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Language ideologies and racialization of language: multilingual learners' experiences in the first year in a community college.

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LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES AND RACIALIZATION OF LANGUAGE: MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS' EXPERIENCES IN THE FIRST YEAR IN A COMMUNITY COLLEGE

By

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DEDICATION

To my parents who worked relentlessly to make me the person I am now. Also, to my Sugar, mi compañera incondicional en este camino.

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ABSTRACT

LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES AND RACIALIZATION OF LANGUAGE: MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS' EXPERIENCES IN THE FIRST YEAR IN A COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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Community colleges have become key sites for preparing diverse and immigrant students for the transition to the workforce and four-year institutions. Yet, despite the recent growths of Multilingual Learners in community colleges, few studies focus on how students experience the first year in college after completing their ESL programs and their relations with instructors and how instructors perceive and interact with students institutionally classified as English as a Second Language (ESL) students. I use theories of language ideologies and racialization of language to understand multilingual learners' experiences in the first year of college and how interaction with instructors shaped those experiences. I use a qualitative critical approach to analyze data from interviews, fieldnotes, and observations from a year-long study in a community college located in a mid-sized city in the South.

This dissertation is divided into six chapters. Chapter one gives an overview of the background of the study and the process of realization of this project throughout a story I tell about my understandings of language and experiences with language learning during my career as an English language teacher and now researcher. Chapter two

explores the theories of language ideologies, racialization of language and language identity and how they are connected to understand how Multilingual Learners (MLs) in a community college experience education and access to resources. I explore how language ideologies are used to maintain social power, more specifically, the idea of academic language and language proficiency as a gatekeeper for academic achievement in educational institutions for multilingual learners.

In chapter three I describe a critical approach to ideology to examine Multilingual Learners' experiences in college through interviews, observations and fieldnotes. I focus on beliefs about language and language identity that influence multilingual students' experiences in higher education. In chapter four, I analyze students' perceptions of their academic English skills connected to their own ideas of accent, use of grammar and an idealized English proficiency instilled by the interactions with White Americans, including college instructors. Those ideologies formed language identities in which students see themselves as deficient in comparison to the White native speaker of English. In chapter five, I show evidence of instructors' views of students regarding their cultural, linguistic, and educational and class background. Some of those views revealed ideologies of language standardization that racialized multilingual students through lenses of language standardization and assimilation to American culture that I discussed in chapter six.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Before I dig into the content of this chapter in which I explain the background and overview of the study, I offer a few definitions that will be found throughout the study in relation to how multilingual students will be referred to in this research.

Key Terms

English as a Second Language (ESL)[1]*:* The popular term used for services provided in schools and colleges to immigrant students and children of immigrants who need to learn English as a second or additional language.

English Language Learner (ELL): A national-origin-minority student who is limited-English-proficient. (US Department of Education, 2020) originated from the No Child Left Behind Act.

Emerging bilingual (EB): coined by Garcia (2008) to refer to ELLs with an asset-view perspective focused on the learning of language building on the valuable knowledge of their first language.

Multilingual Learner (ML) or Multilingual Student (MS): a variation of the term emerging bilinguals that scholars have recently adopted to reflect the multiplicity of languages that students speak in and outside of school. I adopted this term throughout this project to represent the value behind the multiple languages spoken by the student

[1] I will use the term ESL and ELL only when quoting authors in the literature and when using quotes from participants of the study. The term Multilingual Learners or MLs will be used when I refer to my own views of this student population.

participants of this project.

Reflecting on my Experiences as a Language Learner

I grew up in a small city on the northern coast of Venezuela, very close to the beach. It is hot and dry there. We speak Spanish, but is it standard Spanish? I had never thought about it until I moved to the US in 2016. Many of my classmates, including my Hispanic classmates, pointed out how different my accent was. The first semester I taught Spanish during my MA studies, my supervisor, while observing my classes, pointed out my fast speech rate, the use of *vos* instead of *tu*, and the singsong vocal quality while speaking. She later qualified this as features of Caribbean Spanish. To me, that was eye opening. In Venezuela, we would think that people from Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic or Cuba are the ones that have a very distinctive Spanish variation. Now, reflecting on it, I notice that my ending /s/ sounds are shorter, /p/ sometimes sounds like /k/ and I rarely change /r/ to /l/. Being aware of these phonological language practices has become part of my language identity and understanding of my own language practices.

Reflecting on my own language practices and other people's attitudes towards my home language are somehow different from those of my second language, English. Spanish is the language I feel more confident about; the one nobody could judge and claim I make mistakes on or make me feel I am not good enough. However, when it comes to English, people's attitudes and comments affect me in different ways. When I first came to the US and started a MA program in TESOL in a Linguistics department, I realized how different international students were treated in comparison to the so-called "native" speakers. That is how I understood that the privilege of learning English in a

foreign country, that valued English as a language of status, was different but I could not explain how.

My history with English, as a speaker and then teacher in a foreign country, was always positive. It is such a privilege to learn another language, especially English. In Venezuela, as English language teachers, our practices, although culturally appropriate, are heavily influenced by a conceptualization of teaching languages based on assimilationist approaches in which shifting to English-only is the main goal. We, as citizens of a developing country, needed to learn English to be successfully integrated into "stronger" societies where English is the first language. These are reflections I can make now based on 6 years of experiences identifying myself as bilingual in the US.

Understanding the differences in people's reactions towards my English abilities and giving meaning to comments such as "your English is so good" sparked my intellectual curiosity about the status of English and other languages spoken in the US. More than languages per se, I became interested in the speakers' and listeners' attitudes toward different language variations. I remember writing a paper in my MA bilingual education class on how demeaning the term "minority language" was, a concept I did not quite grasp when newly arrived in the US.

Two years later, freshly new to my PhD program, I was invited to participate as a graduate research assistant in a project that included observing and interviewing multilingual students and teachers participating in a bilingual peer mentoring program at a local high school. While conducting research in a high school, I often overheard immigrant bilingual students addressing their peers, officially classified as English Language Learners (ELLs) with phrases such as "Speak in English, you need to practice"

and “You don’t want to speak English”. I questioned why that was happening when they all spoke Spanish and could easily communicate in their home language. I started to see some connections between the privilege of English Language and the students’ ideologies towards what the outcomes of speaking English represent for minoritized students. The more time I spent in high school observing classes, interacting with students, and conducting interviews the more I understood the difference in value English had over students’ home languages. This is how I came to the realization of the meaning of “minority language” and how bilingualism is distinctively perceived depending on how people look.

Transforming Curiosity into Research Ideas

I came into my PhD program with the idea of developing a research agenda on bilingual education. When I was first invited to work as a research assistant for the bilingual peer-mentoring project in a high school with 25% of multilingual student population, I started to reflect on my former experience as an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher. Was I like one of those peer mentors who sometimes overlooked the anxiety and shame that language learners carry and the fear of making mistakes? Unlike Venezuelan EFL students, multilingual learners (MLs) in the US are often thrown into schools with the “sink or swim” approach (Davila, 2012; Olsen, 1997); thus, their experiences are more complex given the status of English as “de facto language” and the language policies that prioritize it as a measure of academic achievement.

In a way, my reflections, loose ideas, and questions became a research idea when I engaged with literature on how schools in the US overlook home language practices and

legitimize the transition into English as best teaching practices with multilingual learners (Garcia, 2009; Flores, 2015). My early readings in the topic of multilingual learners indicated that, often unintentionally, researchers focus on research orientations that reinforce deficit discourses around this student population. For example, Cummings' (1984) dichotomy of Basic and Interpersonal Communication Skills (BIPS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) framed multilingual learners as capable of producing basic language while academic language would take an average of 7 years. This idea of separation between communication and academic language often leads to unfair classification of multilingual learners in schools and consequently in research studies (Flores & Rosa, 2015). On the other hand, learning about the theory of cultural capital which involves institutionalized assets (education or specialized knowledge), embodied assets (personality, speech, skills), and objectified assets (clothes or other belongings) (Bourdieu & Passeron,1977; Bourdieu, 1985); helped me understand the overall influence of language as a social concept. In fact, Bourdieu's (1985) concept of cultural capital influences most of the recent groundbreaking literature on critical theories of language.

The concept of cultural capital shed some general light into my understanding of dominant cultures and dominant discourses around minoritized populations. Language is part of the embodied category of cultural capital that can be transformed into power and even social status. For instance, if the language spoken is considered legitimate or official in society, speakers of that language can access other forms of capital. Elites with "native speakerism ideologies" (Ortega, 2019) influence how certain forms of capital become widely recognized as "official" or default. More specifically in the schools, this

legitimization of language practices allows students from dominant cultures to have the knowledge required to thrive in schools while linguistic minority groups are left out (Bourdieu, 1997). This is one of the many ways in which schools as institutions reinforce inequalities for speakers of other languages. Multilingual learners could be at a disadvantage because of a perceived limited English skill. Without adequate language services, it may be almost impossible for multilingual students to further their education and get access to economic or social capital leading to social mobility.

People not fluent in English are often negatively viewed and denigrated for their language use by the mainstream dominant groups (Peterson, 2020). Particularly, non-standard language speakers are denied access to mainstream culture mainly because of a perceived lack of skills in the de facto language. For instance, the speech of non-English speaking immigrants in the U.S. is not acknowledged by native speakers of English because they are often unable to express themselves using the language styles normally expected in schools (Flores, 2020; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Rosa, 2019).

My initial literature examination also indicated that multilingual learners' experiences in schools are more than "a student learning English", rather those experiences comprise a whole spectrum of lived experiences informed by race, ethnicity, and social class. For Jimenez-Castellanos and Garcia (2017), equity issues with MLs go beyond the language difference and need to be revisited to consider the spaces students occupy. The discourse needs to be shifted to giving a response on how MLs are racially and socio-economically framed and (un)intentionally discriminated against by mainstream culture. Drawing on the theory of funds of knowledge (González et al. 2005; Moll, 2002), Jimenez-Castellanos and Garcia (2017) suggests that the research on

multilingual learners leaves behind family, community and societal factors that shape schooling experiences (Garcia et al., 2015; Moll, 2002). Leaving behind students' community wealth means leaving behind their home languages too. Other scholars have also critiqued the hegemonic imposition of English in educational spaces in the US, more frequently seen in ESL programs and bilingual education schools (Flores, 2020; Martinez, 2010). These ideas permeated my understanding of how the broader societal context pervades ideologies about language. Ideas about language are not only about language but also expressions of the ideological beliefs about the speakers of the languages. Understanding this context led me to construct research ideas that have also slowly shaped and transformed my views of language, literacies, and education.

The Foundations of my Research Agenda

The initial study of literature on cultural capital informs my understanding of the deficit perspectives surrounding MLs often mentioned in literacy and language studies. I started to question my own beliefs regarding language and language learning. From that questioning emerged a new identity as a language user. I no longer subscribe to assimilationist ideas of language learning in which home languages practices are erased. Very quickly, I realized that multilingual learners are deemed as having a "language gap" (Flores & Rosa, 2015) not based on "the empirical linguistic practices that emerge from the mouths of speaking subjects" (p.152) but based on the ideologies that the listening subject has about the speakers. More notably, in mainstream classrooms, when MLs cannot communicate with their peers or teachers, they might be (un)intentionally left out, because of their lack of skills in the dominant language. Studying assumptions about MLs' language practices would help me understand deeper relationships among

language, race, and social class in schools as institutions which hold power in society.

As I dug deeper in the study of the literature to give a name to what I was observing in the high school while I was a research assistant, I understood that my views of language and literacy align with the work of a diverse group of scholars who purposely emphasized the sociocultural and sociopolitical contexts of literacy, language, culture and teaching (Compton-Lilly, 2009; Garcia, 2019; Nieto, 2018; Paris & Alim 2017). I was embarking on a new journey with new mindsets and beliefs about language and culture of people who, like me, are also bilingual, but now, from a researcher perspective, more than of a teacher.

Pedagogical theories like translanguaging (Garcia & Wei, 2014), culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy (Lucas & Villegas, 2013), and culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2000) began to resonate with me. Garcia and Kleifgen's (2018) pedagogical views of translanguaging puts bilinguals' language practices at the center of dynamic bilingualism. More concretely, for Spanish speakers, they argue that as English and Spanish share similar linguistic features, students can develop "linguistic interdependence" (p. 79), which means that both languages support each other, helping with language development and literacy practices at the same time. These theories call for a teaching style and practice that responds to students' dynamic and integral use of multiple languages in the classroom, as it naturally happens in other community spaces. Similarly, Lucas and Villegas (2013) call for a teacher education preparation that develops expertise, advocacy, and actions for a change in teaching and engaging multilingual learners in the mainstream classrooms.

Overview of the Study and Research Questions

Within a culturally and linguistically responsive framework, my research ideas, and the meaning-making of my observations in the high school helped me shape the overall topic of this study. In the summer of 2020, amid the COVID-19 pandemic, a friend invited me to a meeting in the local community college where she had recently accepted a position as an ESL instructor. In those initial meetings, general education instructors and administrators gathered to brainstorm ideas of "issues with the ESL population". One of the common topics was how instructors from other departments complained about the low level of English "ESL students" had after testing out of the ESL program. Many of the instructors agreed that "ESL students" needed to develop better language skills before taking college-level classes. According to some preliminary data collected by the office of student success, some of the issues documented in regular classes included the development of discipline-specific study habits; lack of classroom participation and training to public speaking; and inexperience with test expectations and preparation. The primary solution was hiring an ESL instructional coach to assist faculty members in reviewing curriculum, assignments, and projects as well as coaching students in their classwork.

The issues surrounding the MLs in this local community college align with what has been found in recent studies. Research has consistently shown that newcomer ESL students encounter barriers especially in their transition from secondary education to college. These barriers are related to lack of English skills, gaps in language services, and academic underachievement. (Kim & Garcia, 2014; Kim, 2017). "ELLs" are behind other English-proficient minoritized students in college access and attainment (Kanno &

Cromley, 2013, 2015).

Multilingual learners are typically served in one of the following three placements: (a) an English language support program (e.g., ESL, ESOL) designed for newcomers; (b) reading remedial programs developed for low performing students or students with specific learning disabilities; or (c) placement in mainstream classrooms with limited or no support (Kim, 2017). After those special language services end, however, immigrant students need to quickly transition to regular classes and learn English and content at the same time. Research also suggests that ELLs in community colleges and 4-year institutions struggle when dealing with college-level classes. Those difficulties might involve, first, the characteristics or preparation of students such as insufficient listening skills to understand the teacher's instructions and to work-on homework, and even those necessary to interact with other classmates who are native speakers of English. Secondly, other challenges might be related to the instructors' academic expectations of "ESL students" which might align to unrealistic or biased perceptions of students' abilities (Hagedorn & Li, 2017).

Past experiences of being classified as an "ESL student" may project limitations onto MLs' academic potential. Some educators may assume that a student that is or has been an ESL student is not ready to assume the challenges of AP classes or college-level classes especially if students are Latinx (Callahan & Humphries, 2016; Kanno, 2018). Some research studies suggest that this inadequate preparation seems to be mostly related to the resources and gap in services provided to support their language learning and the development of proficiency needed to take college-level classes. In an analysis of survey data about MLs in grades 6 through 12 (N = 175,734) that were collected from 40 school

districts in California, Olsen (2010) reported that more than a third of "ELLs" were placed in mainstream classes without language support. Similarly, Menken and Kleyn (2010) found that more than 50% of long-term "ELLs" who participated in the study in New York City high schools experienced a complete gap in language support services during their schooling.

Behind the services provided to MLs are language policies that would likely represent policymakers' beliefs about this student population and how language should be taught. For example, Bunch (2008) in a study of 8 colleges in California, examined the language assessments and policies that Latinx students and others from immigrant backgrounds face as they graduate from high school and attempt to enter community colleges in California. The main findings indicate that policies signal assumptions about bilingualism and determine how students are placed in classes. Those assumptions were mainly related to the students' history with language, for example, the number of years attended in high school in the US, or how many years have passed since students took ESL classes. Some colleges in the study placed students in ESL classes even when students were proficient in the language. This illustrates how assumptions create expectations on students' future performance and academic achievement.

Academic expectations might be rooted in one or all the following factors: deficit-oriented assumptions made about minoritized groups of students, the neglect of multilingualism, the privileges given to English and native speakerism in English-only educational spaces. Expectations rooted in native speakerism position native speakers as more competent (Holliday, 2006) while marginalizing speakers of other languages. Ramjattan (2015) claims that native speakerism ideas are founded in whiteness and the

White Listening Subject who is often in a position of power to judge the language skills of other speakers. The White Listening Subject assumes a monolingual language ideology as a norm that prioritizes English as the standard language and marginalizes other languages and language users. I unpack the theoretical framework on language ideologies and language standardization ideologies and how they are connected to ideas of whiteness and native speakerism. Whites, usually also represented as the figure of native speakers represent the White Listening subject in this study. The White Listening Subject, according to Flores (2021) can be an ideological position taken by Whites or any other person whose beliefs align with the larger ideologies of language standardization. I explain this better in the literature review, chapter 2.

Multilingual students' internalization of their limitations projected by the White Listening Subject based on their language proficiency might affect college aspirations and academic performance (Olsen, 2010). Faculty's dispositions and expectations for MLs might reflect larger societal views of language and MLs' performance based on linguistic parameters. Thus, studying instructors' beliefs and ideologies about MLs is crucial to unveil classroom practices, and their possible influence in language policy orientations in educational institutions, particularly in higher education spaces. Given the implications of instructors' academic expectations about multilingual students on their success, the purpose of this project is to examine multilingual students' language and academic experiences as well as the students' perceptions of the interactions with their instructors in the general education classrooms.

From a critical perspective, I use a qualitative design, through interviews and fieldnotes, to analyze how multilingual learners perceive their language skills and how

that connects to the instructors' academic expectations. Furthermore, I unpack the concept of academic language and racialization of language to show how the connections between those two concepts helps to understand the experiences of racialized bilinguals in academic settings. Academic language and its implications, discussed in the literature, is a racialized linguistic concept often used to assess multilingual students' academic potential. Overall, I center the students' voices by describing academic experiences in general education classes in their first year of college, and how the interaction with their instructors impacts their academic achievement. This study is premised on the assumption that classroom and teaching practices create conditions for the enactment of beliefs that might affect students' learning, academic achievement, and their own self-perceptions, so neither approach nor interaction with students will be perceived as neutral. The study of ideologies in this research intends to report on the experiences resulting from MLs' interactions with instructors and other students as well as instructors' beliefs regarding teaching MLs or having MLs in their classrooms. This critical qualitative project aims to study multilingual learners' experiences in a community college located in a mid-sized Southern city.

Specifically, I asked the following overarching questions:

1. What are multilingual learners' perceptions of their academic experiences in community college classes?

The following sub-questions helped me answer those two overarching questions:

- How do multilingual students describe their language skills?
- How do multilingual learners' linguistic histories connect to their current academic experiences at the community college?

2. How do first year community college instructors perceive multilingual students' language identities and academic potential?

In order to answer these questions, I analyze data from a year-long, qualitative study of First Year Freshmen multilingual students attending an urban, English-dominant community college. The study objective is to center multilingual students' voices in the conversation about the circulating discourses in the community college around "ESL students" lacking the language skills necessary to thrive in college-level classes. This research study also documents student-instructor classroom interactions, instructors' views of the students and views of teaching and cultural beliefs.

Overview of the Dissertation

The dissertation is divided into six chapters. In this chapter, I have outlined the background of the study, the objectives and my personal story that brought me to this research topic. In Chapter 2, I describe and analyze the current research on multilingual learners in schools and colleges, as well as the main theoretical frameworks focused on the literature of racialized bilinguals in community colleges. In Chapter 3, I provide details of my research methods, the research design, study site, participants, rationale for my selections, and my researcher role and positionality in the study. I also describe the methods for data collection, data sources, and data analysis. Chapters 4 and 5 contain the findings of this study divided into different themes that respond to the research questions. I sectioned the chapters first to reflect students' voices and later perceptions and views from the instructors' perspectives. Finally, Chapter 6 encloses the discussion, conclusions, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the theoretical, conceptual, and empirical literature that guided this study. First, I examine the existing empirical literature on multilingual students in community colleges, with a particular focus on studies that are situated in English-dominant contexts. Then, I will discuss studies on multilingual learners' academic performance and how that is connected to academic language. Then, I outline the theories that grounded my study design and framework. Lastly, I examine some of the gaps in the literature, and I make an argument for qualitative research that addresses the need to study multilingual learners in higher education.

Multilingual Learners' Education

Overview of Research in K-12 Spaces

Much of the research on teaching Multilingual Learners (MLs) has remained focused on the K-12 context and has historically framed MLs as deficient (Valdes, 2001, Garcia, 2008). For example, researchers on teachers' beliefs about MLs have mainly used quantitative data, suggesting that teachers have negative assumptions about MLs and even blame them for their academic difficulties (Duff, 2005; Karabenick & Noda, 2004; Pettit, 2011; Riley, 2015; Walker et al., 2004). Viewed as "the new burden" (Penfield, 1987), Hispanic multilingual students were often connected to disciplinary problems, laziness, lack of effort or even described as "needy, pushy and time moochers" (Pappamihiel, 2007, p. 51). A survey of 162 mainstream teachers indicated that it was

ESL teachers' sole responsibility to teach ELLs. In a similar study, Harrison and Lakin (2018) quantitatively measured mainstream teachers' beliefs and results indicated that 55% of the teacher respondents had a negative attitude toward "ELLs", with only 18% having a positive attitude, and 27% were neutral. These assumptions may lead to unfair treatment of "ESL students" and lower classroom placement.

