspired by Durkheim's Theory of Suicide - perhaps that fact alone warrants some degree of skepticism around Tinto's frameworks. In any case, Tinto's 1975 dropout model argued that "it is the individual's integration into the academic and social systems of the college that most directly relates to his continuance in that college" (p. 96). At the time, Tinto and other scholars were challenging earlier models of retention which had tended to view retention and student persistence through a psychological lens which saw the individual (i.e. the student) as responsible for their academic success and did not take into account the relationship between the individual and the

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environment. How far Tinto has come from putting the onus on the individual student is not always clear.

In his 1975 proposal, Tinto posited that the process of college attrition can be viewed as a "longitudinal process of interactions between the individual and the academic and social systems of the college" (1975, p. 95). While this model proposed a way to evaluate student retention through a focus on integration and the relationship between the individual and the environment, it was not fully successful in theorizing this relationship, and has since received much criticism from education scholars. For example, Hurtado and Carter (1997) criticized Tinto's notion of integration for not adequately addressing the circumstances and complex factors which impact persistence of students from diverse backgrounds. Tinto defined social integration as sufficient interactions with others in the college and congruency with the prevailing values of the college or institution (1975, p. 92). He defined academic integration as essentially meeting the academic requirements of the college or institution to remain an active student, such as GPA. Hurtado and Carter (1997) pointed out that the notion of social and academic integration can mean something different to students who have been marginalized in higher education (p. 326-327). Furthermore, the notion of social and academic integration, as described by Tinto, is problematic because at its very core is the assumption that "the cultural differences of ethnic groups should be diminished and that to be successful, minority students must adopt the values of the dominant college environment" (Hurtado & Carter, 1997, p. 327). Relevant to this dissertation, Tinto's (1975) notion of social and academic integration suggests a linguistic benchmark, informed by institutional and social language ideologies, which may dictate the ways of languaging that minoritized students ought to adopt to integrate into the "dominant college environment".

From my perspective, scholars like Hurtado and Carter (1997) are right to challenge Tinto's positions on retention and persistence, which tend to ignore the related barriers and inequities. For example, Tinto (2017) proposed that "students do not seek to be retained... they seek to persist" (p. 254), but my research shows that many students feel pushed out of academia, be it from disciplines like STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) or from educational spaces and institutions all together. Many students would like to feel universities putting more effort into retaining them. Nevertheless, I appreciate Tinto's emphasis on the importance of sense of belonging for student persistence. According to Tinto, sense of belonging "is most directly shaped by the broader campus climate and the perceptions of belonging students derive from their daily interactions... and the messages those interactions convey about their belonging" (p. 258). Twenty years before Tinto's 2017 publication, Hurtado and Carter (1997) explained that "understanding students' sense of belonging may be key to understanding how particular forms of social and academic experiences affect these students" (p. 324-325). In this passage, "these students" refers to "students who have historically been excluded from education and are now part of the emerging racially and ethnically diverse groups in colleges and universities" (p. 324). In other words, by understanding students' perceptions of their sense of belonging we can also gain understanding about the ways the broader campus climate and interactions in academia interact with and contribute to belonging.

This dissertation aims to build such insight by considering the role of language in university interactions and perceptions of belonging, in the same way that Sylvia Hurtado and Deborah Carter (1997) have contributed a critical and explicit acknowledgment of the impact of the campus racial climate on Latino college students' sense of belonging. In 2007, Johnson et al built upon Hurtado and Carter's 1997 contribution with a study that examined sense of belonging

among first-year undergraduates form different racial and ethnic backgrounds. Johnson et al found that "African American, Hispanic/Latino, and Asian Pacific American students reported a less strong sense of belonging than White/Caucasian students" and that "perceptions of the campus racial climate had strong significant relationships to students' sense of belonging" (p. 525). Although Tinto emphasized the importance of integration, his contributions have been vague and have hedged around these very salient features of sense of belonging.

Some scholars have adopted the notion of membership in place of integration, which implies a more diverse spectrum of participation without adopting dominant norms. The notion of membership as a facet of belonging in higher education is reflected in Ladson-Billings (1995) "culturally relevant pedagogy", which aims to foster belonging and academic success through an additive model, where rather than integrating and acculturating students at the expense of their own cultural identities, the goal is to foster multicultural competencies. This additive model of membership addresses many of the shortcomings that Tinto's integration model demonstrated, as criticized by many scholars.

To summarize, belonging as a facet of academic experiences and a variable in student persistence and retention has been studied from different perspectives, and has been attributed to varied factors. Importantly, scholars agree that belonging really does matter for positive academic experiences and outcomes.

Some scholarship has addressed language as it relates to persistence and retention. While much of this scholarship employs deficit views around language and has focused on students who are "Limited English Proficient" or "English Language Learners" (Fry, 2002; García & Torres-Guevara, 2010, p. 182; Graham, 1987), Chicanx and Latinx university students are more proficient in English than ever before. According to the Pew Research Center (2015), English

proficiency among Chicanx and Latinx youth and adults is on the rise, while Spanish use at home declines. However, the way the Pew Research Center defines English proficiency may differ than how universities define and assess proficiency (as measurable, testable, academic, etc.). Furthermore, this report suggests a causal connection between rising English proficiency and declining Spanish use, which is not necessarily the case. What Pew's findings do reflect is variation among language use across generations, which is not unique to Spanish in the United States. What we learn from this report is that language practices continue to vary across generations based on time in the United States, and that English proficiency appears to be increasing while persistence and retention rates continue to reflect disparities, suggesting a more nuanced relationship between language and academic experiences.

It is certainly still the case, as it has been for decades, that universities value a certain type of English proficiency. This truth is evidenced by, for example, exam scores required for admission and entry level writing requirements. English proficiency studied in this way falls into the category of academic integration, which has received considerable attention and has been studied through assessments such as the SAT and language proficiency exams. In my view, the fact that the main focus on language as it relates to academic achievement and retention has remained on English language proficiency demonstrates a myopic view of the role of language in student academic experiences. Language as a facet of the student experience is not just about how language is or ought to be used, nor how it ought to sound or be written, though these ideological policies certainly impact students. Scholarship and policies which insist on English language proficiency as the dominant variable perpetuate the notion that a *certain variety* of English is (and should be) the metric by which we measure academic success and belonging.

Duran et al (1985) is an influential study that exemplifies the trend discussed in the previous paragraph. As the reference point for students' college preparation and performance, their research used the SAT, which is an exam conducted in English. Duran et al's study sought to explore how the language characteristics of Latinx students impact college access and performance. They surveyed 1,048 students across seventeen four-year colleges. The aim of Duran's study was to develop language survey questions that could accurately predict the SAT-verbal scores of Latinx respondents. The position offered by Duran et al, and other scholars cited throughout their publication, is that students with perceived higher proficiency in a certain, standardized variety of English are more prepared to succeed in higher education. The main issue with this study is that it reinforced deficit views of Latinx students and prescriptivist notions of what language features are deemed necessary for college preparation and success – demonstrating ideologies around standardization, which I discuss in more detail later.

While Duran et al (1985) focused on English language performance and written proficiency in particular, their study also addressed the role of beliefs and attitudes around language on the academic experiences and performance of Latinx students. Their findings suggest that language ideologies expressed or modeled by other interlocuters during the academic trajectory of Latinx students affect students' sense of language proficiency as well as their actual language performance (at least written). The respondents felt that the way others perceived their accented English had a negative result on their own academic performance. In this case, perceived accent related to ways that other speakers associate non-standardized varieties of English with decreased intellect and less desirable personality traits (Duran et al., 1985, p. 5). In other words, the belief that the "wrong" English signals "dumb" had an impact on

student academic performance. Importantly, such assumptions reflect ideological positionings rather than any intrinsic aptitude of students.

While this study aimed to improve the predictability of SAT performance, it also revealed the ways that language ideologies interact with student academic experiences and perceptions of belonging. In this case, belonging related to being prepared to succeed in academia with "appropriate" English verbal skills. This view directly relies on standardized measurements (e.g. the SAT) and assigns a particular variety of English as the desired and (only) accepted metric of academic success. Additionally, such metrics suggest that adequate proficiency in English as determined by an exam will suffice for academic success and belonging. Duran et al's (1985) findings on Latinx students' awareness of how other interlocutors perceived their language use merits further study into the influence of language ideologies on Latinx students' academic experiences. If broader campus climate and interactions in academia, as Tinto put it, impact students' perceived sense of belonging as well as their academic performance and thus persistence, designing a survey to predict how they fare on a high-stakes exam does not get to the source of the issue. Instead, scholarship needs to examine the underlying language ideologies embedded within policies and interactions within academia. I discuss such scholarship in the next section.

Research that examines language, retention, and persistence beyond language proficiency reveals issues around discrimination and linguistic acculturation. Acculturation can be defined as "those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups" (Salamonson et al, 2008 citing Redfield et al, 1936, p.149). In this way, acculturation is viewed as a complex interactive process. Linguistic acculturation describes a

speaker's language preference and degree of language use, impacted by interactions with external cultural features. Importantly, linguistic acculturation is separate from language proficiency, where linguistic acculturation refers to a speaker's preferences for language use and actual language practices.

John Schwieter (2011) explored the role of linguistic acculturation and cultural variables in the academic experiences and attrition of migrant "Hispanic" high school students. Through open-ended interview questions posed to a bilingual education administrator and four migrant "Hispanic" students in a small high school in the Midwest of the United States, Schwieter's findings suggest that migrant "Hispanic" students are pressured to either acculturate to the dominant culture to minimize their "differentness" and "make it" in academia, or to allow social and cultural influences within academic settings to negatively affect their educational engagement.

According to Schwieter, "Prejudices and stereotypes regarding Hispanics and their cultures create a limiting foundation for educational opportunities... this contributes to the marginalization of Hispanic students in schools and leads to feelings of not belonging" (p. 35). In fact, in an earlier study, Schwieter (2008) found that Anglo students' language attitudes toward "Hispanics" and the Spanish language aligned with nationalistic ideologies. Such ideologies have also been observed among migrants from Mexico who were brought to the U.S. as children, who associate English with belonging and American identity (Swift, 2020). Linguistic acculturation upholds particular language ideologies which assign a preference to one language or variety over others. Furthermore, linguistic acculturation impacts both the language practices and the ideologies of a speaker or group of speakers.

Relevant to discussions around persistence and retention are Schwieter's (2008) findings that such negative beliefs about "Hispanic" students also manifest through acts of "benevolent racism" by educational professionals who view "Hispanics" as a "very needy, economically challenged group" (2011, p. 36). Love-Nichols' (2018) observations of instructors enacting expectations of appropriateness also reflected a sense of benevolent racism. Such deficit views take the approach that "Hispanic" students must acculturate in order to succeed and belong in academia.

Contrary to the hegemonic position that linguistic acculturation is the key to academic success, scholars have shown that when students maintain their cultural identity while *adapting* (rather than assimilating) to dominant cultural and linguistic norms, they are more likely to persist. For example, Marcelo Suárez-Orozco's (1991) study found that "Hispanic" American students who are able to maintain their bicultural and bilingual identities do better in school and are more likely to persist. Similarly, Schwieter (2011) reported that when acceptance and support of students' bicultural and bilingual identities was lacking in academic settings, "Hispanic" students felt punished and singled out for speaking Spanish. The students in Schwieter's study reported feeling excluded from the academic community and came to limit their Spanish language use to appease the frequently repeated nationalistic ideology that "Hispanics" in the U.S. ought to speak English. Linguistic acculturation in this way relates to the ideology of appropriateness discussed by Love-Nichols (2018) and Flores & Rosa (2015), whereby a certain variety of English is recognized as more appropriate. Some students in Schwieter's 2011 study responded to such pressure by acculturating linguistically and hiding their Spanish in order to be more "Anglo acting," which made it easier for them "to be accepted in the school" (p.40) because "to be successful, they have to leave behind their Hispanic characteristics and

acculturate with the Anglo culture" (ibid.). Schwieter's findings suggest that acceptance and inclusion of "Hispanic" students' diverse language identities would more positively contribute to persistence in academia.

David Becerra (2010) also explored issues of linguistic acculturation in "Hispanic" student academic experiences and attainment. Becerra conducted telephone surveys of 1,508 adult "Hispanics" and Latinas/os. The goal of Becerra's study was to report on the variables most perceived by adults to be barriers to college enrollment and completion. Becerra's findings suggested that linguistic acculturation was the variable most related to perceived barriers. Becerra defined linguistic acculturation as the participants' preferred language for speaking, reading, and preference for survey response. According to his findings, students with higher levels of linguistic acculturation (higher levels of English preference) are more likely to perceive discrimination as a reason to not complete college. Becerra speculated that "Hispanic" and Latina/o students with increased English fluency may better understand the implications of such discriminatory exchanges compared to a less linguistically acculturated individual. Such a finding also relates to the notion of stereotype threat (the predicament by which individuals fear they will confirm a negative stereotype about the ethnic, racial, gender, or linguistic group with which they identify) which has been found to negatively impact student persistence (Oseguera et al, 2009). Such findings reflect Schwieter's research and suggest that an awareness of the perceptions (e.g. negative stereotypes) of other interlocutors negatively impacts students' sense of belonging and decisions to persist.

So far, the discussion in this chapter has synthesized scholarship which has addressed ways that ideologies and practices around linguistic acculturation impact students' sense of belonging, language use, and academic persistence. As Suárez-Orozco's (1991) study found that

bilingual and bicultural identity maintenance positively impact persistence, Patrick Velasquez (1999) similarly found that students' positive perceptions of bicultural identity impact persistence. In his study which relied on a survey questionnaire, Velasquez reported that Chicano students' sense of belonging and persistence may be influenced by knowledge of Mexican culture and history. At the same time, Velasquez also reported the role of acculturation, which he referred to as "social integration," and suggested that "students who were more comfortable in social affiliations with White students were more likely to experience a higher level of sense of belonging on campus" (p. 20). Velasquez operationalized integrated socialization as the "degree of integration found in respondents' childhood neighborhood and high school" (p.18), which is very different than the definition of social integration as proposed by Tinto (1975, 2006, 2017) and other scholars. Furthermore, to base social integration on neighborhood does not problematize the external factors which delineate neighborhood makeup in the first place. Due to sociopolitical values around race and language, the U.S. has a long history of segregating communities and gatekeeping access to neighborhoods based on race, language, and socioeconomic status. This finding reflects the historical (and present) segregation experienced by Chicanx and Latinx students in the U.S., where housing and educational policies promote the segregation of White students and students of Mexican origin. Places like Oxnard and Lemon Grove in California (among countless other towns throughout the country) employed separate and unequal school systems well into the 1980s (Madrid, 2008), with models of this segregation continuing to this day for many Chicanx and Latinx students who continue to experience disparate schooling throughout their lives.

That students experience increased sense of belonging when more comfortable in White spaces does not, and should not, suggest that the solution to closing opportunity gaps is to create

more White spaces or to ensure that racialized students take on the work of becoming more comfortable around White students. While Velasquez' contributions are thus conflicted and problematic, his finding that the inclusion of bicultural identities contributed to persistence is relevant to the present dissertation.

While the studies referenced above do point to the interaction between language and sense of belonging for positive academic attainment for Chicanx and Latinx students, they also reveal deep gaps in our understanding of the complex variables contributing to retention and persistence. Improving campus racial climate cannot occur by prioritizing Latinx student comfort around White students, faculty, and staff. Such an approach suggests that racialized students would do better and feel better in academic contexts if they could just be comfortable in social affiliations with White people, and does not adequately address the undercurrents of inequity, racism, and racialization that create that discomfort in the first place. Such a position also puts the onus on adjusting, acculturating, or otherwise changing non-White students to fit White norms and standards.

Through the lens of LangCrit, linguistic acculturation is viewed as problematic when it serves to uphold one language variety over others in order to achieve belonging and recognition. LangCrit recognizes and aims to understand how linguistic acculturation propagates "Whiteness as a norm associated with native English speakers" (Crump, 2014b, p. 207). According to LangCrit, linguistic acculturation reflects essentializing notions of identity categories imposed on an individual. Furthermore, LangCrit views linguistic acculturation as related to socially constructed language ideologies which frame language as a fixed entity aligned with belonging. LangCrit challenges the static notions of language and belonging that linguistic acculturation seeks to validate and maintain.

Instead, LangCrit recognizes the many fluid dimensions of an individual's identity in terms of intersectionality. Linguistic acculturation as described by Velasquez as social integration appears to suggest assimilation as the key to belonging and persisting, rather than inclusion and recognition of one's intersectional identities. However, LangCrit also explores how linguistic identities intersect with racial(ized) identities "and what this might mean for how individuals negotiate and perform their identities" (p. 216). Thus, the findings reported by Velasquez provide insights about ways speakers perceive the role of their language choices and identities in their persistence decisions.

The scholarship reviewed so far address racial and linguistic tensions in academia, and their impact on Chicanx and Latinx persistence. That (some) scholars and society have traditionally suggested that a remedy to academic disparities is increased acculturation on the part of linguistically racialized, minoritized, and underserved students points to the role of language in belonging in academia. In other words, the fact that English proficiency has been the focus of scholarship around retention and persistence of non-White students points to the role of language in academic preparedness, success, and belonging. Furthermore, that studies have reported students' perceptions that their (perceived) non-standardized ways of speaking English contribute negatively to their academic experiences point to underlying language ideologies which impact student sense of belonging in academia, as well as their sense of aptitude.

These findings connect to Gal's (1998) discussion of the ways that oppressive language ideologies can come to be accepted as truth by those most impacted by them. According to Gal, "power resides …. in the ability of some ideologies to gain the assent or agreement even of those whose social identities, characters, and practices they do not valorize or even recognize" (p. 321). As a result, and as reflected in the perceptions of respondents in the studies reviewed

above, students come to have negative associations between their language background, racial and linguistic identities, their academic preparedness and aptitude, and their sense of belonging in academic spaces and exchanges.

In the next section, I present scholarly work that focuses on language ideologies. This literature elucidates the scholarship presented in the previous section in regards to the role of sense of belonging in Chicanx and Latinx academic experiences and persistence. As the studies reviewed so far make clear, the conditions which foster or prevent sense of belonging are very much intertwined with language. More specifically, beliefs, values, and feelings around language (i.e. language ideologies) inform interactions in academia, as well as perceptions of self and others. Sense of belonging results from these variables interacting in a given space, time, and environment.

Language Ideologies

In this section, I discuss the language ideologies reflected in the student experiences shared throughout the dissertation. The goal of this section is to present the case for language ideologies as a focus of inquiry in order to better understand how sense of belonging might be fostered for Chicanx and Latinx students to affect persistence and academic experiences. I specifically focus on scholarship which has explored language ideologies in relation to racial, ethnic, and linguistic identities in education. To begin, I provide working definitions relevant to the discussions that follow. I then elaborate on particular language ideologies salient to the academic experiences of the students whose stories guided this dissertation.

Mary Bucholtz and Kira Hall stated that, "sameness and difference, the raw material of identity, do not exist apart from the ideologies and practices through which they are constructed" (2004, p. 388). Thus, in order to better understand the relationship between language, identity

and belonging, we must explore the beliefs, practices, and experiences of speakers. Students, like all speakers, are relegated to positions of power and/or subordination within a society or institution, and language plays a pivotal role in this dynamic. An analysis of language ideologies offers insight into the ways that language interacts with academic experiences, belonging, persistence and retention. The language ideologies I elaborate on here are *standardization, raciolinguistics,* and *transracialization*.

Language and language ideologies have been studied by many researchers as a function of social identity. Particularly over the past two decades, scholars have approached questions about language ideologies in order to explore topics such as social identity and bilingual identity (Zentella, 1997), as well as policy and the racialization of language (Leeman, 2004), along with power structures (Kroskrity, 2004). Language ideologies were defined by Michael Silverstein (1979) as "sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use" (p. 193). Heath (1977) proposed language ideologies as "self-evident ideas and objectives a group holds concerning roles of language in the social experiences of members as they contribute to the expression of the group" (p. 53). Crump's (2014b) proposal of Critical Language and Race Theory (LangCrit), similarly posits that language ideologies and practices are socially and locally constructed and inform how individuals negotiate and enact their identity (p. 208). From these perspectives, language and social norms mutually inform each other;, ideological patterns encompass not only how individuals and groups engage with each other and society, but the values assigned to language and ways of using language.

Similarly, Susan Gal (1998) asserted that by focusing on language ideology we can reveal different aspects of social phenomena and better understand the relations of language to social

life, which Woolard referred to as "the different "sitings" of ideology" (p. 319). Language ideologies are not simply "beliefs or feelings about languages as used in their social worlds" as put by Kroskrity (2004), rather they are instruments of power. Gal gets at the underlying power structure and instrumentalism of language ideologies by pointing out that, sometimes, ideologies that appear to be about language are actually (also) about some aspect of social life. Gal referred to this function of language ideologies as *coded stories* or *coded arguments* (1998). Gal's work may offer insight about opportunities to address disparities in academic outcomes and experiences by examining the *coded stories* and language ideologies therein.

Putting together the descriptions of language ideologies and their roles in social worlds as proposed above by Gal, Woolard and Schieffelin, and Crump, I propose a definition of language ideologies as socially and situationally constructed power structures that inform one's beliefs, feelings, and values around language in social worlds and which can dictate how (and by whom) language might be used for access to and recognition in social worlds. Applied to the realm of education, through exploration and analyses of student language ideologies, we can learn much about the academic experiences, opportunities, and outcomes of linguistically and racially marginalized and underserved students. As an "instrument of power maintenance", as Kathryn Woolard and Bambi Schieffelin (1994, p. 58) asserted, language ideologies are often used to identify, enact, or deny power in social worlds. In other words, language ideologies are rooted in notions of power and work to enforce educational disadvantages for some students who have been racially and linguistically marked as Other.

The following subsections review scholarship related to language ideologies of standardization and raciolinguistics. I also include a subsection focused on processes of transracialization and affective agency. Together, these subsections provide background to

situate the contributions of this dissertation as they relate to language ideologies and academic experiences of Chicanx and Latinx university students. This dissertation builds upon the foundational conversations reviewed here by providing extensive exploration of language ideologies in the academic experiences of Chicanx and Latinx university students in a way previous studies have not yet offered. Specifically, this dissertation offers detailed student accounts of encounters with and enactments of language ideologies in academia and the role such structures and belief systems play in sense of belonging.

Language Standardization Ideology

"Because markedness implies hierarchy, differences between groups become socially evaluated as deviations from a norm and, indeed, as failures to measure up to an implied or explicit standard. Hence such differences are used as a justification for social inequality." (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004, p. 372-373).

The quote above was selected to introduce this subsection because it aptly addresses a social and linguistic outcome that this dissertation finds students experiencing and enacting. Students encounter expectations around what their language use and language identity ought to be in and for academia, and such expectations are informed by particular language ideologies.

Ideologies of language *standardization* revolve around the notion that there is a way that language should be spoken, and that certain languages and language varieties "belong" in certain contexts; that certain people (e.g. teachers) should speak a particular (standardized) language variety. In Silverstein's definition, which focused on structure and function, is the notion that a particular way of using language (due to its structure on a metalinguistic level, or its praxis) may be more justifiable or easier to rationalize than other forms. Such a definition suggests a degree of standardization. Additionally, this position suggests a benchmark in terms of appropriateness. Heath's definition offered a broader understanding of language ideologies which includes the

interactional features of ideas about language, as expressions of a group of language users (and its individuals therein).

Years later, Lippi-Green (1997) defined what she referred to as language standardization ideology as a preference toward an idealized and homogenous language, which is greatly influenced and perpetuated by dominant power structures and institutions. Additionally, such standardized language ideologies most often idealize the spoken language of elite speakers, according to social markers of economic, racial, and social class. In other words, according to Lippi-Green, standardized language ideologies are drawn from social constructions of elitism. This position relates to the imperatives proposed by Woolard and Schieffelin (1994), who asserted that studies in language ideology should address "the relevance of power relations to the nature of cultural forms" and explore how meanings about language "are socially produced as effective and powerful" (p. 58). Woolard and Schieffelin also urged scholars to adopt critical analyses of language ideologies, with a particular focus on "the political use of language as an instrument of power maintenance" (p. 58). Similarly, Crump's (2014b) critical framework examines how individual language practices and ideologies are connected dialogically to larger systems of policies and norms.

The standardized norm to which other languages and uses of language are measured is socially constructed and rooted in hegemonic power, resulting in a hierarchy of language and language identity that benefits some speakers over others. As Gal (1998), Bucholtz and Hall (2004), and other scholars have contended, language indexes aspects of social life. As such, "Participants' ideologies about language locate – and sometimes even generate – linguistic phenomena as part of, and as evidence for, what they believe to be systematic behavioral, aesthetic, affective, and moral contrasts among the social groups [speakers] indexed" (Gal, 1998,

p. 328). This aspect of standardization ideologies creates and perpetuates the misconception that language, as an entity one has or does not have, is somehow independent of its context and purpose, and rather is something fixed within a speaker or group of speakers. García and Torres-Guevara (2010) refer to this as *monoglossic language ideology*, which views language as "an autonomous skill" (p. 182). Similarly, Michael Silverstein referred to this notion as the "monoglot 'standard' in America" (1998), which he described as "a phenomenon in a linguistic community in which institutional maintenance of certain valued linguistic practices—in theory, fixed—acquires an explicitly-recognized hegemony over the definition of the community's norm". Deficit views and policy framings of speakers who are perceived as deviating from that norm arise from this view that language is an entity or a skill that a speaker has and that there is a prescribed norm to be met. Similarly, Gal spoke about the power of language ideologies and the associations they create between speakers and a language, according to which, "Linguistic differences that index social contrasts are reinterpreted as *icons* of the social contrasts. In this process of *iconization*, the ideological representation fuses some quality of the linguistic feature and a supposedly parallel quality of the social group and understands one as the cause or the inherent, essential explanation of the other" (1998, p. 328). This power that language ideologies are imbued with can have positive and negative implications and impacts on human interactions.

In many educational institutions throughout the United States, policies are, and have been, influenced by standardization ideologies around language, particularly English-only policies. Such policies relegate standardized American English as the only acceptable language for use and instruction in academic contexts. In the education of Chicanx and Latinx students in the U.S., language policies have focused on "trying to make their *English fit 'native' standards*,

and their *Spanish fit 'foreign' standards*" (García & Torres-Guevara, 2010, p. 182). In other words, standardization ideologies apply to Spanish, too.

Nevertheless, within the dominant education model in the U.S., the interaction between standardization ideologies and English-only educational policies result in beliefs that only standardized English "fits" in education (Wiley & Wright, 2004). While to some extent bilingual education models provide an exception, these are few in number, frequently disparaged, and at times legally prohibited, as happened in California between 1998 and 2016. As such, in many cases English has been "constructed as the only acceptable language use of loyal and true United States citizens" (García & Torres-Guevara, 2010, p. 184). While standardization does not automatically correlate with English-only policies, it is true that the majority of educational institutions in the U.S. prioritize English-only. Thus, English-only policies not only reflect aspects of standardization (since a certain variety of English is the target model for English-only education) but also reinforce ideologies that value monolingualism as the normative ideal. In fact, at various points throughout U.S. history the use of Spanish in teaching U.S. Chicanx and Latinx students has been prohibited, such as after the passing of the 1998 Proposition 227 which prohibited Spanish for instruction in California, with the exception of Spanish as a "foreign language". Similar propositions were passed in Arizona and Massachusetts, which limited bilingual education in favor of English-Only pedagogies (García & Torres-Guevara, 2010). Although such policies have since changed, (Proposition 58 in California in 2016; Massachusetts in 2017)[19] standardization ideologies expressed through English-only policies continue to carry

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[19] In Arizona, HCR2026 was proposed but did not make it to a vote by the Arizona senate. However, a similar bill (House Concurrent Resolution 2001) was introduced in 2020. House Education Committee gave HCR 2001, a due pass recommendation during their Jan. 27, 2020 meeting with a vote of 10 ayes, 1 nay and 2 absent.

much weight in the beliefs of speakers, in the structuring of educational policies, and in the language practices and performances of speakers.

Standardization language ideologies may be present and observable when they "attempt to legitimate an identity through an institutional or other authority, or conversely the effort to withhold or withdraw such structural power" (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004, p. 386). This position on standardization ideologies relates to those similarly proposed by Woolard and Schieffelin (1994) and Crump (2014a, 2014b). Examples of the relationship between standardization language ideologies, identity possibilities (Crump, 2014b, p. 220) and power structures can be observed in the student narratives discussed in chapter 4, as well as those presented in *Feeling It* (Eds. Bucholtz et al, 2018), see below. These examples reflect the socially constructed belief that, in order to earn upward mobility, one must enact the language use mandated and recognized by the nation state. For students, this may be observed in the ways language use is negotiated to align with the norms around "appropriateness" (Flores & Rosa, 2015) in particular campus spaces, or language performance on assessment measures. Similarly, the connection between institutional power and language standardization was observed in Schwieter's study (2011), which addressed the role of classroom language policies and English-only policies on enforcing standardization ideologies. Such notions insist that Spanish does not belong in the classroom and that Spanish speakers should turn off that aspect of themselves and acculturate to standardized English as the permitted language in educational spaces.

While English-only policies observed in classrooms reflect features of standardization language ideologies, such policies also relate to the ideology of essentialism which has salience in the lives of speakers. Crump (2014b) addressed the notion of essentialism as a language ideology and said that "Even though languages are social constructions, the ideology of language

as fixed entities still carries a powerful social force." (p. 210). The notion of language as a fixed entity suggests that language is something one either has or does not have, and that there is an underlying stagnancy or consistency that can be sustained intrinsic to a language. Essentialism suggests either/or (e.g. *either* Spanish *or* English) rather than and/both (e.g. Spanish *and* English). Crump's position aligns with Gal's 1998 statement about the power afforded to linguistic differences. Due to the phenomenon of iconization, as discussed by Gal, social groups and individuals can be associated with or "fused" to some quality of linguistic feature. As it relates to education, language ideology might insist that English is the *icon* associated with education and with "good student", or "smart", or "well behaved student", whereas Spanish use is iconic of (sometimes stigmatized) Latinx identities.