Two examples of relevant studies carried out in Canada revealed teachers held similar negative stereotypes regarding MLs which influenced placement and academic achievement. (Duff, 2005; Riley, 2015). Teachers' assumptions based on ethnicity, family background and social behaviors of such groups dictated whether they could be placed in advanced classes or not. Considered "hard workers," Chinese and Korean ESL students generated higher expectations from teachers while students from indigenous backgrounds, including Mexican descendants, did not. Assumptions based on family values toward education were a strong predictor of classroom and academic performance (Riley, 2015). Family values is another layer in the study of beliefs regarding the emerging literature about MLs and their parents' engagement in schools. Wassell et al. (2017) studied teachers' expectations for family involvement for "ELL" students in urban STEM classrooms and their analysis revealed that teachers' expectations of Latinx families were completely driven by their own assumptions of what family engagement is, from a White middle-class perspective. Teachers overlooked the fact that immigrant families lacked the support from the school in terms of translation services and or information on how to navigate these situations. In addition, expectations of engagement might look different in Latinx families due to cultural differences.

Similarly, in the findings of a qualitative study carried out in a high school

science class, Duff (2005) critiques how "ESL students" used their home languages in group activities when they shared the same home language. A particularly relevant finding revealed that teachers believed that "ESL students lack cultural, geographical knowledge to interpret written and oral texts…and are ill-equipped to participate in oral presentations, roles, debates." (p. 56). (Un)intentionally, this discourse used by mainstream teachers implied a very deficient way to describe youth Latinx multilingual students based not only on deficient language skills but also personal characteristics. Expressions like "lack of cultural knowledge" and "oral skills" are based on assimilationist views of mainstream culture as valued higher than ML students' home cultures. From a cultural capital lens, these teachers held assumptions based on the privilege of English while dismissing MLs' cultural wealth and personality traits that might be valuable in their cultures.

Overview of Research in Community Colleges

The same type of discourse is also found in the literature on MLs in higher education, although multilingual learners' experiences in community colleges remains under-researched. Community colleges serve almost half of the undergraduate population in the United States (American Association of Community Colleges, 2019); approximately 24% of these students come from an immigrant background, MLs being 40% of the enrollment (Community College Consortium for Immigrant Population, 2015). However, recent research indicates that half of high school students who were classified as ESL do not attend any postsecondary education (PSE) after high school (Kanno & Cromley, 2013, 2015). If they do, the most likely options are local community colleges (Kanno, 2018).

MLs in college are not a monolithic group and their learning in community colleges will vary depending on their institutional classification and the time they have spent in the US. For example, students who qualify for ESL classes can be (a) international students under a visa, (b) newcomers and (c) long term English language learners and generation 1.5, who arrived in the US as children or adolescents, and have completed schooling in the US but are not considered proficient enough to complete college-level work (Bergey et al., 2018; Blumenthal, 2002; Bunch, 2008). This research study focuses on the latter two groups.

According to the results of the first national-level examinations of "ELLs"' access and degree of attainment in postsecondary education "ELLs lag far behind both, English-proficient linguistic minority students and monolingual English-speaking students in college access and attainment" (Kanno & Cromley, 2013, p. 89). However, the analysis of data revealed that nonlinguistic factors such as family income, previous college planning (other than lack of English skills), contributed to "ELLs"' limited postsecondary education access and attainment (Kanno & Cromley, 2013). Some other studies have documented the experiences of immigrant and Latinx students in community colleges regarding sense of belonging (Holloway-Friesen, 2021) and academic achievement, motivation, and attainment (Fong et al, 2016). However, little has been said about the broader social structures and ideologies that might shape ESL students' academic experiences in college.

Transition to college for MLs is complicated as they might have some schooling in the US but still not be considered linguistically competent in academic language. Few studies have documented MLs' transition from high school to college. Studies have

observed that school goals for MLs are to avoid drop-out and encourage high school graduation (Callahan & Gandara, 2004; Kanno & Cromley, 2013, 2015). To respond to the growing body of immigrant students whose home language is not English, most community colleges provide this student population with ESL instruction so they can gain the required academic language skills to succeed in college (Blumenthal, 2002; Bunch, 2008; Kuo,1999). ESL classes can be non-credit classes and credit classes. Some colleges provide developmental classes like public speaking, reading etc., before ESL students can enroll in mainstream/regular classes.

Some early studies in retention and mainstreaming have documented how language is one of the issues affecting retention of ESL students in higher education (Hagedorn, 2006; Razfar, 2006; Razfar & Simon, 2011). Kibler et al. (2011) claim that ESL courses in college are not designed for recent immigrants who have different needs than international students. MLs in community colleges might not be getting the academic language skills needed to take college-level classes, which puts them at a disadvantage (Bunch et al., 2011). Bunch's (2015) work is remarkable in explaining teaching practices and the experiences of linguistically minoritized students including "ELLs". In a study of 1.5 generation immigrants, Kibler and Bunch (2011) described them as students who had some schooling in the US, but their English skills are considered inadequate by the faculty. Faculty, in the same study, considered themselves unprepared to teach and support these students. Bunch and Kibler (2010) and Kibler et al. (2011) coined the term US-educated language minority (US-LM) students to go against the misused term generation 1.5 that implies a lack of language proficiency. In two different studies, these authors described four initiatives at colleges in the San Francisco

Bay Area that represented efforts to promote US-LM students' access to language and literacy used for authentic academic purposes, integrate linguistic and academic support, and promote students' progress toward college-level English and disciplinary coursework.

Kibler et al. (2011) suggest a comprehensive resource-oriented framework to work with US-LM that is based on 1) Supporting academic transitions into community colleges. 2) Integrating language and academic content. 3) Providing accelerated access to college-level, mainstream academic curriculum. 4) Promoting informed student decision-making. This framework aims at using the resources and services already available in community colleges to provide holistic services and teaching practices specifically dedicated to this community of students. Yet, Kibler et al. (2011) suggest that effectiveness of those initiatives remain unknown as there is little evidence in the literature which suggests so.

Research has also consistently shown that assumptions about students influence institutional language policies. In an early study of immigrant students' transition from high school to community college, Harklau (2000) used the concept of representation to talk about identity negotiation and how the label of "ESL or ESOL" had a positive meaning in high school while in college students were framed as "inexperienced users of English" and were placed in low levels of ESL classes. Assumptions about ESL students at the college level demonstrate that ESL students don't belong in college or are expected to behave differently because college expectations require different levels of academic skills. Faculty expressed that in college there is not more nurturing or adaptations or initiatives to make students learn and adapt to college environment and academic

expectations.

Similar to Harklau's (2000), more recent studies done in community colleges have documented similar findings based on language and academic demands. For example, Bunch et al. (2020) report on the first systematic study of the language and literacy demands of a community college health program and instructors' perspectives on the challenges students face in meeting those demands. In this study, authors reviewed writing assignments from Math, Psychology and English and interviewed instructors about the literacy difficulties students had in their classes. The majority of the instructors revealed information about general academic demands instead of explaining what the specific literacy problems were. Although this study was not specifically about MLs, there is a small section related to how instructors described the challenges facing language minority students (as defined in their study). Instructors saw ESL students as unprepared to take science classes and lacking language skills to comprehend text and unable to write papers using their own words. Some instructors suggested that ESL classes should be tailored for the sciences. The literature is consistent with the notion of ESL students as incapable of mastering academic language.

Students' Perspectives

All the studies discussed so far talk about experiences and challenges of MLs from the faculty and administrators' perspectives. Fewer studies focused on how MLs themselves describe their language and literacy skills and the challenges they represent for succeeding in their academic endeavors. Perspectives of students from diverse multilingual backgrounds, however, are left largely unexplored in the college student success literature–especially those in community colleges. To my knowledge, only one

study, carried out by Mulready-Shick and Parker (2013) about MLs in a nursing classroom, has inquired community college students, through open-ended interviews, on their everyday experiences. Findings indicated that students' concerns were mainly related to their own identities and skills as learners. Students identified themselves as shy and hesitant in class. Others talked about their own intellectual actions to overcome barriers such as overcoming self-doubts and showing determination. As in many other studies, ESL students in this study were also depicted as shy or hesitant to participate. Findings revealed that ESL students' hesitations in asking questions or challenging faculty were related to cultural differences or even previous negative experiences in which they had been treated unfairly.

Research on ESL college writing has shed some light in the role of ideologies regarding ESL teaching. The work of Matsuda (2006a, 2006b) highlights how monolingual ideologies in postsecondary institutions overlook bilingual students' abilities and knowledge of writing. Liu and Tannacito (2013) found that racial and language ideologies play a crucial role on Taiwanese ESL students' disposition toward writing instruction in an US university. Although this study is slightly different regarding student population and context, it illustrates how the White privilege based on American-centered English language skills expectations shape students' perception of what are legitimate language practices that will result in successful academic writing.

MLs' academic expectations and identities are also influenced by their perceptions of what is valued in the dominant culture. Chang (2016), using Gee's theory of Discourse and identity theory studied how two ESL community college students negotiated socio-cultural norms and academic discourse to learn the language and

accomplish their academic goals. The main findings suggest that, in these two cases, multilingual students' learning at the college is shaped by their socio-cultural background and future aspirations. Community college ESL program curricula were not aligned to students' needs related to workplace aspirations rather than college transfer. Overall, this literature suggests that students' beliefs or expectations cannot be studied in isolation. Perceptions of reality are affected by the circulating discourses in the institutions and broader society.

Role of Educators in Multilingual Learners' Experience in College

Instructors are essential instruments for students' learning and the rapport they built with students is significant for the successful achievement of learning objectives. As seen in the secondary context, educators' expectations and beliefs shape the roadmap for their practices. Recent studies in community college spaces related to instructors' expectations and beliefs about the ESL population have been focused on the perceptions of instructors regarding teaching practices and language abilities of the ESL students in a variety of ESL, developmental and mainstream classes (Avni & Finn, 2020; Bunch & Kibler, 2015; Delgado et al., 2019).

For example, Delgado et al. (2019) used a survey for instructors to study English competencies among Hispanic English as a Second Language science student. Delgado et al. found out that institutional practices and services provided to Hispanic students limit their development of language skills in the sciences as the curriculum is not set to provide opportunities for these students to gain skills in content as well as language. Students demonstrated a lack of competency in English, more specifically, grammar, vocabulary, and general skills for listening, speaking, reading, and writing as well as self-awareness

of those issues. That lack of skills was a result of a deficiency in the services provided to students in terms of academic counseling to access coursework materials. Delgado et al. illustrate how students are not to blame for their lack of English skills and low academic achievement in the sciences. Attention should be given to the absence of scholarly work, dealing with experiences of MLs beyond the ESL and the developmental classes. Also, research on teachers' beliefs has been generally done in quantitative studies using surveys, which may oversimplify deeper beliefs, identities and positions that might be revealed in critical qualitative research. There is also a current need to study classrooms where newcomer MLs engage in interaction with peers, and non-MLs, as well as instructors. That is why this qualitative study seeks to understand how instructors' language ideologies mediate their relationships with ESL students and their classroom practices.

One important example of those social beliefs is the role that instructors' beliefs, institutional language policies, language placement and testing and teaching practices play in students' success once they leave ESL level classes and are ready to enroll in regular college classes. In a systematic literature review, Suh et al. (2020) compiled a small number of research studies that documented the transition of ESL students to college-level classes. Among this literature, there is a growing focus on the academic experiences of adult immigrant-origin students, referred to as Generation 1 learners (Suh, 2016). Three main themes emerged in this literature review. First, several studies related to college preparatory courses report on the content of transitional ESL classes and the necessity to have more ESL courses with content in which ESL students can practice advanced skills required on college level classes. Second, authors identified an

ambiguous approach to placement and language assessment in postsecondary institutions. Mostly related to assessment done to place students in ESL courses. Research indicates that students' self-reported linguistic background led them to be misplaced in classes. An important finding suggests that ESL students were misplaced in college coursework that slowed them down in their academic track (Hodara, 2015; Morales, 2018). Third, authors noted a need to create professional development opportunities to train college faculty and staff to work and support ESL students (Rodriguez et al., 2019; Seymour, 2009; Solomon, 2012). In short, Suh's (2020) systematic literature review summarized research that deals with institutional services for ESL students transitioning to college-level classes but does not report on research done about the actual college-level/mainstream coursework in which "ESL students" enrolled after testing out of ESL programs or the general constraints students' face in interaction with other actors during their college experience.

In short, gaps in the literature regarding the study of MLs' learning experiences in community colleges dealt with absence of students' voices, regarding their placement experiences, classroom experiences and transition from ESL programs to college-level classes and how those experiences impacted students' performance in the long term. This study will offer some empirical insights into the issues of college services to MLs beyond the ESL classroom. I also offer a qualitative perspective regarding instructors' perceptions of students and interaction with them instead of questioning students' lack of English language skills. And finally, I take this as an opportunity to reflect on structural systems that may frame MLs as only a language category, ignoring class-based, policies and services issues that can be keeping MLs from reaching their full potential. That is

why in the next section of the literature, I discuss a broader lens to look at the experiences of MLs in educational settings to include aspects such as race, class and ethnicity that might shape the ways in which their English proficiency is perceived.

Racialization of Language and Racializing Bilinguals

Before digging into the literature on how bilinguals are racialized because of their limited English language skills, I want to explain the concept of racialization that I am using in this research study. In the literature, racialization has been defined as the "the processes by which racial meanings are attached to particular issues" (Murji & Solomos, 2015, p. 3) or as "the process through which *racialized groups*, rather than "races," are formed (Hotcham 2019, p. 1245). Following this concept of racialized groups, Garcia et al. (2021) described racialized bilinguals as people who have been positioned as inferior racially and linguistically as a result of oppression and colonization. I take this idea of racialization to understand how the experiences of multilingual students in a community college have been shaped by this process of racialization on the basis of language.

More than looking at race as a social construct, scholars of race and language are interested in how speakers perform race in interaction (Alim et al., 2020) and so recent scholarship on raciolinguistics has theorized race as "an intelligible category" (p. 2). Alim (2005) was one of the iconic scholars to study this category, in Black Language in White schools. Alim's (2005) ethnographic work in a high school in Philadelphia analyzed teachers' discourses and the differentiation they made between Standard English and Vernacular English. Teachers often viewed Black students' language as something to "eradicate" (p. 187). Alim (2005) concluded that by deeming Black English and Black Speakers as inferior teachers were enacting ideologies focused on White

supremacy. Alim found that the language tends to be labeled as "standard," "official," "normal," "appropriate," "respectful," (p.188) and is that of the ones with power in the society.

Stigmas tied to non-standard English have a long history in the US that have not changed despite efforts for the past 85 years (Baker-Bell, 2020). African American Vernacular English users have been historically linguistically and academically profiled as deficient. It was not until after the Ann Arbor Decision[2] that there was a shift in the recognition of African American Vernacular English (AAVE). Black students' language skills were finally validated instead of having to subscribe to an institutionalized and standardized variation of English. Later, in 1996, the Oakland School board approved Ebonics to be recognized as a language independent from English. Teachers then recognized and respected students' use of AAVE in their classrooms. With all these efforts, scholars wanted to highlight the African roots of African American speech and its connections with languages spoken elsewhere in the Black Diaspora (Baugh, 2003; Rickford, 1999; Rickford & Rickford, 2000; Smitherman 1977). Thus, contemporary inequalities and discrimination against language users, whether non-standard language users or non-native speakers of English, have historical connotations. In the case of non-native speakers of English, research has suggested that stigmas around MLs are rooted on systems of colonization and oppression. Therefore, it is necessary to study language stigmas with race, ethnicity, and social class lenses to understand how generational social structures produce the stigmatization of language.

[2] Ann Arbor Decision: the case of Martin Luther King Junior Elementary School vs Ann Arbor School District considered an important precedent in the education of African American Students.

Other scholars have also studied the racialization of language with a focus on the listening subject regarding immigrant students, especially Latinos perceived as deficient language users (Rosa & Flores, 2017). The standardization of language is related to the ideas of racialization in a way because minoritized speakers are deemed as deficient because of their lack of skills on the perceived "Standard English." Rosa (2016, 2019) in his study of Latino students in a high school in Chicago, used raciolinguistic ideologies to demonstrate the ways in which racialization of language places minoritized groups at the bottom of the social stratus. From this ethnographic work, Rosa (2019) coined the term languagelessness to explain how based on ideas of standardization and racialization, a group linguistic capacity is considered limited. I use these ideologies of language standardization and ideologies of languagelessness to frame my understanding of what language and academic skills are valued in a community college.

Flores (2015, 2017) and Rosa (2019) argue that multilingual learners get minoritized and racialized even when they are proficient in English. Students of color would be racialized by the White Listening Subject regardless of their language practices, primarily based on their physical traits. For Wei (2021), racialized bilinguals "will always struggle to achieve the imagined and elusive standards set by those of the dominant race with institutional power" (p. 7). The concept of academic English becomes an imaginary standard that more than specific language features become a racialized category that benefits those of the dominant culture. Even when we shift the language to study how MLs use language as suggested by Bunch (2020), the issues of poor academic attainment according to administrators and educators will persist. Flores (2020) refutes the notion that "the home language practices of racialized communities are inherently deficient"

(Flores & Rosa, 2015, p. 150). Frequently misrecognized by teachers, MLs do master a language, often accompanied by literacy skills in their first language. These racialized views of language "shift the focus from the linguistic practices of the speaker/writer toward the perceiving practices of the listener/reader" (Flores, 2020, p.24). Students whose writing and speaking language skills do not align with the standardized, White, native speaker use of English are negatively viewed and discriminated against but in subtle ways in which their language skills are classified as not good enough, not specific, or complex enough to be in high-level classes.

Academic Language and Academic Attainment of Racialized Bilinguals

A large and growing body of literature has investigated the relationship between academic performance and the mastery of academic language and literacy skills in multilingual students in high schools (Bunch, 2020; Freeman & Freeman, 2009; Menken, 2013). However, unpacking the definition of academic language and how the operationalization of this term privileges native speakers and marginalizes multilingual learners is crucial to understand its future implications (Flores, 2020; Menken, 2013). Freeman and Freeman (2009) in a study of "ELLs" in high school, framed long-term English learners as those who have been in the United States for some time and their conversational English "is often quite good but they lack academic English." (p. 10). Freeman and Freeman (2009) distinguished among three types of "ELLs"; the newly arrived in the United States with schooling in their home countries who need to learn English to pass standardized testing; others with limited schooling and academic knowledge in their home language who need to develop content and literacy skills in English; and the last one who were referred as long-term English learners with good

conversational skills but poor academic English.

This distinction has been consistently highlighted in research regarding MLs (Cummins, 1984; Uccelli et al., 2017). For example, the work of Cummins (1984) on Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skill (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) separated academic language and conversational language. When making this distinction authors immediately situate MLs in the conversational English category. This assumption positions MLs as not capable of composing academic texts; therefore, they get completely out of the conversation on academic performance.

Bunch and Martin (2020) makes a special consideration of this topic in their work by claiming the following:

> The argument usually goes something like this: Students, especially language learners or those speaking languages or varieties of language not privileged by dominant socioeconomic and racial groups, must learn to use specialized forms of language before being able to successfully engage in "mainstream" content-area instruction. (p. 539)

Many scholars over the years have ascribed to this idea of academic language being more specialized and specific than everyday language. Since Cummins' (1984) BICS and CALP, the discourse around academic language has evolved but still maintained a dichotomy of separating academic language as this abstract and complex concept that requires high-level skills while everyday language is considered less complex, less specialized, and easy to manage by MLs outside the academic scope. There is a plethora of studies done in K-12 in which academic language is deemed as the language of schooling or the language of academic success (Bunch, 2021; Cummins, 1984; Jensen & Thompson, 2020). Uccelli et al. (2020) while studying language demands of school texts, claim that academic language "includes 2 subconstructs: (1) discipline-

specific academic language (e.g., science- or math-specific terms: gene, hypotenuse) and (2) cross-disciplinary academic language, useful in all content areas (e.g., terms used across content areas: hypothesis)" (p. 77). This definition supports the idea that academic language is more related to content than the mastery of language skills such as vocabulary and grammar as many other authors have suggested. Martinez and Mejia (2020) claim that academic language, rather than an "empirically observable set of linguistic features," is actually an "idealized notion of the kinds of language valued in schools" (p. 53). This idealized notion of language is legitimized in schools through the setting of academic expectations that benefit students from the dominant mainstream culture.