Another study relevant to the present discussion on ideologies of standardization is that of *Feeling It* contributing author Jessica Love-Nichols, whose study explored the language ideologies of teachers. Love-Nichols aimed to "emphasize the relationship between teachers' positive actions, intentions, and impact and the negative language ideologies that many teachers – and particularly but not only white teachers – still participate in" (p. 92). Love-Nichols discusses two main ideologies held by three White teacher participants: the ideology of formality and the ideology of worth. What these ideologies have in common with language standardization ideologies and the ideology of appropriateness (Flores & Rosa, 2015) is the notion that there is a "right" and more valuable way to engage in academic spaces. Love-Nichols proposed that systemic negative language ideologies can, often, be rooted in positive intentions for student academic success (p. 92). As with the ideology of standardization, the ideology of formality posits that linguistic varieties that stray from the "standard" academic English forms are inappropriate for school, while the ideology of worth posits minoritized student linguistic forms

as inappropriate for school because their messages are not perceived as "intelligent" or "worthwhile" (p. 93).

The ideology of formality proposed by Love-Nichols also relates to the ideology of appropriateness and the concept of the *white listening subject as* discussed by Flores and Rosa (2015). Through these ideologies, teachers' positive intentions of preparing students to be well understood and appreciated by (generally White) listeners results in perpetuating a power dynamic and sociolinguistic hierarchy. Flores and Rosa (2015) assert that idealized linguistic practices of whiteness manifest in the ways that listeners hear and interpret the language use of language-minoritized speakers. As a result, the language use of minoritized speakers is perceived through the white listening subject as deviating from appropriate and correct language use based on their racialized positions in society and not based on any objective features of their language practices. These language ideologies insist that youth language is not fitting for academia. The ultimately damaging outcome of such masked ideologies is the notion that "if students simply used academic English, they would no longer suffer discrimination" (p. 94). Such a deficit orientation toward linguistic variation assigns power to one standardized linguistic form rather than to the systemic inequalities and ideologies that inform the perceptions of the listening subject. Love-Nichols calls out the issue here: there is nothing intrinsically good or bad, right or wrong, appropriate or inappropriate about one linguistic form over another. Rather, the beliefs around those forms as informed by social structures and systems are what assign such values and degrees of acceptability and worth.

This dissertation contributes to research around ideologies of standardization in both English and Spanish, and demonstrates that students are critical of their own perceived deviations from socially constructed linguistic norms. While language ideologies can be very

problematic, including ideologies of standardization, as scholars and educators we cannot dismiss the fact that for many speakers adopt and manifest such essentializing views of language and identity in their linguistic practice and performance as they interact with academia. . Such associations appear in both individual and group ideologies around language. Furthermore, the power of such ideologies impacts one's sense of belonging in academia, as illustrated in the findings of this dissertation.

Raciolinguistic Ideologies and Languagelessness

The concept of *raciolinguistics* was first popularized by Nelson Flores and Jonathan Rosa (2015) and elaborated on by H. Samy Alim, John Rickford, and Arnetha Ball in their 2016 edited volume titled *Raciolinguistics: How language shapes our ideas about race*. Raciolinguistics focuses on the socially cyclical relationship between race, racialization, and language: language is used to construct race ("languaging race") and perceptions of race influence how language is used and viewed ("racing language"). Critical Race and Language Theory (LangCrit) similarly examines the interconnectedness between race, language, identity, power, and belonging (Crump, 2014b). Like Raciolinguistics, LangCrit examines the ways that locally and socially constructed language boundaries intersect with processes of racialization and inform "a sliding scale of belonging" (p.217). LangCrit has not received as much attention as the framework of Raciolinguistics, though both are relevant and useful to this dissertation.

As a framework, Raciolinguistics has been utilized particularly well to better understand how sociolinguistic variation is intertwined with social and political factors. In this way, language may be used to seek or demonstrate (racial) group membership (Eds. Alim et al, 2016) through the notion that speakers of X language [should/do] look a certain way, while members of

X ethnicity [should/do] sound a certain way. Raciolinguistics aims to examine how speakers are racialized through language and demonstrates that linguistic racialization is perpetuated through power structures and contributes to identity formation and expression, as well as sense of belonging. A key example is provided by educational institutions, which have historically segregated individuals in the U.S. on the basis of race and language (as well as gender, and religious affiliation). At the core of the standardization ideologies perpetuated across most (though not all) educational institutions in the U.S. is the notion that spaces such as schools are White public spaces, where "failures of linguistic order, real and imagined, become in the outer sphere signs of race" (Hill, 1998, p. 682). It is in this "outer sphere", according to Hill (1998), that speakers of "accented" English and languages other than English, such as Spanish, are racialized and held up to the standards of linguistic orderliness. Raciolinguistic scholars like Alim, Flores, and Rosa offer detailed analyses and examples of the interaction between race and language in both the maintenance of and resistance to such language boundaries.

Regarding the notion of shared cultural, social, and linguistic conventions that signal a particular social identity, raciolinguistics might observe that the performance of those conventions, or the "acts" and "stances" as Elinor Ochs (1993) refers to them, are expected to be performed differently for different speakers, and in particular that interlocutors expect different acts and stances from different speakers based in part on the phenotypical features of the speaker. The linguistic acts and stances of a speaker perceived as White wanting to convey the social identity of "successful student" may be different than the linguistic performances required of non-White presenting speakers. For example, Hill's research (1998) suggests that, for Whites, language boundaries are not considered as fixed nor as "disorderly and dangerous" as it is for Spanish speakers in the U.S. (p. 682). Here, the notion of fixity described by Hill relates to

Crump's discussion of the ideology of essentialism, as well as discussions around English-only policies which delineate language boundaries for Spanish speakers in U.S. classrooms. Evidence from studies identifying linguistic discrimination and accent hallucination provide evidence that in fact, performance recognized as aligning with a particular social identity is not the same performance for all speakers (Rubin, 1992).

Rosa addresses this double standard of language boundaries and raciolinguistic identity enactment in public spaces in a chapter which uses ethnographic and sociolinguistic methods to analyze the raciolinguistic ideologies and linguistic practices of Latina/o high school students and administrators in Chicago. In this context, White speakers are permitted to use Spanish in public spaces (Mock Spanish) but for U.S. Latinas/os, "public usage of Spanish or 'accented' English is prohibited and/or understood as an index of primordial inferiority (i.e. racial difference)" (p. 67). This dissertation presents similar sentiments and investments among Chicanx and Latinx university students, many of whom spoke of their perceived "thick accent" in English and positive feelings towards Mexican and Californian varieties of Spanish. This dissertation also adds to Rosa's findings by presenting student experiences with monitoring and negotiating their English and Spanish use depending on the campus space they enter. Such instances of language choice, or acts and stances, point to the power upheld at the intersection of language ideologies and academic space.

Furthermore, Rosa (2016b) discusses the ways that ideologies of language standardization are problematic, as they are "often understood to stigmatize particular linguistic practices perceived as deviating from prescriptive norms" (p. 163). Rosa proposes that such stigmatizing ideologies interact with what he terms *languagelessness,* which refers to "racialized ideologies" that "call into question linguistic competence – and, by extension, legitimate

personhood – all together" (p. 163). The ideology of languagelessness also relates to the essentializing notion of language as an entity that one either has or does not have (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004; Crump, 2014a; 2014b), and specifically constructs some speakers as lacking (legitimate) language altogether.

Scholars before Rosa have described a similar deficit view of language referred to as "semilingualism" (Cummins, 1979; MacSwan, 2000; Pavlenko, 2006) or "non-non" (MacSwan, 2000; Valadez et al, 2000). In the sixties and seventies, linguists and cognitive scientists were interested in understanding the relationship between language and cognitive ability. To this end, scholars such as James Cummins proposed that cognitive ability in one language for bilingual children was related to their development in their first language (L1). According to Cummins (1979), "a cognitively and academically beneficial form of bilingualism can be achieved only on the basis of adequately developed first language (L1) skills" (p.222). Cummins aimed to dispel the notion that linguistic factors explained academic difficulties of minority children along with the belief of many linguists and educators at the time that bilingualism created developmental deficits for children. Instead, Cummins supported the notion that differing academic outcomes observed among bilingual children resulted from the interaction between social, linguistic, and educational program factors.

However, even at the time of writing this dissertation current interpretations of Cummins continue to argue that subtractive bilingualism causes cognitive deficits – an argument adamantly rejected by many bilingual educators for its suggestion that students suffer from cognitive deficits rather than influences of social inequality and racism (MacSwan, 2000a; Pavlenko, 2006). Deficit views of language proficiency and educational achievement do not account for the social and political factors that contribute to disparities in language proficiency, as well as

attitudes around what qualifies as "proficient" and perceptions of imagined low proficiency for racially and linguistically minoritized speakers that are not similarly applied to non-minoritized speakers. What we learn from deficit views of language as it interacts with education identity is that at the intersection of such views are standardized language ideologies as well as raciolinguistic ideologies which assign linguistic competency and identity to some speakers over others on the basis of race and ethnicity, and which impede access to adequate multilingual education in order to prioritize monolingual standardized English instruction. Even beyond language, Bernal speaks of how ways of knowing through Eurocentric and White privileged perspectives have become so standardized as to "subtly (and not so subtly) shape the belief system and practices of researchers, educators, and the school curriculum while continuing to adversely influence the educational experiences of Chicanas/Chicanos and other students of color" (2002, p. 111).

As Rosa asserts, bilingualism is often framed as a "handicap in U.S. public schools" (2016b, p. 164). Drawing on data collected at a predominately Latina/o U.S high school, Rosa critiques claims that "the English language in itself will provide U.S. Latinas/os with access to societal inclusion... that there is a 'language barrier' that must be overcome" (p. 177) and points to the experiences of (English-speaking) Latinas/os who experience "profound forms of inequality in the realms of education, employment, housing, health care, the criminal justice system, electoral politics, etc." as evidence that speaking English does not mitigate the racializing processes that result in such inequality.

Furthermore, contributions by Alim (2016) and Rubin (1992) have shown that even when minoritized speakers demonstrably use standardized English, they are perceived as not doing so. For example, Rubin's 1992 study used a matched guise approach to explore students'

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comprehension in response to language. Students were presented with an audio-recording and told it was the voice of a course instructor. The same audio-recording was presented at the same time that a picture of a female instructor was projected. The first group of students were shown a picture of a White female instructor and the second group of students were shown a picture of a Chinese female instructor. The only stimulus that changed was the picture but the audio-recorded lecture was the same. The students who were told the Chinese instructor matched the audio-recorded voice reported decreased comprehension and identified speech errors. These findings demonstrate the phenomenon of accent hallucination, as students wrongly perceived a non-standardized accent. Similarly, Alim was told by many interlocutors that he had an accent depending on phenotypical markers he presented with (e.g. with or without a beard), despite his language variety staying the same. These studies show that the perceptions of other interlocutors influence the racial and linguistic identity or identities that a speaker is recognized as presenting. The responses reported by Alim and Rubin show how strong raciolinguistic ideologies are and the impact that such associations between race, language, and identity have in their influence over the exchanges that linguistically racialized speakers encounter.

Transracialization and Affective Agency

A relatively newly developed concept in linguistics is that of *transracialization,* proposed by H. Samy Alim in his contributing chapter in *Raciolinguistics: How Language Shapes Our Ideas About Race* (2016). Alim proposed the framework of *transracialization* for theorizing and problematizing race and the process of racial categorization. In his chapter titled, "Who's Afraid of the Transracial Subject?" Alim describes ways that individuals are racialized by others through language, and also how individuals transracialize themselves in order to resist racial

identification while also gaining access to racialized spaces, resources, and interactions. The issue, as Alim makes clear through detailed accounts of his own experiences with racialization, is that *transraciality* requires one to be able to move fluidly across racial, linguistic, and national boundaries. Much in the way that John Baugh demonstrated that racial discrimination results when racial identification is mapped onto one's linguistic performances (2003), Alim shows how transracial strategies rely on stereotypical, hegemonic notions of racial categories and ethnolinguistic identities.

What Alim describes also relates to what Bucholtz and Hall (2014) say about *authentication*, that "Everyday conversation then becomes the vehicle for authentication practices, as speakers are able to index various ethnic and nationalist stances through language choice" (Bucholtz & Hall, 2014, p. 385). In other words, language facilitates the expression, interpretation, and categorization of racialized identity. Alim describes this through the transracial subject, as one who *translates* their racial identity through the negotiation of language use. Thus, as a "vehicle of authentication", transracialization entails the enactment of a different perceived race by employing its associated linguistic resources. At the same time, an individual may be racialized (often times incorrectly) by others based on their linguistic performance and/or phenotypical features.

Similar to how Alim described his own agency in disrupting racializing processes, the authors in *Feeling It: Language, race, and affect in Latinx youth learning* (Ed. Bucholtz et al, 2018) present student experiences as a critical source for understanding racializing processes in academia. The authors elaborate on racializing processes through student experiences and instructor observations that are part of the School Kids Investigating Language in Life and Society (SKILLS) program. Established in 2010 at the University of California, Santa Barbara,

SKILLS began as a twenty-week college-level curriculum on language in social life, taught to high school students. The impetus behind the SKILLS program was to contribute to efforts to eliminate the threats to youth well-being and education that result from racializing processes in educational agencies and systems. In this section I review the contributions of *Feeling It*, as they offer insight around the role of language and language ideologies in the academic experiences of linguistically racialized students which are extremely relevant to this dissertation.

Bucholtz et al define racialization as "the sociopolitical process of imposing structural disadvantage on certain kinds of bodies that have been categorized as phenotypically marked" and argue that this process is "central to all forms of education" (p. 1). Importantly, the authors highlight the affective component of racialization, which has to do with how young people are "socialized into a specific racial subject position [which] entails being socialized into its attendant affects" (p. 3). The authors define *affective agency* as "the simultaneously cognitive, perceptual, and emotional experience of embodied encounter with the material world." (p. 3). According to Bucholtz et al., "agency resides not in individuals but in actions; it is interactional and hence both linguistic and material; it is inherently political" (p. 4). Furthermore, affect is not separate from agency, cognition, or language because affect is a "social and relational phenomenon". As such, affective agency is a tool that racially minoritized youth utilize to "enact social change by resisting, subverting, and dismantling hegemonic ideologies and practices" (p. 2). The contributing authors show how youth encounter and acquire ideologies of "affective appropriateness" which stipulate how they ought to behave and feel. Such ideologies of appropriateness are identified in various exchanges between students and teachers.

For example, contributing author Adanari Zarate, "You don't *look* like you speak English" Raciolinguistic profiling and Latinx youth agency", focuses on three high school-aged

Latino males participating in the SKILLS program and describes the ways that the young men were racially and linguistically profiled in their experiences. Data for Zarate's analysis come from observations of classroom discussions and collections of student journaling around an influential essay by Gloria Anzaldúa, "How to Tame a Wild Tongue" (1987). Through analysis of the student narratives, Zarate brings to the forefront ways that Latinx youth navigate experiences of raciolinguistic profiling. Specifically, Zarate relies on Jonathan Rosa's concept of *raciolinguistic enregisterment,* which describes "an ideological process in which a person is assumed to speak a certain language solely based on racial signifiers that are marked as belonging to users of that language" (p. 133). In her analysis, Zarate concludes that "in the white public space of their workplaces, spaces that required and normalized the use of English, their appearance influenced their linguistic interactions" and that the way Latinx youth perceived and responded to these raciolinguistic profiling incidents revealed "the multilayered agentive resistance they each possessed" (p. 145). Students demonstrated their individual ways of resisting raciolinguistic profiling: by responding in a language other than Spanish (the language they "looked like"). In doing so, Latinx youth acknowledged the oppressive act of being assumed to speak a certain way based on their appearance and challenged the raciolinguistic assumption behind such acts. Student perceptions of and responses to racializing processes reflect the affective agency employed by Latinx youth to position themselves differently than how listeners in white spaces otherwise assigned them. Zarate's findings also build on Rosa's contributions by presenting ways that associations between phenotypical cues and particular ways of speaking, as well as language aptitude, are socially constructed and inform raciolinguistic profiling of speakers.

The findings of Zarate's study draw on similar notions of social identity as proposed by Ochs (1993), who described social identity construction as evolving "in the course of social interaction, transformed in response to the acts and stances of other interlocutors as well as to fluctuations in how a speaker decides to participate in the activity at hand" (1993, p. 298). The student anecdotes demonstrate ways that speaker racial and linguistic identities can be constructed differently depending on the social interaction or in response to perceptions of other interlocutors. In both Zarate's and Alim's studies, speaker agency presents by identifying and challenging racializing processes.

What the contributions of the authors discussed in this section offer to this dissertation is the necessary foundational agreement that youth are not passive recipients of others' actions, but are a "fundamental source of sociocultural knowledge and sociopolitical transformation in their own right" (p. 1). Additionally, these studies draw critical and observable connections between language ideologies, race, and student experiences. As such, these studies are uniquely valuable for their focus on the role of language in academia. This dissertation builds upon the understandings provided by these studies and offers additional insights about ways that language ideologies foster inclusion and exclusion for linguistically minoritized students in academia. This study also contributes insights about the language ideologies that fuel racializing processes.

Language, Identity, and Belonging

"For me identity is fundamentally about desire and death. How you construct your identity is predicated on how you construct desire and how you conceive of death: desire for recognition; quest for visibility... the sense of being acknowledged; a deep desire for association... It's the longing to belong, a deep, visceral need that most linguistically conscious animals who transact with an environment (that's us) participate in." (Cornel West, 1992, Summer)

As I've presented so far, the relationship between language, identity, and belonging are factors that impact the educational experiences and outcomes of racialized students. Identity is a complicated concept and aspect of human existence that has received much attention across many disciplines. Scholars have investigated the ways that the creation, expression, and negotiation of identity manifests in human interaction, in relation to other variables such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, and language. Recent work on identity critiques essentialist and deterministic outlooks, instead viewing identity as socially constructed, performative, and an ongoing and social political process (Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2001; Bucholtz & Hall, 2004, p. 376; Crump, 2014a, p. 63). Scholars also acknowledge the interconnectedness between socially constructed categories, language ideologies, and language use. The interplay between these aspects of social life and individual identity are informed by beliefs about, and practices of, language use, which influence ""the ongoing construction, negotiation and renegotiation of identities in multilingual settings" (Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2001, p. 243).

Language is very much intertwined with identity. In the U.S., as in many societies, fixed linguistic identity categories "bound the meaning of identity within the individual: that is, identity is something someone *has*, and it is static, uniform, and countable" (Crump, 2014a, p. 62). Fixed identity categories attempt to define an individual in essentializing terms and suggest that identity is a constant state of being. The studies cited above reveal ways that speakers are assigned fixed categories based on their presenting ethnic identity and language background, impacting their academic performance and persistence. More recent sociolinguistic studies view race and language identities as hybrid, multifaceted, negotiated and performed differently depending on the context (Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2001; Crump, 2014a; Pavlenko, 2006). However, fixed identity categories have strong social presence and are often the set societal

norm to which individuals are measured. In fact, individuals do enact both fixed and fluid identities (Crump, 2014a; Pennycook, 2010). In relation to language, while speakers may not agree with monolingual ideologies that dictate English as *the* language of belonging in the U.S., many speakers associate belonging and success with English (Schwieter, 2011; Swift, 2020). Such essentializing ways of assigning identity exist outside of English speaking contexts, too. For example, Alim's experiences with being racialized as a result of being phenotypically ambiguous as well as his language performances resulted in different identities being assigned to him or performed by him in a variety of European countries (2016).

For Alim, racial identity was experienced in connection to language identity. Alim's experiences with being perceived by others as either similar to them or different to them depending on his perceived language identity reflects what Bucholtz and Hall (2004) discussed as it relates to identity scholarship, which has often approached identity performance and construction in terms of sameness and difference. Scholars in this field have analyzed and proposed not only how identity comes to be formulated for individuals and groups, but how identity is used for social purposes. The scholarship discussed in the previous section demonstrates ways that language identity can be formulated for individuals by other interlocutors, as well as by speakers through affective agency. However, as Alim presents through his own experiences with transracialization and as the student experiences shared in *Feeling It* also demonstrate, linguistically racialized speakers do not experience single or separate identities. Such lived realities reflect a social constructivist approach to social identity, as Ochs (1993) shares, which "allows us to examine the building of multiple, yet perfectly compatible identities – identities that are subtle and perhaps have no label, blended identities, even blurred identities" because "social identities evolve in the course or social interaction" (p.

298). Language interacts and intersects as a feature of identity in complex ways for social

purposes: to claim a similar identity to others in order to gain access to social resources,

structures, and power; to claim an identity distinct from others in order to preserve a sense of

community or for politically and socially motivated movements (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004).

Language identity is thus a semiotic process as well as a "habitual social activity" that

shapes our "way of being in the world" (Ochs, 1993, p. 377). According to Ochs, language

identity and use is informed by features of social life and experience, which are different for

everyone. An important aspect of practice is that "speakers may elect to engage in certain

activities or to affiliate with social groupings in which particular practices are expected" (p. 378),

or in what Lave and Wenger referred to as "communities of practice" (1991). As such, practice

as it relates to language and identity allows for individuals to have multifaceted, dynamic

identities across different communities according to the activities (i.e. practices) that make up

that social group. Elinor Ochs described social identity as a "complex inferential and social

process" (1993, p. 290), which relies on shared understandings and conventions around acts and

stances between a speaker and interlocutor. These acts and stances relate to the notion of

performance, where social identity is "a social meaning that one usually *infers* based on one's

sense of the act and stance meanings encoded by linguistic constructions" (p. 289), and

demonstrating a speaker's agency in the production of their social self (p. 296). The position on

identity construction proposed by Ochs is reflected in the notion of *affective agency* described by

Bucholtz et al (2018).

According to Ochs, social identities are "mediated by the interlocutors' understandings of

conventions for doing particular social acts" (p. 289). In other words, the behavior a speaker

chooses to enact is recognized to validate the attempted social identity only if others recognize

the behavior and associate it with the target social identity. This process of indexicality describes associations between language and identity, involving language ideologies which assign associations between a particular language use and particular social identity.

Many sociolinguistic studies assume that "language use is distinctive at some level but that such practices are reflective, not constitutive, of social identities" (Ochs, 1993, p. 376). However, such an assumption neglects to consider speakers' affective agency. Furthermore, "as the product of situated social action, identities may shift and recombine to meet new circumstances" (p. 376). Ochs described this in another way, saying "Social identities evolve in the course of social interaction, transformed in response to the acts and stances of other interlocutors as well as to fluctuations in how a speaker decides to participate in the activity at hand" (1993, p. 298). It is this pragmatic yet responsive fluidity of identity that contributes to acts and stances through language. The framework proposed by Bucholtz and Hall (2004) connects Ochs' discussion of social identities to language, according to which "social identities come to be created through language" (p. 370) via symbolic semiotic resources. Bucholtz and Hall described language as a symbolic resource endowed with social and political meaning in specific contexts. In other words, identity is constructed in part through language in contextualized ways, informed by the social and political meanings embedded within language and context – this notion speaks to Ochs' point about language relating to social identity in nonarbitrary ways. Who a speaker is in one linguistically contextualized space and time may be very different than the identity of that same speaker in a different context. This notion was also reflected in Alim's work on transracialization, as well as in the findings presented in *Feeling It* as it relates to affective agency.

The notion of affective agency can clearly be seen as a linguistic tool and response in racializing processes, including transracialization. Drawing the concepts together that have been discussed so far, affective agency might be experienced and enacted by linguistically racialized students as a type of *authenticating move*, which Petra Shenk (2007) described as an act of belonging through language which speakers employ in order to enact forms of ethnic identity. Such authenticating moves rely on raciolinguistic and ethnolinguistic ideologies, which map particular ethnic and racial identities onto ways of speaking, which are associated with ethnic, racial, gender, or citizen categories. As Alim (2016) asserted, linguistic resources are often employed in order to claim a particular racial or ethnic identity. Such identity enactments contribute to sense of belonging, or not (Alim, 2016). Identity informs a sense of belonging because in order to feel *belonging*, one must associate with an identity that permits belonging or an identity that is associated with recognition. In other words, for a speaker to successfully demonstrate acts of belonging through language they must be aware of the relevant acts and stances for the target identity or identities that warrant belonging. Shenk's study (2007) shows how Mexican American students use linguistic and ideological resources "to position the self as authentic and to position the other as inauthentic" (p. 197). Such authenticating moves reflect how identity is dialogically constructed through interaction and validated only through the interactional stance if there is "interactional uptake".

Thus, acts of belonging through interactional identity making may involve utilizing the tactic of distinction, as discussed by Bucholtz and Hall (2004) whereby the speaker highlights the difference(s) between oneself and others – to signal "I am X because I am not Y", so to speak. For example, Shenk presents interactions between Mexican American students as they attempt to demonstrate their authentic Mexicanness through metadiscourse around spelling and

pronunciation conventions. According to Shenk, "asserting one's Mexiccanness is a recurring identity performance" (p. 204), which is reflected in the students' dialogue when one student, Rica, jokingly reminds another student, Bela, that since Bela is "only half" Mexican, she should pronounce an English word using half Spanish phonological conventions and half English conventions. This example also points to the language play employed to draw upon ideological distinctions for identity making stances. The point to emphasize by referencing Shenk, Bucholtz and Hall in this section is that language is intertwined with the process of social identity construction and expression for the sake of being perceived as authentic and thus belonging.

The discussion offered throughout this section relates to the retention and persistence of Chicanx and Latinx university students by highlighting the complex and relevant role of language in social identities and belonging. Since Velasquez (1999) found that sense of belonging and social affiliation may be the most influential factors contributing to Chicanx persistence in academia, it is undoubtedly worthwhile to further explore the role of language and identity in the academic experiences of Chicanx and Latinx students. This dissertation addresses this gap in the literature by presenting analyses of language ideologies and ways they impact student language identity and acts of belonging through language. Additionally, this work offers insight about the importance of Spanish for identity development, maintenance, and expression for increased sense of belonging in higher education.

Chapter Discussion

The literature presented throughout this chapter makes clear that language, identity, and belonging are very much interwoven elements that inform the educational experiences, opportunities, and outcomes of Chicanx and Latinx students. The common thread throughout this literature review is the understanding that language interacts dialogically with ideological

positions around identity and belonging: the identity that an individual presents in a given interaction is impacted by the perceptions of others, the recognition and validation of identity expression, and the expectations around what identity belongs in a certain space and exchange. Language is mediated strategically as a tool to express identity that others will perceive as authentic (Shenk, 2007) and which will reflect features integral to identity, such as race, ethnicity, and group membership. The studies reviewed throughout this chapter also point to ways that linguistic authenticating moves (acts and stances) are not equally laborious for all speakers and do not always result in the same degree of authentication or belonging. Language ideologies woven into spaces and exchanges reflect norms and standards around what belonging sounds like and looks like. Importantly, literature across disciplines agrees that sense of belonging is an integral feature of student academic well-being and persistence. The literature reviewed in this chapter clarifies the complex dialogical relationship between language, identity, belonging, and space.

The gap in the literature also reveals double standards around language, space, identity, and belonging; a central finding in recent work on raciolinguistics is that White presenting, standardized English speakers can claim an identity of belonging in educational spaces regardless of the language they are speaking in a particular interaction, while racialized and minoritized speakers feel they must avoid public usage of Spanish or "accented" English because it is an "index of primordial inferiority" (Rosa, 2016b, p. 67). Other recent studies (Cavazos, 2016) also show the resilience and creative linguistic determination intentionally employed by racialized students who utilize linguistic resources to perform particular racial and linguistic identities and complicate standard notions embedded within interactions with other interlocuters. This dissertation builds upon the contributions discussed in this chapter to help close the gap in

our understandings as educators, activists, and community members so that we might begin to reimagine, recreate, and rebuild educational possibilities and linguistic landscapes in education, to truly educate equitably and dismantle racism and linguistic discrimination.

Chapter 3
Methodology

Chapter Introduction

The multifaceted linguistic ideologies and repertoires of Chicanx and Latinx students are incorporated into their daily lives. For this reason, a methodology that offers a panoramic snapshot of the language ideologies of students was essential to employ in conjunction with the guiding theoretical framework, Critical Language and Race Theory, or LangCrit (Crump, 2014b). A well-suited methodology for this purpose was ethnography, which offered a holistic amalgamation of data in order to understand individuals in a particular space. The insights fostered by an ethnographic approach complement the principles underlying LangCrit: that the viewpoints and lived experiences of the individuals of study are front and center. This is referred to as the emic perspective (Watson-Gegeo, 1988). In ethnography, this type of "thick description" (Watson-Gegeo, 1992) offers the possibility of zooming out from the micro level findings of a qualitative study in order to reflect on, and generalize to, the macro level phenomena that inform language practices for a specific community, as well as providing insights about the influencing sources of ideologies. In order to more thoroughly approach a "thick description" and contextualize my inquiry, I triangulated data which included

observations, extensive fieldnotes, audio-recorded interviews, and documentation of the linguistic landscape. These data sources provided detailed insight into the beliefs and feelings that students held around language while at el centro, as well as in other spaces and exchanges in academia. Below, I describe my methodology in detail.

Site: El Centro

All observations were conducted at el centro. I selected this location as the site of observation and participant recruitment because it is a location on the Patwin University campus that is designed to offer the Chicanx and Latinx student community a space and services aimed at fostering retention and student persistence. The description below describes the intentions of the space, as outlined on the center's web page.