Uccelli et al. (2020) also indicate that academic language is not "superior" or more "complex" as complexity can exist in any type of language genre (e.g., jokes). This definition debunks the idea of academic language being separated from everyday conversation and would not exclude MLs from attaining academic English. However, Uccelli et al. (2020) suggest that marginalized students still internalize the societal discourses that undervalue home languages and privilege school language by associating it with smartness (Uccelli et al., 2015). In a similar way, Braden (2019) discusses the use of "mock Spanish" among bilingual Latinx high school students in a science lab and found that US born high school students identified English as the language of science, while invalidating Spanish speakers and Spanish as a language used to communicate certain expertise in science. By devaluing and excluding Spanish from the science classroom, students assumed that English is the language of academics while home languages are precluded as social or only relevant at home to communicate with

family and friends. Students' internalization of these ideas may come from school discourses rooted in language separation and the hegemony of English in academic spaces.

Students have learned that English language proficiency and an accurate use of language is heavily valued in schools. Bunch and Martin (2020) claim that focusing on only discussing linguistically minoritized students from a prescriptive view of academic language reinforces the negative narratives of what MLs can do with language in the classroom. These authors propose shifting the question from "what is academic language?" to "how do students use language to engage in academic work?" (p. 541). However, focusing on how students use the language would only solve part of the equation for practitioners and educators who are in classrooms with students. Oftentimes, studies done about MLs, and academic language tend to focus on how students are perceived rather than their actual use of language. That is why it is necessary to see this phenomenon from a raciolinguistic ideological perspective to study the privilege given to academic English as a way to marginalize multilingual students' language practices. Wei (2021) addressed Rosa and Flores' (2015) raciolinguistic ideologies regarding academic language by adding that the concept of academic English is "a category and a categorizing device that emerges as part of broader raciolinguistic ideologies that position racialized and minoritized learners as illegitimate language users, linguistically deficient and unacademic" (p. 7). The racialization of language occurs when social structures influence language use and beliefs around language use and speakers.

By looking at academic language as a racialized category we understand the role of race in how language practices of MLs are perceived by the White Listening Subject.

Students of color would always be framed as incapable of mastering academic language because of their racial background. Ideas and definitions of academic language are usually centered in Whiteness and how White native speakers are innately perceived as capable of producing language necessary to thrive in schools (Alim, 2015; Flores, 2020). Through this lens of racialization, Baker-Bell (2020), in her study of anti-black linguistic racism, refers to academic language as White Mainstream English (WME) and that Black students code-switch to avoid discrimination.

Over the years, Baker-Bell (2017, 2020) has argued that under the term "academic English" is hidden the privilege of linguistic norms of Whites. The work on linguistic profiling and linguistic discrimination can inform how language as an embodied category of cultural capital can be used to deny minoritized groups access to other forms of capital. The identification of a person's race from their speech and using that information to discriminate on the basis of race, has been documented in the home rental market (Baugh, 2003; Henderson, 2001; Squires & Chadwick, 2006), the workplace (Cukor-Avila, 2000; Lippi-Green, 1997, 2012), and schools (Rosa, 2019). There is a clear intersection of race, ethnicity, and language that not only happens with speakers of other languages but also with speakers of different language varieties.

More specifically, in mainstream or non-ESL classrooms, when MLs cannot comply with this imaginary standard of academic English, their language skills might be perceived as poor or not good enough to tackle content-related assignments. In short, recent research rejects the dichotomy of academic and everyday English and shows how MLs' language practices are complex and their home languages aid the development of literacy skills (Kibler et al., 2020). An example of complexity in language managed by

MLs is presented in studies by Martínez and Mejía (2020) and Flores (2020), in which they demonstrate Latinx students manipulating complex morphologies when mixing English and Spanish to enhance meaning in informal conversations.

When multilingual learners themselves recognize a struggle with "complex language", they are ascribing to the historically dichotomic distinction of academic language versus non-academic language. Academic language is defined as having more complex sentence structure. However, Flores (2020) suggests that bilingual education is trying to move beyond the notion of academic language to include the concept of language architecture which recognizes the complexities of languaging practices of bilinguals in different scenarios navigating their greater linguistic repertoire. I would contend that language architecture can only be enacted and recognized in spaces where both languages are allowed to be used while in English-only spaces; otherwise, the ideas of racialized bilinguals' poor language skills will pervade.

I use this literature to aid my analysis of language ideologies held by multilingual learners and instructors of general education classes in a community college, where participants, both students and instructors, indicate their beliefs about language and engage in language practices while interacting in classrooms. I argue that students' ideologies and underestimation of their language skills are influenced by discourse reflecting dominant ideologies of broader society and the institution in relation to academic language. That is why it is relevant to study teachers' tacit assumptions about multilingual students' home languages to understand the deeper relationship between language and race in schools as institutions, which hold power in society.

Dominant ideologies of what is valued in the schools and societies can influence

students' identities and self-worth in relation to the language. For example, in fact, because of political, social, and cultural attitudes toward the Spanish language, bilingual education, and the Latino culture (González-Carriedo, 2015), some research on Mexican Americans and Spanish language indicates Spanish language loss beyond the third generation (e.g., Rumbaut et al.,2006). This is an issue not only of language maintenance but also a matter of identity and sense of belonging in educational institutions. Even when MLs spend a considerable amount of time in schools in the US, their language practices are considered foreign to the language of school which can affect their own sense of worthiness and belonging in the institution and to English as the language of school. Thus, in the next section, I show how identity and language connect theoretically to understand MLs' experiences in community colleges and the arbitrary power that their environment suggests due to dominant discourses of language proficiency affecting their own identities.

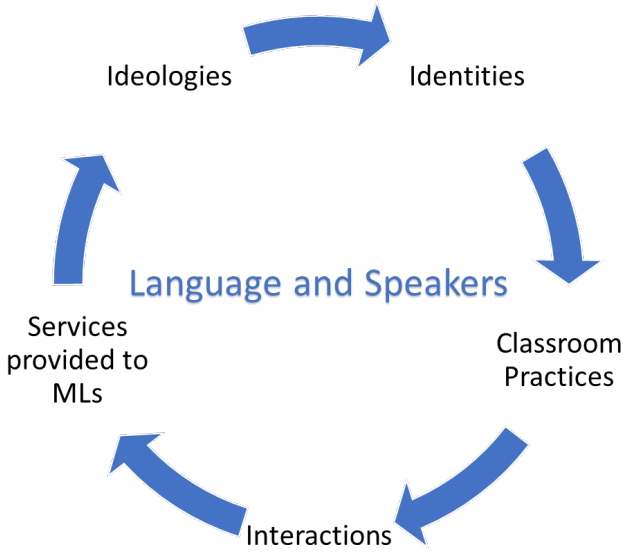
Theoretical Framework

Three main theories are being used in this study to explain how identity, language, and ideologies intertwined when describing the experiences of multilingual learners in a community college. Through social interaction and the reproduction of certain discourses, institutions exercise power normalizing educational practices in schools that allow for individuals to ascribe to certain social and linguistic identities. Those identities allow for a understanding of a set of beliefs that are then shaped by the same identities becoming a cycle that feeds ideologically charged practices that later affect interaction, classroom practices, and services provided to multilingual learners in the community college of this study (see Figure 1). I first explain how language as

symbolic power helps understand the connections between identity, language, and power in institutions. Then, I describe language and identity to explain how performances of identities are enacted through language that reflects and/or permeates ideologies about said languages.

Figure 1

Theoretical Connections



Note: Connections among the theories used in the study

Language as Symbolic Power

To understand how the notion of academic language is often connected to racialized bilinguals' abilities to perform in a second language, we first need to understand the institutional power exercised on minoritized students. I take up language as a political and ideological construct to interrogate how young multilingual students in a community college describe their language skills and experiences with the language in interaction with instructors, other classmates, and people in general in social and

academic contexts. Power in education can not only be seen from the macro level of educational policies that mandate the content to be taught in educational institutions but also from the micro-level perspectives of curriculum and classroom interaction between teachers and students.

Kramsch (2021) in a recent book on language as symbolic power uses Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital to explain that subtle social differences like accent, conversation style and register get translated into symbolic differences, that is, perceptions of different amounts of linguistic, economic, cultural, or educational capital. That is, marking a difference in the way an individual speaks can shape an individual's or group's access to capital. Cultural capital involves tangible and intangible assets that can be divided into three categories: institutionalized (education or specialized knowledge), embodied (personality, speech, skills), and objectified (clothes or other belongings) (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Bourdieu, 1985). Language is part of the embodied category of cultural capital that can be transformed into power and even social status. For instance, if the language spoken is considered legitimate or official in society, speakers of that language can access other forms of capital. Elites influence what is the capital that is widely recognized as "official" and "normal" or the default. As Khan (2012) claims, elites are more likely to have the power to control the discourses and the distribution of capital; they are the "engines of inequality" (p. 362). In the field of language and linguistics, elites can be considered those with power in institutions, which have legitimized and standardized English as the official language, to control those who lack English skills or for whom English is not their first language.

While there is not an official language in the US, English has been legitimized as

the “de facto” national language because it is spoken by most of the population. However, according to the US Census Bureau (2017), more than 20% of US residents speak a language other than English. This percentage of the population would have to align to this “official” rule, speak this legitimate language, to access all forms of capital. More specifically in the schools, this legitimization of language practice allows students from the dominant culture to have the knowledge required to thrive in schools while minority groups are left out (Bourdieu, 1996). This is one of the many ways in which schools as institutions reinforce linguistic discrimination. Emergent bilinguals could be at a disadvantage because of their limited English fluency and skills. Without adequate language services, it may be almost impossible for MLs to further their education and get access to economic or social capital leading to social mobility. Even with the right resources and language skills, MLs may still be racialized as a language category foreign to the inner dominant groups.

Here the concept of institutions as mechanisms created by individuals who naturalize hierarchies and moral differences is relevant to understand the reproduction of inequalities (Bourdieu, 1985). In this sense, language as a symbolic system arises and reinforces power. White native speakers serve as an institution when correcting non-native speakers' use of English or when expecting to use language in a certain way. More specifically, when multilingual learners are framed as lacking academic language and this leads to poor academic attainment, clearly expectations are set for White native speakers of English. As mentioned before by Baker-Bell (2017), whose language skills are legitimized by the concept of academic language? While success in school might seem to be due to individual ability and inborn talent, in fact it depends on the opportunities

afforded by such institutionalized social relations as they are found in educational settings that legitimize certain students more than others.

Bourdieu's (1996) theory of cultural capital informs this study to understand how schools as social institutions reproduce the social order. For instance, at the microlevel of education, teachers' ideologies and practices in the classroom can reflect those broader societal trends in relation to whose language practices are standard. Teachers' accountability and accommodations for MLs in daily classes will mirror their views about multilingual learners' deservingness of education and access to services. Are there any changes in lesson planning? Do teachers account for the different languages spoken in the classroom when teaching? How do they manage classroom interaction with multilingual learners? What are their assumptions about multilingual learners? The answer to those questions might not be straightforward but can determine MLs' access to cultural capital mediated by teachers and schools. Teachers, unintentionally through daily practices, might be operating through the social structures that require MLs to align to the official standards in which their own home languages and language identities get neglected or unnoticed.

Additionally, Bourdieu views cultural capital as related to habitus, or "a system of lasting, transposable dispositions which integrated past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions" (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 48). Teachers' habitus or their socially constructed predispositions or assumptions about MLs might be unintentionally leading them to overlook the linguistic and cultural capital MLs bring to schools. More specifically, mainstream teachers often constrained by English dominance ideologies may not recognize MLs' home practices as valid in their efforts to

assimilate MLs to mainstream culture. Teachers, by privileging mainstream students' standard language and without accounting for cultural and linguistic differences, might be stigmatizing MLs' home language practices and respond to broader social standards dominated by elites.

Language and Identity

The relationship between language, identity, and language learning is relevant to understanding how language works as an ideological tool that shapes the linguistic identities of bilinguals while they navigate language learning in educational institutions. Bakhtin (1981) claims that "language is not just a neutral form of communication, but a practice that is socially constructed in the hegemonic events, activities and processes that constitute daily life – the practices that are considered normal by the dominant society" (p. 271). Seltzer (2020) states that the use of language leads to the imposition of identities by individuals. For example, when speakers pull out from their linguistic repertoire to communicate with others, they are not only enacting language features but also their identities. This concept is relevant to unpack the larger language ideologies in which participants of this study were immersed. Edwards (2009) suggested that language is a marker of individual and group identities. When language users identify themselves as speakers of a certain language or dialect, an identity construction is determined by language as a marker. The same can happen when identities are thrown upon speakers by others. That is why I, in Chapter 4, the first findings chapter, unpack what the label "ESL student" does to the construction of identities for multilingual learners in this study. The beliefs and ideas that multilingual learners have about themselves as speakers of certain languages allows for the development of identities, not only linguistic identity but also

academic identities.

Language aids the negotiation of membership to social networks (Heller, 1992). Language as a form of identity is also ideologically saturated and reflects our world views. Bakhtin (1981) states that

> All words have the 'taste' of a profession, a genre, a tendency, a party, a particular work, a particular person, a generation, an age group, the day and hour. Each word tastes of the context and contexts in which it has lived its socially charged life; all words and forms are populated by intentions. (p. 293)

It is through language that we make sense of the world around us and reproduce socially charged ideas about people and entire communities. The intersection of language, identity, and ideology is twofold in this study. First, to inform how instructors talk about multilingual learners' academic performance, language skills, and language learning in the community college. As Silverstein (1998) states when a person evaluates or classifies accents as "amusing" or "funny" there is an ideological assumption about the language variation that others it against the standard form of language. Second, to analyze how multilingual learners convey identities that come from how to take ownership of home languages or English in academic spaces. The ascription of identities can reflect multilingual students' sense of belonging and self-assigned language proficiency skills in relation to other people's views of them and their own ideas of competence or incompetence in a certain language, whether home languages or English.

Language Ideologies

Before explaining the concept of language ideologies, I want to highlight some iconic studies that explain how teachers' background and dispositions toward bilingualism defined their curriculum decisions and actions in the classroom (Poza, 2019;

Villegas, 2007). To start with, Poza (2019) found that a 5th grade bilingual teacher's dispositions to language diversity shaped the curriculum, lesson planning and language practices allowed in the classroom. A bilingual and bicultural upbringing impacted a teacher's views of students and allowed for dynamic language practices in his classroom. Bilingualism in students was viewed as an asset instead of a burden. Villegas (2007), on the other hand, offers a dispositional framework to study teachers' beliefs and how they significantly shape the expectations teachers hold for student learning. Although the context of this project is higher education and specifically community colleges, Poza's (2019) and Villegas' (2007) works underscore the implications that educators' ideologies about language diversity have on their disposition toward teaching, learning, and linguistic diversity in general.

More than condemning teachers on their beliefs and practices, and to align with Poza (2019), it is necessary to provide spaces to dialogue with teachers about how their ideologies or dispositions may often unintentionally marginalize MLs' language practices. The study of language ideologies provides a bridge between linguistic and social theory, linking considerations of language use, attitudes, and beliefs with considerations of power and social inequality.

Language ideologies are examined in this study as an umbrella term to examine beliefs about multilingual students as speakers of English as an additional language. Language ideologies have been studied in the field of anthropology, sociology, and linguistics and are defined as people's beliefs about language and language users which are usually connected to broader societal discourses (Kroskity, 2004; Schieffelin et al., 1998). As language ideologies are connected to the larger sociopolitical context of

society, linguistic anthropology can inform this study in two different ways. First, it focuses on language use, and it is centered on the user's point of view (Erickson, 2004; Wortham, 2008). Second, this study involves examining and reflecting on beliefs and ideologies about language, linguistic diversity and generally about teaching multilingual students in a community college. Language ideologies from a linguistic anthropology of education lens focuses on power relations, the interactions and language practices of language users shaped by broader social and cultural structures (Erickson & Shultz, 1982; He, 2003; Rampton, 2005; Rymes, 2001). I center this work on contextualized use of language and how it serves particular functions in educational contexts. If educational institutions provide one of the major mechanisms through which power is maintained and challenged (Apple, 2004, p. 7), then the ways in which education is organized and controlled influence how certain groups get access to economic and cultural resources and power in the larger society. Thus, the language used in these settings mediates those power relations as well as the circulating ideologies and discourses around people, in this case, multilingual immigrant students.

To address the first guiding research question of this study, the language ideologies theoretical framework informs the study of instructors' language beliefs, their language policy orientations and how those ideologies influence their understanding of the world, their actions, and choices in classrooms regarding ESL students. To study those ideologies, attention is given to how instructors perceive multilingual students in relation to others and how students perceive themselves. Those ideologies are intertwined and connected and will be discussed in both findings' chapters. That is why, both perspectives are examined to contribute to the study of multilingual students' voices

which are usually silenced or absent in the literature.

The study of ideologies and language practices include issues of power and legitimization of language (Heath & Street, 2008) through a cultural lens from a humanizing and democratizing "way of being" (Hymes, 1980). In this sense, I use a critical lens to address issues of power and privilege in spaces where multilingual immigrant students may be considered a marginalized population due to their emerging English skills, the de facto language in the US. Understanding multilingual students' experiences and their relationship with their instructors lead to examining issues of race, as in a racialized view of languages and language speakers who are students of color.

The critical views of this study are also based on the analysis of power dynamics and reflexivity that includes the dialogic interaction between the researcher and the participants. By hearing the voices of multilingual students and reflecting upon our experiences, we can agree and potentially advocate for future social change. I intend to explain how social, historical, and political contexts impact ideologies, interactions, and relationships in this community college. I attempt to situate my participants' voices in the larger societal structures that delimitate their access to education, and the possibilities of transformation for current practices in the community college.

A critical lens through the study of language ideologies has Critical Race Theory at the center of the study. This perspective enables me, as a researcher, not only to include the ideological dimensions of power in language practices in educational settings but to also challenge the status quo and disempowerment of marginalized groups (Baumbusch, 2011). My role is to help "legitimize and make visible interviewees' silenced realities, in juxtaposition with an official narrative" (Madison, 2010, as cited in

Palmer & Caldas, 2016, p. 384) through critical consciousness for future positive social change (Hytten, 2004). To do that, two processes took place. First, introspection, in which I identified my connection with the phenomenon studied and the participants. Second, my positionality as a language teacher, former ESL student, and researcher shaped the way I approached and interacted with the participants and designed data collection protocols.

Also, discourses are situated in micro and macro contexts to analyze how power functions in this community college. Instructors' ideologies about language and language speakers influence teaching practices in the classroom and their general concepts about the multilingual student population. Those classroom practices may consequently affect students' realities and experiences in college-level classes and in college in general. As Sensoy and Diangelo (2017) claim, oppressive practices in education are ideological, internalized by the dominant and the minoritized groups. As a product of individual consciousness, these oppressive practices get rationalized as normal in mainstream society and by the minoritized group itself.

Moreover, and in search of empowering multilingual students' voices, I also center this work in Counterstorytelling (Vaught, 2011) as a Critical Race Theory method to describe multilingual students' experiences to "bridge the gap between their worlds and those of others." (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 41). In this way, multilingual students give power to their own stories and contrast them to those of instructors, as often language ideologies are co-constructed in common spaces. This can be a relevant contribution to the current literature on multilingual learners in higher education which is often limited in terms of students' perspectives. This will be better explained in the

following chapter in which I lay out the rationale for my methodological choices.

Care, Support, and the Role of Peers

A theoretical lens that emerged after I analyzed data from this study was the mechanisms of support multilingual students used to navigate college academic and navigational endeavors. For minoritized groups, having multiple participants and supportive institutions can make a difference in their success or failure in life. A body of scholarship has examined support as mentor-mentee relationships, demonstrating that youth who had support through a mentoring relationship demonstrated rich social networks (Sanchez, 2011; Schwartz et al., 2013). Sanchez et al. (2008) found that having a mentor in high school fostered positive academic performance and generated great expectations for success. Although significantly different than the type of support multilingual students in higher education may find, this literature has implications for the mediation of learning and navigation of college for multilingual students in this project.

> Terrion and Leonard (2007) defined peer mentoring as the following:
>
> helping relationship in which two individuals of similar age and/or experience come together, either informally or through formal mentoring schemes, in the pursuit of fulfilling career-related (e.g., information sharing, career strategizing) and psychosocial (e.g., confirmation, emotional support, personal feedback, friendship) (p. 150).

I use this definition of peer relationships to frame the type of relationships multilingual learners may foster in college spaces to get support not only academically but also to fulfill the need of personal connections. Due to a lack of institutional support, multilingual students may refer to peers to bridge language barriers and mediate learning

using language brokering. Language brokering has been studied in the literature mostly regarding children translating and interpreting for their parents (Orellana, 2009; Tse, 1995, 1996) and to a lesser extent children brokering for peers (Bayley et al., 2005; Morales & Aguayo, 2010). Recent research by Alvarez (2017) studied language brokering in bilingual spaces with an emphasis on care. In ethnographic case studies of homework mentors, librarians, teachers, students, and parents, Alvarez found that language brokering is crucial to understand the engagement of social relations in bilingual and bicultural communities. Language brokering then entails a combination of language and social skills that allows for the development of connections among peers. Alvarez (2016) expands on the work of language brokering by adding a *Confianza* lens to explain how relationships among peers are reciprocated to create humanizing support systems in which students' full linguistic repertoires are validated and celebrated. I use this theoretical framework to analyze multilingual students' finding support in peers for their academic endeavors and in college navigation in general.

To sum up, the theories I use in this study respond to an understanding of language as a political construct in which power is exercised over multilingual learners in educational spaces. I use language ideologies and language identity to explain how the racialization of language occurred when a White Listening Subject interacts with marginalized students who are institutionally classified as "ESL students." By learning about students and instructors' beliefs about language, I may also understand how they see themselves as language speakers. The racialization of language happens in this context when these students are deemed as inferior by the White Listening Subject who at the same time represent the legitimate speaker of English. So, my general contribution to

the scholarship on multilingual learners deal, first, with the study of students in community colleges and second to present a nuanced lens to the study of the racialization of language from the students' perspectives. This racialization also occurs when MLs themselves unknowingly are affected by the broader societal ideologies that value a standardized version of English.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I provide an overview of the methodology of my study. My theoretical framework focuses on beliefs about language and language identity that influence multilingual students' experiences in higher education. I follow a critical approach to ideology in which I explore how language ideologies are used to maintain social power, more specifically, the idea of academic language and language proficiency as a gatekeeper for academic achievement in educational institutions for multilingual learners. Therefore, interviewing multilingual youth, as a traditionally silenced community was central in this study.

Background of the Study

My initial interactions in the research site started in the summer of 2020 when I was invited by a friend, who at the time was an ESL specialist, to a meeting in which administrators and some instructors of Trinity Community College (TCC) (pseudonym) gathered to discuss issues around emerging bilinguals in college-level classes. In my first meeting, I met three of the instructor participants in this study and they were discussing ways in which the General Education instructors could help the ESL students to have a better academic performance in their first year of college and other future college-level classes in their respective majors. One of the general issues that some instructors complained about was the speaking abilities of the ESL students. Instructors have been told that during clinical practice, ESL students did not "have the vocabulary" or

“fluency” to talk to patients. These comments were a concern for the administration and the outcome of this meeting was to use some grant funds to hire an ESL specialist to serve as a liaison between the instructors and the students. With the instructors, the ESL specialist assisted curriculum development, teaching strategies and creation of materials adapted for the ESL population. With the students, this ESL specialist supported them on assignments, creation of study habits and technological issues. This team, made up of instructors and administrators, voluntarily met throughout the summer, to work on materials and assignments for the fall semester. I continued attending these meetings over the summer and fall 2020 and occasionally would share ideas with the team.

I attended those meetings to survey this community college, as a potential site for my future research. The more I heard about instructors' concerns and views about the ESL students, the more interested I became in diving deeper into the students’ perspectives. I wondered: what do the students think about this? Is this really an issue of speaking ability and study habits? Why were there only a few instructors who volunteered their time to participate in this professional development team? What do the students have to say about their language skills and experiences in the community college?

All those lingering questions set the foundation for my research questions that reflect modifications in the approach to this study as I spent more time interacting with the participants and familiarized myself with the research context. Again, my research questions examine community college instructors’ and multilingual students' perceptions of language and experiences of being or working with linguistically diverse students in the first year of community college. To understand peoples’ ideologies, it is necessary to

immerse oneself in their everyday lives as well as to engage in genuine interactions with individuals; but above all to deconstruct and to challenge circulating discourses about those ideologies. That is why I chose a critical qualitative approach to research ideologies and beliefs surrounding multilingual learners at Trinity Community College.

Methods

This study takes a critical qualitative approach and a critical ethnographic lens with a focus on counterstories as "narratives told by members of outgroups" (Delgado, 1989, p. 2414).

First, I will unpack the connections among beliefs about language, beliefs about teaching linguistically diverse students, and beliefs about students. Research on teachers' expectations suggests that teachers' dispositions and expectations reflect larger societal views that deal more with the speakers instead of the language they speak (Banda, 2018; Flores, 2020; Rosa, 2019). I contend in this study that views about language and more specifically views about multilingual learners' use of language are based on assumptions about the speakers being immigrants and from an implicitly racially minoritized group that do not speak English as a "native" language. In those views about language are included the notion of (lack of) academic language by racialized bilinguals, who are often assumed to be incapable of mastering academic English, which is rationalized to be the cause of poor academic attainment. The notion of academic attainment, as noted in my literature review, is directed towards how native speakers are perceived as competent users of a language. Those native speakerism ideologies are centered in Whiteness and the prestige and status of Standard English as a language of power. I unpacked these concepts in chapter 2 and later discussed them in chapter 4 and 6.

Thus, understanding the position of students in the circulating discourses about them is crucial in this study. Counterstories, as a central part of Critical Race Theory, is a foundational concept in the methods of this study. Counterstories are narratives that serve to counteract the stories of the dominant groups. Although I also conducted interviews with instructors, the main data set of this study comes from the minoritized youth, the multilingual students attending their first year at Trinity Community College. Counterstories ``open new windows into reality, showing us that there are possibilities for life other than the ones we live " (Delgado, 1989, p. 2414). The story is not just a story, it should "advance larger concerns or help us understand how law or policy is operating" (Ladson-Billings, 2013, p. 42). Through counterstories, traditionally silenced groups, find a way to challenge the status quo. In research about multilingual learners, we often hear from educators and less frequently from the students who often have a different perspective on the ideas or views other people have about them. The critical lens in this study, comes also from not only listening to the students but also challenging the perspectives of educators who–often with the best intentions–racialized emerging bilinguals into categories that positioned them as incompetent language users. Moreover, and in search of empowering ESL students' voices, counterstorytelling (Vaught, 2011), as a critical race theory method, allowed me to describe multilingual students' experiences to "bridge the gap between their worlds and those of others" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 41). In this way, multilingual students give power to their own narratives and contrast them to those of their instructors as often language ideologies are co-constructed in common spaces.

This critical lens, I argue, is also combined with an ethnographic perspective, as I

spent 18 months in the site, including 6 months of informal conversations with administrators, emails, and professional development events with potential participants, as well as the period I spent building rapport with students before conducting interviews. First, I attended meetings with instructors as an observer invited by the ESL specialist. Then, after being offered an ESL coach adjunct position, and before collecting data and gaining ethical approval, I spent 3 days a week for 3 months in the community college. I attended their study sessions at the library, sat in two of their General Education classes, observed them, and participated in classes as an outsider. Finally, when the time came to collect data, I waited for students to have a better sense of their experiences during the semester in the general education classes and with the instructors. Then, I progressively attended classes more frequently until students felt comfortable talking to me. This decision was based on the consistent comments from the instructors and administrators stating that ESL students often do not look for help or have a difficult time trusting instructors.

Thus, from a critical ethnographic lens I conceptualize ethnography as a "way of seeing" (Wolcott, 2008) based on fieldwork. The study of ideologies and language practices include issues of power and legitimization of language (Heath & Street, 2008) through a cultural lens from a humanizing and democratizing "way of being" (Hymes, 1980). In this sense, the critical ethnographic lens allows me to address issues of power and privilege in spaces where multilingual students may be considered a marginalized population due to their emerging English skills, the de facto language in the US. Understanding ESL students' experiences and their relationship with their instructors may lead to examining issues of class, race, and a racialized view of language use and

language speakers.

A critical ethnographic approach needs to respect six typical characteristics of an ethnographic design: cultural theme; culture sharing groups; shared patterns, beliefs, and language; field work; context or setting; and research reflexivity (Creswell, 2018). The research design of this project mirrors these six elements regarding the characteristics of the groups, the time that will be spent in the field and the nature of my reflective and analytical practice as a researcher. Although ESL students shared similar characteristics in terms of academic progress and the classes they were taking, languages, migration histories and schooling backgrounds differed.

A critical ethnographic perspective derives from Critical Race Theory as it enables researchers not only to include the ideological dimensions of power in language practices in educational settings but to also challenge the status quo and disempowerment of marginalized groups (Baumbusch, 2011). As a researcher, my role is to help "legitimize and make visible interviewees' silenced realities, in juxtaposition with an official narrative" (Madison, 2010 as cited in Palmer & Caldas, 2016, p. 384) through critical consciousness for future positive social change (Hytten, 2004). To do that, two processes need to take place. First, I engaged in introspection, to identify my connection with the phenomenon studied and the participants. Second, I reflected on how my positionality as a language teacher, former ESL student and researcher shape the way I approach and interact with the participants and design data collection protocols.

Research Site

Selection of Research Site and Participants

When I first moved to Cloud City (pseudonym), a mid-sized city in the South of

the United States, I started collaborating as a graduate assistant on research projects in a high school and early learning centers. In March 2020, with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, access to schools as research sites became very limited. I had initially envisioned a project looking at ESL students in a high school and their history with language and academic experiences, specifically Latinx students. With the limited access to research sites and the virtual learning shift that schools across the US were going through, I adapted the research idea to study multilingual youth in a similar setting. The community college that receives most of the immigrant multilingual students in this city is Trinity Community College (TCC).

When I was invited to the different initial meetings and observations at TCC, I noticed how research done with multilingual students in secondary education was also reflected in this community college setting. For example, in a study of multilingual mentoring in a local high school, Gast et al.'s (2022) findings revealed that educators and other more experienced bilinguals racialized Spanish speaking ESL students by making assumptions on their "lack of effort" or "lack of educational expectations and values", influencing their development of English skills and academic performance. Although TCC is a higher education institution, I found similar discourses when TCC instructors discussed issues with ESL students in the initial meetings I attended. Those comments motivated my decision to design this study based on in-depth interviews, fieldnotes, classroom observations, with a focus on the experiences of multilingual students as a primary data source. I wanted to center the voices of students around those common discourses I often heard from the instructors.

Trinity Community College

Trinity Community College is located in Cloud City with a student population of approximately 12,000, of which more than 1,000 are First-Year Freshmen (FYF). Thirty-five percent of students self-identify as an underrepresented minority, of which 30% are black and 10% are Latino/a. TCC serves a majority of low-income students who seek to attain higher education to eventually be inserted in the workforce or on a pathway to 4-year institutions. For Fall 2020, 600 FYF were classified as ESL students taking not only English language classes, but also college-level content classes. These ESL students are mainly foreign born with some schooling in secondary institutions in the US. There is no exact data about how many students, classified as ESL, have attended high school in the US and how many were inserted in higher education upon arrival. Also, some students are placed in ESL classes after taking a language and reading placement test and some other students are placed using high school GPA and ACT scores, if they attended 1 or 2 years of high school in the US.

In a former grant-funded project from the office of student success (TCC, 2019), administrators documented issues related to ESL students in regular college-level classes that included the development of discipline-specific study habits, classroom participation, inexperience with test expectations and preparation and lack of training to speak in public. Hence the context of this study was initially focused on the college-level classes where regular instructors teach content classes specific to the students' careers, such as nursing and the general education humanities courses. However, after submitting an external IRB application, access was limited to general education classes in areas such as English, arts and communications. The reason behind that decision was the availability of

part-time and full-time instructors in those classes while in the health programs most of the instructors were adjunct and provisional. The focal courses in this study are Writing, College 101 and Art (pseudonyms) because these instructors voluntarily agreed to participate in the study. However, student participants were at the time taking other courses from first- or second-year requirements.

Participants

I use stratified sampling *"*to ensure that the range and diversity of different groups in a population are included in the sample. This could relate to any factor, such as age, race/ethnicity/culture, sexuality, ability, and location" (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 59). The participants in this study are divided into two groups. The first group consisted of 6 first-year instructors from general education classes and college level classes; 2 college 101 instructors, 2 writing instructors, 1 ESL instructor and 1 Art instructor. These instructors are mainly monolingual English speakers except for two of them who identified as bilingual--Spanish and English. The second group consisted of multilingual 17 students taking first year general education courses. The following descriptions of participants will aid the interpretation and analysis of data on how instructors and multilingual students see themselves, their experiences, and their views of their position in this institution.

Instructor participants

Angela. Identifying as a White Caucasian, Angela had worked at TCC for about 10 years. Angela does not speak languages other than English and is an instructor of College 101. At the time of the interview, she was teaching two sections of College 101 that were "ESL friendly." College 101 is a general education class focused on preparing students to learn about college, majors, advising and general cultural topics. Angela

indicated that she gave “ESL students” extra time for assignments and made language more accessible to students in the teaching materials and in her communication in classes.

Melissa. During the interview, Melissa identified herself as White. Melissa had worked at TCC for 14 years. She speaks English and some basic Spanish she learned during her time in South America. Melissa is very invested in ESL students' success as she has transformed her classes to be mindful of students’ background and needs over the years. Although Melissa is a part-time instructor, she indicated she works 10 more hours helping students, creating different materials with a focus on culturally responsive pedagogy because it is a way of “giving back to the community.”

Abby. An administrator and art instructor, Abby is responsible for an initiative tailored to help academic success for ESL students at TCC. She identified herself as White. Abby considers herself as “more open to change” as she comes from the “working world”. She has worked at TCC for over 20 years. When Abby commented on how she does not feel as a “colonizer White American” due to being racially profiled as an immigrant because of her European descent.

Chelsea. Before coming to TCC, Chelsea taught Adult ESL and bilingual classes at community centers and a couple of universities in the Midwest. She has been teaching ESL and ESL writing for 4 years at TCC. When asked about her racial identification, Chelsea identified herself as a White, European American. She considers herself bilingual in Spanish and English.

Joseph. Self-identified as Black Latino. Joseph has taught at TCC for over 4 years. He has a background in TESOL. Joseph is one of the two bilingual instructors in this participant group. He speaks English and Spanish. He indicated interest in learning

about students' background and educational systems in their countries of origin so he can make “adjustments to the classroom to kind of accommodate everybody.” Specifically, he indicated making an effort in learning about students’ “L1 because I can start to see things like language transfer and see kind of the influences of that language in their learning and acquisition of English as well.”

Elizabeth. Self-identified as Caucasian, Elizabeth has been working at TCC for over 14 years. She has a TESOL background and teaches writing to ESL students. She indicated that she worked only as an ESL or English instructor during her entire career as a teacher.

Student Participants

Student participants came from a variety of African countries, the Middle East and Latin America and they speak many different languages (see Table 1). A criterion sampling (Creswell & Poth, 2018) was used to select student participants for this study. First, participants had to (a) be multilingual or classified as “ESL students” currently enrolled at TCC as Freshman, (b) be able to speak English, and (c) have at least 3 years living in the US, to ensure some previous schooling in the public-school system or at TCC during the ESL program or other General Education classes. Most of the students are foreign-born except for Yitzy and they have been in the US an average of 3 to 9 years.

Table 1. Student Participant Characteristics

Participant #	*Gender*	*Age*	*Pseudonym*	*Languages*	*Country of Origin*
SP01	F	25	Siti	Arabic, English	Palestine
SP02	F	18	Mana*	Nepali, English	Nepal
SP03	M	19	Juan*	Spanish, English	Peru
SP04	F	18	Gilda*	Spanish, English	Honduras
SP05	F	22	Amani	Arabic, Somali, English	Somalia
SP06	M	18	Carlos	Spanish, English	Cuba
SP07	F	20	Carolina	Spanish, English	Honduras
SP08	M	25	Arvin	French, Swahili, Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, English	Republic of Congo
SP09	F	21	Mirtha	Spanish, English	Cuba
SP10	F	20	Yitzy	Spanish, English	Mexico
SP11	M	35	Ousman	English, Jola, Mandinka, Serre	Gambia

SP12	F	19	Sadiya	Saha, English	Eritrea
SP13	F		Oneida	Spanish, English	Cuba
SP14	F	20	Ruhina	Persian, Turkish, English	Iran
SP15	F	20	Saima	Arabic, English	Sudan
SP16	F	20	Yodit	Tigrinya, Blin, English	Eritrea
SP17	F	20	Romi	Somali, Arabic, English	Somalia

*****_Only participated in the focus group_

Describing specific characteristics of student participants in this study is crucial to understand their backgrounds, multiple identities, their relationships with languages and how language learning has played a role in students' resettlement in the United States. The focus of Interview 1 was to familiarize myself with their stories of coming to the US and to also understand how multilingual students described their identities in terms of race, ethnicity, and language. However, many times during the interview, when I asked, "*What is your race or ethnicity and how would you describe them*", most students were confused, requested clarifications, or responded with information about their personalities. Waters (1999) in *Black Identities*, explains that immigrants experience race relations in the US differently than in their former countries. People of color in the US are aware of the prejudice towards their skin color while immigrants are still new to the idea of being classified and treated differently than Whites. This claim by Waters (1999)

might explain why those confusions happened and the difficulties students had to relate to discrimination events to race. I provide examples of this in chapter 4. Next, I provide details of all the student participants. All the identities and information described below are self-reported.

Siti, a 25-year-old Palestinian, was attending TCC for an education major, and took ESL classes for a year before taking General Education Classes. Siti speaks Arabic and English. Siti identified herself as Muslim.

Mana, an 18-year-old Nepali, came to the US and entered elementary school when she was 8 years old. She attended high school in the US too. Mana entered TCC being proficient in English and did not take classes in the ESL program. At the time of the focus group, Mana was taking General Education classes and others towards an associate degree in Nursing. She is the first in her family to go to college. She speaks Nepali and English.

Juan, a 22-year-old Peruvian, came to the US after studying 2 years of college in his country. He worked for about 1 year before enrolling at TCC and learning English. Juan completed the ESL program at TCC; at the time of the interview, he was taking General Education classes and was planning to start the Business Administration major at TCC. He speaks Spanish and English.

Gilda, an 18-year-old Honduran, came to the US when she was 11 years old and went to elementary school while she was learning English. Gilda was classified as an ESL student throughout elementary, middle, and high school. She was in the nursing program at TCC and was taking General Education classes at the time of the interview. She speaks Spanish and English.

Amani, a 22-year-old Somalian refugee born in Egypt, has been living in the US for 8 years and went to high school in the US. Amani was taking General Education Classes at the time of the interview and was planning to go into nursing the following semester. She completed the ESL program the prior year and was enrolled in the "ESL friendly" sections of College 101 and Writing. She speaks Arabic, Somali and English. Amani identified herself as Muslim

Carlos is an 18-year-old Cuban who speaks Spanish and English. Carlos came to the US 3 years ago and studied 2 years of high school in this country. At the time of the interview, Carlos was finishing his first semester out of the ESL program; he was taking College 101 while working full-time. Carlos was planning to study computer science after finishing the technology associate degree at TCC. Carlos identified himself as Latino/Cuban.

Carolina came to the US when she was 13 years old. She is from Honduras. She did not take ESL classes at TCC and at the time of the interview, she was taking only College 101. Carolina identified herself as Hispanic.

Arvin had been in the US for only 3 years and came with his family from the Republic of Congo as a refugee. Arvin speaks French, Kirundi, Kinyarwanda, and Swahili. Arvin was enrolled in one of the "ESL friendly" College 101 sections and was taking other general education classes while working full-time on night shift. Arvin identified himself as Black African.

Mirtha was 21 years old at the time of the interview and had been living in the US for 3 years. She was admitted to TCC through the ESL program and was taking the "ESL friendly" College 101 section and working part-time. Mirtha only participated in the first

phase of data collection and identified herself as Latina.

Yitzy, born and raised in the US, grew up bilingual in Spanish and English but was classified ESL from kindergarten to 6th grade of elementary school because her first language was Spanish. Yitzy only participated in the first phase of data collection and identified herself as Latina.

Ousman, a 35-year-old Gambian, grew up speaking English, the official language in Gambia. Ousman was taking the "ESL friendly" College 101 class at the time of the interview and reported to be taking other general education classes and planning to study the aviation maintenance major at TCC. After moving across the US, he recently settled in Cloud City, joined TCC to get his associate degree. Ousman identified himself as Black African.

Sadiya, a 19-year-old refugee from Eritrea who grew up in Ethiopia, reported to speak three languages, one of them being Saha. Sadiya came to the US 6 years ago and first attended a high school in the first city she lived in the US for 6 months. Sadiya completed a year of the ESL program at TCC and at the time of the interview she was in her first year taking general education classes and planning to enroll in the nursing program.

Oneida has been living in the US for 6 years. She identified herself as Black, Latina and Cuban. After becoming a Certified Nursing Assistant, she decided to attend TCC to get an associate degree in physical therapy. Oneida first completed the ESL program at TCC and was taking general education classes at the time of the interview. She considered herself bilingual in Spanish and English.

Ruhina, a 20-year-old from Iran, came to the US after finishing high school in her

country. She identified herself as Iranian and White. She speaks Persian and Turkish. Ruhina only took classes at TCC for a year before transferring to a 4-year institution. Her TOEFL scores were not high enough to be admitted at the university, so she attended TCC to take ESL classes and two general education classes. She is now studying science at a 4-year- university and plans to go to medical school later.

Saima, a 19-year-old refugee from Sudan, identified herself as Black. Saima came to the US 6 years ago, attended a school for newcomers then transferred to a regular high school. Saima completed her ESL program at TCC and was in the second semester of freshman year. I met Saima at the library while she spent time with her friends, the ESL students that were in the classes I was observing. She had already passed the general education classes and was finishing her freshman year.