> The core mission of el centro is to provide an academic support space where students thrive as scholars and unique individuals. The center's practices and services are grounded in the following three priorities:
> **Access:** Get connected to community, academic and social support.
> **Academics:** Learn strategies and best practices for the classroom.
> **Empowerment:** Discover leadership and career development opportunities and explore employment opportunities.

The language used by el centro in its 'mission' statement (which were referred to as 'priorities' on the webpage) frames the space as an intentional resource that fosters *empowerment, access, community, opportunity, support,* and *leadership*. The selection of el centro as the site of observation for my study was intended to maintain integrity and focus throughout my research. Given the mission of this space and the intention for its very existence, it made sense to observe the interaction between el centro and student language ideologies as I explored questions around the role of language in the academic experiences of Chicanx and Latinx students at Patwin University. Specifically, since this site was a part of the campus wide

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retention initiative at an emerging Hispanic Serving Institution, it was the best site to explore this dissertation's research questions.

El centro is located in the heart of the Patwin University campus and is open to all university students. The center encourages students to spend time in the space, grow their community, and utilize a range of services including writing or math tutoring, peer advising, and counseling, to name a few. The space offers various workshops and events throughout the year. Students that utilize the space may be in any year of study (undergraduate or graduate) and represent a range of racial, ethnic, linguistic, and gender identities. For this reason, the center intentionally uses the terms Chicanx and Latinx as descriptors of the space, where the 'x' allows for gender inclusivity, for students who identify and don't identify along the gender spectrum.

Before beginning any data collection, I met with the staff leadership for el centro. During our meetings we discussed my study and data collection plans. With their approval and support, I began to observe the space during fall term of the 2018-2019 academic year. During winter term I began official classroom observations, success coaching, and recruitment for interviews. I recruited focal students through interactions in the space as a success coach, as well as by word of mouth. I created a flier that I posted on one of the bulletin boards in the space and spent time every day interacting with students and staff. During the spring term I met with students for audio-recorded testimonios, volunteered at el centro, and attended events.

Participants

For this dissertation, I interviewed 15 students. The names of students are their own, as their preference was not to use pseudonyms. The table below provides a snapshot of the student participants. I then provide more detailed but brief introductions for each student. I discuss and analyze each student's interview to varying degrees in Chapters 4 and 5.

Table 8: Participant demographics

Participant	Gen. status	Place of birth	Transfer (Y/N)	Race/Ethnicity*	Class standing
Jose	2nd	California	Yes	Mexican, Chicano	4th
Melissa	2nd	California	No	Mexican, Chicana	3rd
April	2nd	California	No	Mexican, Chicana	2nd
Kassandra	2nd	Arizona	No	Mexican, Chicana	3rd
Juan	1.5	Mexico	No	Mexican, Chicano	4th
Alfredo	1.5	Mexico	No	Mexican, ChiLat, Chicano	4th
Jasmine	2nd	California	No	Mexican, Latina	4th
Alberto	1.5	Mexico	No	Mexican, Chicano	5th
Daniel	1.5	Mexico	Yes	Mexican, Latino, Chicano	4th
Destiny	2nd	California	No	Mexican	PhD
Katie	2nd	California	No	Latina	1st
Lydia	3rd	California	No	Chicana	2nd
Mirella	2nd	California	No	Latinx, Mexican American	3rd
Meli	2nd	California	No	Latina, Mexican American	PhD
Efren	2nd	California	Yes	Mexican, Mexican American	5th

I've indicated the racial and ethnic terms used by the speakers to refer to or describe themselves in their interviews. I did not ask about student gender identities. Generational status refers here to arrival in the United States. All but one of the participants in this dissertation were first-generation college students.

<u>*Jose*</u>

Jose was the first student I interviewed. At the time, Jose was in his 4th year as a first-generation college student with a double-major in Political Science and International Relations. Jose was born and raised in California and both of his parents were born in Mexico. Jose transferred to Patwin University from a community college in southern California, which he described as an overall good experience despite feeling lonely at times, compared to Patwin University. Growing up in southern California among other Chicano families, Jose's first language was Spanish. He identified as bilingual in Spanish and English and referred to himself

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as Mexican and Chicano. The interview was conducted in English and in my observations of him I overheard him talk to a peer about his experiences with Spanish and English as a university student. Jose frequently code-switched at el centro.

Melissa

I first met Melissa when she was a student in an introductory linguistics course I had taught the previous year. At the time of the interview, Melissa was twenty years old and in her third year as a double-major in linguistics and psychology and aspired to become a speech language pathologist. She was inspired by her younger siblings' experiences in speech therapy.

As the oldest of seven, Melissa often helped her parents with her siblings, as well as their family business. Melissa started at Patwin University as a freshman after completing high school in southern California. She grew up speaking mostly Spanish at with family and friends. She described challenges in her elementary school years when transitioning from a Spanish immersion program in the first couple years of elementary school to an English-only model.

April

I first met April when she came to me for a Success Coaching appointment in January of 2019. At the time she was nineteen years old and in her second year of university. She was majoring in Psychology but was interested in switching to a different major that would better prepare her for her dream of working in the music industry.

April was born and raised in southern California and identified as a first-generation college student. Both of her parents were born in Mexico. April has older siblings but they did not attend college. Before beginning her studies at Patwin University, April had plans to transfer to a different college. However, shortly after she began her first term as a freshman she decided

to stay because she liked how calm and at home she felt at Patwin University. April's first language was Spanish and she grew up using English at school. Once at university she began to use Spanish for the majority of her interactions with friends.

Kassandra

I met Kassandra at el centro one day in the winter when we were sitting at the same table. I was working on some things and she was sitting with two female peers. They were code-switching, going back and forth between Spanish and English. I hadn't yet interviewed many people so I asked her and her friends on the spot if I could share with them a little about my research project to see if they'd be interested in letting me interview them. They took a break from their conversation and we exchanged contact information. At the time of the interview Kassandra was in her third year of study as a Music major. Kassandra is a first-generation college student and identifies as a bilingual English and Spanish speaker. Her parents were born in Mexico, but Kassandra was born and raised in Arizona before coming to California for university.

Juan

I met Juan while volunteering at Patwin University at a center that serves undocumented students, where he worked. Juan described himself as Mexican and Chicano. He was in the final term of his 4th year of study as a twenty-one year old Chicana/o Studies major with a minor in Public Health. Juan had started his studies at Patwin University as a Biological Sciences major but said he felt pushed out of the major and didn't receive enough support. While Juan did experience some academic difficulty during his time as a student at Patwin University, he was a high achiever. He had completed his Associate in Arts degree at community college courses by

the time he had completed high school. He attended a charter high school and was dissuaded from applying to competitive universities by his high school counselor but Juan applied anyway and was accepted to many competitive and prestigious universities, including Patwin University. Juan was very active in the local community as a university student and aspired to attend medical school.

Like his parents, Juan was born in Mexico. He migrated to the U.S. when he was six years old. Juan's first language was Spanish, which he speaks with his parents who are monolingual Spanish speakers. When he first began elementary school in the U.S. he was introduced to American Sign Language in place of English Learner courses, which they did not offer. Juan described using English at home to speak with his three younger siblings in secret, though Spanish was the main language of the home.

Alfredo

I met Alfredo while volunteering at a center on the Patwin University campus that serves undocumented students, where Alfredo worked. Like his parents, Alfredo was born in Mexico. He moved to the United States at a young age, so he could also be described as generation 1.5 since he spent years of his childhood in Mexico before immigrating.

At the time of the interview, Alfredo was twenty-two years old, the first of his family to attend college, and in his fourth year of study as a double-major in Neurobiology, Physiology, and Behavior, and Chicana/o Studies. He identifies as a bilingual Spanish and English speaker and spoke a lot about his use of Spanish with family and community. His parents were also born in Mexico, where his father completed the third grade and his mother completed the fourth grade. Alfredo's father became a permanent resident in the U.S. during the Immigration Reform

and Control Act of 1986, signed under President Reagan. His father had moved to the U.S. first in order to find work and create a stable situation for Alfredo and his family to arrive to. While growing up in Mexico, Alfredo's mother was about an hour away from him where she cared for her mother. Alfredo joined his father in the U.S. with his mother when he was 10 years old. One of Alfredo's main motivators for maintaining his Spanish speaking skills at the level they are is to sustain his familial relationships and ties to Mexico, where he visits multiple times a year. In fact, when speaking about his family Alfredo often began to code-switch into Spanish.

Jasmine

I met Jasmine through a program at Patwin University for which I was a coordinator. I facilitated seminars and developed curriculum materials in order to support and guide first-generation, low income students through their first research project and applications to graduate and professional programs (this was also the program through which I met Efren, who was also a participant). Jasmine and I were frequently at el centro at the same time.

At the time of the interview, Jasmine was 22 years old and preparing to graduate. She had already landed a job in a nearby town working as a school counselor. In getting to know her, Jasmine said it was her dream to be a role model to other first-generation college students, which she didn't have growing up. At Patwin University, Jasmine majored in Psychology and Chicana/o Studies with a minor in Education. Many of our research interests overlapped and we experienced similar family dynamics growing up. Jasmine is a first-generation graduate, born and raised in California and identifies as a bilingual Spanish and English speaker. She grew up speaking mostly Spanish at home with her family. Her parents were born in Mexico. Her mother

had completed her GED in California and her father completed his second year of high school in Mexico.

Alberto

I was introduced to Alberto by another student who spent time at el centro. When I met Alberto, he was in his fifth year at Patwin University. He explained that he chose to extend his academic plan because he wanted to study abroad in Spain during his fourth year. Alberto was a first-generation college student and a double-major in Chicana/o Studies and Communications. He immigrated to the U.S. with his family when he was less than 1 year old to access more educational opportunities than those his parents had in Mexico. Alberto shared that from his understanding, his mother completed up to the fifth grade, ("because she's a woman she wasn't allowed to continue her studies") and his father completed the sixth grade. For a time Alberto and his family returned to Mexico before finally settling back into southern California, where Alberto attended high school before enrolling at Patwin University.

Alberto grew up in a "Hispanic" community where the majority of people speak Spanish. At home, he only speaks Spanish with his parents, who are monolingual Spanish speakers. Alberto attended bilingual programs prior to attending Patwin University but described English as his dominant language since beginning his university studies.

Daniel

I met Daniel at el centro in the fall of 2018, where he was employed as a student worker. After hearing from some of his peers that I had interviewed them for my research project, Daniel asked if I would like to interview him, too. I interviewed him at el centro in a semi-closed off cubicle where I would usually meet students for Success Coaching.

At the time of the interview, Daniel was twenty-seven years old and a senior. He had transferred to Patwin University from a California community college and had AB540 status. Daniel could be considered generation 1.5 since he moved to the U.S. from Mexico with his family when he was eight years old. He grew up speaking Spanish with his family and described an emotional adjustment into the English only schooling he received once a student in the U.S. As a university student Daniel frequently code-switched in Spanish and English and identified as bilingual.

Destiny

When I met Destiny during the 2018-2019 academic year she was in her final year as a doctoral candidate in Engineering at Patwin University. She attended Patwin University as an undergraduate, too. Destiny was a first-generation college student whose dominant and preferred language is English.

Destiny grew up in northern California in a town near Patwin University. For about three years of her early childhood, Destiny lived in foster care and was exposed predominately to English. With her biological family, Destiny spoke Spanish. She described herself as having conversational Spanish for family exchanges but not necessarily fluency. Growing up, her parents spoke to Destiny and her siblings in Spanish while Destiny and her siblings responded in English.

Katie

I met Katie through success coaching. When we met, she was a first-year student from northern California majoring in biological sciences. Katie's father was born in El Salvador and received a college education in the U.S. Her mother was born in Mexico, where she completed

occupational school. Her first language was Spanish and she recalled learning English for the first time as a kindergartener. She speaks Spanish with her parents.

At the time of the interview, Katie wasn't very happy with her decision to attend Patwin University because it didn't live up to the college experience she was looking for. She had plans to transfer to a different school in southern California. When I followed up with Katie in 2021 she was in good standing and in her third year at Patwin University.

Lydia

I met Lydia during a success coaching appointment. When I met Lydia, she was nineteen years old and in her second year as a cognitive sciences major with an emphasis in biology. Her parents were born in California and went on to complete their college education in California to become educators. Lydia was also born in California and is the oldest of three.

Lydia code-switched frequently at el centro and in her exchanges with others. She began her interview in Spanish before switching to English. She recalled speaking both Spanish and English with her family with periods of her life being dominated by one language over the other (more English or Spanish). She did recall her father enforcing Spanish in certain contexts as a way of showing respect. She frequently visited family in Mexico and attended a dual-immersion elementary school.

Mirella

I met Mirella at el centro. Throughout the year of data collection, Mirella was a student employee of el centro. At the time, she was twenty years old and

Mirella's parents were born in Mexico and came to the U.S. when they were young themselves. Mirella was born and raised in California. Her father completed some high school

and her mother finished high school and attended some community college courses. Mirella started at Patwin University as a Neurobiology, Physiology, and Behavior major and did well in her coursework, but she didn't feel at home during her first year which she felt impacted her mentality around coursework and overall enjoyment of her studies. During her second year of study she switched to Psychology.

Mirella identified both Spanish and English as her first languages, for different purposes. With her mother and her other's sisters she spoke English since her mother had arrived in the U.S. at a young age. With her father, Mirella spoke Spanish. She recalled feeling more dominant in Spanish until she began school. She continues to speak to her father exclusively in Spanish and a mixture of English and Spanish with the rest of her family.

Meli

I met Meli years before the focal year of study, while we were both volunteering at a local dual-language program which served adult learners of English and Spanish. She and I were both language instructors for the program, Meli taught Spanish and I taught English.

At the time of the interview, Meli was finishing her doctoral degree in Spanish Linguistics and had accepted a faculty position at a four-year university. She had taught many classes in Spanish, had already completed a separate graduate degree in Spain, and grew up speaking Spanish with her family and friends in California. Meli is a first-generation college graduate born in California. Her mother had completed two years of high school and her father completed little schooling in elementary before beginning to work, in Mexico.

Efren

I met Efren during his fourth year of study when he joined a program I helped to facilitate for first-generation university students. Efren was a transfer student majoring in Chicana/o Studies major with a minor in Community Development. He was very active in the Patwin University community and we had many overlapping areas of campus involvement. I frequently saw Efren at el centro mentoring undergraduates.

His parents were born in Mexico and were not able to finish high school. His first language was Spanish which he still uses with his parents. He recalled using English with his friends back home and English almost exclusively when on campus, with some degree of "Spanglish."

Data Collection

Fieldnotes

I compiled detailed ethnographic fieldnotes for all observations at el centro. Fieldnotes are extensive documentation of observations of people, places, things, and the interactions between these features of human behavior during a specific time in a specific space. To start, I took as detailed notes as possible while actually observing students at el centro: how many people were in the space, when people arrived and departed, how the physical space was set up during that observational period, the language use I overheard, who was interacting with whom and for how long, the temperament of such interactions such as laughter or quiet, robust storytelling, etc. My notes also included drawings of the physical space to document and map out the way the space was designed and how visitors engaged with it, as well as features of the physical space that contributed to the linguistic landscape. I often audio-recorded my personal reflections after periods of observations, either because I was not able to write or type out my

notes at the moment or because my observations were so rich and thick that I needed to be able to articulate them as fast as my perception put them to words. I then reflected on them in more extensive fieldnotes. My fieldnotes expanded upon my observational notes and helped to arrive at contextualized understanding about the connections between what I observed, what I learned through interviews, and what I learned from the literature.

I utilized a combination of written and audio-recorded fieldnotes for all observations. In order to maintain the integrity of my role as a Success Coach, I recorded field notes immediately following my sessions with students who had consented to be part of the research, but never during. This was an important boundary for me to maintain because Success Coaching sessions were intended to support students, not extract student information or to incentivize students into participating in my research project. Taking notes during these sessions would have prevented me from being fully present and holistically supporting student goal development through engaging and meaningful discussion.

Observations

My observations encompassed different types of interactions with students and the space in order to develop a "thick description" (Watson-Gegeo, 1992). In this section I describe the types of observations that I conducted at el centro. Observations were comprised of different manners of interaction, as described below.

El Centro

The first type of observation that I did was of the general space of el centro. I visited the space on average 4 hours per week and recorded extensive fieldnotes. I observed on different days of the week and at varying times for multiple weeks from fall term through spring term in

order to get a sense of how the space was used, by whom, for what purposes, and the role and use of language.

I was also invited by the Director of el centro to attend one of the First-Year Seminar courses that he taught to Chicanx and Latinx first-generation college students in the conference room at el centro. This invitation provided another opportunity to meet students, learn about their academic experiences, and share about my research. This visit also allowed me to invite students to attend success coaching.

Another type of observation that I conducted at *el centro* was of a co-class for students concurrently enrolled in a course called Workload 57. The course I observed was called 991 and consisted of weekly seminars to support students with their writing with the goal of assisting them in satisfying the Patwin University Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR). This course was taught by two writing specialists. I did not interview any students from this course but I did observe interactions and noted the importance of this course being hosted at el centro. I observed this course on multiple occasions throughout the winter term of 2019.

Success Coaching

I got to know students by working with them during 30-minute Success Coaching appointments. As a Success Coach, I helped students to clarify or identify goals or changes they wanted to make toward academic, personal, or professional progress and accomplishments. I also helped students strengthen their study system by assessing learning strategies and habits and through offering research-based practices and a strengths-based approach to support students in integrating more effective and efficient study strategies into their regimen. I am a trained Success Coach and had provided this service to students at Patwin University in prior years. I offered success coaching sessions to students that visit el centro as a way to get to know students and

contribute to the space as a community member. These sessions were 30-minutes long on a drop-in basis in 2 hour blocks two times per week, for a total of 4 weekly hours. Some days students didn't meet with me for coaching and other days I met with students for each available session. I took extensive notes following each appointment with those students who agreed to also be participants for this dissertation (I only took notes beginning after the second appointment so that I could first receive consent from the participant). These appointments also served as a way to meet students and potential participants for my dissertation interviews. The aim of success coaching is to help students identify goals and develop actions plans for success. I guided students in identifying their own strengths, as well as resources provided at Patwin University to support their action plans. During these sessions I asked some guiding questions, including:

1. What campus services have you used to assist with meeting your academic and professional goals?

2. What spaces do you utilize for studying?

3. What courses are you enjoying and which ones are you finding challenging?

4. What goals do you have for yourself this year? What obstacles might get in the way of you meeting your goals?

While I did intend to meet potential interviewees by providing success coaching, I did not require students to agree to participate in my study in order to receive coaching and did not turn away any students. I didn't mention anything about my study or invite students to participate as interviewees until the end of a coaching session, sometimes after more than one. More than a recruitment strategy, coaching enabled me to contribute to the resources offered at el centro.

Interviews

I conducted audio-recorded interviews with 15 students. I also interviewed two writing specialists and the Director of el centro. For the purpose of this dissertation, I focus on the interviews with students.

The interviews collected for this dissertation are *testimonios*. A testimonio is a methodological approach commonly utilized in critical race frameworks. These types of narratives aim to present nonmajoritarian understandings and knowledges. Pérez Huber discussed ways to utilize the approach of testimonio in LatCrit (Latina/o Critical Race Theory) studies to disrupt the apartheid of knowledge which results from Eurocentric epistemologies and certain ideological beliefs. In other words, testimonios present the actual lived experiences of marginalized, racialized, and oppressed individuals and communities, whose voices and stories often go muted and ignored.

From these testimonios I obtained background information about the students' experiences with language in academia. To gain as much insight about the language ideologies that students held around language and academia, I asked questions pertaining to their academic experiences both before Patwin University and while at PU as students. These interviews offered insight about the types of language ideologies of participating Chicanx and Latinx students at el centro and also provided perspective about the influencing factors that informed their ideologies, complementing my observations.

The interviews were one-hour in length and included categories of questions that covered background information about the student (e.g. age, major, transfer status, hometown, place of birth, parent background information); prior education; opinions and ideologies; language

background, use, and feelings; work experience; and questions about el centro. The complete list of questions can be found in the appendix to this chapter.

The questions posed throughout the interview were intended to foster open and engaging conversation and provide space to explore responses. As such, I did not ask the interview questions in the exact same order for each student. While I had the questions written in a particular order, I did not abide by a rigid interview system and instead adopted a conversational approach. I decided on this approach after my first interview with Jose when many things became very clear to me about the importance of organically arriving at discussions around language ideologies. Firstly, Jose was eager to share and elaborated in great detail without being prompted in response to a single question. As a result, Jose answered many of my questions before I even got around to asking them. I interviewed Jose a second time and got his feedback on the questions and interview process. He suggested I add additional questions and encouraged me to continue to approach the interviews as we had, in a conversational manner. He was the only student I interviewed more than once. When he or other interviewees digressed from a question, I reframed the question if needed or asked follow-up questions about the additional experiences and insights they were offering to share. From a LangCrit perspective, this interview approach recognized and prioritized the viewpoints and lived experiences of each individual. Such an approach to interviewing, I feel, resulted in rich and dynamic connections and emergence of categories relevant to the participating students' experiences.

Linguistic Landscape

A supplemental layer of data consisted of a media corpus that I compiled with Google Alerts. This corpus included any mentioning of el centro, the status of Patwin University as a Hispanic Serving Institution, and the issue of student retention at Patwin University. I don't

discuss this data in detail in this dissertation because I have decided to focus on the interviews and observations with students. However, reading this corpus did inform my positionality as a community member of el centro and Patwin University.

Additionally, I collected copies of print material on display at el centro (e.g. flyers and pamphlets). This corpus provided additional layers of understanding about the role of language in this space and the ways that the English and Spanish interacted. Much of this data extends beyond the scope of the present dissertation. As such, I do not provide a comprehensive analysis of this data but I do include elements from the physical linguistic landscape, such as the artwork, posters, and signage on display at el centro which I highlighted in Chapter 1, to further contextualize the site of observation. The table below provides a brief description of each type of data source.

Table 9: Data Sources

Type	Description
Fieldnotes	Extensive written and audio-recorded notes taken during and after periods of observation. These notes often included drawings to map out the ways that the space was organized, where students were seated, and the location of elements that made up the linguistic landscape. All fieldnotes were coded.
Observations	During observations I watched and listened to interactions and exchanges among students, as well as students and staff, across different types of settings at el centro. I observed students in the main space, as well as in the conference room during workload seminars and in the cubicle during success coaching sessions. I also observed events such as the graduation ceremony. I took notes in as detailed a manner as possible by hand or in a word document on my laptop. I sometimes audio-recorded notes after observations, too. All observational notes were coded.
Interviews	One-hour audio-recorded interviews. I generally did not take any notes during interviews so that I could remain fully present and in conversation with the interviewee. I took extensive notes following each interview. All interviews were coded, see below.
Linguistic Landscape	Elements of the physical space of el centro which included things like posters, pamphlets, fliers, artwork, and signage. I took photos of the linguistic landscape and took extensive notes of these elements.

Data Analysis

Interview recordings were coded for salient categories, which emerged through multiple layers of coding. I received assistance from a former student turned peer and colleague, Jaz, in the transcription of all interviews. We did not transcribe prosody in great detail, although some prosodic features were noted and informed analysis of students' expressed emphasis around certain topics or words. All other prosodic features were left un-analyzed (e.g. pauses, false-starts, laughter). All transcriptions were completed through the software ExpressScribe and saved as Word documents.

The next step of analysis involved reading through each transcription multiple times to identify themes in the topics students volunteered, the ways students spoke about certain categories and responded to questions (e.g. word selection, code-switching), and emotions, locations, and people incorporated into the responses to the interview questions. After a first-round of coding in this very broad way, transcripts were analyzed a second and third time to crystalize the themes identified. Fieldnotes were then coded through this same process, using the coding system derived from analysis of the interview transcripts. My coding methodology draws on the view of language as dialogic as discussed by Mikhail Bakhtin (1981) and Aneta Pavlenko (2006), which assumes that every utterance carries with it, in potentially meaningful ways, connections to other utterances, discourses, and voices. This view of language also informed the categories that became both broad and narrow codes because I utilized some salient descriptions and words directly from the student interviews. In other words, I used the student voices to both guide and categorize the themes. Such an approach to creating coding categories and identifying themes is also an *emic* approach to understanding human exchanges, behavior, and feelings: through their own words. For example, one broad code was "Identity", which included multiple

sub-codes or themes. An example of such a sub-code was "Identity: 'be more American'" which related to descriptions in student narratives that indexed exchanges or feelings around American identity or assimilation in the U.S. (as examples). Another example was of course, "Language" with multiple sub-codes, such as "English and Professionalism" which encapsulated excerpts from student narratives which described associations between English and Professionalism, English as the "appropriate" or "right" or "proper" language of choice in certain spaces and exchanges. I also coded for spaces (i.e. locations) in the same systematic way in order to track ideologies and language practices across exchanges and encounters. This approach to coding transcriptions was particularly well-suited for the examination of language ideologies and their interaction with academia, race, and belonging. Connecting themes were identified which provided a deep analysis of the research questions posed for this dissertation. Excerpts were then grouped together, which informed the dissertation chapter boundaries and developing contributions to the gap in the literature.

Methodology Rationale

My dissertation aims to fill a gap in current and previous literature about the role of language in the academic experiences of Chicanx and Latinx university students at an emerging Hispanic Serving Institution. Due to the apparent dearth of such scholarship, descriptive observational data provides a necessarily dynamic perspective into the complex role of language in academic experiences. Most studies analyzing the role of language in Chicanx and Latinx academic performance and outcomes employ deficit views and a focus on language proficiency. However, such studies begin with assumptions and objectives about performance. Instead, this dissertation relied on an ethnographic approach to gain insight into the actual language ideologies experienced and enacted by students to better understand the day-to-day academic

experiences, feelings, and beliefs that Chicanx and Latinx students hold and encounter around language, belonging, and academia. By observing students' actual language practices at el centro and also accounting for their ideologies as they described them, this dissertation offers an up-close perspective of the role of language, as well as a broader, zoomed-out perspective of the academic ecosystems which contribute to students' language ideologies.

Chapter Discussion

This research project addresses a gap in current scholarship around language, education, generational status, power, and racism in higher education. The reality is that the issues this dissertation addresses have already impacted students for many decades. Although scholars have attempted to explain the educational disparities across race and ethnicity, there is still much to be learned about the role of language in impacting Chicanx and Latinx student education experiences and outcomes. My project responds to a call in sociolinguistics to apply a critical lens to the study of language as it intersects with race and identity. In this way, language may be used to seek or demonstrate (racial) group membership (Alim et al, 2016; Bucholtz et al, 2018; Crump, 2014b; Rosa, 2015). As mentioned earlier, despite Critical Race Theory being applied to many inquiries in education studies over the past decades, the application of Critical Race Theory in linguistics has not received significant attention. I believe my response to Crump's 2014 call for the application of Critical Language and Race Theory (LangCrit) will contribute to conversations around language, power, race, belonging, and identity. My ultimate hope is that this dissertation and the student voices that guide it contribute to conversations around what it means for Patwin University to actually serve Chicanx, Latinx, and "Hispanic" students in

academia. I hope this project and its findings will inform the development of inclusive language policies and inspire a shift in the linguistic landscape of the campus in all its expressions.

Chapter 4
Exclusionary Ideologies

Chapter Introduction

In this chapter I begin examining the ways that students at Patwin University described their beliefs, feelings, and experiences with language and education. The goal of this chapter is to present ways that the various exclusionary language ideologies are interdependent and impact sense of belonging for Chicanx and Latinx students at Patwin University. We learn from the student stories in this chapter that while ideologies around language are complicated they are, in many ways, informed by academic experiences and negatively impact students' perceptions of their language abilities and sense of belonging in academic spaces and endeavors.

The ideologies that emerge throughout this chapter demonstrate associations between race, ethnicity, language, education, and belonging that students direct at other speakers or are assigned themselves. Specifically, I examine ideologies of standardization, raciolinguistics, and languagelessness and identify these frameworks as *exclusionary ideologies*. I define exclusionary ideologies as those beliefs which work to create and maintain systematic hierarchies of belonging. As they relate to language, exclusionary ideologies rely on prescriptivist notions of what language is "good" and which speakers are recognized as "good" or legitimate speakers. A result of exclusionary ideologies is the perpetuation of inequality in whichever spaces such beliefs are embraced. In the realm of education, exclusionary language ideologies work to

compartmentalize languages, language practices, speakers, and access to spaces and resources in order to maintain a hierarchy of languages and speakers and sustain the myth of academia as a place for certain people and certain ways of languaging. In particular, standardization ideologies, at times, inform a sense of languagelessness (Rosa, 2016b) for students whose language and identity are monitored, creating negative associations between their language practices, racial, ethnic, or linguistic identities, and sense of belonging in academia.

The interview questions that elicited the stories shared here were intended to create an open space for students to express their own feelings around language and education. In addition to an exploration of student accounts, I draw on elements of the linguistic landscape of el centro to offer a more textured analysis of the multi-layered relationship between language and academic experiences. In the first section, I focus on standardized ideologies in regards to both English and Spanish. I explore how standardized ideologies, as students experience them, stem from hegemonic beliefs and inform ideologies of languagelessness. In the second section, I examine the raciolinguistic ideologies and experiences described by students. Raciolinguistic ideologies (Alim, 2016; Rosa, 2016a, 2016b) demonstrate a layer of exclusionary ideologies which attempt to delineate ethnolinguistic identities and expectations, undermining the complexity of speaker identities and upholding racializing processes through standardization. I demonstrate how these exclusionary ideologies interact and impact students' beliefs about language and belonging in academia. This chapter aims to address part of the overarching question of this dissertation: What is the role of language in the educational experiences of Chicanx and Latinx students?

Language Standardization Ideologies & Languagelessness

Through an exploration of standardized language ideologies, we can ascertain the social and political power assigned to certain varieties of a language, as well as the impact of such prescriptivist ideologies on speakers and communities. I view language standardization in much the same light as Jonathan Rosa (2016b) who described ideologies of language standardization as "often understood to stigmatize particular linguistic practices perceived as deviating from prescriptive norms" (p. 163). These prescriptive norms suggest *who* speaks or should speak a certain language or variety; *when* or *where* a language or variety ought to be used; *how* a certain language or variety ought to sound and be written; *what* ethnolinguistic markers are recognized as appropriate for access to certain spaces, activities, and identities. Educational policies are, and have been, influenced by standardization ideologies around language. In the education of Chicanx and Latinx students in the U.S., language policies have focused on "trying to make their *English fit "native" standards*, and their *Spanish fit "foreign" standards*" (García & Torres-Guevara, 2010, p. 182). This interaction between standardization ideologies and educational policies results in beliefs that English "fits" in education, and Spanish mostly does not, and English has been "constructed as the only acceptable language use of loyal and true United States citizens" (García & Torres-Guevara, p. 184). Additionally, when Spanish is permitted to exist in educational spaces and curricula, it is often only recognized when it aligns with standardized ideologies which claim that there is one "correct" Spanish that fits into academia, excluding all other varieties. More specifically, a standardized variety of Latin American or Peninsular Spanish is given the green light as acceptable Spanish in academia, while other varieties are relegated to an inferior and "incorrect" status. Thus, in academia a systematic hierarchy of languages permeates.

Many of the students I got to know at el centro described familiarity with the feeling of 'sticking out' and speaking English "incorrectly". For these students, sometimes such stigmatization related to speaking what they perceived (or were told) was "bad" English. Students also felt this stigmatization when speaking Spanish publicly in academic spaces. They reported the feeling of being watched or feared, and not good enough for school. Other times stigmatization was directed at students' Spanish use (or lack of use) from other Spanish speakers, insisting that Spanish should be spoken if the speaker is Chicanx or Latinx, or that Spanish ought to be spoken a certain way otherwise the speaker might be labeled "pocho" or "white". Language standardization attempts to create a seemingly benign belief that "this" way of speaking is correct. However, such prescriptivist ideals are rooted in inequities and result in the ideology that "this" way of speaking belongs and "that" way of speaking does not. For students at Patwin University, experiences with language in academia that were framed by standardized ideologies impacted sense of confidence and belonging. Furthermore, the raciolinguistic ideologies embedded within student experiences also made students feel their identities as Chicanx or Latinx were inauthentic because they didn't speak Spanish or didn't speak Spanish as others felt they should. Rosa (2016b) proposed that stigmatization that results from standardization ideologies interacts with what he terms *languagelessness,* which refers to "racialized ideologies" that "call into question linguistic competence – and, by extension, legitimate personhood – all together" (p. 163). Deficit views of language proliferate at the center of ideologies of languagelessness and impact student language choices, confidence, and personal beliefs around belonging.

To be clear, the exclusionary ideologies of standardization and languagelessness reflected in the stories shared by the students throughout this chapter are descriptions of experiences they

had in traditional academic spaces (e.g. classrooms, office hours with teaching assistants or professors) or with family. El centro, the main site of this dissertation, is indeed an academic space but does not fit the traditional or standard academic space of a classroom, for many reasons. I want to make this very clear as I move forward with this chapter. While the student accounts of exclusionary ideologies in this chapter point to the ways they were critiqued, questioned, doubted, and corrected in certain academic spaces, these are not the ways any students I met described the norms or exchanges around English and Spanish at *el centro*. I will speak more about the language ideologies and relationship between language and academic experiences of students at el centro in the next chapter as they relate to *inclusionary ideologies*.

Blend in and fit in: English Hegemony, Language Monitoring, and Academic Belonging

For racialized speakers, encounters with exclusionary ideologies like those of standardization and languagelessness can create a sense of urgency and need to sound a certain way in order to be recognized as welcome in certain spaces or exchanges. Academic spaces, such as classrooms, have traditionally prioritized English and relied on segregationist tactics of punishment in order to get students to speak the way they're told to – or not to speak at all. Many generation 1.5 students in the U.S. have experienced such exclusionary tactics, including the students introduced in this dissertation.

Alfredo experienced punitive classroom language policies as an elementary school student in the U.S. Alfredo described how such experiences impacted his feelings about English and Spanish in academic settings. In his narrative, he shared his memories and feelings about English after arriving to the United States from Mexico at ten years old and beginning the fourth grade. He described feeling like he did not at first receive adequate English language instruction in his first year of elementary school in the U.S. and identified English as a way to belong in

educational spaces. He remembered getting into trouble with his white teacher whenever he was caught speaking Spanish with classmates. Alfredo recalled her saying "you're not allowed to speak Spanish. You're only allowed to speak English in here" (García & Torres Guevara, 2010; Wiley & Wright, 2004). Such language policing and punitive measures for non-English language use reflect deficit thinking in relation to bilingual and bicultural students. Rather than welcome and nurture his linguistic capital (Yosso, 2005), Alfredo was viewed as lacking the "right" knowledge to succeed academically. Such language policies impacted Alfredo's classroom participation and community building with peers because it made Alfredo feel like, "well, I don't *know how to speak **English*** so I'm just gonna shut up and sit in that corner because there's really nothing I can say, right?".[20]

The damage of such language policies was twofold for Alfredo: they perpetuated the standardized language ideology which situates English, and English only, as belonging in school; they discouraged Alfredo from participating in class. As Alfredo reflected on this elementary school memory and adjusting to English in educational spaces, he added that it wasn't until he got to college that he felt he had to "try to speak English the *best* possible way in order to fit in"- to fit in linguistically in order to be recognized as having something to say, to be heard, and to belong. Since becoming a university student, Alfredo felt his "really heavy accent" had gone away and that he was speaking more, "you know, American." Nonetheless, he felt that his peers did not perceive this language shift the way he did. He said that his classmates at Patwin University told him, "oh you have an accent". For Alfredo, such a critique or comment on his English language speaking came off as *you're not blending in* and *you don't belong*.

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[20] Italics were used as a transcription convention to indicate the speaker's emphasis. Bold italics indicate instances of emphasis that exceeded other instances of emphasis, often including increased speech volume.

A perceived accent by others that is then communicated to speakers like Alfredo as something that marks *difference* fuels the notion that there is a (standard) language form that he had not yet achieved. He recalled the pressure this put on him:

> "I always had to like, keep better – everything about me. You know, be more American than everybody else... I was trying to figure out a way to like maneuver this new space without knowing... finding a new space but not truly being me... but at the same time I was like, I just have to be able to be in this space or be able to be in this new country and you know, be able to just blend in more than anything. I was trying to, like, learn English like as fast as possible".

In these reflective thoughts, Alfredo associated English with "blending in". This association reflects an English language standardization ideology which assigns belonging to those with perceived unmarked English - accentless and free of traces of a language-other-than-English background, as though English is the benchmark for recognition as equal. Alfredo's experiences with language in educational spaces led him to believe that it was not enough to understand English. Alfredo felt he needed to sound a certain way in order to be recognized and accepted, which demonstrates another aspect of standardized language ideology, which is the association between "accent" and proficiency (Lippi-Green, 1997). The pressure to conform linguistically, to "be more American than everybody else" and speak more "American" echoes the notions upheld by standardization ideologies, which assign value and correctness to a certain way of sounding and recognition in certain spaces through English over other languages.

Another level of this standardization of English manifested in the pressure he experienced to acquire a certain standard of English proficiency in order to represent and support his parents who did not speak English (Orellana et al, 2003). In the excerpt below, Alfredo elaborated on the impact that English had on his sense of belonging and ability to "survive".

> "And you know, us being like, here and navigating a new country, especially with my Mom, it was like, "okay, well we have to figure out how we're going to be able to

survive," and I-if I'm the only one that's going to be able to like, learn English because you're at work, then that's how it's gonna be and like you don't have to put in my part of it too".

Alfredo described English as playing a role in his and his family's ability to "survive" in the United States. Schwieter (2011) discussed *survival English* and its impact on student academic experiences and language acquisition. Schwieter defined survival English as just enough English to get by in mainstream classes, which can become a barrier to educational attainment and sense of belonging because students may experience difficulties in "engaging themselves in their own learning" and may have "difficulties understanding academic English" (p. 39). The way Schwieter framed survival English suggests he was describing a level of proficiency, as opposed to the functional purpose of English that Alfredo suggested in his reflection. For Alfredo and his family, acquiring English was about surviving daily life in the United States as immigrants – a tool or even a shield. However, Alfredo did describe standardized academic English as both a necessity and barrier; English was a barrier to adapting and progressing in the classroom. English was also a functional "adaptive mechanism" that protected his family.

> "So, you know, it was all these different things that like, you know, like luckily, things changed when we moved. So that really helped me you know, really learn the language and learn more of like the culture to be able to defend, not only myself but also like my parents, like you know, being in different spaces."

In the quote above, Alfredo identified how attending a new elementary school contributed positively to his academic experience and to his increased English acquisition, which provided understanding about U.S. culture from which to defend his parents. While I cannot completely unpack the role of a new schooling experience in Alfredo's increased language

acquisition and confidence, Alfredo's own retelling of this period of his life points to the change

in academic spaces as a positive contributing factor in how he experienced language and its

interaction with his academic experiences. His reflection alluded to the exclusionary feature of

the "English only" classroom policy at his first U.S. elementary school and how it discouraged

him from engaging in the classroom (García & Torres-Guevara, 2010), a contrast to his second

schooling experience where he felt he could really "learn the language". As Alfredo elaborated

on the spaces in which he translated for his family (Orellana et al, 2003) including the

Department of Motor Vehicles, Doctors' appointments, and "anywhere that required English", I

asked how he thought such experiences influenced his feelings about Spanish and English.

> "I mean, I-you know... something that I think I've always thought about is like, what
> language am I thinking of, right? Like in my mind? And I remember like growing up, I'm
> thinking it was all the way up until college, that I always thought in Spanish, right? And
> it wasn't until now that it was like, now I think in English and then it was like, where did
> that change, right? Like, what-where are those influencers? Uh but, in terms of like, you
> know, being-growing up, I always-I don't think I ever like wanted to let go of my
> Spanish. I always thought, I have to know Spanish regardless of like-of how much
> English I know, that's more of uh, and adaptive mechanism, right, like I have to-I need
> that to survive here but at the same time, I'm not going to forget Engl-Spanish because-in
> my mind I was like, "I'm going back, I'm going back to Mexico, 'cause as soon as I have
> a chance, I'm going back!" You know?"

In some ways, Alfredo came to compartmentalize English and Spanish – where English

is for survival "here" and Spanish is saved for "going back" and for use with family in the U.S.

and in Mexico. This level of compartmentalization is also a feature of standardized language

ideologies which dictate which language belongs in which space. Such compartmentalization

also reflects the deficit view of bilingualism that he had been taught through punitive classroom

language policies. Alfredo's description of English as an adaptive mechanism to defend himself

also alludes to the power of standardized language ideologies, as they assign recognition and validation to speakers who sound a certain way (Lippi-Green, 1997).

For students at Patwin University, there seemed to be a sense that there is one language that matters for access to surviving in the U.S. and helping others: English. As Alfredo described, there is a visceral experience with English in the U.S., one that permits or prohibits survival, fitting in, blending in, and feeling safe. This hierarchy of standardization places English on a pedestal which affords certain social access and protections (Wiley & Wright, 2004). Perceived inadequacies in English proficiency can be detrimental to one's sense of contribution to their families and ability to make it in the U.S. Standardization ideologies also signal the association between what English should sound like and acceptance: that "good" and "correct" English is unaccented or has no inflection hinting at knowledge or use of Spanish (Lippi-Green, 1997). The excerpts discussed so far in this chapter reveal much about associations made with English and the impact of exclusionary language ideologies on Chicanx and Latinx students.

I asked Destiny about her feelings around English and was curious to hear her thoughts since she identified as a dominant English speaker with minimal Spanish knowledge. As a graduate student in Engineering and the only Chicana in her department, Destiny told me she never really had opportunities to practice her Spanish in academic spaces at Patwin University. She described language learning as important to be "set up for success". In Destiny's view, two languages are better than one:

> " Mmm…I think English uhm... I think here, in the United States, English is an important language to have but it's not the only language to have. Uhm... I think... I think if anything you should be bilingual instead of uhm... I don't know what's the word for... you know... [Marinka: Monolingual]. Monolingual! Uhm, I think it's better to have two languages than just one, I think it's better to have English and Spanish than just Spanish".

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However, as a STEM scholar, she identified the particular value in and presence of English in academia. In describing her feelings around English, Destiny recalled observing the impact of language in the academic experiences and outcomes of her younger cousins. She described the challenges her cousins faced in school and attributed such difficulties to the Spanish only policies her aunt had enforced in the home. Destiny's position on bilingualism reflects an asset-based approach to language and also relates to Yosso's (2005) discussion of linguistic capital. According to such a position, bilingual practices engage "dynamic linguistic practices that do not conform to monolingual norms" (Flores & Rosa, 2015). This perspective of multilingualism also relates to *heteroglossic language ideologies* (García, 2009), which frames linguistic practices and social relations as interacting in dynamic ways. Destiny's aunt promoted bilingualism through separating Spanish and English, while Destiny expressed a more heteroglossic perspective which situates bilingualism as a form of capital that fosters academic success.

> "When I'm thinking of English, I'm thinking of like my aunt who, they like would not let their kids, like my cousins, speak English at home. And then my same cousins had to take like ESL classes and they would like fail a grade and like, they just weren't set up for success like, imagine if they knew *two* languages, you know? And they practiced *two* languages in kindergarten, two languages all the time and… and like their parents are just so against English and it's like, they should know both of them".

The aspect of a standardized language ideology reflected here situates English for academic purposes and non-English languages as detrimental to English language acquisition, suggesting that English everywhere is necessary for adequate language acquisition. This language ideology is reflected in many classroom language policies as well as family home language practices. The misconception perpetuating such a perspective is that bilingualism gets in the way of English language acquisition.

Underlying this anecdote is the notion that linguistic factors explain academic difficulties of minority children and the belief that a version of bilingualism contributes to developmental deficits for children, the notion that some linguists have worked to dispel. Destiny did express the belief that students should be able to learn in two languages, but spoke of her aunt being against English. She did not talk about the impact of the classroom English only policy. Bucholtz et al (2018) addressed the impact of English only schooling on minority students, noting that schooling exclusively in English "has resulted in feelings of shame or frustration about their abilities in their home languages – and often about their English as well" (p. 256). This notion, apparent in Destiny's response, also relates to what scholars refer to as *subtractive* approaches to language education, according to which "language-minoritized students are expected to replace their home language varieties with the standardized national language" (Flores & Rosa, 2015, p.150). In contrast to stigmatizing and prescriptivist subtractive approaches, many language educators and researchers now promote *additive* approaches instead, which encourage students to maintain their home language varieties while also acquiring standardized language skills.

Destiny's reflection alludes to the challenge that many Spanish speaking students and families grapple with – how to maintain Spanish speaking identity while acquiring the English requisites for academic success? It's not possible to diagnose the extent to which her aunt's home language policies impacted Destiny's cousins' English acquisition and academic performance, though I am inclined to say that this is another example of the subtractive views of bilingualism embedded in ideologies of languagelessness. Destiny believed that it was the Spanish exposure at home that led to English language and academic deficiencies for her cousins. Such a notion expresses the power in language standardization ideologies in the U.S.

which seek to separate languages and see the value in bilingualism for certain purposes, while also claiming that bilingualism can be detrimental to English.

Alfredo's and Destiny's reflections reveal that the consequences of exclusionary language ideologies are felt as young as elementary school. While Alfredo described striving for that "American" sound to fit in at Patwin University, other students described still feeling not good enough even further in their academic career.

Despite being a doctoral candidate with advanced degrees in linguistics and dedicating her professional endeavors to educating others, Meli felt her language abilities were inadequate and expressed many doubts about her language proficiency. She recalled ways that her perceived accent had contributed to her low confidence in her English abilities and place in academia.

> "I feel very insecure... I feel so insecure about my English, so, so insecure, so insecure that it has stopped me from publishing. I've written so many papers for so many classes, and I think they could have been published but I just never published them because I feel like my English is terrible. Uhm…I feel like I have an accent which I know everybody does, but I definitely feel like I have a very thick accent, uhm... I don't feel very confident about my English *at all.* At all."

Meli's training as a linguist and dedication to academia developed in her a meta awareness about language. She understood that "everybody" has an "accent". Yet, she believed her own English to be "terrible" and that she had a "very thick accent". Her perceived inadequacies in her English impacted her confidence in both her speaking and writing, limiting her motivation to pursue scholarly recognition as a published scholar. In other words, she avoided entering certain academic spaces and experiences because of her limiting beliefs about what language variety was good enough for academia. Her reflection above signals a belief that she did not belong in a certain tier of academia due to her English writing and speaking skills.

Susan Gal (1998) discussed the power of standardization ideologies and the associations they create between speakers and a language, according to which, "Linguistic differences that index social contrasts are reinterpreted as *icons* of the social contrasts. In this process of *iconization*, the ideological representation fuses some quality of the linguistic feature and a supposedly parallel quality of the social group and understands one as the cause or the inherent, essential explanation of the other" (p. 328). As it relates to Meli's experiences, a standardized language ideology insists that English is the *icon* associated with excellence in academia and publishing, as well as with "smart", or "intellectual", or "publishable".

I found this part of the interview with Meli to be very difficult to hear. By this point, I had known her for many years. We had been in graduate courses together, volunteered together in a dual-immersion program as language instructors, and played soccer together. I perceived Meli as an excellent scholar, speaker, and writer. I did not hear the "thick accent" that she perceived for herself and was troubled and saddened by her perception of herself and her abilities and that her language experiences in academic spaces contributed so much pain for her. Meli's reflections suggest some alignment to a standardization ideology and, as a result, relegated her to a perceived inferior status and ability in academia.

Meli, like other speakers I interviewed, qualified her English as less than adequate due to her perceived "accent" and difficulties with English spelling and writing. In other words, she internalized the standardization ideologies of academia which told her she didn't "sound right" or good enough for academia. Meli had also completed her undergraduate studies at Patwin University and reflected on the pressure and challenge to acquire college level English writing proficiency in order to avoid being dismissed from Patwin University, which all undergraduates must satisfy before the end of their first year. Meli recalled feeling inadequately prepared for

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college level writing, despite having taken honors and AP level courses in high school. Even after being admitted to a prestigious university such as Patwin University, Meli was still affected by her perceived and experienced deficiencies with her speaking and writing. She came to believe that her English was not good enough, and neither was her Spanish.

> "Because I didn't speak the language and it was just **very** hard…eventually I learned but as you could tell, I still have an accent, I still can't spell in English to save my life, like I'm a terrible English speller…it's definitely a challenge."

Some students enter Patwin University having already satisfied the entry level writing requirement based on their scores on the university writing placement exam. If students do not receive an adequate score on that exam they can satisfy the writing requirement by receiving a passing score (C or higher) in qualifying courses. This is a high stakes university requirement because failure to satisfy the entry level writing requirement within the first year of study at Patwin University may be cause for dismissal. Meli had not received an adequate score on the placement exam and was required to take a course during her first year of study in order to meet the requirement. Some students experience much difficulty in meeting this requirement and attempt the qualifying course(s) for consecutive terms in their first year. While this additional course requirement presents as a roadblock and confidence crusher for many students, Meli described her writing course in a positive light. However, Meli also spoke to the pressure that this requirement placed on her and described her English language writing as "crappy". Despite the pressure to meet this university writing requirement and the insecurities she felt about her English writing proficiency and preparedness for university, she felt grateful for this course.

> "By far one of the best courses I've ever taken here at Patwin University, *so* incredibly helpful, so incredibly grateful because through there-even though it was only one quarter, in that quarter I learned so much, I *had* to. You *had* to learn it because if not,

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you're gonna be dismissed, you can't be writing, you know, like crappy at the college level."

The awareness of her language skills and the anxiety that she felt about her linguistic preparation is evident in the stories she shared. Meli explained to me that at one point, in high school, she expressed her concerns about her preparation for university writing to her English teacher who she felt had not adequately prepared Meli or her peers for university studies. That Meli spoke up to her teacher about her lack of English writing preparation demonstrates a meta-awareness of the role of language in her academic experiences – that she was aware of the ways she could continue to be affected by the role of English into the college level.

Meli felt she tried her "very best from very early on" and was always the interpreter in the house, "the translator" (Orellana et al, 2003). The pressure of this role, combined with the anxieties she felt around school and language, contributed to her insecurities about her English abilities. While her family likely appreciated her ability to fill the role of interpreter, her father expected her to acquire a certain level of English early on and fostered an association between school and English. For example, whenever Meli came across a Spanish word she didn't know the English equivalency for when translating for her father, he responded with something like "What's the point of school?". This notion perpetuated the idea that English – not Spanish – ought to be the language of academia. This belief is felt with varying weight for many children of immigrant parents in the U.S. when they are assigned the task of language brokering for family (Orellana et al, 2003). Similarly, Meli reflected on these exchanges as examples of feeling told her English was not good enough.

While Meli described feelings of inadequacy with her own English skills, she spoke of other scholars in her department for whom English was not their first language and described

them as "incredibly *brilliant",* who had published in both English and Spanish. Meli reflected on

her feelings about this observation and compared herself to them. She felt like everything, her

"whole experience" made her feel like she's "not ever good enough", asking aloud "How come I

don't have that confidence?".

> "And I wonder if it's just a mixture of a lot of things, like being a first-gen, being raised
> in a very low income, you now, household community, uhm … I don't know English,
> you know, not being something that-obviously we learned English at school, but it
> wasn't-I don't know I-I just don't know why my English is not to a level where I feel like
> ... comfortable, confident, like … I second guess everything-when I was applying to jobs,
> like, oh my goodness, I was so scared, so, so scared because of course all of my
> documents were in English and I was so grateful that there were so many professors, grad
> students, willing to read over my work … but if it wasn't for that, I don't think I would
> have applied because I was that scared. That's how bad I feel about my English, I get so
> much anxiety."

In Meli's narrative, the impact of how Eurocentric epistemologies in language ideologies

have been modeled and upheld through her educational experiences, particularly through

encounters with ideologies of standardization. We see this idea of Eurocentric epistemologies

(Bernal, 2002) interacting with language ideologies Meli questions and critiques her own

language skills and associates standardized English with professional aptitude, academic abilities

and belonging.

At the time of the interview, Meli had accepted an instructor position at a public

university in the Pacific Northwest of the U.S. where she would be teaching courses to

undergraduates with English as the language of instruction. While a graduate student instructor at

Patwin University, Meli had taught exclusively in Spanish. Although she continued to describe

the layers of her insecurities around her English throughout the interview, I was struck by the

observation that her upcoming professional endeavor had not quelled her anxieties or validated

her identity as a scholar and educator. If only it were that simple. Meli had applied for dozens of

academic positions in her final year of her doctoral studies, which is an arduous task for all

graduates. She, like many, had received numerous rejections. While many applicants may take a

slew of rejections more lightly and assume it was a competitive candidate pool or that their

expertise was not the right fit for the position, Meli felt her English was to blame for her

challenges in landing a professional position. Even after accepting the position, Meli still

doubted her competence and aptitude due to her perceived inadequacies with her English.

Meli was not alone in believing that English ought to be a certain way in academia, as she

had been taught. When I asked April what influenced her language choices, such as when to use

English or Spanish, she drew an association with the notion of *appropriateness* (Flores & Rosa,

2015).

> "Yea like, if I'm talking to my professors or, um I'll ... I'll use um like, proper – just like
> English or whatever. But if I'm with my friends it doesn't really matter what I speak 'cuz
> I know they'll understand it."

Standardized language ideologies assign appropriateness to English as the "proper"

language of choice in educational spaces and activities. While it may also be the case that many

professors at Patwin University speak English (and only English), the language choice reflects a

standardized language ideology because April qualified English as "proper", which suggested

that a deviation from English (e.g. code-switching, Chicano English, Spanish) is not proper and

might even compromise intelligibility. With her friends at el centro, language choice did not

require as much negotiation because she knew "they'll understand it", whatever variety of

language she chose to use. At the same time, feeling understood and *heard* in one's complete

linguistic repertoire relates to a sense of belonging, which April described as feasible only with

her friends and not when talking to professors. In my observations of April at el centro, I

frequently overheard her code-switching in Spanish and English when speaking with peers and staff.

The ideologies of languagelessness fueled by standardization come at students from multiple directions, with the effect of stripping a speaker of their linguistic repertoire and challenging their sense of belonging. When I spoke with Mirella about her feelings around English and Spanish, she used English as a reference point, highlighting the power of English as the benchmark for linguistic belonging in academia as well as language proficiency. Mirella's reflection on both her English and Spanish through a negative lens reflected the power of external standards and perspectives on student's sense of fitting in and belonging in academia. In the passage below Mirella opened up about her feelings around her own English.

> "I get self-conscious because some words… like… my sentences aren't like, flowy, you know? Or I have to stop or … uhm… I feel like if I would of talked just like, normal ranting, people would just kind of be like, "Oh my God, like, this girl is not speaking right," or something."

When I initially asked Mirella to describe her feelings about English, she said "it's complicated". She described the confusing nature of the disconnect between spelling and pronunciation in English and recalled conversations she had with her housemates about correct spelling. Mirella connected some of her self-consciousness with English to the structural confusion of English (e.g. the multiple spelling variations for the sound /i/). While I was asking about her personal feelings about English, her resulting description also included concerns about how others would perceive her English speaking and her fears that they might think she doesn't speak "right". As such, Mirella described being hyper aware of her speaking and the efforts she made to monitor her English. If we accept that exclusionary language ideologies like standardization and languagelessness exist to create and sustain hierarchies of power and

oppression, self-monitoring of one's language use as Mirella described demonstrates the influence and efficiency of such belief systems. At some point, the student voices shared so far came to embody the limiting linguistic beliefs imposed on them, doing the work for linguistic oppressors (Gal, 1998).

"No se dice así": Spanish Hegemony in and beyond academia

So far, the student experiences discussed reflect ideologies of standardization as they relate to English. In this section I turn to examples of this exclusionary ideology as it permeated student exchanges in Spanish and the ways this fixation on standardization challenged students sense of linguistic and racial identities.

Meli shared multiple anecdotes of critiques she had received from professors and other scholars throughout her graduate studies in Spain and at Patwin University, who told her that her Spanish wasn't good enough for academia – or wasn't the "correct" Spanish, and neither was her English. While this also relates to the idea of languagelessness (Rosa, 2016b), these experiences also reflect standardized language ideologies which seek to dictate what variety of language(s) constituted *good* language skills for academia. In this case, Meli was frequently told that the variety of Spanish she spoke and used as an instructor was incorrect in academic contexts and spaces. For example, Meli described interactions with fellow Spanish instructors that she had at Patwin University while pursuing her doctoral degree in Spanish Linguistics. As a graduate student, Meli taught a range of Spanish language courses and met with students during office hours. She shared an office with fellow graduate student instructors and recalled them often interrupting her interactions with students to tell her that her Spanish vocabulary was incorrect or inappropriate for university Spanish use and instruction.

"I know, it's awful, and they're telling me like, "Oh, it's not academic enough," so here I am like an idiot looking up words in the dictionary and I'm like, "Okay, so I didn't make this up," because it comes to a point where you just begin to doubt, "What do I know? What is a word? And what is not a word?"

Meli spoke about how such interactions led her to doubt her knowledge of Spanish and made her feel insecure in her Spanish speaking and writing abilities, much in the way that she felt about her English for academic purposes, too. Meli had received similar criticisms of her Spanish when completing a Master's degree in Spanish with New York University in Spain. We may even call such interactions a form of *linguistic gaslighting* – where a speaker is told that the words they use aren't real. What Meli knew as a linguist and confirmed through her own research, which focused on the teaching and learning of Spanish for heritage speakers, was that the prescriptivist corrections her fellow instructors and peers had assigned to her were rooted in very specific beliefs about what Spanish is "appropriate" for the university. Even with this understanding, Meli described the conflict within herself of knowing the problematic power behind such ideologies while also trying to fit in and be validated as an academic, bilingual, and successful college student. As a linguist, Meli was able to unpack all the issues with the experiences she shared with me but also described the weight of the persistent insecurities she harbored as they related to her language identities and belonging in academia.

Other students I spoke with described similar feelings about their Spanish in academia. Mirella recalled feeling aware of some expectation around what Spanish 'should' sound like or what language skills denote proficiency. When I asked Mirella to describe her feelings about Spanish, she qualified her Spanish in relation to English. In this comparison, however, Mirella described both her English and Spanish speaking abilities as not "flowy", an adjective she seemed drawn to that suggested 'fluent' or 'proficient' or 'good'. She described feeling self-

conscious about her Spanish language skills as a result of not growing up reading or writing in

Spanish, as she did in English. Contending with the perceptions and corrections of others,

Mirella seemed to assess her own feelings about her language abilities based on the perceptions

or standards set forth by other speakers she encountered.

> "I don't want to say it's *off* but sometimes it's like, since I didn't grow up like, reading, I
> mean, not reading – yea. Like reading, writing… as much as English, uhm… I remember
> when I was in high school like, my dad would kind of correct me a lot, well not my dad
> but… well a little bit of him. So, I would just be like, self-conscious, like 'oh my Spanish
> is bad, like don't talk it, unless you want to get like, corrected' which I did not like
> getting corrected. So… like… I was hesitant to speak it…and then now it's like, 'Okay,
> like, at least I know Spanish, I can get my message across'. I might not-it might not be
> like, grammatically, or like, as flowy as like - well I know I just said that my English
> isn't flowy but like l*ess flowy,* uhm, at least I can, like, get it across and uhm, yea."