Yodit, 20 years old, identified herself as Black African American and came to the US 4 years ago as a refugee from Eritrea. She completed high school in an institution for predominantly ESL immigrant students. She completed the ESL program at TCC and was taking one of the "ESL friendly" College 101 classes at the time of the interview. Yodit speaks Tigrinya and Arabic. She was planning to go into the nursing program.

Romi, identified herself as Muslim and American. A refugee from Eritrea, Romi came to the US 5 years ago and entered high school. She attended a high school for newcomers and then transferred to a high school with predominantly ESL immigrant students. Romi completed the ESL program at TCC and was taking online "ESL friendly" general education classes.

The Study Design

This critical qualitative study occurred in three cyclical but indiscrete non

sequential phases. These phases inform each other, especially the observation as I started data collection. I used notes from the observations to ask follow-up questions during the interviews and consequently edited, rephrased, and reorganized questions to avoid misunderstandings that occurred with previous participants.

Gaining Access to the Site and Building Trust

This phase started in the Summer of 2020, when I attended the professional development sessions led by the ESL specialist with the team of instructors who volunteered to participate in a small project directed to better support ESL students. I attended two of those sessions as a participant observer and occasionally provided instructors with feedback about the teaching materials they brought to the workshop. The purpose of those workshops was to work on the teaching and assessment materials to be used the following semester. During those sessions I made connections with some of the instructors and administrators and introduced the idea of doing research with multilingual students in the TCC humanities division. In the Fall 2020, I contacted 3 of the instructors who attended the summer sessions. I also had a virtual meeting with the head of the ESL program who resisted the idea of research during a global pandemic given the fact that most classes were held online. I spent the entire semester exchanging emails with the administrators and instructors but their hectic schedules and the overwhelming load of work that shifting courses to a virtual platform required made it impossible for me to get a positive answer to get access to the site. Later, at the end of Fall 2020, one of the administrators in charge of a small grant from the student success office, knowing my background in TESOL, offered me the ESL instructional coach position that was left vacant in Fall 2020. Once the instructors knew I was going to work with them and their

students the following semester, they became more open to my presence as I was now an insider.

Ethical Approval and Participant Recruitment

Once I gained access to the site, I submitted my Institutional Review Board (IRB) application and after approval, I proceeded to submit the external IRB for TCC. During this time, I attended one College 101 section, sat at the back of the classroom, and occasionally supported students with assignments and activities during the class. Every Monday for two months (January and February 2021), I went to class, introduced myself at the beginning of each lesson and made myself available as a member of the class community. I would occasionally interact with students, answer their questions, and have informal conversations about the class. Sometimes, multilingual students would come and ask questions regarding the class content, or we would work on College 101 assignments. During March 2021, the office of research replied to my application and expressed some concerns about the scope of the study. One of the concerns was related to the language accessibility in the consent forms and the interviews. In response, I submitted a simplified cover letter describing the study so it could be easily understood by students. Another issue dealt with the instructor participants; the research office was concerned about the number of adjunct instructors from the different academic units who would potentially participate in the study. Primarily concerned about time and availability of the adjunct faculty, the research office agreed to approve the study with only full-time and part-time faculty from the General Education classes in the humanities division. I started the recruitment process and secured signatures for consent forms. I contacted the instructors of College 101, Communication, and Art, the classes in which I was the

designated ESL coach. During Spring 2021, only two groups of College 101 were taking place face to face, the two groups I was already visiting every Monday as a coach. The rest of the general education classes were online. Angela, Abby, and Melissa agreed to participate in the study. I then continued attending Angela's classes not just to support students, but also to collect data. In the meantime, I was also assisting Melissa's students as the ESL coach in a virtual way via the Microsoft Teams virtual instructional platform. To establish trust, I waited until near the end of the semester, April 2021, to start conducting interviews with instructors and students.

Data Collection

Towards the end of April 2021, I started contacting multilingual students who were taking College 101 in the Spring 2021. There was a group of 5 students who usually stayed after class for office hours with me. Every Monday afternoon, I stayed 2 or 3 hours at the library study room to support students with College 101 homework and occasionally with the writing class. Conversations ranged from colorism in their own home countries and the US and differences and similarities of schools and writing conventions in English. Thus, from April 2021 to July 2021 I conducted the first wave of interviews with 11 students and 4 instructors. These were individual interviews conducted face to face except for 3 of them with the instructors. Later, during Fall 2021, from August to September, I conducted the second wave of interviews with 9 of the initial 11 recruited students. Then, in September I started the second phase of data collection by attending Melissa's classes for 90 minutes every Monday for 15 weeks. During this semester, I recruited 3 additional students, and I conducted the interviews from October to December. While observing Melissa's classes every Monday, I noticed

five additional students who continually participated in class discussing issues regarding instructors and access to services in the institution. I wanted to follow-up on those discussions and give students the opportunity to expand on those insights during the focus group. Only four of those additional students volunteered to participate in one session of the focus groups. By the end of Fall 2021, I recruited two more students, one from Melissa's class and one from Angela's class to finalize data collection. Conversations with students during the fall semester encouraged me to contact two additional instructors frequently mentioned during the interviews: Joseph and Chelsea, respectively. Details about the data collection sources and explanation of the student participation is provided in Table 2.

Focus group and interview questions for the student participants included experiences with language choice, language-learning experiences in the US, classes, and relationship with instructors (see Appendix B for complete interview protocol). Questions allowed them to recount different events into coherent stories on how student and instructor participants make sense of their experiences and how they communicate with each other. Details are provided in the next section of data collection techniques.

Data Collection Techniques. The techniques of data collection in this critical qualitative design were in-depth interviews (conversations), focus groups, field journals and classroom observation from April 2021 to December 2021. These are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Information Sources, Techniques, and Timeline

Primary Sources			
	Participant Group	Spring/Summer 2021	Fall 2021
Interviews	Students (N=17)	**Interview 1**- 11 students/30-60 mins. **Interview 2-** 9 students/30-60 mins.	**Interview 1**- 3 students 30-60 mins. **Interview 2** – 2 students- 30-60 mins.
	Instructors (N=6)	**Interview 1-**4 instructors/ 60-90 mins each	**Interview 2-**2 instructors/ 60-90 mins each
Focus Group	Students (N=4)	--------	1 session- 90 mins- 4 student participants. Only 1 of them participated in individual interviews
Observations	Students/Instructors	10 hours- classroom observations – two times a week- 2 sections of College 101	30 hours- 3 times a week- 3 sections of College 101 for 15 weeks
Fieldnotes		20 hours- informal conversations with instructors after class. Conversations with students before or after the interviews and during study time at the library.	10 hours- informal conversations with instructors after class. Conversations with students before or after the interviews
Secondary Sources			

Artifacts	Instructors/Students	Assignments, teaching materials, blackboard screenshots, emails, photos of the whiteboards.
Fieldnotes	Instructors	Notes during meetings with instructors and administrators.

Interviews. An inductive process of inquiry into contextual use of language is crucial to gain understanding of beliefs towards language and actions shaped by those beliefs. That is why I chose interviews as a main source of information in this study. My study unifies an experiential (study of experiences, opinions, views, perceptions) and critical approach; therefore, interviews and observations are the most suitable strategies in experiential studies to interrogate perceptions, opinions, and views (Braun & Clarke, 2013) but also helpful for critical studies which take an interrogative stance when interpreting the data to question it and study the factors that influence those stances. In-depth interviews gave me the opportunity to gain critical insights into students' histories with language, language choice and their self-reported language skills as well as how that history with language has shaped their current experiences as first year students in the community college.

With students, the first interview (see Appendix A) was mostly focused on the stories of their arrival to the United States, challenges related to their arrival and settlement, and their current reflections about what happened at the time. The second biggest focus of the initial interview with students was their language experiences learning English, language choices in public contexts, languages spoken at home and in academic spaces, and how they describe or evaluate their language skills in English and home languages. These questions were designed to encourage them to reflect about their

own language skills. Often, reflections about language use and language learning lead to an understanding of cognitive and social processes of languaging, a concept that recognizes the actions and reactions of bilinguals in conversations (Bloome & Beauchemin, 2016) that also allow them to talk about their beliefs about language. These initial interviews allowed for an understanding of how students valued or undervalued their own language skills and their negative and positive experiences with language in their home countries and in the US in former contexts such as high school. Another reason why I asked about language history is the connection or impact that previous experiences with teachers and other students in elementary or secondary school have had in their current experiences in college.

The second interview with students was divided into three sections (see Appendix A). The first section included topics such as classes, instructors, relationships with instructors, and language use when participating in class. These questions would lead to an understanding of how students' experiences aligned or differed from how instructors framed them in the instructor interviews. The second section interrogated students' perceptions of the services provided by TCC in addition to language support. The third section of this interview centered on students' perceptions on how instructors viewed them as ESL/immigrant students and how those views influenced their academic expectations. Lastly, I also interrogated students on their self-identified experiences of racism at TCC. All four sections gave me in-depth insights on how students' interaction with educators, in high school and now at TCC, affects their own perceptions of themselves regarding their language skills and identities as students and ESL students.

Based on qualitative principles, I emphasized in my analysis the social and

cultural interactions of the student participants. Interviews were in-depth conversations in which participants' stories were means for telling their experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). By doing this, I could better appreciate the meanings related to being an ESL student in high school and in college and how that shapes students' current perceptions and interactions with instructors in the general education classes.

With instructors, interviews (see Appendix B) interrogated current demographics of their classes, knowledge and views of students' backgrounds, and instructors' perceptions on the experiences of having multilingual students in their classes. I also asked about the strategies or adaptations done in their courses geared towards serving ESL students. Another focus of the interview was on institutional services provided to ESL students at TCC and any specific experience they would like to discuss regarding working with ESL students. My purpose was to lead a conversation in which instructors talked about their practices as they taught classes that are "ESL friendly" -- meaning that to contextualize their teaching with a focus on linguistically diverse students, instructors implemented adaptations of materials and strategies. This interviewing process was "an attempt to understand the world from the subjects' point of view, to unfold the meaning of their experience, and to uncover their lived world." (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 164). In this study those points of view deal with beliefs about language and language users because teachers' beliefs about what language is, the language they value, as well as their views on students' language use and language repertoires shape both the pedagogical choices they make and the ways in which they position learners along the continuum of academic ability (Banda, 2018).

Focus Group. With the intention of encouraging dialogues and conversations through

group discussions, I initially wanted to carry out three sessions of focus groups with students from different classes before conducting the interviews. Another purpose of this focus group was to start an exploration process of the field, as students might feel more comfortable to talk about their experiences in a known environment with their peers. However, I scheduled the meeting at three different times during Summer 2021 and Spring 2021, without a response from students. Later, in Fall 2021, and after conducting Wave 1 interviews with students and instructors, I conducted 1 session of 90 mins with students from Melissa's class. My decision to invite these students to the focus group was based on the discussion they were having in the classroom regarding issues with instructors and services at TCC. Melissa's classes were often culturally focused. Every class, she encouraged students to be reflective of experiences of racism or unjust treatment from instructors and staff at TCC. Students frequently interacted in small groups and then shared with the whole class. I took notes on these conversations and then asked follow-up questions during the focus group.

The conversation during the focus group revolved around two topics. First, I asked students to introduce themselves and talk about their background, country of origin and the reasons to study at TCC. Then, I asked students to discuss what it means for them to be classified as an ESL student and any struggles they have had during their time at TCC. During the rest of the conversation sessions, students spontaneously asked each other questions about their experiences of being an ESL student in different classes and instructors. Through this focus group, I seek to understand the experiences and perceptions of each participant, and to examine similarities and differences across cases (Glesne, 2016). This was also a non-directive style of interviewing, to encourage a

variety of viewpoints on the topic (Kvale & Brinkman, 2015).

More than reaching consensus about or solutions to the issues discussed, the focus group gave students the opportunity to reflect on their own experiences with inequity and inequality while finding similarities in their struggles and building community. This was a suitable data collection strategy to hear multiple perspectives from the students, follow-up and expand on the notes taken during the class as well as to build rapport with the students. During the conversation, I also engaged with them by talking about my own experiences as a former ESL student and my work as an ESL coach at TCC.

Observations. I started observations immediately after getting IRB approval for Angela's classes near the end of Spring 2021. I visited her classes once or twice a week. At the time, she was teaching 5 groups of College 101 but only two of them included ESL students. I was interested in teacher-student interaction as a way to co-construct language ideologies. However, during my visits I noticed ESL students did not often participate in class. Therefore, I decided to only use observations as a secondary source of information for this study to contextualize the practices of the instructors who have been or would be interviewed. In Spring 2021, Angela was the only one of the initial instructor participants in face-to-face classes. I focused my notes on describing the objectives of the class, questions asked by the instructor, and the type of participation and interaction ESL students had with the instructor or any other students in the class. I used a journal diary and chronologically narrated what I saw in the class and my interpretations, questions, and connections to other data sources. Later in Fall 2021, for 15 weeks, every Monday, I visited Melissa's and Angela's classes. This time I emphasized my notes and interpretations on Melissa's classes as she was only teaching online the previous

semester. By fall 2021, I had conducted 24 interviews with students and 4 interviews with instructors, so I used the data collected to make connections with the new information and more specific notes on events I have noticed in Spring 2021. I also paid close attention to finding examples of issues mentioned by students during interviews and informal conversations after or before classes.

My role during Melissa's classes was more interactive. I often participated by interacting with students in small groups. Melissa often asked me for help to work with students on assignments during workshops. I was also in charge of the class on two occasions while she was sick with COVID-19.

Fieldnotes. I used a journal diary to write my notes every time I visited TCC or during online meetings with instructors and students. During my time at the library in the study rooms with students, and while working on assignments, I engaged in conversations with students about the classes they were taking and more specifically about the struggles they were having in those classes. These notes provided rich information about the context and allowed me to interpret data from the interviews. I learned about the types of assignments used by instructors, assignments and online activities from classes I was not observing. This helped to have a big picture of students' generalized experiences in those classes.

When I left the library, I audio recorded researcher memos of what I saw but also my initial interpretations of what I saw each day. During the audio recordings, I also reflected on my own biases on approaching students during those interactions. Therefore, my notes described the setting, the participants, the topics of the conversations and the insights I gave them during the conversations. The fieldnotes were also an opportunity for me to narrate events, but also the future changes I should do in my interviews. In

addition, after each interview, I also wrote about the way I approached the students, questions and answers that made me uncomfortable or questioned my role during the interviews. For example, sometimes I questioned my own thinking in terms of perpetuating deficit perspectives about multilingual students during my interaction with instructors. Being the ESL coach could have positioned myself as an ally of the students, but I needed to support instructors and the ways they were developing their classes. Frequently, during the interviews, I found myself over monitoring my language to be empathetic. Field notes were also a space to reflect on my own positionality in this research. I constantly reflected on my beliefs about language that were mirrored in the questions I created for the interviews or my participation in the meetings with instructors. I took every opportunity to reflect on what I believe and my own history with language teaching and my experiences as an immigrant to the US.

Artifacts. Artifacts were a secondary source of information for my study. These included homework assignments, teaching materials, and any other resources that could help understand the context and teaching practices in general as well as students' challenges and successes with the classes they were taking. Artifacts provided information on teachers' structure and focus of their classes. When students set an appointment with me as the ESL coach, they would bring their assignments and I took pictures or took notes on what materials they were using in classes. This allowed me to gain understanding of what was happening in the classes in which I was not the ESL coach.

Internal validity for this study was attempted through triangulation of sources throughout the data collection process. I crossed-checked data collected at different times. For example, student participants were interviewed twice, and I used information

from the observations to ask follow-up questions to student and instructor participants. In addition, observations happened in two different cycles at different times with different groups of students. Another way in which internal validity was reached was through a reflexivity which is "how the researcher affects and is affected by the research process" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 249). In the next section, I honestly disclose my biases, experiences, worldviews, and theoretical orientations that guided my approach to the site, the data analysis, and how I viewed and interacted with my participants.

Researcher Role and Positionality

In chapter one I tell the story of how my views of language and teaching language shifted when I moved to the US from Venezuela and how being bilingual in a Spanish speaking country comes with certain privileges that carry a different meaning than in a country where English is the de facto language. Part of the learning is recognizing my identity as Black Latina whose English language skills are questioned and profiled as deficient. I observed the same in my time as a research graduate assistant in two different educational settings in the city where I live. One of those settings was a diverse school with 30% immigrant emerging bilinguals and another one was pre-schools located in a predominantly black neighborhood.

This research study started as a curiosity for me to understand the racialized ways in which White "native" speakers see bilinguals in the US. At the beginning, while conducting research in a bilingual peer-mentoring program, I did not understand the underlying conflicting ideologies that made bilingual mentors devalue their home languages in school to advance their academic careers or criticized their peers' use of home languages in school. While I found a sense of belonging and community with my

fellow Spanish speakers every time I visited that high school, students tried to distance themselves from being profiled as an ESL student. Those initial encounters with bilinguals in a school setting influenced my choice of doing research with multilingual students who are institutionally classified as ESL students or ELLs.

I understand that when I entered TCC and heard similar discourses regarding the ESL population I developed an awareness of my own biases and views and a sense of advocacy that comes from also experiencing linguistic profiling during my time in graduate school. Although I attempted to present myself as an ally to instructors because of my position as the ESL instructional coach, I am aware of my inner desire to advocate for multilingual students. These views evidently influenced my presence in the research site, my interaction with students, and my approach to data analysis.

I also acknowledge that throughout the study I frequently monitored my language and reflected on the ways that my research design and my decisions as a researcher could be perpetuating deficit views around multilingual students. Every time I conducted an interview with instructors, I reflected on whether or not I stopped and took the time to challenge their views or if I just kept going with my previously structured questions. I try to be honest on the different roles I played in this study. As a graduate student and language teacher of color, who has experienced linguistic discrimination in classrooms in the US, I recognize that issues of social inequality have theoretically and methodologically informed this study. When I read the work on linguistic discrimination authored by Jonathan Rosa, Nelson Flores, Ofelia Garcia, and April Baker-Bell, I recognize that I align to views of liberation and an understanding of language as a socially shaped process in which privilege and institutions of power play an important

role. Even then, I also frequently challenged my tendency to align with my participants' positions, views, and experiences because I need to acknowledge that as a researcher, I am also an outsider and in a position of power. I designed this project with an emphasis on students' voices and experiences as a result of their interaction with institutions that might shape their ideologies about language and their experiences in college. I was involved in their learning process for approximately a year in which I invested time in helping them navigate assignments and projects but also supported them in various issues regarding financial aid, interaction with instructors, academic probation, and so forth.

Being the ESL instructional coach

I had tried to gain access to the site for 6 months before I was offered the position as ESL coach by the dean of humanities who was also part of the ESL working group I attended in Summer 2020. Being the ESL coach allowed me to have access to the students and instructors in a more official and consistent manner. However, being the ESL coach also complicated my role as researcher as I became a participant observer on many occasions and my relationship with student participants was shaped by the fact that I was providing academic support during and after class. My role as an employee also provided me with access to materials and insights that would have not been possible if I were just an outside researcher. I acknowledge that frequently working with students and instructors in the form of academic support allowed me to build relationships and trust as well as to have a deeper understanding of the context and their language experiences and views.

Transcription

After data collection, I used a software called otter.ai premium to generate generic

transcripts of all interviews. As this was a machine-generated transcript, I personally edited each transcript to represent accurately what participants said. In this process of transcription, I did not focus on non-verbal communication as much as I tried to capture confusions, hesitations, and general use of language. With both student and instructor participants, I honored their use of structures, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. I used what Bucholtz (2000) called eye dialect and colloquial spelling to "to capture the flavor of the original speech" (p. 1457). Colloquial spellings such as "wanna" "gonna" "cuz" etc. were transcribed similar to how the speaker produced them. The reasoning behind my decisions not to correct grammar, spelling, syntax, and word choice laid on the exact raciolinguistic premises in which this study is framed debunking the idea that standardized English is the "correct" appropriate language to use. By correcting their language, I would be assuming an authoritative position to policing their language for the sake of readability. I would then be erasing the linguistic identities of my participants. However, by capturing participants' authentic use of language, I do not mean to represent them as lower-status speakers, on the contrary, I want to highlight non-standardized use of language with a focus on meaning.

Finally, some of the transcription conventions used to transcribe interviews included (.) full stop, not necessarily end of a sentence, (?) rising intonation including questions, (,) a gap between utterances, and (...) a sentence which is partially transcribed.

Data Analysis

My data analysis followed three cyclical processes. First, during data collection, every time I conducted an interview, observation, or field notes, I questioned my observations or interview and reflected on how the participant responded to examine

what aspects of the data I took for granted and ignored in the interview or in the field. I wrote researcher memos not only on what stood out to me but also how the participant reacted to the questions; whether they misunderstood the question; and often on how some participants gave short answers during the interview, but during the conversation, before or after they engaged in meaningful conversations about specific interaction with teachers or further explained details of their academic journey in the US. For example, during my interview with Carolina, she would not list any challenges during her time at TCC, but after the interview she gave details of how many sacrifices she made to be able to pay for college and how that affected the time she could dedicate to school. In the following interviews with different participants, I rephrased some questions and added some others that speak to those issues. Analyzing the silences and gaps was also part of this first approach to the data while still collecting. For example, when participants were asked about the question, “Do you think that race plays a role in your experience as a student at TCC?”, most students became silent or immediately replied, “No, I don’t see any racism in the school.” On many occasions I rephrased it as “Students come from different cultural backgrounds, races, and ethnicities that sometimes can make them feel different or have barriers that others don't have. Is this the case for you?” This rephrasing often prompted them to give examples of challenges and issues they have faced during their schooling time in the US. Also, during the observations, I took notes that helped me dive deeper into some of the topics I identified in the observation and field notes, such as student participation, student-teacher interaction, and students’ descriptions of their English language abilities. Also, the first round of observations during Spring 2021 allowed me to structure and do more focused field notes during classroom observation for

Fall 2021. The first set of data was very general and by the second semester of observations, I focused more on student-teacher interaction, teachers' views of language and teachers' view of students' performance.

Before my first approach to coding and during data collection, I familiarized myself with the data before finding patterns, codes, and generalizations. Timmerman and Tavory (2022) suggests that data analysis starts during data collection so in addition to doing what has been already explained, my next step was focused on "who does what? when? where? How and [with] what practical effects?" (p. 21). So, I went systematically through my notes and questioned if I was finding exceptions more than patterns and if there were other places, I should answer the who, what, when, and where. I did it with my researcher memos after each fieldnotes. I noticed how some students were not answering the questions, or whether I pushed back to the narratives of discrimination in which some of my instructor participants engaged. I reformulated questions from the interviews and tried to elicit more information from participants by engaging in deeper conversations. This is the reason why I also decided to apply for an extension of my external IRB to conduct more observations in classrooms during the Fall 2021. Those reflections also led me to change the emphasis on the focus group to now reflect what I was noticing during the fieldnotes, observations and interviews.

This process of reflecting, finding exceptions and questioning was my first approach to data analysis to later engage in the development of codes and themes I explain in the section called *Focused Coding*. In the following paragraphs I present an example of step who *does what? when? where?* with 2 participants; Amani and Sadiya, two students that were in Angela's College 101 class in Spring 2021, the first term I

conducted observations.

Who does what? When and where?

Amani and Sadiya have been friends since high school when they were both newcomers to the US. They took ESL classes together at TCC and were taking College Writing with the same instructor. Amani and Sadiya work on assignments at the library every day after class. One day, while I was taking field notes at the library, they were both sitting on two different computers working on a writing assignment in which they needed to write a story representing themselves in a historical moment of the United States.

[Fieldnotes] *On the table, Sadiya has an example of an essay her instructor shared with the class so they could resemble that paper. Sadiya reads the example essay over and over again. I am sitting two tables away from her writing notes and waiting to talk to Amani and schedule a second interview. As they both work on googling and conducting a search of any prominent character in the US, Sadiya voiced out loud that she has decided to write the paper on the first woman to become a flight attendant in the US, Ellen Church. Sadiya said 'I don't understand what I have to do with this assignment, where should I research? Where should I find information about this topic? She [the instructor] is asking to cite sources using MLA, what is that?' Amani jumped from her chair, came to me, and asked, 'can you check if this is good?' I went over her paper and realized she has copied and pasted from the internet many paragraphs and I suggested to revise the text as she can be accused of plagiarism and that is academic misconduct. Amani, in disbelief, frowned her face, and asked: 'plagiarism? What is that? I remember one of my teachers saying that in class, but I do not know what is that? In my*

country they don't teach that, we don't do sources. Can you teach us?' Sadiya got also interested in the conversation and sat closer to us. I showed them what plagiarism entails and how it can be avoided by adequately citing the sources in-text and at the end of their papers. I downloaded some examples of the structure of a paper and showed them how they could structure sentences and paragraphs not only to accomplish the task but also to avoid plagiarism. Amina sits now by herself and starts rewriting her essay.

Thirty minutes passed, Sadiya had finished the first paragraph of the essay about flight attendants and asked me to read it. I read and gave her feedback on the writing, but I noticed she was not following the instructions. Instead of researching a time in history and connecting it to a fictional character, she was writing a paper about herself. The core of the paper was to do research and apply the information to their own stories. We went over the instructions again and she kept writing. Sadiya wrote about 2 pages and sent it to her instructor for feedback. Amani abandoned the task complaining she could not follow an example when she did not quite understand the instructions of the assignment and had not conducted research before in her life.

While Sadiya was still writing. I conducted my second interview with Amina and on the issues impacting the ESL students she expanded on what just had happened while she was trying to write her Writing class assignment. Amina said "I think because instructions are too hard. Your teacher should only give you instructions. 'Oh, here is the examples of students of past years, they did that. I don't know what you're talking about. I want to have the instructions. I will try to do that, but I'm not going to understand anything.'" She later mentioned how important for these types of issues it is to have a tutor or someone else who supports students academically besides the instructor. She

went on to explain “if we're going to do the project, you are there for us to help us, to explain what is the program, to show us the website. Yes, that's why we pass the classes.” My interactions with Amani and Sadiya during the time at the library motivated me to start thinking about preliminary codes such as class content, role of instructions, student-teacher interaction which later became an important part for the development of themes in the analysis in chapter 4 related to peer support, interaction with instructors, and academic skills.

Answering the questions who does what, what, where, and when helped me connect the scenarios and built a solid foundation for focused coding. Putting together the observational and fieldnotes from my interactions at the library with the students, as well as after the interviews, allowed me to review data before the second interview and expand on those specific elements during informal conversations with other students and during the second interview.

As I went through this reviewing process, I found patterns and changes. Some of those shifts were related to how Amani changed her vision and discourse about her English skills from the first interview to the time I conducted the second interview and followed up with her on the issues facing ESL students. For example, during the first interview, Amani referred to her English skills being “good” and “perfect” because she had taken classes in English since elementary in private schools in Egypt. As time went by, during several interactions and the second interview, Amani indicated that instructors did not consider how ESL students and refugees may have more difficulties completing homework because English is their second language.

I later took more specific field notes in places where Amani was present, whether

it was the library or the classroom with Angela. Answering what and when required me to follow Amani closer. On one summer day, Amani called me and asked me for help understanding an email about her financial aid. It turned out that Amani's GPA was too low to keep her financial aid due to being on academic probation for two consecutive semesters. Amani had failed her writing class and as a consequence she lost her financial aid. We met on campus; in my presence she wrote a letter to the financial aid office in which she explained her struggles with writing and not understanding instructions in her writing class. She also indicated how the lack of support to her as an ESL student and refugee affected her academic performance.

I continued seeing the patterns in the roots of students' issues, whether it was interaction with instructors, staff, a lack of understanding of processes such as financial aid, registration, work as I answered the *what, when and where questions*. As Timmerman and Tavory (2022) suggests, answering the when, how, where questions, also accommodates surprises and provokes researchers to consider what is being taken for granted. That is why, when Amani invited me to her wedding, I accepted not only to reassure her that I was someone to be trusted, but also to find other places in which the same participant could be seen. After all, Amani is not only an ESL student, but a person and part of a community who influences her interaction in school and I was part of that community at the time.

Going to the wedding gave me better insights about Amani's cultural traditions but above all what it meant for her that "her teacher" was there. I was a representation of her school world in her personal space. I was the only person outside her ethnicity present in her wedding. When she sent the invitation, she made emphasis on the impact that her

interactions with me, as an ESL coach and researcher, had on her in her academic endeavors. My main takeaways of attending Amani's wedding were how important peer and community support is for immigrant students. Every person in her reception had a role. Friends and close members of her community oversaw preparing the food, music, and most importantly mine and their understanding of time and schedule. Those two elements helped me understand how different students in the same classroom might experience instructions, content, and interaction with the teacher. All these elements are fundamental in how I carry this data analysis. As most of the student participants in this study are from the African diaspora, every interaction in different spaces shaped my perceptions of the group interpretation of the data.

Creating Analytical Memos

The general sequence of events, connections, patterns and shifts that I found while analyzing the major issues in Amani's and Sadiya's experiences helped me focus on three different events in the data. First, past experiences learning language shaped students' understanding of their current experiences in college. Second, relationships/interactions between students and teachers informed students' perceptions of their language and academic language skills. Third, peer roles or responsibilities mattered in multilingual students' navigation of community college. After answering the *what, when and where*, I conducted the focused coding. First, I read the observations and interview transcripts and looked for a contradiction, a turn of phrase, or what I thought was a strange reaction. Second, I created two subsets of analytical memos. The first subset comprised the following memos that somewhat cluster some of the main topics of the student interviews: Multilingual Learners' Language Learning, Multilingual Learners' Language

Identity, Multilingual Learners' Perceptions of their English Skills, Academic Language Skills, Multilingual Learners' Description of their Language Skills, Language Use at Home, and Language Use in School. The second set of memos related to the subset of students were focused on students' interactions with their instructors because I saw a pattern during the observations and focus groups in which students described specific scenarios and interactions with instructors when they reported issues with the classes. This subset included memos on Multilingual Learners' Perceptions of their Instructors, Description of Classes, and Multilingual Learners' Relationship with their Instructors. The analytic memos allowed me to reflect on patterns and find similarities and differences among the student data set. But these analytical memos only provided a general view of the data. I used a sample of 8 interviews from the students; 4 from wave 1 and 4 from wave 2; 4 interviews from instructors and 5 fieldnotes; to create the analytical memos. I used the interviews and fieldnotes in which participants provided more details.

Focused Coding

Once I attached most memos to the data, I reread the transcripts and created specific codes (mostly in-vivo codes) which better described and condensed the meaning-making process of my participants. Memos more frequently attached in this first round became codes to extract specific descriptors from the big excerpts originally in the memo to represent a smallest unit of data. I began by coding the first set of interviews (wave 1) from student participants looking for patterns on how they used language, how they learned language and how they described their language abilities whether from past experiences or current experiences. Then, I coded the fieldnotes looking for specific

information about these three main topics. Second, I re-coded the second wave of student interviews with a focus on instances of support, challenges, class participation and perceptions of their instructors. These were broad topics that could lead to answering the overarching research questions. In this second phase, I realized that students mostly described their language English skills in a negative way reflecting interactions with other people. I used what Saldaña (2016) called descriptive coding and values coding. In descriptive codes, I documented and categorized the different opinions into a simple phrase or word that captured the entire meaning of the excerpt. In values codes, I captured subjective perspectives. For example, the code Race/instances of racism can be considered subjective from the lens of students, instructor, and me as a researcher. Values coding distinguishes between values, attitudes, and beliefs (Miles et al., 2019). But, especially with the students' data I used in-vivo codes to "prioritize and honor the participants" (Miles et. al., 2019, p. 65). In vivo codes helped me emphasize the language participants used as a reminder to later use them in the main themes of the findings chapters. The following table details how analytical memos were used as a general classification of the in-vivo codes. Some codes are in Spanish to reflect specifically what students said. However, English translations of those instances are provided in the corresponding findings chapter.

Table 3. Memos and in-vivo codes (Student Data Set)

Initial Memos	Descriptors or in-vivo codes in the memos
ML language learning	Home country vs the US Aprendi ingles a empujones English = Money Private schools in home country Es que en newcomer escuchabamos pero no hablabamos

ML language identity	I have English friends only that they speak English My English people I use our language at home but my kids have white friends and they speak English Si quiero actuar cool, hablo en ingles
ML perceptions of their language skills	Academic language skills Competence in language measured by grammar skills Use of big words My English is not as full No hablan Ingles complete Emphasis on writing No tengo conocimiento profundo \ Im not good at it I have an accent Research is considered a high-level skills Es que todavía mis ingles no están muy claro Le pregunto a un compañero porque yo tampoco hablo ingles perfecto My English is not as full as I can sit and write whatever I want Es que todavía mi ingles no está muy bueno
ML perceptions of their instructors or interactions with their instructors	Pedagogical issues in relation to teachers Students' perceptions on teaching materials you give me instructions and you want me to do this by Friday Needs for scaffolding Getting ignored when English is not your first language Deje de hacer tareas y a nadie le importo They are supposed to help you, but they don't Profesores are super nice, I turn assignments late
Description of classes	Easy because explains to emails fast Explains instructions Provides PPT, videos, online support
Lack of support	-No instructions -Lack of guidance (advisors' issues) No support other than financial aid No support to ESL students Support in the form of ESL coach
Peers-group meetings	To do homework To enroll in college To explain instructions Un ejemplo "que dijo la profesora" I text my friends in class Peers Friends Community organizations Teacher is good he gives me some help and explains how to access the blackboard Translation can be seen as a waste of time

Lack of background navigating schools	Los estudiantes siempre están perdidos Nadie ayuda y se tardan en responder Process is really complicated for someone who has never done this before They can't assume I know that from high school as I didn't go to HS here They have to give examples as
Pedagogical issues in relation to teachers	Student's perceptions on teaching materials you give me instructions and you want me to do this by Friday Needs for scaffolding They are supposed to help you but they don't These are your classes you are on your own
Students mentioned Race/racism (lack of)	I don't see any racism No racism in the school but on the streets It doesn't happen to me, but I have seen friends People laugh at my accent Todos los profesores tratan a todos por igual The hispanic students skipped classes –yo miraba y yo decía yo no quiero estar ahí Yo tengo mis motivaciones altas No le gustaba a los Americanos que habláramos español I don't know, he is not American
Class participation	Tenemos miedo de preguntar Participation depends on the communication they have with the instructors
English is connected to Americans	I work with Americans My kids have white friends, so they speak English
Benefits of learning English	Aprender inglés para poder avanzar, para poder actuar como persona Cuando llegamos yo limpiaba baños y ahora estoy en una oficina con computadora
Views of the ESL students	Kids play around, not doing homework in HS Latinos skipeando classes Yo tengo mis motivaciones altas No quiero juntarme con alguien que hable español Juntarme con un estudiante Cubano q el sí hablaba inglés y no estaba skipeando classes
Other issues	No tome ACT so automáticamente en ESL Difficulties paying for school Force me to take ESL classes

For the instructors' interviews, instead of starting with analytical memos and then more focused coding, I started looking for information related to what students have already said, not to compare but to provide a much more complete analysis to respond to the second research questions. I used Dedoose, a web-based program to analyze qualitative data. Some codes were repeated, and some other new codes were created. See Appendix F. For an example of codes attached to excerpts from the instructors' interviews using Dedoose.

After I coded all instructor participant interviews, I used the co-occurrence of memos and codes (See Appendix D) a tool on Dedoose which helped me have a visual representation and understand the frequency of memos and codes, the trends on code application, the connections between those two. After I saw the trends on code co-occurrence, I classified the codes into categories and subcategories. For example, data initially coded as *views of students' backgrounds*, *perceptions of students*, *descriptions of ESL students* were categorized under the subcategory cultural views and later into a bigger category *Views of the Students*. A sample of the arrangement of classification of codes into categories and subcategories is provided below:

1. Category: Instructors' views of students
    - 1.1.1. Subcategory: Code: Perceptions of the Students' cultural background
        - 1.1.1. Code: Students' countries of origin
    - 1.1.2. Subcategory: Code Descriptions of Students' language
        - 1.1.3. Code: Emphasis on writing
        - 1.1.4. Code: Efforts of remediation
        - 1.1.5. Code: Grammar focus

1.1.6. Code: Accent

1.1.3. Subcategory: Code Description of ESL students

1.2. Code: Classification of ESL students

1.3. Code: Effort and more work

1.4. Code: Help-seeking

1.5. Code: Comparison of students

1.6. Code : Native Vs Non-native speakers

1.7. Code: Language teaching

As focused coding continued, I realized some of the codes were repetitive and I moved them around to fit accordingly. Sometimes, some general codes were connected to more than one subcategory and category. Thinking and re-thinking this coding process allowed me to see the connections to tell a story, especially for chapter 4. I wanted to avoid the segmentation of data that gets lost into dozens of codes and memos. Thinking about the ways in which students connected their own narratives in the interviews and using the in-vivo codes, I created the main themes displayed in chapter 4 and 5.

CHAPTER IV

(DE)LEGITIMIZATION OF MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGING IN ACADEMIC SETTINGS

This chapter examines the results of my data analysis process and explores the three major categories I established through my first focused coding cycle from the students' data. Three broad themes emerged from the analysis which respond to my first overarching research question: What are multilingual students' perceptions of their academic experiences in the college-level classes? as well as the sub-questions: How do multilingual students describe their language skills? and how do multilingual learners' linguistic histories connect to their current academic experiences at the community college? First, I examine multilingual students' perceptions of their language skills. Those perceptions reveal notions about language shaped by their experience with language learning and their negotiation of identities while talking about language use. I use both Rosa's (2016) ideologies of language standardization and ideologies of languagelessness to explain how multilingual students' understanding of their language skills come from the learned circulating ideologies of what language skills are valued in educational institutions. As Rosa (2016) suggests these two concepts "call into question linguistic competence–and, by extension, legitimate personhood–altogether" (p. 162). In doing so, I draw attention to how multilingual students' perceived lack or deficiencies in academic English skills are connected to their perceptions of accentedness. Thus, I make explicit connections with the social construct of race through students' perceptions of

accent and English as a Second Language. Their ideas of accent and ESL are markers not only of their English language skills but also their language and academic competence in comparison to White Mainstream English (Baker-Bell, 2017) speakers due to their constant interaction with instructors and staff who value "American" language use as the standard and take a position of the White Listening Subject. I use the White Listening Subject (Flores and Rosa, 2015) to explain how MLs' interaction with the White American impact the way they see themselves as language speakers and how they describe their English skills abilities. Secondly, I argue that multilingual students often rely on peer support to navigate and succeed in college. In this inner circle, students found a space free of judgment, embarrassment and fears that created a safe learning environment. Finally, in the last theme, I demonstrate that multilingual students' main challenges and issues in college go beyond linguistic parameters and stem from their current and former interaction with instructors and administrators in past schooling experiences and college.

"My English Is Not as Full": Multilingual Students' Characterization and Description of their Academic Language Abilities in the First Year of College

Multilingual students' perceptions of their language skills are shaped by their experiences learning English before and during their time at TCC and are manifested in how they talk about their identities and language use. To arrive at these findings, I used codes connected to language identity, language learning, multilingual learners' perceptions of their language skills including academic language skills, language and race, benefits of learning English and English connected to Americans and Whiteness. I framed students' views of language on languagelessness ideologies that come from the

circulating discourses of what language skills are considered valued and legitimate in their former and current educational institutions. Multilingual students viewed accent as an indicator of or lack of skills which delineates a difference between them (immigrants and emerging bilinguals) and "Americans" whose first language is English. Through interaction with the White Listening Subject MLs came to assess their English Language Proficiency. Hence, I use the concept of "Listening Subject" and sometimes "White Listening Subject" (Flores and Rosa2015) to analyze students' reported interaction with other students or instructors who judged their language performance and how that judgmental interaction contributes to students' language ideologies. By the end of this section, I use the connection of language and identity to unpack what the "ESL student" label means to the construction or negotiation of identities for multilingual learners.

Grammar and Accent as Markers of Language Skills

When I asked multilingual students to describe their language skills. They often responded with statements and experiences that defined their skills as the abilities to "write well", to have (good) "grammar" skills and "accent". For example, in the second interview Amani discussed how difficult "the grammar" is and taking classes that are content related while being "a refugee" and "ESL" student. She indicated that multilingual students often lack the knowledge to take college classes and referred to "grammar" or "academic school" as something difficult for "ESL students" to attain especially with COVID-19-imposed restrictions when TCC suspended placement tests and students were sent arbitrarily to ESL classes without taking the usual entry language assessments.

This grammar-focus view was shared by other interviewees. Carlos and Oneida,

when asked about their English skills, they immediately measured their English competence by their grammar abilities as well. Regarding this idealized sense of language correctness, Carlos expressed "*Yo creo que mi gramática está mejor en inglés que en español*" [I think that my grammar is better in English than in Spanish] while Oneida said "because I know when I speak you can notice the accent, probably you can notice, you know I have some problems with has or have or had, that's a big agghhhh, my grammar, so, probably I know I make mistakes, you know, I'm conscious that I have those problems so I know it is not I cannot say 100 % I can say a nine but not 100%". In addition to providing commentary and examples of her issues with English grammar, Oneida also mentioned her accent when talking about her proficiency in the English language. Ruhina and Ousman expressed similar concerns. For example, Ousman, who spoke English in Gambia, his home country, since elementary school, when describing his English competence, he said:

> *Ousman*: Because anywhere I go if you speak English, I'm able to understand I can read and write we can communicate. Do I have accent? Yes, but like there's nothing you can't tell me or read something I cannot understand.
> *Yohimar*: Yes, so you consider yourself like an 8 because you have an accent?
> *Ousman*: 8 number 8 from 1 to 10, I will rate myself 8 number 8
> *Yohimar*: Yes, that's what I am saying, like why would you say 8? You said 8 because you have an accent?
> *Ousman*: Yes, that's what I can say. Like I am not perfect, I can't call myself a 10. I don't know everything, no. I can't say that.