In Mirella's reflection above she alluded to different features of the ideology of

languagelessness as she experienced them. Specifically, she described feeling her Spanish being

monitored by others. She also described her language skills in Spanish as even "less *flowy"* than

her non-flowy English, suggesting inadequacy in both languages. A part of the ideology of

languagelessness is the monitoring or policing of a speaker's language production and practices.

This policing and monitoring manifests not only in English interactions between racialized

speakers and educators, but also around Spanish between Chicanx and Latinx speakers and

educators. In my conversations with Spanish speaking students at Patwin University I often

heard stories of students feeling criticized by Spanish instructors for speaking the "wrong"

Spanish for academia. Students also shared stories of receiving criticism about the way their

Spanish sounded or their Spanish lexicon by peers and family members. For example, Mirella's

father corrected her Spanish and gave her the sense that other speakers may think "this girl is not

speaking right". The students I interviewed shared many stories about feeling their language

abilities and identities were under constant scrutiny in educational spaces, with peers, and family

members. Mirella's qualification of her Spanish *in relation to* her English language skills is an example of how ideologies of languagelessness manifest from multiple directions for speakers.

In the next excerpt, Meli explained her feelings about Spanish. While Meli above shared about her insecurities around Spanish in academia, here she shared about similar experiences and judgements from family members in Mexico. Meli talked about "now" feeling a lot better about Spanish after a "roller coaster" of Spanish experiences which included monitoring and corrections from others in regards to her Spanish speaking skills. Having mostly acquired Spanish at home, as many Spanish speakers do in the U.S., Meli felt her family was constantly scrutinized because their Spanish was not formally in alignment with the standardized variety favored in academic settings and elsewhere. Similarly, to how Mirella felt self-conscious and judged for her Spanish speaking by her father, Melissa felt that because she "never learned [Spanish] in an academic setting", her family members in Mexico would often correct her Spanish and point out supposed errors.

> "We'd go to Mexico, and I would say like, "Oh my God, we drive a truck," and I'd be like, "Oh nos vamos a ir en la troca," like "We're gonna go in the truck," and my cousins would be like, "Troca?" Like, "No se dice *troca*, se dice *camioneta*," and I'd be like, "Why do you say camioneta?" To me, troca is so normal, like-

It is important to acknowledge what was really being said and felt when speakers like Mirella and Meli described their perceived inadequacies in Spanish as a result of not having received formal Spanish instruction in the classroom. In the U.S. and arguably most Spanish language classrooms, the prescribed variety of instruction is that spoken by elites. While some phonological and lexical features of various Spanish varieties do receive some attention in Spanish language textbooks, Paffey (2007), Cameron (1995), and other scholars have discussed the role of institutional language ideologies in reinforcing a particular definition of the Spanish

language which favors the prescriptivist ideals set forth by the Real Academia Espanola (RAE; also called the Royal Spanish Academy). Some scholars have referred to the practices by which people attempt to regulate language use as *verbal hygiene* (Cameron, 1995; Paffey, 2007). Cameron suggested that not all practices of verbal hygiene are bad because the foundational component of such practices is "normativity", which she posited is a part of language use. Cameron also argued that language practices are culturally constructed, prescriptivist or not.

As these ideas relate to Mirella and Meli and their feelings about their language use and proficiency, the ideologies underlying notions of verbal hygiene and "good" language are of standardization. Language ideologies allude to broader perceptions and beliefs regarding the "role, usefulness, value and quality of that language variety" (Paffey, 2007, p. 314). For Mirella, the quality of both her English and Spanish was something she questioned because, in her view and based on the evaluations of her speech that others had volunteered, it did not match the target quality of the idealized varieties of those languages. Mirella's assessment of her languages suggested that she felt her English and Spanish did not align with normative values of English and Spanish ("this girl is not speaking right"). The stories Meli shared about having her Spanish corrected by family in Mexico also point to ideologies of standardization which reinforce a particular definition of Spanish. In this case, the target variety that Melissa's family claimed she had missed was standardized Spanish, even though it was most often not the variety they themselves spoke in Mexico. Meli and Mirella's experiences reflect ideologies of languagelessness and standardization, and tell the story that their Spanish was not good enough for their Spanish speaking family and their English was not good enough for academia. Underlying the critiques they received from family members were ideologies which suggested

that there is one way to speak Spanish 'correctly' and that diverging from that norm marks a speaker as different.

Meli, having specialized in Spanish linguistics as a graduate scholar, had grown to understand that the variety of Spanish spoken by her family in the U.S. is a different but legitimate variety spoken in the U.S. Nonetheless, understanding the multitude of language identities and varieties did not quell her insecurities since they had been reinforced through the comments she received by others, both inside and outside academia. To Meli, the constant reminders and attention on her languages from others felt like being policed on campus and that others were trying to "fix" her Spanish.

> "You're always constantly reminded, "Así no se dice," even now by my graduate-my grad colleagues, students always telling me, "No se dice así" and they're always constantly correcting. They're like almost like…police on campus, like trying to fix my Spanish."

What is the impact of language and language ideologies on the academic experiences of students at Patwin University? Both Mirella and Meli shared ways that their Spanish and English have been monitored and policed by others in academic spaces, as well as within their own families. Meli and Mirella shared experiences and reflections which called out the ways that these interactions made them feel insecure and self-conscious about their language use and identities. Meli described constantly doubting herself and her knowledge – doubting her identity as a Spanish speaker and scholar and questioning whether these identities could exist simultaneously. She felt her Spanish was not good enough for academia and was told as much, but was also made to doubt her Spanish knowledge and speaking skills outside of academia when speaking with family members in Mexico. The ideology of languagelessness insists a speaker is inadequate in (all) their languages and thus does not merit the corresponding language identities. Through the lens of LangCrit (Crump, 2014a, 2014b), these stories reveal powerful

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and painful ways by which language, identity, and belonging interact. When Meli and Mirella were corrected and monitored for their language use they felt like they weren't "right" or "normal", as if they didn't belong and their identities were called into question.

This standardization reflected in these student accounts relies on essentializing notions of language which places language as an entity that one has, an idea critiqued by Crump (2014a, 2014b), Bucholtz and Hall (2004). The standardized norm to which other languages and uses of language are measured is socially constructed and rooted in hegemonic power, resulting in a hierarchy of language and language identity that benefits some over others. For Meli and Mirella, these experiences made them feel as if others were trying to "fix" their languages, as if their languages are things that must be adjusted, assimilated, monitored and corrected.

Language indexes aspects of social life (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004; Gal, 1998). Gal has discussed ways that speakers' language ideologies , " locate – and sometimes even generate – linguistic phenomena as part of, and as evidence for, what they believe to be systematic behavioral, aesthetic, affective, and moral contrasts among the social groups indexed" (1998, p. 328). In other words, there are dialogic features in the relationships between language and social behaviors and values, meaning that language and life interact in a sort of cyclical and mutually informing way. Language practices as evidence for affective and moral contrasts among speakers reflects an aspect of standardization ideologies which creates and perpetuates the misconception that language, as an entity one has or does not have, is somehow independent of its context and purpose, and rather is something fixed within a speaker or group of speakers that indexes differences and values among social groups. In some ways, this notion relates to what García and Torres-Guevara (2010) referred to as *monoglossic language ideology*, which views language as "an autonomous skill" (p. 182). Paffey (2007) addressed this point in a similar way, saying that

within language ideologies "language as a medium of communication not only carries functional meaning, but also indexes characteristics and values common to groups of speakers" (p. 314). Likewise, Kroskrity (2000, p. 21) spoke to this idea, saying:

> "Language users' ideologies bridge their sociocultural experience and their linguistic and discursive resources by constituting those linguistic and discursive forms as indexically tied to features of their sociocultural experience."

These perspectives relate to a discussion of ideologies of standardization and languagelessness, which tend to assign more to a speaker than language proficiency. These exclusionary language ideologies assign value and identity to speakers. Said another way, the beliefs a speaker has about language are like an electrical cord that connects the way one speaks to their experiences, in a mutually igniting and often times vicious cycle. As it relates to Spanish for the students in this dissertation, Chicanx and Latinx identity was experienced and described in relation to Spanish language use. For some students, encounters with and adoption of exclusionary language ideologies impacted the way students used Spanish, as well as the ways they felt about themselves as Spanish speakers.

Meli's doubts about her own language abilities echo the feelings Destiny shared about questioning her Spanish word choice and conjugations. For these speakers, prescriptivist ideas about what Spanish should sound like and what Spanish is appropriate for academia impeded their confidence and led them to question their own language abilities at home, at school, and in work. In our conversations about Spanish, many students spoke to these exclusionary norms and the impact they had on their perceptions of themselves and their language abilities. Efren recalled a particular experience at Patwin University as a student in a Spanish language class.

> "When I took Spanish last year - well, last quarter. And like…and like I saw that I was very like…uhm … the teacher was talking I guess Spaniard Spanish. It was very like structured and like, words that I wouldn't even say and like…and I was told by other

friends too, they had experiences where it's kind of like... their professors told them to not speak like a Ranchero Spanish.

For Efren, an instructor speaking Spaniard Spanish said things he "wouldn't even say". Efren's friends had similar experiences, in which they were told by professors that there is a right and a wrong way to speak Spanish. The wrong way, according to such professors, is "Ranchero Spanish" which is a derogatory way to refer to Spanish spoken by Mexicans or individuals of Mexican origin. Similar to Meli, Efren was made to feel by other Spanish speakers in academic spaces at Patwin University that the Spanish variety with which he was most familiar was not appropriate or correct for academia.

Efren also spoke of having to "come to terms with" his language use once he got to university in order to "move up the social ladder, you know, and get into spaces". I was curious about Efren's feelings about and practices with code-switching because at the time el centro promoted itself as a bilingual space and I had often overheard students and staff codeswitching. At this point I also understood that not all Chicanx and Latinx students and staff spoke Spanish while at Patwin University or at all (like Destiny). I was curious to know to what degree Efren had thought about mixing his languages and the role that Patwin University and el centro played in such a language practice. If students were monitoring their Spanish language use outside of el centro (e.g. the classroom, public spaces like the campus meal centers and library, etc.), what about code-switching? Were students adopting essentializing and separatist language practices to appeal to standardization ideologies about what language belongs where, or whether languages can be mixed at all? I had overheard Efren using both English and Spanish in various exchanges at Patwin University, so I asked about his feelings on code-switching. This was his response:

"Uhm... I-I like it a lot but I-I just-I don't know that many terms to do it for. And sometimes I say the wrong things. Like, uhm…my friend, she like-we hang out a lot and like, she knows Spanish really well, and she'll correct me a lot... why even speak it when I can't even say it, you know? But-that's why I said like, I wish I knew it fully so I could do that type of Spanglish 'cause I have a whole lot of friends who will like speak it well and I'll be embarrassed just to like-do the same thing like Spanglish 'cause like…I wouldn't know what to say next. Stuff like that."

While I had overheard Efren speaking in Spanish at el centro on a few occasions, I often heard him switch from Spanish to English while other speakers continued to converse in Spanish. For example, Efren and I were involved in a student run conference during the spring term of the year I had interviewed him. Efren was part of the planning committee for the conference, along with some Spanish speaking graduate students. One morning, the committee and presenters met to talk about the logistics of the conference. I was one of the presenters at the conference so I was there, too. The graduate student conference coordinators were catching up in Spanish and dove into discussions about the conference, still in Spanish. I noticed that the majority of the Spanish speakers in attendance were speaking exclusively in Spanish or code-switching. Efren started to speak in Spanish and then switched to English for the remainder of the meeting. Perhaps, as he shared in his interview, he felt self-conscious about his Spanish.

As the stories so far demonstrate, standardized language ideologies are not unique to English. It is not an exaggeration to say that in contemporary U.S. society, most speakers perceive languages under the lens of "right" or "wrong", "correct", or not.

Raciolinguistic Ideologies

Raciolinguistics focuses on the socially cyclical relationship between race, racialization, and language: language is used to construct race ("languaging race") and perceptions of race

influence how language is used ("racing language") (Alim et al, 2016). This framework has been utilized particularly well to better understand how sociolinguistic variation is intertwined with social and political factors. In this way, language may be used to seek or demonstrate (racial) group membership. Raciolinguistic ideologies are often embedded within language standardization ideologies which, together, say that speakers of X language do or ought to look and sound a certain way, and if done "correctly" such speakers can achieve unmarked linguistic and social status. In many of the student experiences I have discussed so far, students described ways that standardization ideologies were directed at them and their languaging. Their stories also revealed ways that they themselves had reinforced such ideologies through their own feelings and practices around language. In this section I present student stories that address the ways that such standardization ideologies interact with raciolinguistic ideologies and experiences.

One underlying feature of English standardization ideologies in the U.S. is the notion that spaces such as schools are normatively white public spaces, "mediated by cultural notions of 'correctness' and 'good' English", and as such "failures of linguistic order, real and imagined, become in the outer sphere signs of race" (Hill, 1998, p. 682). It is in this "outer sphere", according to Hill (1998) and Urciuoli (1996), that speakers of "accented" English and languages other than English, particularly Spanish, are racialized and held up to the standards of linguistic orderliness. For U.S. Latinas/os, "public usage of Spanish or "accented" English is prohibited and/or understood as an index of primordial inferiority (i.e. racial difference)" (p. 67).

In this section I examine the raciolinguistic ideologies described by students which situated English and Spanish as belonging to certain speakers and spaces. Throughout this section, I offer an analysis of the impact such beliefs and associations had on students'

perceptions of language in academic experiences, as well as the ways that students negotiated language in such spaces and exchanges.

"You don't speak Spanish? How embarrassing."

Raciolinguistic ideologies assign a way of speaking to an individual based on phenotypical attributes or even based on a speaker's name. The notion that if a speaker looks like X they must speak X is upheld in many ways. For example, speaker A, a monolingual English speaker who believes that 'good' or 'correct' English must sound a certain way (e.g. 'unaccented' and free of certain variations in lexical choices and syntax) may see a non-white individual, speaker B, and assume that they don't speak 'good' or 'correct' English based on the phenotypical markers of speaker B (e.g. not appearing white or their style of dress) (Alim, 2016, pp. 33-64). In other ways, raciolinguistic ideologies are expressed when one's race is presumed based on the way they speak. In another example, a speaker may present a certain way and be expected to speak a certain way so as to validate their phenotypical attributes. Such an example of raciolinguistic ideologies upholds standardization by placing value and appropriateness onto a single variety of speaking and withholding access to such linguistic status, perpetuating the power hierarchy among speakers and language varieties. As the guiding framework for this dissertation, LangCrit (Crump, 2014b) examines "who" a speaker is allowed to be based on boundaries among socially constructed categories of becoming and belonging, such as language and race. LangCrit explores how and where speakers express the intersectionality of the dimensions of their identity. In this section I examine student narratives that demonstrate their encounters with racializing processes and raciolinguistic standards and the ways they navigate identity and belonging through language.

Another way that perceptions of race as a marker of language identity and ability manifest is within racial and ethnic groups which expect people that look like X to also speak X. The stories in this section present ways that Chicanx and Latinx students at Patwin University experienced raciolinguistic ideologies in exchanges with peers. For example, students who identified as Chicanx or Latinx and did not speak Spanish frequently were met with disbelief, the message being "you can't possibly be X if you don't speak X" and "you look like you speak X but since you don't speak X, what are you?" Some of the stories shared by students revealed ways that they contributed to such raciolinguistic notions while others shared about times they had been on the receiving end of raciolinguistic ideologies, by which the felt that their racial and ethnic identity was assessed by peers based on their language use.

For some speakers, Spanish was not always an available marker to validate their identity as Chicanx or Latinx. When I asked Destiny about her thoughts around Spanish at Patwin University, she recalled this experience:

> "When I think of Spanish and Patwin University? I think of this one time where, this one girl told me like, "you don't speak Spanish?" and I was like, "no, not really" and she's was like, "oh that's so embarrassing" or like "oh that's so sad." And I was like, "why?" like- like I think that some people- some people even at Patwin University think that, if you don't speak Spanish like, are you really Mexican enough? Are you really Latin enough? Or Latino enough? Like... yea I think that so I had that experience multiple times at Patwin uh…'cause I didn't speak Spanish but I was a part of all *these* clubs because that was like the group I most identified with and even with the group that I most identified with didn't identify with me in reverse so that was something."

That other Chicanx and Latinx students viewed Spanish as an integral component to Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x identity stems from raciolinguistic ideologies that say if a speaker looks like X they should sound like X or if a speaker claims X race or ethnicity they must speak X language. As they relate to belonging in higher education, such raciolinguistic ideologies and statements made Destiny feel that her inclusion in "*these* clubs" was challenged, despite

identifying most with Chicanx and Latinx groups. She described an important feature of belonging and inclusion: recognition. Destiny's experience demonstrates ways that one's linguistic identity is linked to other features of their identity and that a perceived disconnect on behalf of the listener results in rejecting a speaker's affiliation with social groups, where the access card to Chicanx or Latinx identity requires Spanish speaking identity. She was made to question her own belonging and right in claiming Mexican or Latin identity based on how others perceived her language. In other words, while Destiny appeared Mexican, her identification as Mexican was perceived as inappropriate or inaccurate because she did not meet the racio*linguistic* criteria: could she really claim to be Mexican if she didn't speak Spanish? Rather, her peer suggested she ought to be embarrassed for not meeting this linguistic requirement.

One student I interviewed, Katie, explicitly expressed the raciolinguistic ideology that Destiny experienced. When I asked Katie about her feelings around Spanish, she voiced a raciolinguistic ideology which insists that Latinx and Chicanx identifying individuals must speak Spanish.

> "I think it's so simple. Like… people who are from Latin basis, like backgrounds, who don't speak Spanish, kind of disappoint me. Just 'cause I feel like…there's always been that stigma that once you come to the U.S. you should only speak English. And I feel like, it's an advantage for us to speak both Spanish and English because it's who we are."

While Katie's response above conforms to the raciolinguistic ideology which claims people from a certain background should speak a certain language, she also alluded to the assimilationist and standardization ideologies which plague U.S. history. Her reflection touches on the points made in the first section of this chapter: that belonging is about how well one speaks the right variety of a language. In the U.S., the 'right' language is and has been English.

In the Spanish language classroom or even among fellow Spanish speakers, the 'right' Spanish is the variety spoken in academia.

Katie also spoke about the potential of bilingualism for Latinx speakers in providing an advantage by challenging "that stigma that once you come to the U.S. you should only speak English". What Katie proposed with this statement was an act of resistance against ideologies of standardization and the insistence that English is the only language that warrants belonging in the U.S. Katie went on to talk about the importance of Latinxs being bilingual in English and Spanish to be considered more competitive in the job market.

> "And I feel like it's an advantage for us to speak both Spanish and English because, A: it's who we are. And then B: it's gonna give a lot more job opportunities in the future and if you're going up against a person who's white and speaks Spanish and you're Latin, or Latina, and you don't speak Spanish, like... what does it make it say about us? Like, they're just gonna add more stereotypes to who we are as a group of people."

In arguing that Spanish speaking white individuals would be selected above non-Spanish speaking Chicanx or Latinx candidates, what she said touched on the power of standardization in convincing speakers that it is to their benefit to fit into the linguistic box(es) created by institutions and policies. Instead, Katie called for Latinx speakers to embrace bilingualism in order to be competitive on the job market and to challenge raciolinguistic stigmas which claim Chicanx and Latinx speakers are languagelessness and not bilingual. The reality is that languagelessness often impacts nonwhite speakers the most. However, while Katie's statements about the importance of speakers of Latin backgrounds to speak Spanish was perhaps intended to be empowering and inclusive, to a degree it also upholds the prevailing raciolinguistic belief that *a* culture must speak *a* language (Rosa, 2016a; Urciuoli, 1996).

Katie described bilingualism in Spanish and English as "who we are", referring to individuals in the U.S. who are from Latin backgrounds. Probably more specifically, Katie was

referring to speakers like herself – 1st generation university students who grew up with Spanish in the home and English at school. This perspective both acknowledges and challenges raciolinguistic ideologies which can box speakers into a racialized monolingual identity. In this statement Katie identified herself as not fitting a monolingual mold: she is not just a Spanish speaker and not just an English speaker. Describing the importance of bilingualism in this way, Katie challenged the assimilationist and standardization stereotypes which tend to assign monolingual identities onto speakers and insist that to belong in the U.S. one must speak English only.

What Katie described above also points to the level of language monitoring and maintenance that upholds raciolinguistic ideologies. In Katie's view, speakers of Latin backgrounds experience a contradictory dichotomy by which they are expected to assimilate while also stigmatized for abandoning their Spanish language roots to satisfy the English-only standards in the U.S. – to be American. Many Chicanx and Latinx individuals do assimilate in such a way and believe English is tied to American identity (Swift, 2020). This has also been the case for immigrants from many language backgrounds in the U.S. What Katie addressed points to the social and political hierarchy that such raciolinguistic and essentializing notions of language, identity, and belonging place on certain speakers in the U.S., particularly when she said "what does it make it say about us? Like, they're just gonna add more stereotypes to who we are as a people". For students like Katie and Destiny, the negotiation of language and identity for the sake of belonging and recognition revolved around an awareness of how others perceived their language and assigned, or withheld, racialized identities accordingly. While Destiny and Katie expressed different raciolinguistic identities in regards to Spanish, both students spoke about monitoring their language use.

Katie described being made to feel aware of her Spanish language use at Patwin University. I asked if she ever felt pressured to speak a certain language on campus. This was her response:

> "Yea. Sometimes when I would speak Spanish around here, people would just look at me. Specifically, white people, they just stare at me as if I'm a threat or like ... I don't know, like they think we're talking about them or something. So, they'll just stare. So, I'm always ready to like... I always have my defenses up just in case I need to use it."

Features of exclusionary language ideologies, such as monitoring of language use (one's language as well as that of others), interact with racializing practices in spaces framed by standardization. Language negotiation is the labor put forth by speakers to either satisfy or challenge language monitoring in their social spaces. For example, in the social situations that Katie described above, she described having her "defenses up" when speaking Spanish around white speakers in spaces at Patwin University, (outside of el centro). Her reaction was a way to protect herself from the social consequences of speaking a language other than English in English dominant spaces – the glares and stares. What Katie described underscores the foundations of raciolinguistic ideologies about "languaging race" and "racing language" (Alim et al, 2016), which goes deeper than using language to define and describe race. 'Languaging race' refers to "Language's central role in the construction, maintenance, and transformation of racial and ethnic identities" (p. 7). Katie's experiences and observations of such language boundaries and their subsequent consequences have been documented by scholars, too (Urciuoli, 1996). The association between "threat" and Spanish (and other damaging categorizations) has been experienced as part of the *racial scripts* familiar to Latinx individuals in the U.S. across generations, as well as many other non-white presenting speakers. Katie's experiences exemplify ways that racial categorization is tied to language. Katie's concerns about what white speakers

may say about non-Spanish speaking Latinx hints at an understanding of who creates expectations around what racialized speakers should sound like. This awareness came up in my conversations with Jose, too. Jose's experiences prompted him to challenge standardized ideologies that situate Spanish as not belonging in academia. Developed from an awareness of ways that English standardization in education negatively impact Chicanx and Latinx students, he came to embrace Spanish to avoid assimilating to "damaging ideals". However, Jose still associated English with "white". Thus Jose, like other speakers throughout this chapter, described the raciolinguistic conflict of being a non-white student in higher education. Jose challenged notions and stereotypes associated with being Latino by embracing Spanish as a university student and in so doing identified ways he felt he had bought into the dominance of English and the impact it had on blocking his understanding of the Chicanx academic experience. (I discuss Jose's process in more detail in the next chapter):

> "I dunno it's like, it's a process when you're realize like, holy crap everything I thought was like .. terribly wrong and .. like .. you know, we gotta– we gotta do something about it. I went into like this ^panic mode and, that was when – that's when I realized like, that's when I realized just ^how ^important it is to give back to community. And how wrong it commit ethnic genocide and then... I just – I started to understand and want more things and ... became ^more involved."

What *does* not speaking Spanish say about a Chicanx, Latinx, or Hispanic identifying student? For Jose, it says assimilation and ethnic genocide. For Katie, it says giving into the stigma of English-only beliefs in the U.S. and perhaps not being perceived as authentically Latina/o/x. Students are thus thrown into the pit of raciolinguistic ideology making, where in an effort to not assimilate or be perceived as White through English and to instead embrace Spanish, students may inadvertently perpetuate raciolinguistic ideologies which claim that to be Chicanx or Latinx requires Spanish. When speaking with Lydia, she shared with me an anecdote that exemplified raciolinguistic ideologies in the Spanish language classroom at Patwin

University. This story came up when I asked Lydia if she ever felt judged by others for the way she spoke on campus. I was a bit surprised by her candid response.

> "Uhm... sometimes like in class, probably. Yea sometimes I do-I know-like you kind of already know-figure people are judging you. Do I feel like... shy or bad about it? No. But I know that people are judging me 'cause... I wouldn't say I judge others, but I clearly take note on how other people speak, like I know there's-in my Spanish class, **all of us,** all of us though this one girl, you know, she's white skin but she's Mexican. We all ***thought*** she was just gonna speak like broken Spanish".

The anecdote above reflects the cyclical aspect of raciolinguistic ideologies. Had Lydia at times felt judged for the way she speaks? Yes, but she also identified an example by which such judgment is shared among speakers and which she participated in, too. For Lydia and others in her Spanish class, a white skinned speaker may have identified as Mexican but "must" speak "broken" Spanish. The notion perpetuated here is that Spanish speakers ought to look a certain way and ought to have a certain level of melanin in their skin to be perceived as authentic Spanish speakers on site. As it turned out, Lydia explained that the student she described spoke excellent Spanish, despite the way she looked. Lydia's story above reveals much about how standardization and raciolinguistic ideologies manifest on the surface of exchanges in educational spaces, like a classroom. The belief that Lydia and her peers had which insisted that their white presenting classmate must speak "broken Spanish" stems from raciolinguistic beliefs which tell speakers to look for certain phenotypical features as cues or evidence for the linguistic identity and abilities of a speaker. On the flipside of such internalization is the notion that this classmate didn't look Mexican enough, or Spanish speaking enough – she was too white to really meet the criteria for Mexican. Lydia's story, and admission that her classmate did *not* speak "broken Spanish", also points to ways that language is used as a proxy for race because her classmate's Spanish validated and authenticated her Mexican identity. In other words, Lydia and

her peers were basically saying, 'okay, she is Mexican because she sounds Mexican'. This story is important for understanding the complex ways that students have been socialized into assigning, challenging, and validating identities around race and language together in educational spaces.

An ethnolinguistic highwire: Between two languages, two worlds.

So far, this chapter has explored ways that students at Patwin University compartmentalized their English and Spanish, in use and beliefs, and were at times hyper aware of their language skills. Students also shared about ways they had assimilated to standardized ideologies, which assigned English as the language of belonging in educational spaces. Furthermore, students experienced and participated in racializing processes through language with the belief that speakers of a given language must look or sound a certain way. In this section, I analyze raciolinguistic ideologies further and explore ways that they interacted with ideologies of standardization in student experiences. This analysis addresses the tension in the identity balance that Chicanx and Latinx students encountered and enacted at Patwin University.

When speaking with students at el centro and observing the ways they transitioned and negotiated between English and Spanish, I took note of a balancing act in which students engaged. However, this balancing act became much more apparent in the stories that students shared about language exchanges outside of el centro. It was through my conversations with students that I learned of the multitude of exchanges and relationships outside of el centro through which students felt pulled and pushed into proving their ethnolinguistic identities – proving they were Mexican or Latin (enough), that they spoke English and Spanish well and of the 'right' varieties, and that they weren't "pocho" or "americano". Bernal (2001) described features of this balancing act in the idea of a *mestiza consciousness* (Anzaldúa, 1987), which

refers to ways of knowing that straddle multiple cultures, races, and languages. The tension in balancing English and Spanish, between belonging and not, between speaking right, sounding right, looking right – this tension is what I describe here as an *ethnolinguistic highwire*, which students at Patwin University attempted to balance. I introduce this idea with a reflection from Alfredo, whose perspective inspired the title of this section.

When he first started learning English, Alfredo recalled having forgotten some words in Spanish, which is not at all uncommon for learners when acquiring new or multiple languages. Alfredo attributed a perceived attrition in his Spanish to "mixing a whole new language and the language you already know". He recalled the conflicting process of acquiring English while trying to maintain his Spanish.

> "Uh, so I remember going to Mexico, and me being like twelve-thirteen and then me trying to talk in Spanish but-I'm trying-I'm thinking of the word in English and I'm trying to figure out how to say it in Spanish and I'm just sitting there like, "uh, uh" you know like, and they're thinking, "Oh, ya es Americano" like he doesn't know how to speak Spanish. And I would always get so mad because it was like, "No, I still know how to speak Spanish" like, y'all... they don't like me over there because I don't know how to speak English, they don't like me over here because I don't know how to speak Spanish like, where am I, you know? Where am within like these two things but it was always like, 'okay, I have to make sure that I know how to speak Spanish well and I know how to speak English well to be able to be in the middle ground between those two worlds'. Uh but I remember one time they called me a "pocho" so I was like, "Uhh-uhh-yea" I got so mad because I was like, 'First of all, y'all have no idea how hard it is to learn a whole other language and then you know like, figuring out everything in between.' Uh, like yea. So, I have a lot of respect for folks who have two languages because it's a lot. It's a lot to like be able to learn while also being in different things."

Alfredo addressed the challenges of receiving recognition for linguistic identities and the ways that his language identities were connected to his racial and ethnic identity as Mexican. Alfredo, like the speakers we have heard from so far, described an awareness of others' perceptions of his speaking and the impact their critiques had on him. He described the pressure

of knowing how to speak both Spanish and English "to be able to be in the middle ground between those two worlds" – the Spanish world and English world; the world of academia in the U.S. and the world with his family in Mexico. That Alfredo perceived separate "worlds" for these languages relates to notions of a subtractive view of multilingualism as embedded in ideologies of languagelessness which views one language as contributing to deficiencies in another, so better to keep them separate. I don't believe Alfredo felt this way, but his reflections demonstrate ways that those he encountered did harbor such beliefs. He did not want to lose his Spanish and connection to his family in Mexico. The memory he shared revealed ways he felt he needed to prove his Spanish speaking identity and belonging with other Spanish speakers, while also maintaining English in order to "blend in" and be as "American" as possible.

Alfredo also spoke to the complexity of ethnolinguistic identity balance and negotiation as he dealt with "figuring out everything in between". This "in between" included adjusting to a new school system in the U.S., learning what it meant to "blend in" to be recognized in the English-only classrooms, translating for his parents, and excelling in academia while also facing the loss of his birth country, closeness to relatives, and working to excel as a Chicano university student. The "in between" often revolved around a similar maintenance of his dual-language, dual-nation identity. While Alfredo saw himself as a Spanish speaker and worked hard to be an English speaker in academia, his family in Mexico challenged his ethnolinguistic identity as it related to his Mexican Spanish speaking identity due to a delay in lexical recall. They didn't see a bilingual scholar, they heard "ya es americano" – as if he had lost his Mexican identity through learning English. This point in Alfredo's narrative relates to Katie's discussion of the stigma and standards placed on Latinx speakers to assimilate to English, which challenges the integrity or authenticity of Latin identity. While Katie expressed concern that lack of Spanish maintenance

would result in stigmatization from white people in the U.S., as a Chicana she also expressed a belief or recognition in this stigma. Alfredo's story shows how this ethnolinguistic highwire was not only experienced in the U.S., but also with family outside the U.S. Thus, some students at Patwin University were charged with the difficult task of balancing the ethnolinguistic identities they held for themselves as well as those imposed by external social factors and actors.

The students I got to know through el centro all seemed to agree in the value and importance or bilingualism in Spanish and English. Even those for whom Spanish was not a readily available marker of Chicana/o/x or Latina/o/x identity, bilingualism was still described as the ethnolinguistic balance to strive for. Despite positive views on bilingualism, student reflections still revealed traces of subtractive perspectives. Alfredo experienced some lexical attrition in his Spanish which he attributed to focusing primarily on English since he began schooling in the U.S. Similarly, as we saw earlier in this chapter, Destiny saw deficiencies in English as a result of not enough English at home, despite the fact that her cousins were at English-only schools. What Alfredo's experiences and Destiny's story have in common is a focus on balance and negotiation between English and Spanish and the ways that speakers are pulled in multiple directions in order to meet certain standards set forth by exclusionary language ideologies.

As these stories show, the idea of balance on this ethnolinguistic highwire can look different for speakers. A commonality is that the ethnolinguistic highwire pushes speakers to balance their identities as English *and* Spanish speakers in order to "make it" in society and within family. In the following passage, Juan described an association between English and fitting in. Similar to Alfredo's reflection on how English had become the dominant language of his thoughts, as an "adaptive mechanism" for survival to "blend in" in the English-speaking U.S.,

Juan recalled the feeling of trying to fit in through English. For Juan, English called to mind

having to try to fit into "a society that sometimes doesn't want you". The feeling of not being

recognized without English relates to the hegemonic social power granted English over Spanish.

The conflict of Juan's feelings around English relates to Alfredo's description of being "between

those two worlds": the English world and the Spanish world. Raciolinguistic ideologies insist

that speakers of English ought to look and sound a certain way. In practice, for speakers like

Juan, this ideology created personal and interpersonal conflict because he felt torn between

trying to fit into society while also trying to maintain his identities as a Spanish speaking

Chicano.

> "It's conflicting just 'cause it's in-a language I had to learn that had to become my primary language. It kind of saddens me sometimes that I can't have Spanish as my main language 'cause that's who I am. Uhm, English just kind of just reminds me a lot of... having to…try to fit into a society that sometimes doesn't want you. So, it's... the stereotypes… get to you with English that you're Hispanic or Latino or whatever you may identify with but you're not supposed to speak those languages because of conceived notions that people have. So, it gets kind of conflicting at times 'cause some of my family members tell me that I sound too white".

Juan described similar experiences and thoughts as those of Alfredo in relation to family

perceptions of himself based on his English language use and identity. What the ethnolinguistic

highwire becomes for some speakers, like Alfredo and Juan, is a sort of catch-22. In other words,

to acquire English as one's main language as a Chicanx or Latinx student one might successfully

avoid the negative perceptions and stereotypes that society has of "Hispanic", Latinx, and

Chicanx speakers. However, prioritizing English dominance comes with the risk of incurring

criticism from family and community. Juan's family said that he sounded "white" - "too white",

similar to how Alfredo's family called him "pocho" and "americano". On the other hand,

speakers who maintain Spanish as their main language might equally face stereotypes and negative perceptions from others and feel unable to fit into U.S. society, particularly in school.

That English is associated with whiteness indicates the process of racialization which underlies raciolinguistic ideologies. In the U.S., as Juan experienced, Spanish is an identity marker that "signals ethnolinguistic and ethnoracial difference" (Rosa, 2016a, p. 67), where the reference point for "difference" is unmarked (unaccented) English and "the act of speaking Spanish publicly is a subtle marker of this difference" (p.67). Katie alluded to this reality as well when sharing about times she felt judged or stared at when speaking Spanish in common campus spaces outside of el centro, particularly from white speakers. For Juan, the push and pull of choosing between Spanish and English, between fitting in with family and fitting in with school and society, between being who he is and who others wanted him to be, elicited conflicting feelings. He described feeling pulled in two competing directions rather than being recognized for the complete complexities of his ethnolinguistic identities.

> "uhm maybe some white students or Asian students feel uncomfortable that I'm speaking Spanish and they'll ask if I could speak in English. Or like, not use specific terms but it's like, I can't help it's who I am. So other than that, I think it's just more of unconsciously I do it, I know in which settings to use and which settings not to. But you do feel pressured just based on how things are".

Juan described situations in which he felt pressured to negotiate and monitor his language use in order to satisfy certain levels of comfort for other speakers. Importantly, for Juan, these situations related to racial and ethnic identities of interlocutors and their preference for English and a certain way of speaking ("or like, not use specific terms"). He also identified the powerful influence of such ideologies as he has negotiated his balance "unconsciously" and knew "which settings to use [Spanish] and which settings not to". For Juan, this unconscious adjustment and awareness of the pressure of the highwire stemmed from knowing just "how things are"-

speaking to the external beliefs and policies he experienced, which dictated what language belonged where, and by whom. For example, Juan spoke about the exclusionary ideologies of academia which permit English only for the majority of his courses. He spoke to the different opportunities that bilingual instruction would allow that current policies and standards do not permit. For example, he shared that "if we learn things bilingually, if we learn things in classes, in English *and* Spanish, we could go out there and teach chemistry to people [in Spanish] …[it would open] a lot more doors". Juan saw the potential for these doors that the current exclusionary standards of the ethnolinguistic highwire were not designed to permit.

Chapter Discussion

Oppressive language ideologies can come to be accepted as truth by those most impacted by them (Gal, 1998). According to Gal, "power resides as well in the ability of some ideologies to gain the assent or agreement even of those whose social identities, characters, and practices they do not valorize or even recognize" (p. 321). As a result, students acquired some negative associations between their language background, raciolinguistic identities, and their academic preparedness and belonging. The student experiences described throughout this chapter reflect an awareness of the ways that exclusionary language ideologies of standardization, raciolinguistics, and languagelessness place a high price on belonging. For these students, English was perceived to permit or prohibit survival, fitting in, blending in, and feeling safe. The double-edged sword of wanting to acquire the "correct" English without being perceived as "too white", "pocho" or "Americano" was experienced by the speakers throughout this chapter through a range of different exchanges outside of el centro. In addition to the pressure to conform to the "right" way of speaking English, students described experiences at Patwin University, with family, and

among peers that made them question their Spanish-speaking and racial identities, too. For some speakers, such a visceral awareness of deviating from some expected linguistic norm made them feel like their entire identity was illegitimate or at stake and something to be negotiated and balanced.

From a translanguaging perspective (García & Leiva, 2014; García & Kleyn, 2016) the balancing act between languages and language identities that students described throughout this chapter reflects the "socially invented" categories which construct separation between languages, like English and Spanish (García & Kleyn, 2016, p. 10). The separation of languages and language identities in this way also reflects bilingual education practices common across many institutions and societies which view language as a fixed entity. Crump's framework of LangCrit aims to challenge such fixed assumptions. Specifically, the 'either/or', 'here/there', 'first/second' approach to language use (and acquisition), which is reflected in the ways students described feeling pressured to speak the 'right' way in certain spaces and exchanges. Instead, LangCrit acknowledges that speaker identities and experiences are more accurately described through a both/and model which accounts for a "continuum of possibilities for understanding language, race, and identity" (Crump, 2014b, p. 220) Similarly. a translanguaging perspective argues that it is more accurate to think of multilinguals in inclusive "unitary" terms and to "think of bilinguals/multilinguals as individuals with a single linguistic system (the inside view) that society (the outside view) calls two or more named languages" (p. 10). This approach to viewing speakers relates to Yosso's *community cultural wealth* model, which conceptualizes the application of critical race theory (Eds. Delgado & Stefancic, 2012) to challenge traditional notions of cultural capital (Yosso, 2005). Community cultural wealth, like translanguaging, steps away from deficit views of Students of Color, and instead recognizes and learns from the vast

knowledge, experiences, and connections that socially marginalized individuals and groups often possess.

The goal of translanguaging, LangCrit, and the community cultural wealth model is to provide inclusive and holistic interpretations and understandings of the dynamic skills of students. Through a translanguaging model, speakers are not expected to separate their language identities and they are recognized for having one complex and dynamic linguistic system "that the speaker then learns to separate into two languages, as defined by external social factors, and not simply linguistic ones" (p, 12). Community cultural wealth includes *linguistic capital,* which emphasizes the understanding that "Students of Color arrive at school with multiple language and communication skills" (p. 78). This understanding drives an inclusive approach to language, belonging, identity, and education, which I discuss in more detail in the next chapter.

In contrast to translanguaging practices, exclusionary language ideologies serve to create and sustain agreed upon norms around what's correct, appropriate, welcome, and authentic. The cost of such exclusionary ideologies in academic spaces is apparent in the stories shared by the student voices in this dissertation thus far: that deviating from exclusionary ideologies around language in academic spaces threatens a speaker's sense of belonging, language identity, and belief in their own language abilities. The cost is also the perpetuation of deficit views of Students of Color in academia, which models like translanguaging and community cultural wealth aim to eradicate. The student narratives shared throughout this chapter show the impact that exclusionary language ideologies have in deficit mindset creation. These ideologies prescribe set norms around the intersection of language, race, belonging, and academia and contribute to feelings of insecurities for speakers who are perceived as deviating from those norms.

The student accounts discussed throughout this chapter underscore Rosa's observation that students' "language ideologies and linguistic practices demonstrate a shared investment in the ability to speak unmarked or 'unaccented' English, as well as intimate familiarity with and affinity for" Spanish (2016a, p. 73). Through a raciolinguistic perspective, we challenge Eurocentric epistemologies (Bernal, 2002) and seeks to understand how "the white gaze" is attached to how speakers enact and perceive linguistic practices (Flores & Rosa, 2015, p. 151). In other words, how speakers perceive the English language use of other interlocutors is influenced by and conducted through the lens of "appropriateness" and notions of whiteness. Flores and Rosa propose that standardized English "should be conceptualized in terms of the racialized ideologies of *listening subjects*" (p.152 citing Inoue, 2006) and not based on any notion of *speaking subjects* because actual linguistic practices that constitute this idealized standardized form are not possible to locate. In reality, the authors argue that standardized English is a socially constructed cultural emblem that contributes to societal stratification and racial hierarchies. For example, listeners perceive the "accent" of some speakers while completely ignoring others. Furthermore, the "appropriate" standardized English variety is not inclusive of varied language backgrounds or racial identities. While speakers are taught to strive to speak the "appropriate" language variety or register in a given context, such as in the classroom, white listening subjects often continue to hear "accents" and deviations from the idealized standardized variety "regardless of how well language-minoritized students model themselves after the white speaking subject" (ibid.).

Students at Patwin University described a similar desire to achieve "unaccented" English while also striving to maintain their identity as Chicanx and Latinx individuals While the student experiences shared throughout this chapter reveal the constraints under which Chicanx and

Latinx students negotiate language and identity in academic experiences and spaces, their stories also point to opportunities to challenge raciolinguistic norms embedded in standardization. In the next chapter, I explore the ideologies which mitigate the damaging impact of exclusionary ideologies identified in this chapter. Specifically, I present what I am referring to as *inclusionary ideologies,* as described and experienced by students at el centro.

Chapter 5
Inclusionary Ideologies

Chapter Introduction

This is a chapter about resilience and tenacity. The focus is on ways students experienced and enacted inclusionary ideologies, as well as the ways that el centro fostered inclusivity of identity, language, and belonging for students at Patwin University. It's about the ways students at Patwin University identified, challenged, and resisted exclusionary ideologies. This chapter offers hope and momentum for the potential of academic spaces and exchanges to foster equity, inclusion, and belonging for Chicana/o/e/x and Latina/o/e/x students.

I define inclusionary ideologies as those which foster belonging without calling for assimilation and which also work to dismantle hierarchies around language, belonging, and education. Inclusionary ideologies necessarily involve identity because to feel a sense of belonging students must feel their identities recognized in the spaces and exchanges with which they engage. As this dissertation demonstrates, student language identities are not fixed. Rather, as discussed in Chapter 4 as it relates to the ethnolinguistic highwire on which students balance,

student language identities are multifaceted and multilayered; they are informed and impacted by many different experiences, interactions, and spaces. This chapter explores the ways that academic experiences informed students' feelings around English and Spanish in a way that invited a sense of belonging, resilience, and persistence. This chapter also explores ways students enacted inclusionary ideologies by recognizing and challenging exclusive and punitive educational practices.

As in Chapter 4, this chapter explores the ways that Patwin University students associated English and Spanish with different facets of belonging and identity. The students I interviewed at el centro described the value in integrating their Spanish language identity into their academic experiences, exchanges, and into campus spaces in order to claim their belonging in academia; challenge exclusionary notions of language; and resist traditional power hierarchies in academia in order to persist as university students. They also described the spaces that enabled belonging and inclusivity, specifically el centro.

Language for Belonging

One of the goals of this dissertation is to address opportunities to close opportunity gaps in higher education and increase retention and persistence among Chicanx and Latinx students. Belonging is a broad idea that encompasses many elements, from availability of and access to student services to the ways that students feel and engage with campus. How students engage with campus relates not only to the student services utilized but also the relationships they build, exchanges they encounter and enact, spaces they seek and use, as well as those that they avoid. Earlier in this dissertation I discussed the variables that scholars have identified as contributing to retention of Chicanx and Latinx students. Of those variables discussed, sense of belonging has

been identified as a relevant factor in student academic persistence and well-being. Here it is useful to recall the distinction proposed by Tinto (1975, 2006) between retention and persistence, where retention refers to the efforts made by the educational institution to maintain student engagement and enrollment, while persistence refers to the efforts of students to continue their studies. This chapter contributes additional insight into ways that inclusionary ideologies afford opportunities to increase retention of and persistence by Chicanx and Latinx university students.

Throughout this chapter I present student descriptions and experiences which highlight the important role of language for belonging in academia, whereby Spanish is linked to a sense of both individual and shared identity, group membership, cultural access, and metaphorical *home*. Students described language as belonging in three distinct ways: language as part of identity; Spanish and el centro as *home*; and language as a medium for self-discovery, resistance and persistence.

Language and Cultural Identity

"This is what we typically find in immigrant situations in Europe or in the Americas, where the 'majority language' is neutral with respect to ethnic belonging and the 'minority language' is a potential symbolic carrier of ethnic (or other) self-identification. Where language alternation is the mere consequence of an attempt to add some ethnic flavor to one's everyday language (i.e. The language of the majority or of the receiving society in the case of immigration), this may suffice to explain 'acts of identity' achieved through switching." (Auer, 2003, p.405).

The notion of "identity" can mean many different things for different people. Sometimes identity is described through essentializing notions of nationality and belonging. In the United States, such notions of identity are American or Immigrant, "traditional" and "nontraditional" student, as examples. Cultural and ethnic identity categories that speakers claim for themselves may be Latina/o/x, Hispanic, or Chicana/o/x. The requisites for such identity categories as they

relate to linguistic identity differ across speakers. It is not the case that all Latinx, Chicanx, or Hispanic identifying individuals in the U.S. ascribe Spanish as a requisite for such ethnic and cultural identity categories. While some Spanish speakers may identify as Chicanx, there are also individuals who identify as Chicanx, Latinx, or Hispanic without identifying as Spanish speakers. In other words, while Spanish may be associated as an identity marker of "Hispanic", Mexican-American, Chicanx, or Latinx affiliation, this is not the case for all individuals. While a 2017 Pew Research Center study found that a decreasing percentage of Latinos in the U.S. speak Spanish, many speakers I interviewed do, and associate cultural and ethnic identity with the Spanish language (Krogstad & Lopez, 2017).

The student experiences and perspectives explored throughout this chapter highlight the role of language in identity. The ethnolinguistic highwire, described by students in the previous chapter, metaphorically illustrates ways that students navigate and negotiate language identity and its relationship to group membership, both in and outside of academia. For some students, thoughts around language and cultural identity evolved through exposure to and engagement with more inclusive language communities, particularly el centro. Some students seemed very cognizant of their language identities and transformations in beliefs and practices around language. For example, Jose openly spoke about his feelings and practices with both Spanish and English and developed new perspectives on the importance of language in his own identity.

The first day that I met Jose, I was working at a nearby table at el centro when I overheard him code-switching with a female peer. He was talking to her about language, and his experience giving a presentation in Spanish in Mexico City. I was excited to overhear a student explicitly describe experiences and thoughts around language, so I hesitantly decided to approach him when he had finished his conversation, and went to the conference room where he

was sitting alone, working quietly. I introduced myself and explained a bit about my project

before asking if he'd be interested in letting me interview him about his experiences with and

thoughts about language at Patwin University. I conducted two interviews with Jose, as I was

still clarifying my interview questions and methods for the project. Jose offered suggestions on

questions to ask future interviewees.

Jose identified as a bilingual Spanish and English speaker. In the excerpt below, Jose

explained the frequency with which he used Spanish on campus.

> "Uhm, every now and then I would say. Probably with my immediate group of friends.
> You know we talk, talk about "X" subject, whether something serious or like, something
> funny or something like that. *Spanglish* it – it's part of like, our *culture*, part of the
> *Chicano culture*, I would argue, *here* … so the use of Spanish and our forms to like – to
> express ourselves. Because there's some things that you don't get across, in English, as
> you do in Spanish. [Marinka: Yea] Yea, so ... there's just different phrases, or like,
> certain words carry a different meaning than they do in English. Uhm, whether stronger,
> funnier, what have you".

While the term *code-switching* is often used by linguists to describe the mixing of

languages in speech or writing , many of the speakers I interviewed referred to this language

practice with the more widely known term, *Spanglish*. I open this section with the excerpt above

because Jose identified this practice as a part of "our *culture*, part of the *Chicano culture*". In

using the first person plural possessive pronoun "our" to identify himself with a group of

speakers as well as a cultural and ethnic identity *("Chicano culture"),* Jose connected his own

identity to the multilingual practice of integrating more than one language in interaction with

other speakers. This is not a practice shared with just any speaker. For Jose, this practice was

shared with his "immediate group of friends", signaling a sense of group membership and shared

cultural practice and beliefs around Spanish and English. Importantly, Jose situated Chicano

culture and Spanglish as a feature of "here" [el centro]. In doing so, he connected language to space, community, and belonging.

April expressed this connection between Spanish and culture, too. On multiple occasions I observed April greet and interact with fellow students in both English and Spanish, often code-switching between the two. In our coaching sessions we mostly spoke in English, though she would occasionally code-switch (I was a Success Coach at the time as well and met April regularly for coaching). Mostly her code-switching during our coaching sessions consisted of lexical items rather than entire phrases.

In the next excerpt, I asked April, "What do you feel about Spanish? What comes to mind when you think about Spanish?". She said that what came to mind for her was, **"**like our culture, for sure. Uhm… like, different heritages coming together and just they all speak the same language so like, they can be united by that thing – by that common thing". Like Jose, for April, what came to mind was an association between Spanish and "our culture". Again, the possessive pronoun "our" signified something shared among multiple people or within a community. The use of this pronoun also alluded to the notion of language as an entity, as something one either has or does not have (Crump, 2014b). "Culture", on the other hand, is hard to pinpoint. While Jose identified a particular culture he had in mind when describing an identity category linked to Spanish ("*Chicano culture")*, April offered associations with "different heritages coming together" to be "united" through a shared understanding of Spanish. From this perspective, April offered an inclusionary ideology which expressed the belief that Spanish connects people from different backgrounds and fosters the opportunity of shared culture. This is an inclusionary idea for two reasons. Firstly, that Spanish is viewed as something that connects people suggests inclusivity: something to be shared. Secondly, highlighting the value of Spanish in shared

identity, culture, and as a bridge to connect people challenges hegemonic views that traditionally grant English status as the language needed and valued to build connections. Here, for April and Jose, Spanish is granted this role, too. April said that she felt that this "sense of community" and belonging was fostered at el centro and that it was something she felt "right away... as soon as you walk in".

For April, the sense of belonging and community provided and nourished by el centro and the *comunidad* in this space contrasted significantly to her experiences back home. She reflected on the ways that differing spaces and communities contributed to her language use and how others responded to her use of Spanish, in particular. In the excerpt below, April shared about whether she felt she used Spanish more frequently at Patwin University compared to at home or if she only used Spanish in certain spaces.

> "Before coming here ... Um, it was just certain spaces. But after coming here, and being around like the places I was around, like the Chi Center, the people – my group of friends, it's just everywhere. It doesn't matter where I'm at".

In the same conversation, April opened up about ways that she felt her Spanish language use was met with resistance by friends back home who would respond to her codeswitching by saying things like "why can't you just say it the other way?", where the 'other way' meant the English way, despite their comprehension of Spanish. In comparison, el centro and Patwin University provided increased opportunities for April to feel welcomed and supported in expressing her full identity, including her Spanish-speaking identity because "Spanish here, it's like no one cares. Like, especially – like in this place, like in the Chi Center" (note that April, like other students, referred to el centro as the Chi Center, short for Chicana/o/x Center. She also referred to it through a more code-switching manner, as 'the centro').

The next question I asked April brought forth a really insightful response pertinent to discussions around belonging and persistence in higher education. The excerpt from the interview below highlights ways that April associated the Spanish language with identity and confidence for academic persistence.

> MARINKA: When you think about what has helped you to be successful in school so far, do you think that English and Spanish play a part in you doing well in school?
>
> APRIL: hmm … like knowing the languages?
>
> MARINKA: Sure, like knowing the languages or when to use them, or like, how… your *feelings* have changed and like your ability- the spaces...
>
> APRIL: Oh!
>
> MARINKA: - and your ability to use Spanish.
>
> APRIL: I feel – ok – yea. Yea, yea that's a complex question, kind of. So I feel like *because* I use - I'm able to like use uhm... or I found that I use Spanish more now uhm… I was able to like, kinda gain more like – like a sense of *identity* kind of. And like just – just because you have like your own sense of identity you know *who* you are. I mean kind of I guess, for – in *this* aspect uhm... it just helps you like *focus* and stuff like that. Just be focused uhm… like it helps you – well, obviously if you're in the right *head space* you'll do fine in your classes. Well *obviously* you have to work but that's beside the point. [Marinka: yea] It just – it just – I feel like it's just getting that, some sense of identity. That's what helps you. Be more like *confident* in yourself.

In her response above, April drew an association between Spanish and identity and asserted that upon using more Spanish at Patwin University, compared to her high school years, she developed her own sense of identity to know "*who*" she was. For April, the role of Spanish in identity contributed to her ability to focus by fostering increased confidence in herself. Perhaps April's increased sense of identity and focus through Spanish language use at Patwin University was also a result of not feeling restricted in her expression of self. Without the overarching concern for monitoring her Spanish language use, April was able to focus on her

academics and feel in tune with her identity as a bilingual university student. When I asked April about other ways she felt that her life had changed since joining the community del centro she said, "I've met a lot more people like me... who've had like, similar childhood experiences as I have" and contrasted the resources provided at el centro compared to other student services and spaces on campus. Although these spaces offered similar resources (e.g. academic counselors and tutors), she said entities outside of el centro felt like "the man". For April, el centro "makes everything easier" because she didn't feel "scared" to talk or reach out for support, compared to the anxiety that spaces embodying "the man" elicited for her. In other words, el centro contributed greatly to April's sense of identity, confidence, and increased use of Spanish for belonging and full self-expression.

This sense of language as something so intertwined with oneself complicates notions of language as an entity (Crump, 2014b), as something a speaker either has or does not have. For April, Spanish was not separate from her sense of self: it was a part of her identity. We shall remember, however, that neither language nor identity are simply boxed up. For example, while Spanish was something April described as something that fostered a sense of identity and focus, she also described it as a link across heritages – as an entity or tool that connects individuals to a sense of shared understanding and community. The role of Spanish as a metaphorical connective tissue in this way, of bringing people together and sustaining connections, also relates to Bernal's discussion of the *mestiza consciousness* (2001) and language as an integral part of identity that is also a resource for maintaining connections and collective experience. El centro embodied this idea of Spanish as a part of self, identity, and shared community through its physical space, as well as its mission, vision, and linguistic landscape. The inclusion of Spanish as a part of student identities and experiences, which el centro recognized and fostered, relates to Yosso's

community cultural wealth model (2005). Rather than separating language from the student experience, el centro promoted the inclusion of Spanish as a source of capital that students brought with them to university. April's experience of feeling welcome to express herself with her full linguistic repertoire demonstrates ways that el centro modeled inclusionary language ideologies and practices. I regularly heard the impact of inclusive linguistic capital in the range of Spanish and English use at el centro. For example, when I overheard students and staff code-switching at el centro, I often heard them engaging in joke-telling and language play, connecting through Spanish and reinforcing the idea that (all) Spanish belongs.

What Jose and April shared relates to the notion of Spanish as a bridge or tool for connection to authenticity and inclusivity. In the excerpt below, Alfredo described similar ideologies and associations around Spanish as a means of maintaining a sense of self while also sustaining connections to family and other Spanish speaking community members. Alfredo thoughtfully described the roles of English and Spanish in his life and relationships, which indicated to me that he had spent a good amount of time developing awareness and intention of his languages and their connections to his identities. Alfredo shared about times he felt aware of choosing to maintain Spanish as a part of his identity. As a young elementary school child and a newly arrived immigrant in the U.S., he grappled with acclimating linguistically and figuring out his "existence here being in this country" as it related to his knowledge of English. Alfredo was developing a new linguistic identity while simultaneously trying to maintain his identity as a Spanish speaker. He recalled feeling as if his teachers in his first year in the U.S. at a new elementary saw "great potential" in him because he was "wanting to really learn the language". However, for Alfredo "that first year was like hell" because he recalled "not knowing anything

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about the language" while coming to terms with being in the U.S. After his first year of adjusting

to learning English, Alfredo's attitude reflected much resilience as he reflected telling himself:

> "well I'm already here, I might as well just figure it out, you know? And actually saying, 'okay, I need to learn the language, so you know I was super glad that, you know, teachers were super supportive… I was trying to learn English like as fast as possible, you know, to also help my parents because they also didn't know English".

Although Alfredo described feeling forced to learn English due to his circumstances as a

Mexican-American immigrant whose parents did not speak English, he also talked about the

importance of maintaining Spanish. Alfredo's sense of urgency for learning English and his

acquired linguistic identity after moving to the U.S. differed from his description of Spanish.

> "After high school I was like, 'All right,' I was researching schools that I could go to in Mexico, I was like, 'I'm ready! I'm ready to go to medical school in Mexico, I'm fine with leaving this country'. And then you know, I came here and you know, in the beginning I was like, 'All right, once I graduate - what can I do in Mexico you know?' uhm... so I think that's something like-that what kept me from not forgetting Spanish and me still being able to speak Spanish at the capacity that I do uhm, I think that was a huge influencer and I think - I would never want to forget or forget how to speak Spanish because I mean, it's a part of my identity and who I am you know, and it keeps me connected to like everybody else who also speaks Spanish and it also connects me to other folks right, and also connects-also keeps me connected to my family.

Alfredo explicitly described Spanish as being a part of his identity, something that he has

consciously chosen not to forget (or "wash away or hide it" as Jose put it). For Alfredo, to forget

Spanish would be to forget a part of his identity, a part of himself intrinsically linked to his sense

of "who" he is, his connections to family, and possible future work in Mexico. Similar to the way

April described Spanish as a link to speakers of other "heritages", Alfredo described Spanish as a

way to stay "connected to like everybody else who also speaks Spanish". In Chapter 4 we saw

the ways that students described English as a connector as it related to professional and academic

relationships and opportunities. Spanish, in contrast, was described as a more "emotional" and

intimate connection to other folks, as a cultural link and way to maintain sense of self. While students did describe experiences of exclusive ideologies around Spanish, particularly in Spanish language classrooms and among some peers, the salient role of Spanish as students described it related more to inclusivity, particularly at el centro.