This idea of "perfection" or "perfect English" is attached to an idea of accentlessness that multilingual learners usually also connect to Americans or not having an American accent. Ruhina, an Iranian student who recently arrived in the US to go to college, shared a similar idea when responding to her experiences learning English

“because, like, it's their language, like you're in that place. Everyone is, like, you're going to learn from basic the right words, like, um, it begins here, like, is like, the accent is correct” when she referred to taking ESL classes here in the US versus Iran, her home country.

Romi, a student from Somalia, also responded to the same question by saying “I don't know. It's just like my accent... My accent is not great…” to which I asked for clarification on what she meant by that, and she responded: “Like, I think some people sometimes they don't understand what I say because I don't have an American accent…I think I would be more confident if I had one.” By “they” Romi referred to a listening subject who is more likely to be other “Americans” who are White. I use the White Listening Subject to explain students’ beliefs about their language practices. In this case, Romi saw herself in need to have an American accent. MLs often compared themselves to White native speakers, as an embodied category of legitimate speakers of English in comparison to them who are emerging bilinguals. Although MLs did not necessarily employed the term White Listening Subject, I use it to describe how students’ socialization in a society and schools which value language practices used by native speakers shape their beliefs and ideas of the language they should learn and use.

Feeling Shy and Embarrassed in the Presence of Whites

In this section, I also use the White Listening Subject as an ideological position to explain students’ discussion of feeling embarrassed or “shy” to speak when the class is “full of Americans” as Romi said: “when it is one language only, they might get [...] they might not be comfortable asking questions or answering anything so…” Romi distinguished “one language” as referring to monolingual English speakers versus

multilingual students in the classroom who may not feel “comfortable” participating in class. Interaction with “Americans” and the authority they represent as legitimate speakers of English also impact multilingual students’ own ideas of what they are capable of as English speakers. For instance, Ruhina expressed that “but now, I prefer to speak English because it helps me and they can fix me, like, there was like, Oh, you can say this one instead of this one, and I'm learning more.” By “fixing”, Ruhina is reflecting a popular ideology in which Americans are in a different position to correct her language use than those who speak English as an additional language. She also drew on these ideas when she described her interaction with American instructors who can teach her “their language” with a “correct accent.” Ruhina went on to explain that she feels “uncomfortable” because she thinks she is “bothering them. Because like, I'm making them to, like, explain it more than one time, or, like, ask them to say it slowly. So sometimes, I think I'm bothering them.”

Many interviewees agreed that this sense of embarrassment and concern does not arise when in groups with other multilingual students. When the White Listening Subject is not present, MLs did not feel embarrassed or shy to speak in English. Romi indicated “if I am doing it with a friend from other country… it will just be English. And we don't have to worry about getting some things wrong because both of us have English as a second language.” Amina also discussed being “scared of making mistakes when speaking in class” so she writes the questions to the instructor and passes it on at the end of the class. Ruhina’s comment below also showed a similar opinion regarding being in the classroom with other multilingual students:

> Because I think in my classes, maybe because it's in TCC, or like, most of

> these students are from different countries. And English is their second language too, so they can understand me. And like, what I want to explain to them because English is their second language, it's easier for them to understand what I'm talking because they are trying the same way to like talk to me. So, I think it's more comfortable to talk with students in my class then. […] it was easier to communicate with other people who came from other countries and spoke another language than English. It's easier to communicate with them because, I don't know, it just [...] (8:01) if they're gonna make fun of your English or accent.

Those views surfaced also regarding speaking English in other public spaces. Ruhina continued explaining the reasons she never wanted to talk to her cousin's friends because she was "embarrassed" and "scared" to speak English because "she thought she was "going to say something wrong." Sadiya commented something similar regarding her participation in class. She stated "if I was ESL students okay, I can talk however I want to talk, because they are, their English is like mine. But if there is American student I don't talk louder, I just go and ask him [the teacher]." The White Listening Subject is not only represented by instructors, but also other English-speaking peers who are not multilingual. Sadiya implied here that the presence of a White American resulted in her changing the ways she would normally act in class.

These feelings of embarrassment or fear were mostly triggered by past negative experiences in their interaction with "Americans" when multilingual students have been "laughed at" or "made fun of" because of the way they speak English. Carlos and Yodit discussed incidents that happened in high school in which other students "laughed" at his accent. Carlos also mentioned "no le gustaba a los americanos que habláramos espanol en high school" [Americans didn't like us to talk in Spanish" "Cuando hay un americano hablo ingles" [When there is an American, I speak English." Ruhina agreed with those statements and shared a similar opinion by saying: "when I'm talking my own

language, and people couldn't understand, they're just turning around and like looking me like, am I talking about them or something bad? So, I don't like that feeling. So, I tried to talk English as much in public to like, make them to look at me." Interactions with others, like the ones commented here, determine how students "feel" about themselves and their language use. Ruhina later on in the same interview mentioned that "but like, sometimes, when they're like, trying, like asking me, if you want, I can explain it in this way. So, in that case, I was like, getting more comfortable, because like, I'm seeing that she's trying to help me. And she's happy with that. So, I will…"

Interactions with the White American and History with Language Learning

I identify and understand that more than feelings that come from within, these beliefs and views are the result of students' interactions with the listening subject who perpetuate the idea of a deficient use of English and a marginalization of other languages in their former schools and now in college. This idealization and legitimization of language is not connected to just any American speaking and listening subject of English but the "White American". For example, when Amina described her experiences of arriving in the US as a newcomer, she indicated that her American classmates were "surprised" by her English skills. She was asked "are you sure you are here for 2 weeks? How is your English so perfect? how do you know to speak and read and write English?"

These interactions are iterations of how multilingual students have learned that the listening subject can judge their language use and language learning experiences. The validation and invalidation of what is considered "perfect" "good" "correct" is discussed by these students as a product of social interaction with their surrounding

world, in and outside educational spaces. A world that perpetuates ideas of language based on Whites' use of language. To illustrate, when I asked Ousman to talk about languages used at home or school, he explained:

> We use like most of the time you know my son for him and my daughter most of the time we speak our language, but they always speak English too. They speak our language but like most of these kids they keep watching this YouTubes and especially my son who got most of his friends here and this neighborhood here like White friends I can say like my neighbors here, they are white people. So, my son's friends are White people. So, all their languages is English and my daughter goes there too. So, they all what they speak is English.

Yodit shared similar opinions regarding her language choice in the presence of other people. She explained "Oh, if it's like, it's like if you're we have same, we are same like, same country same. We can speak Tigrinya. Yeah. If like American is all white. We can speak in English we can try to speak." Ousman and Yodit are more likely to connect English with Whites which makes more obvious the relations of language and race and how White speakers are seen as the default legitimate speakers of English and at the same time separate multilingual students as belonging to other races.

Yet multilingual students interviewed lacked explicit awareness of this intersection to name it as such. Often puzzled and confused, most students during the interviews did not know what I meant when I asked them to describe their race and ethnicity. As recent immigrants to the US, my participants were new to the meanings of race relations in the US and often had a hard time articulating their thoughts regarding the role of race in their experiences in school. For example, Amani said: "I don't see any racist. [racism]" when I asked about her experiences with race or the role of race or racism in her schooling experiences, but then later in the interview she reported some

racist incidents that happened to other students. As Sadiya was sitting next to us at the time of the interview, she often interrupted the conversation to tell her experiences about the given topic. At that moment, Sadiya interrupted to explain an incident on the bus when another "American kid" pulled off her hijab and as "she could not speak English", her only words were "be careful". Sadiya and Amina both laughed, and we continued with the interview.

When I asked the same question to Ruhina, she reported not having experienced racism in the US but later on when explaining her feelings of "not fitting in" and not belonging she explained:

> They just put them in the groups, like, when I like, go to pick my sister from the school, or like sometimes in the college, like, peoples are groups like Asians together, like, blacks together, white people together. Or like, for example, Indian people together like Persian people together, like they are just separate they are not together. Like I've never seen, like, different cultures being in the same group, maybe they are talking to each other, like in the class or asking for help, but I never seen them like walking together or like sitting outside together. Yeah. that's really hard to see[…]white people goes out together, sit in chair together, black people sit in chair together. Like they're not trying to be mixed.

While Ruhina suggested not having experienced racism and could not explicitly recall instances of negative personal experiences with race, she recognized that race is an element that segregates groups of students at the community college and that is "hard to see." This type of contradictory comment suggests that one, the concept of race and talking about race may still be overlooked by some multilingual students and, two, the connection may still be difficult to grasp.

Ousman, who has been in the US for 10 years, on the other hand, was the only participant who explicitly reported having experienced a racially motivated incident in a former community college he had attended in New York. Ousman was rejected from a

job when the employer realized he was a Black African at the job interview. Ousman has spent a longer time in the US and may be able to identify racial tensions and aggressions more easily than newer immigrant students.

Multilingual students' former and current interaction with the "White American" either regarding language or race helped them frame their self-reported language skills and how they see themselves as language users in relation to the "White American" and other multilingual students. When Carlos responded with "My English no está muy claro" [My English is not very clear] "Si quiero actuar cool, digo frases en ingles" [If I want to act cool, I say phrases in English] to the question about language choice in school and other public places, he demonstrated how English is connected to the notion of being "cool". Speaking in English in front of other multilingual students makes him feel "cool" implies identities shifting shaped by language choice.

Sadiya, on the other hand, nuanced the White American language views by talking about educators' lack of high expectations of multilingual students. She explained that instructors usually assumed that multilingual students "don't know anything" because "we don't speak English very well, and we are starting from, like from the first the first grade. Yes, because we start from high school in America, they think that we don't know anything". Sadiya implied that instructors treat multilingual youth as children who are in the initial stages of their education because they did not go to school in the US, as if they are catching up with their education. Further, she recalled how in high school, a fellow multilingual classmate who did not know the English alphabet was shamed by his teacher when being asked "did you go to first grade, what are you? are you a grown man and really you don't know, she is. Yeah, she used to say that. But if she if she could ask him. I

also, I mean his first language, alphabet. I think he knows everything, read, and write." Sadiya demonstrated a great understanding on how English language skills are not equivalent to knowledge and intelligence of a student and that multilingual students often bring a wealth of knowledge to the classroom even when they are emerging bilinguals.

Mirtha provides another example of how students' history with the language or language used in school impacts the way they see themselves as English speakers. Mirtha reported not having "a deep knowledge of English" and preferring Spanish over English if "she really wants to understand what is being said". Yitzy, although growing up bilingual, born and raised in the US, when talking about her language skills she commented "I don't know, I feel like I'm not too good at it, but I'm also not… like I can understand it and write it, like I don't struggle with that as much". During the interview, Yitzy was quiet and appeared uncomfortable answering this question. She later explained in the interview that she was put in ESL classes in elementary school even though she was bilingual. Her school and parents made this decision because Spanish was spoken at home.

Being Institutionally Classified as an "ESL student"

Despite the presence of multilingual students from many linguistic backgrounds, the ESL program and the practice of the institution operates as a mechanism to reinforce standard English policies only. This is evident in two students' stories about being classified as ESL students. Ousman's story of his enrollment at TCC after having to take a language placement test as shown in the excerpt below:

> Because they said my writing was good. And it said it was too but even though they said I passed but like they were trying to force me to take the ESL class. That's when I told them, no, I'll go to University of Cloud City

> [pseudonym]. I'm not like, I've been like admitted there. But the problem is like they wanted me to do in person classes. That's the only thing. If you don't want me, just give me my papers, but I'm not taking ESL class. I've learned English from my 1st grade until I graduated college. And my documents are there, school documents are there to prove everything is in English. So why they're trying to force me like I'm from a Francophone country? I'm not from a francophone country, I'm from an anglophone country. Francophone is like those African countries which speak French. Anglophone countries are countries which speak English. So I'm from those countries, we speak English. So, I don't see the reason for them pushing me to take English. So, I told them if you don't want me, well fine.

The excerpt above showed examples of how being institutionally framed as "ESL students" by an institution who othered them and perceived them as non-White English speakers affected Yitzy and Ousman's access to education, in different ways. While Yitzy was placed in ESL classes in PreK and elementary school even when she was raised bilingual; Ousman advocated for himself and his reassurance of being a legitimate English speaker from an English-speaking country in Africa allowed him to insist on the correspondent procedures for enrollment. While Yitzy's classification as an ESL student happened in K-12 school, the two stories reflect how institutions perceived and profiled students who do not belong to the dominant culture. Ousman was also an experienced student who had attended another community college in the US in the past which could have also motivated his attitude and use of resources towards solving his situation. He had a former reference of similar procedures for registration. However, when other less experienced bilinguals face similar situations, the outcomes might not always be favorable. For Example, Oneida asked for help in a local community organization to understand the application and registration process at TCC, the cost and financial aid possibilities. Also, when Ruhina tried to enroll at TCC she was considered

an out of state student which would represent a more expensive tuition fee. She reported being “nervous” and expressed the following:

> I go to the admissions office every day, financial aid. It takes about one semester and half for me to solve it. And it was really hard for me to fix it. It was so hard for me, especially when English is your second language, it's hard to explain them and understand them. So, it was really hard for me to like, fix it. And it's kind of so nervous because you have to pay more. And like, it's your first semester, you don't know.

Unlike Ousman, Ruhina could not solve her enrollment issues immediately and as a consequence, she paid a higher tuition fee for two semesters. In her story, Ruhina also commented on the challenges of navigating bureaucratic processes when “English is your second language.” Ruhina is probably alluding to “understanding” and “explaining” to the college employees when they have just recently arrived in the US. Beyond a language concern, there is a lack of knowledge on how to navigate administrative college processes, which are also part of attending any institution of higher education in the US. On many occasions, other student participants faced similar situations. Amani was put on academic probation after her first semester at TCC and while she continued receiving emails from academic advising, it was not until she lost her financial aid that she came to the realization of the implications of being on academic probation. Sadiya, one afternoon while I was taking notes during their study time at the library, was dealing with a rejection from her FAFSA application as she ticked the box “dependents” while having her parents listed as her main source of income. This resulted in an inconsistency in her records at TCC and a suspension of her financial aid. Sadiya was not aware of the situation until I read the email and called the TCC financial aid office. She reported having received prior emails, but she could not

understand what she needed to do to solve the problem. These bureaucratic processes complicate MLs' experiences in college as they navigate these processes while also learning English and learning how to attend college in the US.

Multilingual students often deleted emails without reading them or simply overlooked important information in their emails. During class, while I was observing a College 101 session with Angela in Spring 2021, a student from Sudan asked me for help to call the financial aid office to request her refund; she hadn't been able to get it for a semester. She was not aware of the refund activation process in the student self-service portal. These types of situations might happen due to lack of background knowledge and navigational skills of college but also due to a lack of support on behalf of the college staff. Sadiya indicated that in the financial aid office, when they hear her accent or their inability to address the issues straightforwardly, multilingual students often get dismissed on the phone.

The institutionally framed "ESL students" label not only impacted students' access to the benefits as any other student but also affected how multilingual learners perceived themselves as deficient users of English. The interactions with the "White American" who they considered a legitimate speaker of English shaped how they described their competence in English and the values and perceived benefits they could attain if they knew English "better". Navigating bureaucratic processes in a new schooling system in a new country when students have different cultural backgrounds, maybe not similar to the US, resulted in many confusions students and (sometimes staff and instructors) attributed to a lack of English language. Many interviewees often held deficit views of their own language skills that were also expressed as their own identities

regarding language. Expressions such as "*Aprendí inglés a empujones…todavía mi inglés no está muy claro*" [I pushed my way through learning English…My English is still not very clear] (Carlos), "I don't have a deep knowledge of English" (Mirtha), "I'm not fluent in their language" (Romi), or "I don't know. Cuz, I feel like I don't. I don't speak very well. And I don't know a lot of word. There is a lot of words that I don't know. Yeah, cuz I don't use the word, I use easiest word. I don't use the big words" (Sadiya)--all demonstrate how multilingual learners belittled their English language abilities even when they were taking college-level classes in their first year and had tested out of the ESL program. Thus, confusions although connected to language according to students also dealt with the lack of cultural knowledge related to the navigation of school in the US.

But the use of the label "ESL student" and the consequences of this labeling for their abilities and future academic attainment also brought up some conflicting and complex ideas of selves for multilingual students. Some viewed the term "ESL" as an opportunity rather than a struggle. For example, Mana, during the focus group, mentioned: "I don't mind being an ESL student because I had like really good experiences in elementary and middle school" so historically this word is associated with "extra support" from her teachers. Mana was more likely to extrapolate these positive connotations during her college experiences. Juan, on the other hand, described being an "ESL student" as "a challenge" and as medium of "change" in his social status, he said: "you are putting yourself to like a goal or something like you want to be in the future and then at the same time like you are a different person you are gonna like change." He continued explaining that his Spanish speaking co-workers in the kitchen,

his current work, did not see the need to learn English while as he learned English, he would be able to “stop what you were doing before and then become a different person.” While Juan attached meanings of future benefits and social mobility to the “ESL student” label, other students manifested having more negative experiences with the term.

For example, Gilda’s connection to the “ESL” term is that of being “automatically hard” as she struggled to convince herself that English “is her second language, this is not something like you were born with so he is gonna take you time, it's gonna take you more time than other students" Gilda believed that “other students" might take less time to understand instructors as if their language skills give them automatic power and skills to do so. While Gilda assumed an identity of “ESL student” connected to slower academic progress, Siti believed, or in her own words “felt” that if she did not “do the best” in her writing class (not considered ESL), she was “less than a college student”. For multilingual students, English language proficiency creates complicated academic identities between being “ESL students” and “college students” and in some instances, these complex and fluid identities urged them to distance themselves from the label “ESL” as Carolina mentioned in her interview “I’m not an ESL student.”

She did not want to be associated to other students “who skip classes” because she has “sus motivationes altas” [high motives], as implying that other multilingual students lack the motivation to pursue an education and prefer to skip classes.

As I stated in chapter 2 regarding language and identity, multilingual learners are acting on the assumption about their language, the implicit ideology that saturates the

messages they receive from the White American, that results in diminishing their language abilities by comparing them to an idealized version of language proficiency. This idealized unattainable language proficiency might stem, as I have explained at the beginning of this theme, from what multilingual students considered is valued in school or in society in general. Instances of this assumption can be seen in what Carlos and Yodit said during their second interviews. Carlos said: "you get ignored when English is not your first language" and that he needs to learn English "pa poder avanzar como persona" [to be able to advance as a person]. Yodi shared a similar opinion shown in the following quote: "I can like do more things because my opinion is appreciated like when I speak English a little bit." Similarly, Sadiya explained not being able to "do anything without speaking English…a job or rent a house." These examples reflect, one, an explicit desire of multilingual learners to benefit from the supposed capital implicitly connected to learning and being "fluent" in English and two, how these participants distance themselves from their identity as an English speaker as if they were not speakers of English already.

Those examples also allow for an understanding of multilingual learners' negotiation of membership to their social networks in school. Most multilingual students interviewed seemed to be detached from their identities as English speakers. Ruhina manifested this distance when referring to her White instructors teaching "in their own language" or when she said "like, I'm living here. But it doesn't feel like I belong here. Because maybe it's not my first language" regarding her time in the US. This membership through language is what also makes multilingual learners find a sense of connection with other multilingual learners. When I asked Romi about language choice

when doing homework with friends, she replied that “it's just really comfortable to speak our language, other than English.” Ruhina expressed a similar idea by explaining that multilingual learners separate in groups because “they can speak your own language with those friends. That's one way that they're trying to separate. Because like the other people, you have to speak English. And it's hard. So, you're trying to be with your friends that [are] from the same country.” Thus, multilingual learners’ distance themselves from the English- speaking peers not only to find membership in the groups that share the same language mostly because their inner groups are where they find social and academic support. I will explain this idea of peer support in the following section.

Peer Support in Multilingual Students’ Navigation of College and Mediation of Learning

Multilingual learners frequently found support in peers during classroom interactions, homework and any other activities that involved college such as registration, navigation of financial aid, and solving any other administrative issue. Some of the codes I use in this theme are *language brokering in MLs’ academic success, lack of background navigating schools, student needs, lack of support from TCC*. In this section I also show evidence of examples of how students described their use of translation and translation tools to resolve real-time communication barriers and as a problem-solving strategy to do homework in groups or on their own.

Peer Support during Class

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, during Spring 2021, Angela’s College 101 class was hybrid and divided in two groups; half attended on Mondays and the other half on

Wednesdays. Angela usually started the class by giving instructions on the final project. She would start every class talking about the assignments due at the end of the day or week. This Monday morning, students needed to complete the first section of the final assignment, a career research project. For this career research project, students wrote a 3-section paper about their career choice describing their majors, the reasons for their choices and conducted some online research about the potential jobs, salaries, requirements, etc. In this paper, students also conducted an interview with someone working in their intended field. Finding and contacting an interviewee was usually a struggle for multilingual students who were new to the country and/or lacked background knowledge about the career. Sometimes students struggled to properly write emails to contact workers in their field. This Monday morning, Sadiya and Amani shared a table in the middle of the classroom while listening to Angela's instructions for the paper. Angela asked students for possible questions to be asked during their interviews and some students gave options while Angela was summarizing the main points on the board. Meanwhile some students were raising their hands to participate, Sadiya and Amani took notes, Amani on her computer and Sadiya on her notebook. They did not raise their hands to participate in the brainstorming. After the class finished, Amani and Sadiya went to the library, and I followed them. When we got there, Yodit was sitting at a computer desk along with other students. Everyone was sitting on the institutional desktops. I sat down at one of the desks waiting for them to initiate any sort of interaction with me as they usually did.