When I asked Alfredo his feelings around code-switching he went on to describe "the intersectionality between both [languages]" and said that "things aren't black and white" and that "there's a gray area in between, where you're able to use both". For Alfredo, both English and Spanish were a part of his identity, of *who* he felt he is, and calls to mind the intersectionality embodied within and through *mestiza consciousness* (Bernal, 2001). Alfredo did make a distinction between the role of English and Spanish in his life and how they came to be a part of his linguistic identity. Alfredo had to learn Spanish because that's the language he "lived", but he had to learn English for "***survival***". The distinction Alfredo made between English and Spanish, though both a part of his linguistic identity, signaled how he perceived Spanish as much more related to his sense of self. In his words, "both of these languages are who I am" but he felt he had to relearn Spanish to some degree after prioritizing English. For Alfredo, relearning Spanish was important because, as he said, "that's who I am". In terms of his code-switching practices and inclusive perspectives on English and Spanish, he described the intersectionality of his identity as "uniqueness":

> "And I think that's what like, you know, that really creates like the uniqueness in - or at least I feel like that is what, my uniqueness of like where I'm just like, 'There's both of these things, are who I am,' right, both of these languages are who I am and both have influenced me in the various different parts, right, of like my different identities or my narratives of like learning English and then learning Spanish, you know, all those things, and re-learning Spanish right and re-lear-'cause I think that's-that's something that you do when you're learning a different language, like you have to re-learn the language that you know too uh…so uh I think like you know, code-switching, you say-at least for me saying that, 'oh things aren't just black and white,' it's like I had to learn one, because that's the language I learned, I lived, and the other one for ***survival*** and I relearned the-

Spanish because you know, that's who I am, you know like, it's not just like I learn English and I learn Spanish, you know like there's intersectionality between both and at least personally for me, like that code- switching uh I don't see how there's a problem, you know?

Alfredo's description of how language is intertwined with his sense of self hit at the point I address in the introductory paragraph to this section: that the relationship between language and identity is complicated and not fixed. Bilingual speakers do not hold monolingual identities, not really. It may be the case that speakers have felt forced into demonstrating monolingual identities in certain spaces which uphold exclusionary ideologies, but students like Alfredo didn't describe themselves in such "black and white" terms. While Alfredo acknowledged that the reasons Spanish and English came to be part of his identity were different, he nonetheless described both of these languages as interacting with one another in contributing to his sense of self.

The excerpts discussed so far reveal ways in which students at el centro thought of Spanish as a part of self and identity. These narratives also highlight ways that students draw from their bilingualism and biculturalism in fostering culturally and linguistically relevant community connections in relation to their education. At times the expression of Spanish as part of one's identity was described as an intentional language choice to express a certain identity, to embrace connections with other speakers. Other times, students described instances of code-switching or using Spanish so freely that they didn't register they were doing so. For example, Jasmine described code-switching "without realizing" it and April recalled responding to peers, ("my team in my club") in Spanish ("Qué pasó"), forgetting that her club members didn't speak Spanish. In my view, such anecdotes demonstrated the depth of identification and sense of self that Spanish provided students.

> APRIL: Or sometimes, like, I'll be speaking like, I do this often with my group of
> people, like my *team* in my *club* that I'm in. They don't know Spanish but some

like sometimes like, they'll say something and I'll be like "wait what did you say?" but I'll be like "Qué pasó?" and they'll be like "wait, *what?*" Like I do that *all the time*. Like, oh I forget. I just forget that they –

MARINKA: That they don't speak Spanish?

APRIL: Yea, it's just a habit of mine.

Spanish is home: "it would just mean freedom"

Another way that students expressed inclusionary ideologies and the connection between Spanish and identity was through descriptions of Spanish as a metaphorical *home:* a sense of belonging, familiarity and comfort. Despite the U.S. boasting the second largest Spanish speaking population in the world, second only to Mexico, English continues to dominate the majority of public spaces and educational institutions, as reflected through the exclusionary ideologies discussed in Chapter 4. As I discuss throughout this dissertation, monolingual English ideologies and the power that surrounds English has dominated academic learning and spaces, marginalizing non-English languages and their speakers. As a result, speakers of languages other than English have historically felt pressured to use non-English languages primarily at home, granting English exclusive access to exchanges and spaces, such as educational institutions. One reflection of the weight of such exclusionary ideologies which place English as the requisite ticket to engage in academic space in the U.S. is that, for some students at Patwin University, feelings related to Spanish elicited descriptions of or connections to *home*. While the descriptions students shared that related to this connection sometimes included links to actual, personal homes and family members, others described more affective features of Spanish that brought about this sense of metaphorical home, fostered in the use and sound of the Spanish language, the linguistic and heritage landscape, as well as through connections with peers and staff at el centro.

The association speakers made between Spanish and a sense of home, a metaphorical home or a literal physical space of home, suggests an intimate belief that Spanish as a language is perceived, experienced, and sensed differently than English for the speakers I interviewed. The question I asked was "What are your feelings about Spanish?". Many students described el centro as an extension of their home, or as a metaphorical home. In fact, el centro promotes itself as a bilingual space for students. El centro also provides content on its webpage in Spanish and on their Welcome page they write, "It is our hope that you feel at home here to express yourself" and they encourage students to "become part of el centro *comunidad"*. In fact, I observed such instances of code-switching and translation in both the physical space of el centro as well as on the website. I found the instances of code-switching on the website to be indicative of the sense of (ideology of) *Spanish is home*. For example, in the Mission and Vision page, the English version includes an instance of code-switching which states, "[el centro] is a space for students to find community and a familia", while the Spanish version omits codeswitching, ("Es un espacio para que los estudiantes encuentren comunidad y una familia para sentirse pertenecidos"). In the predominately English version, the use of "familia" encompasses the *sense of belonging* that is elaborated in the Spanish version ("para sentirse pertenecidos"). In essence, *familia* and *casa* or *home* embody a feeling of belonging, fostered through inclusive language spaces, exchanges, and landscape. The complete Mission and Values (Misión y Visión) can be found in Appendix 1. In the excerpts that follow, I analyze student descriptions of Spanish and el centro as 'home' and a sense of belonging.

Jose described campus spaces outside el centro as not representing diversity - he didn't see people like him. In those spaces, such as the 24-hour study room in the main campus library, he felt one may be less inclined to speak Spanish. In contrast, Jose felt el centro provided a

welcoming feel with "folks that look like you around you" where he didn't feel alone or that he needed to negotiate his language identity to fit in.

> MARINKA: Do you feel pressured to not use Spanish in other spaces here on campus?

> JOSE: I think now ... uh, no longer. But I do think those spaces exist where ... we don't necessarily – I don't know if the word is like need to or like, feel like you shouldn't. But I mean if you go to … I think spaces that are like that ... are spaces where you find that we're not really represented there, because it's just like, you don't really see diversity.

> MARINKA: Yea

> JOSE: Right? So like, whether that's the 24/7 room. It's very .. looking back now, it's like a really lonely place. You know? It's a good place to go and do a little homework I guess, but I like to feel welcome and home and like ... you're not ...you know, you got folks that look like you around you and you don't feel alone.

Jose's perspective that pressure to avoid Spanish is connected to a lack of diversity and representation reflects a raciolinguistic ideology that he and many other students experience. For Jose, to feel welcome, home, and permitted to speak Spanish related to socially constructed spaces and identity possibilities around other speakers. In my observations of Jose at el centro he was often working on his laptop but frequently engaged in conversation with peers or the center staff. I overheard him codeswitching in both English and Spanish. In the excerpt below, Jose spoke more about the frequency and location of his Spanish language use on campus and elaborated on his views of Spanish in certain spaces, such as el centro, as fostering a sense of *community* and feeling of *home*. In contrast, Jose felt that outside of student organizations focused on Chicanx and Latinx identity, Spanish "doesn't resemble that sense of *community*" but rather Spanish is "another foreign language that you use for… like, work purposes, communications, etc.". He then described the what Spanish offers in his experience at el centro.

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"Within our community, Spanish is a means of feeling home, like feeling warm, feeling welcome … it's a … a way to like … *sense* community and realize that you're not that far away from home, because your community is *here*. This is your second family. I think .. like, the friends or the folks that I know, they're within the community. We all definitely embrace Spanish".

Jose's perspectives in the passage above relate, in some ways, to how April and Alfredo described Spanish – as a way to connect to folks, family, and other heritages. Additionally, Jose's reflection also portrayed Spanish as a sense of home, which offers nuanced difference to Spanish as a tool or connecting bridge. Jose's description of Spanish as a "means of feeling home" positions Spanish as a sort of vessel – a medium through which he is able to feel and be embraced. Contrasting this description again to the loneliness felt in spaces where he did not feel reflected or represented, Spanish played a part in Jose's experience of inclusivity at Patwin University. To be in a space like "here" [el centro] that embraces Spanish made Jose, April, and Alfredo alike feel at home and not alone.

The connection that Jose offered above, between Spanish and *home* and el centro and *community* compliments the perspectives shared by April and Alfredo in the previous section. In the excerpt below, April described a similar sentiment connected to Spanish, according to which Spanish was reserved for close relationships such as "main group of friends" and was symbolic of being at home.

MARINKA: What languages do you use with your friends?

APRIL: Spanish. *Mostly* Spanish. uhm, but English, too.

MARINKA: Do you use the same amount of English and Spanish on campus as off campus?

APRIL: Yea. Uh, yea. Well, it depends who I'm around. If I'm around like, my main group of friends, yea we'll speak it [Spanish] like as if we were at home.

While April did speak both Spanish and English at el centro and on campus, she described speaking Spanish with friends as if they were "at home". This excerpt is an example of an inclusionary ideology which fostered a sense of full self-expression because many speakers let loose at home and feel safer and more at ease than they might in other spaces or situations. For example, some may sing at home, go without makeup, and have intimate conversations. Home is a refuge, a safe haven (for many people, though certainly not for everyone). For many Spanish speakers in the U.S., "home" has, for many years, been the only "safe" space to speak Spanish as a result of the social pressure to speak English in all other spaces. Furthermore, many Spanish speakers in the U.S. have experienced the damaging punitive features of exclusionary ideologies through classroom language policies. These realities make the power of inclusive language ideologies and Spanish as home even more important. For students at Patwin University who spent time at el centro, it seemed to me that the ideology of *Spanish is home* was a shared belief.

Inclusionary ideologies around language, culture, and belonging through Spanish as a metaphorical home were expressed similarly by Jasmine and Kassandra. I didn't hear Jasmine's language use much at el centro, as she was usually quietly engrossed in her studies. When I did ask Jasmine her feelings about Spanish, she explicitly described Spanish as a link to home. Jasmine elaborated on what the association between Spanish and home meant for her, saying that it [Spanish] reminded her "of home, Mexico, and my family, food… everything that comes with it". Jasmine associated Spanish with home in a sort of nostalgic sense. In a way, Jasmine also described Spanish as a vessel through which a sense of home was experienced. In another way, Jasmine associated Spanish with home in a familial sense because it is the language she speaks at home with her family.

Like Jasmine, Kassandra associated Spanish with a sense of *home* and as a tool for connecting to others. Kassandra's description of Spanish is similar to April's – Spanish as a way to bring together people from different heritages. When I asked Kassandra what role (if any) she felt that language played in her university experience she responded by saying, "I think definitely. English is the main language but speaking Spanish here, like, I felt like I was at home". In an attempt to unpack her response to my question about language and academic experiences, which linked Spanish to connections to "peers and stuff", I followed up with the question "Why is that important for your university experience or for your ability to do well here? Why do you think?" This was her response:

> "Uh…I don't know I just get happy like, uhm well... I'll talk to my friend in class and in Spanish or like she knows what I'm saying, I think it's just like a sense of like connection to like what I felt at home or like to my culture".

Kassandra thoughtfully considered the association she described between Spanish and feeling at *home*. Like Jasmine, April, Alfredo, and Jose, Kassandra felt that speaking Spanish connected her to familiar spaces, people, and practices. This is similar to the ways that other students described Spanish, as a way to sustain ties to family, "my country", and "my culture". Another important point in Kassandra's response above is that she felt that, in Spanish, her friends knew what she was saying. Here, Kassandra recognized a feature of belonging by which one feels seen and understood ("she knows what I'm saying"), free from the need to negotiate language use in order to be recognized by others. In Spanish, she could be herself.

Similarly, Juan described his ability to connect through Spanish. However, Juan assigned Spanish as a means of building connections with "so much more emotion". Not only did Juan feel a connection between Spanish and what he "left in Mexico" that he missed, but he also felt

that through Spanish "you're able to … be who you are". The idea of "being who you are" signals the link between language and identity, by which language is a reflection of self and as a vessel through which one's *connection to self* is fostered. The student narratives also reflected ways that "being who you are" goes beyond the individual sense of self and includes the collective self. What I mean is, students felt validated and a sense of belonging not only through their use of Spanish but also through their shared connection through Spanish with others at el centro. Through the lens of LangCrit, the relationship between language and identity as Juan described it reflects how local language practices (e.g. with family in Mexico) are woven into webs of identity possibilities (Crump, 2014b) through social relations. These reflections demonstrate inclusionary ideologies, by which students experienced a sense of belonging and the ability to enact their full language identities without reservation.

When I spoke with Juan, he described Spanish as "literally a language of love". The notion that Spanish conveys more *emotion* may also relate again to the notion of Spanish as a metaphorical home - to which one holds more feelings. As a linguist, I know that Spanish is not actually capable of doing anything other languages can't, but the ways in which emotions may be conveyed through words and expressions are of course different across languages, due to linguistic relativity and idiomatic expressions being so deeply entrenched in cultural and contextualized referents. The descriptions and associations assigned by the speakers here add texture to the inclusionary ideology of language as culture, which fosters belonging and identity expression.

While Juan's feelings about Spanish revealed much about the sentiments he associated with this language, he also spoke about the way that Spanish fostered belonging and human connection. For Juan, this sense of being able to be who he is related not only to being a Spanish

speaker, but also to his identity as Mexican. He described the ways that speaking Spanish

enabled him to bring "so much more connection with the people" he used it with, while also

fostering a feeling of being "back home". In contrast, and similar to Alfredo, Juan felt like

English was something he was "forced" to adopt, "to be able to survive".

> "I love Spanish. You can-with Spanish you're able to emphasize so much emotion.
> You're able to be… who you are, it's a connection to what I left in Mexico that I miss.
> Of being able to wake up and just scream at your neighbor, "Buenos Días! Cómo está?"
> Like…in Spanish you can bring so much more emotion…so much more connection with
> the people you use it with…Spanish is literally a language of love, a language
> of…sharing one how you really feel with words, with the way your tone sounds... and I
> think that's very beautiful to be able to have that connection to Spanish. To me at least I
> use Spanish and I feel like I'm back home. Or I feel like I'm with a family
> member…English it feels more of like, kind of was forced to take up on, to be able to
> survive.

Meli, a graduate student at the time of the interview, connected inclusive language spaces

to a sense of "home away from home". She described her experience as a heritage speaker and

the spaces in and through which she felt "so accepted" and "motivated and for the very first

time" she shared space with peers that looked like her and spoke like her. This aspect of Meli's

experience relates to the question posed by Crump (2014b), "How do racialized positionings or

racialized spaces intersect with an individual's investment in or affiliation to a language?" (p.

220). For Meli, the spaces that fostered this homecoming and motivation through Spanish were

the Spanish for Heritage Speakers course series and el centro. In the excerpt below, Meli

described her feelings about the first course she took with heritage Spanish learners.

> "And they spoke like me, and they had the same insecurities as I did, they had-in terms
> of language, uhm, they had a very similar background as I did, uhm, a lot of them had
> you know, parents who had worked either in construction or in agriculture, and those
> were my parents, uhm, you know, like their parents didn't go to school, they're first-

generation college students, like me. So, it just felt very identified, very welcomed, and for the first time, I felt like outside of EOP[21], I had a home away from home".

Meli felt at home through *her* Spanish – not the Spanish academia told her to speak or the "correct" variety. She felt recognized and not alone when not being forced to hide or alter her Chicano Spanish. In contrast to other exchanges Meli had endured with Spanish language professors and programs which promoted standardization ideologies of Spanish through *reglas de academia* (Anzaldúa, 1987), the Heritage Speaker program, like el centro, recognized and accepted her complex language identities. Her narrative also touches on the notion of *social capital* in the way that the Spanish for Heritage Speakers classroom provided connections to students from similar language backgrounds in a way that made Meli feel "identified" and "welcomed", a type of emotional support through peer and social contacts (Yosso, 2005, p. 79).

The experiences of el centro that students shared throughout this section make very clear the important role of physical space in academia, such as el centro, in providing connections to others and self, acceptance and inclusivity, and a place to call home. Critically, language, specifically Spanish, can play an integral role in belonging in academia for many Chicanx and Latinx students.

Resisting. To persist.

> *"In a white supremacist society where emphasis is placed on assimilating to Anglo norms, practices and values, claiming an identity, maintaining one's language, and affirming one's culture are all individual acts of resistance" (Gilda Laura Ochoa, 1999, p. 4-5).*

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[21] The Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) strives to improve the access, retention, and graduation rates of first-generation and low-income students. Meli and Destiny met in an EOP summer program as entering first year undergraduate students, and were still friends in graduate school years later.

So far in this chapter I have explored the ways that inclusionary ideologies, as nurtured within el centro and held by Patwin University Chicanx and Latinx students, fostered positive identity expression, language maintenance, and connections and belonging through Spanish. The present section explores the inclusionary ideologies expressed by students which demonstrated resistance and persistence. At Patwin University and engaged with the el centro community and familia, students described ways they reflected on, identified, and resisted exclusionary ideologies which sought to compartmentalize their identities, exclude Spanish, and undermine their full linguistic expressions of self and sense of belonging. Throughout this section, I present ways that students described "coming to understand" the existence and impact of the exclusionary ideologies discussed in Chapter 4, and the transformative experiences that contributed to the ways they challenged language boundaries, language policies in campus spaces, and notions of belonging. Additionally, students described ways they dismantled their own acquired exclusionary ideologies in their beliefs and practices.

I want to reiterate the historical and present-day existence of exclusionary ideologies and language policies against which students are resisting. While some of the exclusionary ideologies and policies described by students at Patwin University were associated with spaces and exchanges on campus, students also shared about more punitive experiences in their K-12 experiences. These experiences are also historically reflected through classroom language policies in the U.S. and serve as a point of reference to emphasize just how impactful spaces like el centro became to students at Patwin University. Historically, in many California school districts and communities, classroom language policies have segregated speakers.

For example, the Lemon Grove Incident of 1931 marked a successful case of desegregation in the history of the United States. The Lemon Grove school board in California

attempted to justify the segregation of children of Mexican origin. At the time and for many years prior, throughout southern states in the U.S. it was common practice to segregate children. Often, linguistic "handicaps" were used as justification for such discriminatory policies, with the promise that students could be reintegrated (read: "desegregated", "included") upon their mastery of the English language. Similar segregation practices still exist today, despite the ruling of Roberto Alvarez v. the Board of Trustees of the Lemon Grove School District, which ruled that the construction of a separate school for children of Mexican origin was a violation of California law. An important detail in this ruling is that ethnic Mexicans at the time were considered white according to the state's education code, which ultimately contributed to the court's ruling. In other words, it was not necessarily that the court found segregation based on race, ethnicity or language to be a violation of the constitution, but that Mexicans were considered white and it was unjust to segregate white students. This raises many other issues to be discussed, but for the purpose of the present analysis this historical court ruling serves to demonstrate the precedent which has effectively segregated students of Mexican or Latin American origin on the basis of language for over 100 years in the U.S. As such, the act of speaking Spanish is an act of resistance and cultural identity maintenance.

"*Allowing for the mixture of language is just allowing us to be human*"

Jose, like many students, can recall memories as far back as kindergarten in the U.S. that reflect deep exclusionary language ideologies in his academic experience. In the excerpt below, Jose shared about the repercussions he had experienced in school for speaking Spanish. At Jose's elementary school, Spanish was not permitted.

> "I think it was in – I was in Kindergarten up until – in first grade I entered a private school, catholic school. It was right on the border and Spanish was prohibited. You would get in trouble. You would get misconduct. You would get sent to detention if you

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were if you were caught speaking Spanish at this private catholic school. Really just try to wash that away or hide it, you know?"

Learning about Jose's very early experiences around language and academia, it is no wonder he came to find el centro as a "transformative" experience, as his thoughts about his own Latino identity evolved as a result of exposure to certain topics and histories that challenged the ways he was led to think about the Latino community prior to university.

Specifically, Jose described a shift in his perspective on the role of Spanish in his academic experience, influenced by his participation in student organizations for Latinx identifying students and courses he took in the Chicana/o Studies department. For Jose, Spanish was linked not only to his cultural identity, but a sense of responsibility to the Latino community. Before coming to university as a transfer student, Jose had very different beliefs around language and the Latino community. At first, he was not interested in being a part of the Latino community at university and wasn't familiar with identity spaces and student organizations. In fact, he said that during his second year at university he "*didn't* really care to be involved". He thought this was a normal feeling, choosing instead to focus on his studies. As a result of joining el centro and student organizations, Jose came to realize that his previous educational experiences "indoctrinated" him into a certain way of thinking, ideologies that ignore the sociohistorical domino effect of oppression which has led to the need for social movements and ethnic centered retention initiatives in university. Jose felt that, due to the indoctrination he experienced prior to university, he "tried to push for assimilation and like … try to just fit in", believing that "we *ought* to be" a certain way in order to be "good little citizens". Jose felt that "fitting in" required him to dismiss his Spanish speaking Latino identity.

> "Yea. So, you know I was really indoctrinated under these ideals and thoughts about like … you know, how we *ought* to be and why we should be good little citizens and, x y

z. And part of that was like, rejecting the, like the Latino you're trying to reject that, and try'n assimilate and try to be quote on quote "white" and try to just … *fit in,* try to assimilate. Uhm ... and ... *embrace* speaking English and not so much everything that was associated with being, uhm … Latino. This idea of like *chicano* was **never** in my head up until I became more involved with the community and … came to understand uhm … came to understand that".

Jose described a sort of waking up to the source and depth of his prior experiences, as well as a sense of *un*-learning of oppressive and racist ideologies that convinced him of the necessity to assimilate and try to be "white" in order to be accepted in U.S. academia. Jose's narrative certainly exemplifies what Yosso (2005) calls *resistant capital* because he applied his cultural knowledge as a Chicano to identify and challenge oppressive structural and institutional language rules and practices. Jose's narrative also echoes the sentiment found in Anzaldúa's words: "ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity – I am my language. Until I can take pride in my language, I cannot take pride in myself." (1987, p. 59). Pressure to "embrace speaking English" while "rejecting" the Latino favors the monolingual English norm in educational institutions. The association between "Latino" and Spanish reflects not only Jose's own ideology of language, but the sociohistorical, sociopolitical, and raciolinguistic ideologies that map linguistic identity onto cultural and ethnic identities. After all, not all speakers who identify as Chicanx or Latinx in the U.S. assign Spanish as a requisite for such identity categories. However, for those whose language has been suppressed, the ideology of *language is culture* is something to be embraced and reinforced, and not suppressed.

> MARNKA: So I'm wondering like, in terms of – you just described some … some big kind of shifts in your perspectives on a lot of things. In terms of like, how you *identify,* how you *think* about things … In terms of language, have you noticed a shift in – in your language, too? Maybe not even in like the *terms* that you use, but maybe your thoughts or feelings around *Spanish* or *English*?

JOSE: Absolutely. Like, I *definitely **do*** embrace speaking Spanish. I definitely think it's enormously important for us to continue to speak Spanish and continue to use Spanish or reinforce it – ***and not try*** to ***suppress it.***

Jose was not the only student I met through el centro who had horrible memories of being made to feel they didn't belong in academic spaces – that their language didn't belong. Like Jose, Meli also attended elementary schools with English-only classroom language policies and punitive measures to reinforce both monolingual language practices and ideologies. For Meli, she recalled it being "very tough" and "really scary – very, very scary" to speak exclusively in English as a young student and being made to feel "very dumb" and "not good enough" as she was constantly punished for speaking in her native tongue.

MELI: We had these card systems, green meant that you were an excellent child, that you were a good student, and there was yellow and that was like a warning, and then there was red, that's like detention and then there was like black and it meant you were like, suspended. I always would make it to the red card by like noon, I was already on the red card ***always, always*** because I always spoke Spanish in class

MARINKA: They would give you a red card for speaking Spanish?

MELI: Mhm, they'd be like, "Meli, no Spanish in class, go change your card," so then I would change from green to yellow and then there I'd go again, be speaking Spanish because that's the only language I-I at this point, I understood English but I still didn't feel confident enough to speak it.

MARINKA: Mhm

MELI: And so then, I would only speak Spanish to the other kids in the class who spoke Spanish and uhm, so yea - by noon I was already on red card. Like, I always was on detention, but not because I was a *bad* child, like I thought I was a really good student but, it's just that I didn't speak the language and so, I was punished.

MARINKA: What did that feel like?

MELI: ***Horrible.*** It was a horrible feeling, at first I…well now that I obviously-now that I have all of this education and now that I'm super like aware and realize that is

> *terrible,* well, it hurts more now, but back in the day, it was just... I felt very
> dumb, I felt very-like I wasn't good enough, and we were always very, very, very
> poor, I was raised in a very low-income household and my parents had no
> education, so I think that added to it and it reaffirmed my situation.
> "You're poor, your family is uneducated, you're uneducated, you don't speak
> the language, what are you doing here?"

As Meli described it, even though there were "absolutely" many Spanish speaking students at her school, there were no bilingual or Spanish speaking resources other than an ESL course which she was tracked into and had one Spanish speaking teacher. Even after all the time that has passed, Meli still felt the weight of these initial indoctrinations in the way she felt about herself as a student and speaker. For Meli, resistance to such exclusionary ideologies and adoption instead of inclusionary ideologies has manifested in the work that she engaged with as a doctoral scholar at Patwin University. In recalling the traumatic high stakes speaking tests she was asked to perform in English as a young student, she said that once she became an instructor of Spanish for Heritage Speakers she never required her students to read aloud. Meli was also very involved in developing the Spanish for Heritage Speakers series, curriculum, and instruction. Meli's act of resistance is in sharing her inclusive perspectives on language and belonging in academia by fostering a learning space where students of all Spanish speaking backgrounds can feel welcome and attain a level of engagement with Spanish that had been denied them in academic spaces for so long.

When I interviewed Daniel, he made a statement about his observation of ESL courses that conveys an underlying feature of notions of (not) belonging. He said, "I know, like for example, here in the U.S., there's a system where if they see you have a Latino last name, they'll keep you in ESL as long as you can, so that you don't take somebody else's place". How and why ESL tracking functions as it does is a discussion for another paper. The important takeaway

from Daniel's and Meli's experiences is that ESL was perceived and experienced as exclusionary, "horrible", "scary", and as a tactic to segregate Spanish speaking students from other pupils. Like Meli and Jose, Daniel looked back on his early experiences with language and belonging in school with a clearer understanding of the negative impact it had on their sense of belonging in academic spaces. They reflected on how these English-only policies and punitive approaches were not what they themselves wanted to perpetuate or buy into as students at Patwin University or community members of el centro. Daniel recalled feeling, as a young K-12 student, that students with a Latino last name were placed in ESL as long as possible "so that you don't take somebody else's place". As a college student, Daniel felt that instead of separating English and Spanish in academic spaces and beyond, Spanish is "important for people to learn, too. 'Cause whether they like it or not, we're here and we're not leaving... I'm telling you. We're not going anywhere. Sorry, Trump". By "we're here" Daniel was referring to Spanish speakers in the U.S. and stating that, despite the exclusionary ideologies expressed by the then sitting president and reflected in English-only spaces, Daniel will continue to speak Spanish.

For some speakers like Alfredo, Jose, Juan, Daniel, and Meli, language experiences at el centro offer Chicanx and Latinx students opportunities to challenge institutional and societal norms around what speakers ought to look like, how language should sound, and where language is appropriate. In other words, inclusionary language ideologies at el centro supported students' linguistic and resistant capital, which contributed to transformative experiences of self in education. Jose described the transformation in his own language ideologies that resulted from experiences at Patwin University, through community with el centro and courses taken in the Chicana/o Studies department. Juan's thoughts on language, belonging, and identity offered a

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critical lens through which we can frame the root of inclusionary ideologies: they humanize

speakers, exchanges, and spaces.

> JUAN: You have to adapt to that 'cause in the world there's not one set of person, you have a multicultural pot. You know, some of us might just have a specific skin tone but you dig deeper and you'll see that we have so many identities that people can't see and I think that allowing there to be a mixture of different languages would allow us to start breaking down that, you know, societal construction of race 'cause at the end of the day we're all a mix. We all come in different sizes and shapes and colors and identities so, allowing for the mixture of language is just allowing us to be human.

Juan's reflection above relates to the notion of *heteroglossic language ideologies*,

advocated by García (2009), which position multilingualism as the norm and considers the

complex interactions that occur in the linguistic practices and social exchanges of multilinguals.

Juan's reflection also relates to Yosso's (2005) assertion that students do hold valuable and

relevant knowledge that ought to be recognized and included in academia. To Juan, including

students' language knowledge, or linguistic capital, is humanizing. For Juan, Spanish and

English are both a part of who he is. Compartmentalizing language skills and identities prevents

speakers from experiencing and perceiving the complex and complete identities of one another.

Chapter Discussion

This chapter explored the inclusionary ideologies fostered through Spanish, el centro, and

acts of resistance by Chicanx and Latinx students at Patwin University. The student experiences

shared illustrate ways that an academic space like el centro can provide a sense of "home",

belonging, confidence, and connections. The role of Spanish and el centro for the academic

experiences of Chicanx and Latinx students are such that student language beliefs and practices

are not suppressed, hidden, or compartmentalized. Through inclusive language ideologies and

practices, spaces and familia, students recognized and challenged the exclusionary ideologies which told them they didn't belong, didn't speak right, and were "bad" for speaking Spanish. Inclusionary ideologies entail acts of resistance, like speaking Spanish, to persist without assimilating, conceding, or hiding.

Chapter 6
Discussion

In this chapter, I summarize the findings of this dissertation. I review the research questions motivating the current study and contextualize the contributions of the findings to previous scholarship. I also discuss implications of this dissertation and its findings for conversations among research communities, student affairs professionals and educators focused on student retention and persistence, as well as initiatives around diversity, equity, and inclusion. Finally, I discuss the limitations of this study and I propose future directions in research which might provide additional insights about the role of language in the academic experiences of underserved, linguistically racialized and marginalized students.

Research Questions

In the first chapter of this dissertation, I introduced three overarching research questions that were explored through participant observation, open-ended audio-recorded interviews, and analysis of the linguistic landscape. This study was largely concerned with the language ideologies of students who utilized the space and resources provided by el centro during the 2018-2019 academic year and who also identified as Chicana/o/e/x, Latina/o/e/x, or Hispanic. The three questions I addressed were: What are the language ideologies of Chicanx and Latinx

students at el centro? What is the role of language in the academic experience of students at el centro? What is the role of language for a student support and retention initiative center in fostering a sense of belonging for Chicanx and Latinx students? In the next three sections I discuss the overall findings that this dissertation presented in addressing these questions.

What are the language ideologies of Chicanx and Latinx students at el centro?

Language ideologies are not separate from people, places, and contexts (Bucholtz et al, 2018; Pavlenko, 2006; Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994). The language ideologies identified and analyzed throughout this dissertation suggest an interconnectedness between language, space, identity, power, and belonging. The student language ideologies explored and described in Chapters 4 and 5 align with LangCrit as a theoretical lens, which argues that local language practices are connected to larger social, political, and historical practices (Crump, 2014b). This dissertation described ways that Chicanx and Latinx students at el centro experienced, encountered, and enacted both exclusionary and inclusionary language ideologies. These ideologies reflected larger practices demonstrated within the space through which they were experienced, expressed, and enacted.

In Chapter 4 I defined exclusionary ideologies as those beliefs which work to create and maintain systemic hierarchies of belonging (Crump, 2014b; Rosa & Flores, 2017). As they relate to language, exclusionary ideologies rely on prescriptivist notions of what language is "good" and which speakers are recognized as "good" or legitimate speakers. A result of exclusionary ideologies is the perpetuation of inequality through exclusion in whichever spaces such beliefs are deployed. In the realm of education, exclusionary language ideologies work to compartmentalize languages, language practices, speakers, and access to spaces and resources in

order to maintain a hierarchy of languages and speakers and sustain the myth of academia as a place for certain people and certain ways of languaging.

The students in community with el centro whose voices informed this dissertation described exchanges, beliefs, and feelings that reflect interactions between the exclusionary ideologies of Standardization and Languagelessness. In contrast to other spaces and exchanges across campus, when at el centro students felt their language identities were included and welcome. As such, el centro was associated with a sense of belonging. Importantly, this dissertation contributes to scholarship by identifying ways that language ideologies impact language boundaries between Spanish and English, which are fashioned according to the beliefs around which language or ways of languaging belongs in what space.

The student accounts reflect ways that exclusionary ideologies of standardization and languagelessness delineate permissions and constraints around which ethnolinguistic identities are welcome and included, undermining the complexity of speaker identities and upholding racializing processes through standardization (Crump, 2014b; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Rosa, 2014, 2016; Rosa & Flores, 2017). The findings of this dissertation confirm that the ideologies of standardization (Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994) that Chicanx and Latinx students experienced in the K-12 classroom manifested through punitive language policies. Such language policies depreciated Spanish and created language boundaries between the classroom and home, between English and Spanish. These exclusionary language ideologies and policies were likewise embedded in student beliefs about themselves and their language(s) in university spaces and exchanges (Gal, 1998). Ideologies of standardization which assign value to one way of speaking and grant access to, and recognition in, certain spaces based on language created polarizing notions of "good" and "bad" English, of "professional" and "not good enough". Even the

positive, inclusionary ideology fostered by and through el centro, where Spanish was welcome and a part of belonging, indirectly reflected the impact of exclusivity inherent in ideologies of standardization because Spanish at el centro felt like "home", a space to which Spanish has historically been relegated.

The ideology of languagelessness (Rosa, 2016b) interacted with ideologies of standardization and resulted in students describing feelings of inadequacy around their language skills and identities. The power of such exclusionary ideologies is evident, as student accounts reflected the ideology of languagelessness which is specifically connected to multilingualism (e.g. English and Spanish). As a result, students questioned their academic aptitude and preparedness. Students also spoke of feeling that their identity as Chicana/o/x or Latina/o/x was qualified on the basis of their Spanish language use due to the impact of standardized Spanish as an exclusionary language ideology. For example, Destiny shared the experience of feeling that her Spanish language proficiency was perceived as inadequate by others, who then questioned if she was even "Chicana" enough. The students in Bernal's study (2001) similarly felt "judged by other Chicanas/os as not being authentic because they did not speak Spanish" (p. 629).

Importantly, the findings of this dissertation suggest that el centro modeled and cultivated inclusionary language ideologies which resulted in a sense of belonging and "home" community for Chicanx and Latinx students. Inclusionary ideologies were defined in this dissertation as those which foster belonging without calling for assimilation. Inclusionary language ideologies work to dismantle hierarchies around language, belonging, and education while humanizing language users as the intersectional individuals that they are.

What is the role of language in the academic experiences of students at el centro?

The findings presented in this dissertation show that language serves both an exclusionary role and an inclusionary role in the academic experiences of students. The previous section summarized the ways that student feelings and experiences around language in academia are related to underlying language ideologies. This section reviews ways that both exclusionary and inclusionary language ideologies impact student language identity and behavior in terms of communities and spaces they utilized and ways they engaged Spanish and English. These findings contribute to insights around ways universities, particularly Hispanic Serving Institutions, can design and implement student support services, spaces, and campus wide initiatives to model and foster belonging through inclusive language policies, practices, and programming.

The exclusionary language boundaries that students described in their academic experiences, throughout the educational pipeline from K-12 through university, contributed to their language choices through monitoring and negotiating their language use outside of el centro, which at times resulted in not using Spanish. Language also served an inclusionary role through el centro's linguistic landscape and resistance to language boundaries. For some students at Patwin University, the inclusionary ideologies associated with el centro contributed to transformative reflections and shifts in their personal language ideologies, in that students attributed to their experience at el centro a significant change in their personal feelings and practices around language and belonging at Patwin University. Specifically, at el centro inclusionary language also contributed to students reporting increased Spanish language use and positive feelings between Spanish and academia.

Language also played a part in students' relationships with others, as they described developing and maintaining connections to community through Spanish. Additionally, inclusionary language ideologies and practices through Spanish at el centro contributed to student sense of self and confidence because they felt they could be themselves in a space where others understood them and their language identities were welcome without question.

What is the role of language for a student support and retention initiative center in fostering a sense of belonging for Chicanx and Latinx students?

A retention initiative space like el centro can tap into language as a community asset to increase student engagement and sense of belonging. In fact, the experiences students shared throughout this dissertation emphasize the urgency with which retention initiatives ought to move forward in supporting students to mitigate the exclusionary impacts that students reported experiencing outside of el centro. Language is clearly a key component of sense of belonging for many students.

The exclusionary ideologies described through student experiences make clear that outside of a space like el centro, students frequently questioned their belonging, identity, legitimacy, and capacity to achieve at the university level. El centro mitigated these exclusionary exchanges, policies, and practices by offering a space in which students were made to feel they did in fact belong, as did all of their ways of using Spanish and English. This dissertation offers real life student experiences in greater detail and context than previous studies, which tended to rely on surveys (Duran et al, 1985; Velasquez, 1999) and a focus on English language proficiency (Graham, 1987; Andrade, 2009). This dissertation also provides insight into the

impact of retention initiative spaces like el centro and their important role in fostering belonging for Chicanx and Latinx university students.

Language at el centro was influential through the linguistic landscape of the physical space as well as through its online presence, where translanguaging with both Spanish and English were reflected and promoted. Additionally, the language practices of el centro community members reflected a local language policy of inclusivity. Other spaces students described as fostering positive transformations in understanding and sense of belonging were courses in Chicanx studies and participation in student organizations. Importantly, these findings make clear that universities ought to turn to students, student organizations, and community members for direction on how best to serve "Hispanic" students rather than relying on old and familiar ways of programming and community design and support. A top-down approach to student support is going to miss the mark.

Contributions to the literature

The findings presented in this dissertation strongly support and expand upon arguments offered by Crump (2014b), Rosa (2016b), and Yosso (2005). This dissertation builds our understanding of the facets of *belonging* in education and the role that language ideologies play in either impeding or fostering belonging in educational spaces, institutions, and communities. In alignment with Yosso (2005), the findings discussed in this dissertation support an approach to education which acknowledges the array of knowledge and resources that students bring to their academic experiences. In particular, the findings connect to Yosso's discussion of linguistic capital, resistant capital, and social capital (2005, p. 78-80). El centro modeled the potential that fostering student linguistic capital has on sense of belonging in academia. Student narratives demonstrated facets and expressions of social capital and resistant capital interwoven into their

language practices and encounters with others. Future research should continue to explore the impact that such a model has on student academic outcomes and engagement with campus resources, with the goal of developing inclusive policies to increase retention, persistence, degree completion, and satisfaction with academic experiences. Additionally, scholars can explore the ways local inclusionary ideologies and practices of communities like el centro interact with university language policies.

This dissertation was motivated by my personal interests as a scholar, educator, languager, and community member at Patwin University. It was also a response to Alison Crump's call for language scholars to use her proposed theoretical lens of Critical Language and Race Theory (LangCrit). This dissertation showed that, for students at Patwin University, English was associated with the majority of spaces and exchanges across campus, while Spanish was associated with el centro and was described as a space where Spanish affiliation and practice was welcome and valued. Crump also asked, "How might language policies (national policies, language-in-education policies, or family language policies) reinforce, produce, or resist racial hierarchies?" This dissertation showed how exclusionary language ideologies, policies and practices across Patwin University reinforced racial hierarchies by monitoring Spanish use and its speakers. Similarly, the exclusionary language ideologies of standardization and languagelessness that students experienced in university Spanish programs reflected ways that language was used to reinforce-hierarchies of belonging, where students felt their variety of Spanish was critiqued and even rejected. In contrast, el centro's inclusive language policies reflected resistance to racialized hierarchies of English over Spanish. Students described using more Spanish once they joined the community del centro, which suggests an increase in investment in Spanish. Student descriptions of monitoring their own language use outside of el

centro reflected a coerced investment in English in order to "blend in" and "fit in" and not be policed by others.

This dissertation also presents insight into the ways that exclusionary ideologies interact with and inform the ideology of languagelessness as experienced by Chicanx and Latinx university students. It also offers insights into the impact of Languagelessness on student sense of belonging and development of language ideologies and practices in educational spaces and institutions. According to Rosa (2016b, p. 163), "ideologies of language standardization and languagelessness are hierarchically ranked approximations of belonging to and exclusion from" particular communities, resulting in the construction and perpetuation of racialized conceptions of language. The ideology of languagelessness as it manifests in the experiences of Chicanx and Latinx students at Patwin University was reflected in the ways students qualified their own English and Spanish language proficiency through ideologies of language standardization, (e.g. "I have a thick accent", "My English is terrible"). Students were also made to question their legitimacy as Spanish speakers and thus, their personhood and racial and ethnic identities all together.

The discussion and analysis presented in Chapter 5 in relation to inclusionary ideologies present this dissertation's greatest contribution to current literature. Insights in relation to inclusionary language ideologies address the calls of previous scholars such as Tara Yosso, Alison Crump, Jonathan Rosa, and Nelson Flores (as well as others) to step away from deficit thinking when considering the role of language in the academic experiences and potential outcomes of Chicanx and Latinx students. The notion of inclusionary language ideologies (and practices) elevates various forms of capital that students bring with them to academic spaces. This dissertation also highlights the ways that linguistic capital, resistant capital, navigational

capital, and social capital are nourished and upheld through local language policies and practices at el centro (Yosso, 2005). Additionally, the insights presented throughout this dissertation step away from survey methods and quantitative measures of academic performance and instead provide more descriptive and critical understandings about the relationship between language ideologies, language identity, and academic through the voices of real students. The narratives explored throughout the dissertation reflect the idea of the ***mestiza consciousness*** in much of what the students described in relation to the process of language and identity expression and negotiation – of learning to "juggle cultures" (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 79). The mestiza consciousness is about "uniting all that is separate", the duality and intersectionality within. A mestiza consciousness is like the connective tissue that supports the inclusionary language ideologies fostered and modeled at el centro, where students can experience their own and others' duality.

Implications

This section offers a summative reflection on the potential applications of this dissertation's findings for professionals in educational settings – including education scholars, administrators, policy makers, retention initiative leadership, and student support staff. While writing this dissertation, I was working in a professional role as a coordinator for a retention initiative program for underserved first-year students, most of whom were also first-generation college students. Serving in this professional capacity enabled me to gain insights into ways that educational institutions can contribute to increasing student engagement, persistence, and sense of belonging. The findings discussed in the previous chapters are important because they contribute insights about the role of language in cultivating inclusivity for Chicanx and Latinx students at an emerging HSI. Additionally, the findings of this dissertation elevate the work being done by student support services and spaces to foster recognition and support of student

language identities. There really aren't many spaces on college campuses where multilingualism is embraced. As such, el centro is unique and merits more dedicated budgetary, staffing, and community support from Patwin University.

First, this dissertation shows that Spanish language departments have the potential to contribute to sense of belonging and should embrace opportunities to address their ideological models to foster more inclusive spaces, exchanges, and experiences of Chicanx and Latinx students. The exclusionary ideologies that Spanish speaking students encountered in the Spanish language classroom and in conversations with faculty, graduate students, and department administrative staff indicate opportunities for growth. Although Meli's initial experience as a student in the program for Spanish heritage speakers at Patwin University was positive, I was very disheartened and angered by the experiences she had faced as a graduate student in Spanish language departments at Patwin University and elsewhere. Such testimonies point to the need for training around inclusivity for faculty and graduate student employees (e.g. Teaching Assistants), as well as department-level evaluation of course curriculum pedagogy and content. Within the current Spanish curriculum at Patwin University, a number of students reflected positively on their experiences in heritage speaker courses, which highlights the potential to increase sense of belonging and inclusivity in Spanish language curriculum and course offerings.

Since historically many students, like Chicanx and Latinx students, were excluded form belonging in academia, it is necessary to thoughtfully and holistically provide the conditions that foster belonging for those who have been excluded from the status quo notion of belonging. This dissertation shows that belonging must often include languages in addition to English, as well as non-standardized language varieties. Student support services and programming should be student focused and student informed. What I mean by this is that the design and implementation

of resources should be designed based on what students specify wanting and needing to feel that they belong. Such resources include actual services provided to students, in addition to interactions with faculty and staff and physical spaces. Evaluating the design of such services and assessing their impact might involve extensive student interviews and observations. Additionally, university faculty and staff need training around inclusive language ideologies. Sociolinguists can respond to this call by seeking professional roles in student affairs and student support services or by working as consultants to collaborate with campuses to design more inclusive policies, spaces, and programming. As part of this process, the potential role of languages other than English and of non-standardized varieties, should be addressed explicitly.

Campus leadership have opportunities to use their positions to challenge the ways that educational institutions have contributed to the design and implementation of policies and practices that perpetuate the disparities we are still working to dismantle. In other words, chancellors, presidents, provosts, chairs, deans, staff and faculty can work to integrate more inclusive language practices, spaces, and policies into campus values, academic policies, funding decisions, and curricula. A fear shared among many, including myself, is that HSIs might insufficiently serve students by not seriously exploring and enacting inclusionary language practices, spaces, services, and values.

As more universities strive for federal status as a Hispanic Serving Institution, we – education professionals and scholars - have increased opportunities and obligations to apply linguistic understanding to the design and implementation of student services, resources, and spaces. We have an opportunity to address the internal and structural systems of racism embedded within institutions of higher education which cultivate exclusionary language ideologies and impede student sense of belonging.

The findings of this dissertation suggest that spaces like el centro and the inclusionary language ideologies that it cultivated foster a transformative model to contribute to student sense of belonging, community building, academic support, and inclusivity, equity, and diversity. Additionally, the site provided tools for students to hone navigational capital (Yosso, 2005, p. 80). For example, students described being introduced to student organizations and clubs, success coaching and advising, as well as identity-based support such as access to a community counselor. Linguists, educators, and student affairs staff must collaborate to design and facilitate holistic student support, dismantle hierarchies of power around language, elevate anti-racism in academia and foster inclusionary language ideologies. For example, I recommend that heritage language programming be offered in spaces like el centro. Such inclusionary programming might include film showings, discussions and panels, poetry readings, symposiums, and student-led multimedia exhibitions. Concurrently, inclusive language programming and models also needs to expand beyond spaces like el centro to affect positive and inclusive change at the broader university level.

The translanguaging practices exemplified throughout the student responses and in the linguistic landscape of el centro provide additional examples of ways that translanguaging is utilized and valued in the educational experiences of Chicanx and Latinx students. Additionally, this dissertation suggests that, when modeled and included across student support services, spaces, and retention initiatives, translanguaging can contribute to positive educational experiences, foster inclusivity, and empower students to embrace their identities.

As the findings of this dissertation show through student experiences, language ideologies at U.S. universities are not just about English. The exchanges that students described as they related to Spanish, and which also reflected ideologies of standardization and

languagelessness, point to the urgency for scholars in fields of education, Spanish linguistics, and student affairs to address the impact that language ideologies have on student persistence, sense of belonging, and retention, particularly at emerging Hispanic serving institutions (Blazquez, 2021). This dissertation affirms that Spanish language departments can contribute to sense of belonging insofar as they work to identify opportunities to address their ideological models and foster more inclusive pedagogical practices, spaces, exchanges, and experiences of Chicanx and Latinx students.

Limitations and Future Directions

While this dissertation provides insight about the relationship between language and belonging for Chicanx and Latinx university students, additional research is needed to understand the impact that inclusive language initiatives and spaces have on student academic outcomes. I was unable to analyze measurements of student academic outcomes for those who utilized el centro (e.g. GPA, retention, degree completion, academic difficulty) compared to students from similar backgrounds and language identities who did not utilize this space or participate in its community. Firstly, this data was not something the center staff were collecting at the time of the study. Secondly, when I requested such data from the university I was turned down due to privacy (although I did not request any identifying information). Additionally, the public database for Patwin University and its partner campuses does not yet include information about language identities or use. Due to the constraints of time that a doctoral degree is bound to, I was not able to track students from the beginning of matriculation to degree completion. While the present dissertation presented observational and narrative analysis from a full academic year, a longer ethnographic exploration of these themes would provide deeper insights into their 'how': *how* does a space like el centro enact inclusionary ideologies? *How* do student language

practices reflect the transformative ideological trajectory they described? *How* is language variation enacted across space and context for el centro community members? I had wanted to incorporate a "day in the life" of each student to observe their language practices across campus and through a range of interactions. Due to time constraints and the scope of this dissertation I did not pursue this methodology.

Research in student affairs can further explore the questions posed in this dissertation and learn from the findings – in designing and implementing student support services, spaces, inclusive programming, retention programming, student persistence services, and initiatives around diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. Universities, including but not limited to Hispanic Serving Institutions, can allocate funding to support adequate space for retention initiative centers and other student spaces. Student affairs services can also model inclusionary language ideologies and practices by utilizing signage and offering programming in languages in addition to English. Above all, campuses can work to create more multilingual common spaces so that places like el centro are not rare or isolated spaces where multilingual students feel they must go to for a feeling of belonging. The inclusionary language ideologies described in chapter 5 in student experiences and perceptions are beneficial to all student exchanges and spaces for increased sense of belonging and thus retention and persistence.

Conclusion

In my view, the questions posed and addressed in this dissertation must be considered by any educational institution striving to receive federal recognition and funding based on the number of "Hispanic", Chicanx, and Latinx students they serve. Since both current and previous scholarship is clear in the importance of sense of belonging for student persistence and retention, this dissertation contributes critical understanding about ways universities can foster sense of

belonging. It also makes clear that Spanish is a very important feature of positive academic experiences and sense of belonging for many Chicanx and Latinx students.

Critically, this dissertation and its findings add to our understanding about language boundaries and equity along the educational pipeline. The student accounts made clear what many already know and have known – racism is not a thing of the past. Often, language has been adopted as a proxy for race. For example, the exclusionary language ideologies of raciolinguistics and languagelessness reflect ways that language is used to exclude and discriminate by drawing expectations and constraints around the intersections of racial and linguistic identity. The language boundaries that students described experiencing in academia are not simply remnants of racism, they are functions of racist segregation and assimilation tactics.

Two years after completing my data collection for my dissertation, el centro hired a new Director. With this change in leadership came a change in the linguistic landscape: the description of el centro as a bilingual-identity based space was removed from the welcome page on their website. How might this impact the way students language at el centro? Time will tell. When I inquired about the change in the description on the webpage, it was explained to me that the removal of explicit promotion of bilingualism was motivated by an effort to make el centro more inclusive for Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x students who did not speak Spanish.

I would like to see community members – those for whom a space is intended to serve, like students – have the say in language practices and policies. While it is true that educators and student support staff, for example, are specialized with valuable knowledge about how to help students succeed – much of this knowledge may be outdated or simply not holistic enough. By holistic I mean concerned with the whole student and informed by a community cultural wealth

model – from their intersectional identities to their multifaceted and complex experiences and backgrounds, including language. I also feel that students know more about what they need to feel they belong than they are given credit for – or even asked about. As educational institutions and professionals we also need to come to terms with the racist roots in academic spaces and policies and critically examine areas of growth for inclusivity. Academia cannot ask students to assimilate and call it belonging. An educational institution cannot claim to value inclusivity when inclusion is relegated to isolated spaces and exchanges.

When a space like el centro models and sustains inclusionary language ideologies and practices in its mission, vision, values, programming, and linguistic landscape, they are fostering a space for sense of belonging to develop and thrive while also modeling to the local and broader campus community that the exclusionary status quo is not the way to retain Chicanx and Latinx students. The findings of this dissertation suggest that the inclusion of Spanish and all its variants in the mission, vision, and practices of el centro provided students with a sense of belonging in academia where they felt permitted to express their full intersectional language identities. For these students, language at el centro fostered belonging by embracing, reflecting, and transmitting a sense of *home* through Spanish.

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Appendices

From the website for el centro.

Mission

The Center for Chicanx and Latinx Academic Student Success is dedicated to welcoming, supporting, retaining and informing students as they navigate the university. It is a space for students to find community and a familia. The center contributes to the university's commitment to campus diversity and inclusion. At its core, the center acts as an academic support space for students to thrive as scholars and unique individuals. Center practices and services are grounded in the following three objectives:

1. **Retention: Academic Support**
   Implement strategies that will support retention, persistence and graduation rates for Chicanx and Latinx students. Develop and engage in best practices that promote students' academic achievement by addressing financial barriers, academic difficulty, parental involvement, a sense of belonging, and access to faculty and staff.
2. **Empowerment**
   Empower Chicanx and Latinx students to do well academically by engaging them in leadership, career, and personal development. Empower students to believe in graduation and in preparing for a better future.
3. **Access: Early Support**
   Prepare new UC Davis Chicanx and Latinx students by making them aware of the academic and social support available and how to use it. Establish an immediate sense of belonging for newly enrolled Chicanx and Latinx students by connecting them to the continuing Chicanx and Latinx student community and staff and faculty. Inform Chicanx and Latinx students by creating access through strategic outreach and recruitment.

Vision

The Center for Chicanx and Latinx Academic Student Success is dedicated to retaining, empowering, and graduating Chicanx and Latinx students at UC Davis. By offering and providing authentic and culturally relevant opportunities for academic and personal growth, the center seeks to support Chicanx and Latinx students as they navigate the university from first-year students to graduating seniors.

Misión

El Centro Chicanx Latinx Academic Student Success se dedica a dar la bienvenida, apoyar, retener e informar a los estudiantes mientras navegan por la universidad. Es un espacio para que los estudiantes encuentren comunidad y una familia para sentirse pertenecidos. El centro

contribuye al compromiso de la universidad con la diversidad e inclusión de los campus. En su esencia, el centro actúa como un espacio de apoyo académico para que los estudiantes prosperen como eruditos y personas únicas. Las prácticas y los servicios del Centro se basan en los siguientes tres objetivos:

1. **Retención: Apoyo Académico**
Implementar estrategias que apoyen las tasas de retención, persistencia y graduación de los estudiantes de Chicanx y Latinx. Desarrollar y participar en las mejores prácticas que promueven el rendimiento académico de los estudiantes al abordar las barreras financieras, la dificultad académica, la participación de los padres, el sentido de pertenencia y el acceso a facultad y al personal.
2. **Empoderamiento**
Capacitar a los estudiantes de Chicanx y Latinx a hacer bien académicamente involucrándolos en liderazgo, carrera y desarrollo personal. Permitir que los estudiantes crean en graduarse y en la preparación para un futuro mejor.
3. **Acceso: Apoyo Temprano**
Preparar a los nuevos estudiantes de UC Davis Chicanx y Latinx haciéndoles conscientes del apoyo académico y social disponible y cómo usarlo. Establecer un sentido inmediato de pertenencia para los estudiantes Chicanx y Latinx recién inscritos conectándolos a la comunidad estudiantil Chicanx y Latinx y personal y facultad. Informar a los estudiantes de Chicanx y Latinx creando acceso a través del alcance estratégico y el reclutamiento.

Visión

El Centro se dedica a retener, empoderar y graduar a los estudiantes que se identifican como Chicanx y Latinx en UC Davis. Ofrecemos oportunidades auténticas y culturalmente relevantes para su crecimiento académico y personal. El Centro busca acompañarlos a medida que aprenden sobre la universidad desde estudiantes de primer año hasta su graduación.

Appendix 2
Interview Questions
Background Information:

1. Name
2. Age
3. Father's age, occupation, and highest level of education
4. Mother's age, occupation, and highest level of education

Childhood and Prior Education:

5. If you were born outside the United States, how old were you when you moved to the United States?
6. Where did you grow up? (City and state)
7. Where did you go to school before Patwin University

8. How did you get to school before Patwin University?
9. What did you do for fun in high school?
10. Did you have any favorite teachers? What did you like about them?
11. Were there any teachers you disliked? Why?

Language:

12. What was the first language you learned to speak?
13. What language(s) did you use growing up?
14. What language(s) do you use with your family?
15. What language(s) do your parents and siblings speak?
16. How many language(s) do you use when conversing with your family?
17. What language(s) did you use in your previous schools?
18. What language(s) do you use with your friends while at Patwin University
19. How many language(s) do you use when conversing with your friends?
20. What language(s) do you use at *el centro*?
21. What language(s) do you use when in class?
22. What language(s) do you write in?
23. When you're writing a paper for class, what language(s) do you use in the draft stages?

Education:

24. Are you a transfer student?
25. If so, when did you transfer to Patwin University?
26. What is your major?
27. What is your minor?
28. How do you get to school?
29. How many days a week are you on campus?
30. How many classes are you taking?
31. What is your favorite class and why?

Work:

32. Do you have a job?
33. Where do you work?
34. How long have you had this job?
35. How many hours a week do you work?
36. How many days a week do you work?
37. Why do you have a job? (necessity like tuition costs, room/board costs, or for leisure spending….)
38. What language(s) do you use at your job?
39. What language(s) do your coworkers speak?
40. What language(s) does your boss speak?

Opinions and Ideologies:
41. What are your feelings about English?
42. What are your feelings about Spanish?
43. When do you use English? Why?
44. When do you use Spanish? Why?
45. What do you feel influences your decision to use a particular language?
46. What are your feelings about bilingualism?
47. What are your feelings about mixing languages (code-switching)?
48. Are you familiar with code-switching? (If not, explain to participant what it is)
49. If you are familiar with code-switching, do you ever code-switch?
50. If yes, with whom? Why? When?
51. What are your feelings about the language(s) used by Patwin University? For example, in the classroom or by administrators?
52. Do you ever feel pressured to speak a certain language? If so, when? Why? By whom?
53. Do you ever insist on your friends or family members speaking a certain language? If so when? Why?
54. If you decide to have children, what language(s) would you want them to learn? Why?
55. What role do you feel language plays in your success as a college student?

Experiences:

56. Have you ever experienced a disagreement with someone because of yours or someone's use/misuse/ or lack of use of English or Spanish? Can you tell me about it?
57. Have you ever witnessed a disagreement that started because of someone's use/misuse/ or lack of use of English or Spanish? Can you tell me about it?
58. Have you ever witnessed someone being told what language(s) to speak? If so, in what context? When?
59. Have you ever been told what language(s) to speak? If so, in what context? When?

El Centro:
60. What do you usually come to *el centro* to do?
61. Who do you usually talk to?
62. What language(s) do you use when you're at *el centro*?
63. Are there any events you have attended? If so, which ones?
64. What sorts of events or resources do you wish were offered but so far aren't?
65. How did you hear about *el centro*?
66. What do you call this space?
67. What does this space mean to you?
68. Do you think it's important to your academic success that *el centro* exists?
69. How has your life changed since coming to *el centro*?