Sadiya and Amani started a conversation about the career research project and asked each other about the instructions. They seemed confused about the project so I sat

across their table and asked if I could help. We went through the blackboard template of the project and the instructions Angela gave during class. Both Sadiya and Amani sat down and started debriefing about who to interview and the possible electronic sources to find information about the career project. Yodit joined the conversation and Sadiya responded to her in Tigrinya. Amani would speak in English and Sadiya and Yodit would translate to each other in Tigrinya. The main issue was about contacting the person to be interviewed. Amani seemed concerned about finding an interviewee. Amani's intended major was Medical Assisting while Yodit and Sadiya wanted to go into Nursing. This situation resembled many of my visits to the library where multilingual students gathered usually after class. They moved through computers, helped each other to complete assignments, sat down and discussed their assignments and often with other multilingual students who took the same classes in former semesters. Sadiya would go back and forward using English and Tigrinya with Yodit and other students who seemed to know each other. I often participated in their conversations and assisted them while doing homework. From those interactions in the library and the interviews, I gathered most of my field note data.

While interviewing Amani the second time, she referred to these meetings at the library but also how multilingual students use language brokering during class. She said: "Sometimes I used to explain my friend. If they don't understand the English when the teacher explains. I try to explain them using my language or Arabic." Amani speaks Somali and Arabic, and she reported using both languages to aid understanding during class. She continued by saying that "I look around to see who can help me in class". Amani asks her peers for help before asking her instructor. Mirtha also responded

something similar by saying that “we often send each other text messages while in the classroom asking: did the professor say this? [...] or what did the professor say?” As multilingual students often did not feel comfortable to participate or ask questions during class, they found in their peers the linguistic support to be able to mediate learning in real time.

Peer Support outside the Classroom: More than Translation and Interpretation

Carolina also indicated she used to get calls from a Cuban classmate to do homework together and having to “translate everything the first month” and “use the dictionary” while completing assignments. Carolina also mentioned that if it wasn't for her classmate, she would have gotten a worse grade which indicates that in this case peer support is crucial for her academic success in college. This peer support often happened because many multilingual students felt “lost” as Carlos mentioned that “los estudiantes siempre están perdidos” [the students are always lost] y “nadie ayuda” [nobody helps] which suggests a lack of support from the instructors or/and the institution. Carlos emphasized that when he stopped doing homework “a nadie le importo” [Nobody cared]. At the time of the interview, Carlos was behind on his assignments and these comments probably related to the instructors who, at the time, did not seem to care because they never reached out to him to ask why he was not able to turn in the assignments. But language brokering for multilingual students not only occurred for academic reasons, but some interviewees also relied on their friends or classmates to navigate administrative procedures in college. For instance, Mirtha reported being helped by a Mexican student to enroll at TCC her first semester because she “did not know English.” Oneida shared a similar experience during registration when she first arrived in the US, she said:

> If nobody explained to you, you know, ok you need to do this and this and this, and to get a career you need to do this first and then make an application to actually be inside of the program, it is, in my case we didn't have internet in Cuba until a few years ago, we don't have that kind of access to the internet and knowledge about it, so, in my case I'm a disaster with technology, so here was twice hard figuring out how I was going to find this information, or where I could go to get an explanation of it.

Language constraints, however, were not the only cause of these challenges to navigate bureaucratic procedures–Oneida already knew English before coming to the US–but rather a lack of prior background on navigating the college system in the US. She continued explaining that "the process, it is really complicated for somebody that never has to do that before in his own country." Oneida found support in a community organization who offered career services and "they talked a lot about how the system worked here…the change and the money". Oneida's issues did not stem from a language deficiency but a lack of background knowledge on the typical college procedures. Ruhina spent two semesters paying out-of-state tuition and with peer support, she solved the problem when her cousin, who was also a TCC student, came with her to "translate things…to the people in the office". She was also assisted by another classmate with a similar situation who happened to work in the admission office "showed her the easy ways to follow to change that."

Multilingual students also used language brokering (the act of interpreting and translating for others), to bridge the gap caused by having different educational backgrounds in an institution whose services are tailored to the White American.

Handling western writing conventions such as MLA represented a challenge for some multilingual students. Ousman spoke about the difference between writing essays in his country and the US. He explained, “We do not use that we used to like writing essays. We have writing the essay on comprehension, and reading a paragraph and summarizing but like citing MLA, or maybe APA. It is something new to me”. He reported reaching out to friends who “go to the university” and taught him “how to do it”. Yodit reported getting help from a community organization leader while Ruhina gathered with her friends at the library to complete a psychology assignment because “the words were so hard”. Sadiya and Amani also commented something similar by saying they needed “people to explain for them” because they could not do it “by themselves.”

The rest of the multilingual students whose comments are not being explicitly quoted here have also used some sort of peer support whether inside the college or outside to complete homework, scaffold instructions, or even navigate institutional bureaucracies related to college admission, registration, and financial aid. In many of my visits to TCC, I witnessed Saima, Siti, Gilda and Juan in groups doing homework or discussing instructions of assignments using multiple languages. Also, during library sessions, other multilingual students that were not part of my participant sample gathered at the library to work on assignments and help each other.

Language brokering and peer support represented in this chapter may be determined by the perceived lack of support multilingual students indicated when I asked, “How is the college supporting you?” or “How do you think TCC supports ESL students?” A common view expressed during the interviews was that support equals the type of financial aid received in terms of scholarships and other forms of monetary

assistance. When asked about the ESL services provided by the college, most students seemed confused or responded that they were not benefitting from ESL services. While a majority agreed that they did not receive support other than the ESL classes, Ousman acknowledged other type of support by saying that "to be honest with you, as of now TCC, the only thing I can say they supported me is like providing lecturers, like advisors like you for coaches and advisor, then apart from that, I don't think they you're supporting me." In addition to Ousman, Siti mentioned the library tutoring center as a type of support received by the college. Somehow, most multilingual students, except Ousman, did not see my role, ESL instructional coach, as a service provided by the college to help them succeed academically which was the intention of the creation of the position by the administrator.

Peer support was instrumental for students to navigate institutional services and bureaucratic situations but also instructors played a role in how those services were delivered to the students, more specifically inside the classroom. Beyond the institutional services and the navigation of those services by the MLs, students also referred to their instructors as a fundamental part of their experiences navigating the college or even the reason why they looked for support among their peers. Even when instructors might be part of those services and views of the institution as a whole, MLs shared specific examples of interactions and perceptions of their instructors that were also crucial in their learning experiences in the first year of college and during their time in the ESL program.

Beyond Language Parameters: Multilingual Students' Ideas of Care and Interaction with Instructors Inside and Outside the Classroom

In this section I present evidence of how students described their experiences with

instructors, the challenges they faced, and their views of relationships with them. I provide evidence of how instructors are crucial in students' academic success in college as well as instrumental for the completion of homework assignments and classroom participation.

"But our Professor was so Nice": MLs' Descriptions of Classes, Materials and Instructors

"But our professor was so nice. And like he was like understanding everything. And the way he was like teaching the videos he was putting on a blackboard", Ruhina noted when I asked her to describe the classes and her instructors. Multilingual students labeled instructors as "nice" and classes as "easy" when instructors provided scaffolded instruction, audiovisual materials while also being responsive through online (mostly email) interaction. For instance, Ruhina described classes as "fun" when instructors used "cartoon characters" and "videos" she could later watch to help with the assignments at home. She emphasized that being "an ESL student from a different country" put her at a disadvantage because "everything here was different", so she could watch the videos multiple times at home without the pressure of a real-time lecture or class interaction. However, if instructors did not provide enough instructions and materials during synchronous online interaction, it would be more difficult, she said. Otherwise, she preferred face-to-face classes because she is an "ESL student" and has the "need to see people." She later provided more details about her math class as follows:

> I had problems with understanding it because it was more than more work problems, than math problems. So, it was hard for me to understand some of the meanings. So, I always asked my teacher for meeting online or meeting in our office hours in campus, and they always like, open time for us and like, we can go over on the problems for more than one hour or more. And we always, and I was

comfortable to ask questions. Because they always have time to solve it.

Thus, if instructors were open to provide support outside the classroom, multilingual students were more likely to complete assignments successfully and seek guidance from the instructors in the future. Students articulated care in terms of instructors' willingness and disposition to support them outside the classroom. Ruhina continued: "When they like happy to help you or trying to teach you something or have like, put effort on it to help you. Like, it makes me comfortable to ask more questions. But like when they just didn't pay attention. I couldn't ask anymore." More than a personality trait, instructors' welcoming atmosphere incentivized multilingual students to participate in class and ask further questions that resulted in a more efficient completion of the assignments and therefore better academic performance. In chapter 5, I discuss how instructors discussed and perceived help seeking by the multilingual students, which was crucial for me to contrast with the interview data from the students in this chapter and the reasons why students avoid asking for help from instructors and tutoring services in the college.

Ousman shared similar opinions regarding the responsiveness of instructors and the quality of materials for online instruction. He indicated:

> Well, I can say, College 101, I wish she was the lecturer for all my courses because it's the best approach for me. I have no issue, her explanations, her PowerPoint, her slides. It is so easy to comprehend. I just watched it and listen to what it is just the simple thing. You just listen to what she said. And what the slides are so easy to do. Yeah, it's also easy. It's just like bread for me. And I love it and I give her compliments. Like, I wish she was my lecturer from all my classes because she is so easy to understand, actually have no problem. English was a little bit hard, but can I think at the final I got 85 which is not bad.

For MLs, "easy" classes are the ones in which they have access to the resources to

accomplish the task successfully rather than those which lack difficulty to complete the task. Multilingual learners who associated having good experiences in classes with a positive view of the instructor demonstrated also having the abilities and the disposition to thrive in college. Ruhina passed all her classes and has now transferred to a 4-year institution while Ousman completed all his classes with good grades. Thus, students demonstrated being hard working and compromised with their college goals, they only needed more support in terms of accessibility of materials, clear instructors, and disposition from the instructors to do so.

Following the topic of quality of materials and instructors' accessibility, Amani also commented that instructors who only focused on the assessment represented an obstacle for her to complete homework. As an example, she explained:

> Because you give me instructions and instructions, you, you will tell me: 'Hey, in the end of the class, hey, here's the instructions, you put them in the table, and you leave the class, and you tell me: Today is Monday, by Friday, I need that homework to be done.' Okay, I have a week. I don't know where I'm going to beginning. I never do search before, that's my first time I do search. I don't know which websites I will use to search. So, the week, I will have our news to figure out what I'm going to do, I will lose my time, and I will lose a point and the grade so that's not gonna help me.

In this excerpt from Amani's second interview, I highlight two focal points. One, Amani could recognize that instructors who did not provide enough resources and follow consistent and explicit steps in order for them to complete the assignments left students "to figure out" homework by themselves jeopardized her grades. Two, instructors assumed that multilingual students had prior knowledge and skills to conduct academic research online. More than criticizing instructors' personalities when students described them as "nice" they are rather commenting on teaching styles and accountability for

emerging bilinguals who needed some extra support not only to complete the assignment but to understand instructors and find the right academic resources to successfully complete assignments. She finalized by saying that she needed "instructions" and "advice." I understand this as instructors overlooking the differences between mainstream students and emerging bilinguals, resulting in a disadvantage for these students to learn the content and have a successful completion of class assignments.

Different Students Need Different Approaches

Ousman and Sadiya shared a similar opinion by acknowledging how instructors make assumptions and hold expectations for all students. Sadiya said "And we don't know what we don't know why those American students know. You know what I mean" while Ousman asserted "you cannot expect people like oh everybody did this at high school…because she did not explain it and give example. Because when you teach him people from different backgrounds, you have to give examples, and you have to explain". He later more explicitly expanded about his experience in a writing class.

> some of them are from Middle East. Some of them are from Africa. Some of them are from Europe. Some of them are from here. See, that's what I mean. Students from different backgrounds. And each of us speak different languages. Some speak English as their first language some French some Swahili. Yep. So that's what I mean. Um, some not everybody graduated from high school here, not everybody graduated from high school too, not everybody also got the experience of going to college.

While instructors might (un)intentionally treat all students as equals, multilingual students acknowledged their differences as multilingual, transnational experiences who needed instruction to be tailored to their differences in terms of content, process, products and even assessment. Multilingual students call for a more culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy that allows for an understanding and recognition of their differences

in language and provides clear descriptions and instructions, audiovisual resources, etc. that help them navigate content.

I often witnessed during my class observation a strong emphasis on homework during class time. Instructors take a significant amount of time to go through the assignments while sometimes disregarding teaching the content. Regarding this teaching style focused on assessment without staged instructions and explanations. Amani explained that her writing instructor often offered sample essays from students from former semesters, she said: “Oh, here is the examples of students of past years, they did that. I don't know what you're talking about. I want to have the instructions. I will try to do that, but I'm not going to understand anything.” I remember observing their study session at the library when Amani and Sadiya were writing this assignment. Later during the interview, Amani explained that the essay required them to research a personality from the past and write an essay including themselves as main characters in time and space. While she indicated to have understood the instructions, she also commented that for these assignments she would spend more time “reading maybe took me two weeks to read, to get information, and the two weeks is done.” Assuming that reading comes before writing while she could not “copy from google” or “use translation” to complete the assignment because her “English is not as full”. Amani implied that instructors need to use a different approach and accommodations for emerging bilinguals who not only need more time but also more tutoring and guidance from their instructors. Research was also considered a different type of academic language skill that emerging bilinguals reported not to manage.

MLs' Interactions with Instructors

These types of behavior and interaction with instructors also influenced multilingual students' perceptions of their instructors, a successful completion of their semesters and on some occasions, dropping out of classes. Ruhina compared her writing class and her physics class and what instructors' feedback and consultation outside class looked like. While in her writing class she only received online written feedback from the instructor without a face-to-face meeting, in her physics class, which was also challenging, the instructor made accommodations for more accessibility of the content and class. She added: "I recorded the classes" and "came back to them and pause it… go to the dictionary and check it". Ruhina continued: "But at the end, when I see that the teachers trying to help you, they're trying to, like, help you with anything they know, you're an ESL student, you don't understand. And they're really like, kind to you, it helps me to like, try to go to them and ask for like, other ways." What Ruhina called being "kind" can be better analyzed as instructors' understanding of the particular characteristics of multilingual students who might require a different approach to class participation, assignments and tutoring.

On the contrary, when instructors had a less supportive strategy for mixed language skills students, Ruhina reported not wanting to come back to classes. She commented on an instructor who, during office hours "was just chatting with me, not meeting, and she wasn't like, helping with like, she didn't try to explain the material for me. She was like you have to search it in your own language to understand if you didn't understand, come back and ask again. So, if I'm going to do the thing, like why do I need you?" This instructor believed that multilingual students' academic concerns are resolved

by individual problem-solving skills and strategies such as translation which leaves the responsibility of learning solely to the students and reflects a view of students' needs based only on linguistic parameters. Although Ruhina did not drop the class, she later in the interview disclosed she had gotten a "bad grade" in the class despite getting academic support at the library tutoring center to complete the writing assignments. Ruhina passed her classes and is now a biology major at a 4-year institution planning to go into medical school, which speaks to her motivation and hard work during her time at TCC.

On the same concept of interaction and relationship with instructors, Siti commented on how much she cared about feeling "accepted" by her instructors. This definition of acceptance according to her previous comments on the interview deals with the fact that she feels "different". Earlier in the interview, she commented on episodes in which the library staff had "replied" to her in a way that she felt they were not being "nice" and moved their "eyes" like suggesting subtle ways in which staff had possibly treated her differently. Siti could recognize poor treatment but struggled to describe it with precise words. In relation to the instructors, Siti responded having mostly a positive experience with her instructors. More specifically she mentioned how Melissa "pushed her" and "supported her so much during class and through email". Siti described her relationship with Melissa as "the main reason she is doing good" in college. Regarding other instructors she positively reported on their "respect" and the "good relationship" shared with them as she received timely feedback about her participation in class. She also commented how one of the instructors "loved to hear from them" because "they are from different places". This sense of caring for Siti is related to the value and recognition instructors had about their cultures and multilingual students' varied backgrounds.

During my class observation with Melissa, Siti always came prepared with the readings, completed assignments on time and participated in whole class and small group discussions.

Just as positive experiences were crucial for student success, negative interactions with instructors also had an impact on students' retention. Most of Siti's comments about their instructors were positive, however, during the focus group, she shared her concerns about the writing instructor. She explained:

> Siti: This year I had a class with a different teacher. He makes me feel 'I'm so bad' like I don't feel good. You know if I talk this like the first sentence, I feel I give up, I don't wanna come here anymore. He makes me feel so bad.
> Juan: Yes, that's true.
> Gilda: Yes, there are some things that [interrupted by Siti]
> Yohimar: in class?
> Siti: in my class like I know to talk this, I know how to say the pronunciation but when I asked him to read, if I don't read in class, I don't have confidence. He starts laughing [simulates the laugh] if I don't say pronunciation right. Oh my God, he makes me feel, each class, each class, he makes me feel bad. He don't feel he do something. He just feels it's [a] joke.

This excerpt illustrates my argument on how multilingual students can be affected by instructors' perceptions of their language skills. Students' negative experiences with a listening subject, who represents an authority in the classroom, judging, in this case, their pronunciation, affects their confidence and how they view themselves as English speakers. The deficit views of multilingual students interviewed in this study were shaped by situations like the one Siti described in this excerpt from the focus group. During my follow-up interview with Siti, she hesitated to connect this incident with race. Although, she recognized similar experiences with other students and commented "I see him dealing with other lady with hijab and it is not good. Sometimes I feel like he done with me this way because of this. I don't know"; Siti also struggled to characterize this incident as a

race issue by saying “but this person is not American. You know what I mean?” as if the only individuals who might execute racial and language discrimination can be “Americans”. This is also evidence of how instructors’ views of language and language speakers shaped their interaction with multilingual students which visibly influenced students’ performance and desire to dropout.

The ESL Instructor: An Exception and Example of Support for Language and Cultural Diversity

When multilingual students spoke about positive reinforcements, good relationships, “fun” classes, and “support”, they often related to experiences in ESL classrooms before and during their time at TCC. I wondered, what makes it different? My questions of care and needs prompted multilingual students to reminisce about their time in ESL classes at TCC. Ruhina described them as follows:

> because they want to learn about different cultures, different languages, like it's one class, and there is like 100 different cultures, different languages, students, they're, like, gathered there to learn English, and trying to talk in English. They like it. And it looks interesting for them, like the way we're trying to learn a new language. And I don't, like saw the teacher, like, in the beginning, because we couldn't speak that much. Well, English, they were trying to tell us all the time that like, you guys are smart enough, because you already know your own language. And this is the second language you're learning. Most of the people couldn't speak like two languages this much well. They were like trying to make you like feel more confident about you. And they always like want to ask, how is our culture and they always try to like, pronounce our name in the right way. Like sometimes because of the accent, we have in different countries, the names are different, but they always trying to ask, Did I pronounce it correct? If it's not like, I can do it again. Like they try to make you happy, like not feel that like you're a different country that like no one likes you. They try to get you that like they like you. They want to talk to you learn something about you.

A spark of interest in multilingual students’ culture and a genuine understanding of their background made them feel seen and valued. As names can be representative of

students' cultures and identities, Ruhina recognized ESL instructors' attempt to pronounce names correctly which seemed to have a long-lasting positive impact on her and influenced her perceptions of ESL instructors. The positive reinforcement and apparent instructors' acceptance of students' abilities to speak multiple languages were also indicators of caring for Ruhina. Later in the interview, she provided more examples in which ESL students have been shown care by instructors who planned "dinner, going to festivals and making plans". Connections outside the classroom were also an indicator of care for multilingual students, as she said they "feel lonely" when adjusting to a new educational setting and sometimes a new country. But "care" for other multilingual students like Romi meant that ESL instructors "don't treat you bad for not knowing a lot of things or not learning quickly. It was all very helpful because we, not just me but a lot of ESL students, improved over time." she elaborated by saying that "I felt nice about it. I didn't feel uncomfortable." Romi presented another layer of understanding to this "nice" behavior of ESL instructors presumably in contrast to what multilingual students experienced in other classes with other instructors in which "not knowing English" resulted in a poor or discriminatory treatment as Ruhina and Siti's experiences with writing instructors. On the contrary, ESL instructors showed their care by "sending e-mail or videos or quotes. Maybe saying e-mail, me if you have difficulties, you know, just like being open."

Other instances of a "nice" treatment were associated with "help" after classes and even the navigation of administrative processes. Ruhina indicated that ESL instructors always went above and beyond to help students by "answering questions" offering "office hours" and solve problems with "financial aid and other departments

including the students to get like more faster response, or sometimes they teach us like, have to go find, like the advisor have to pick the classes or like which building we have to go". To this matter, Sadiya, I noted in multiple of my field notes, during her study time at the library, sent emails to Chelsea, one of her former ESL instructors and a participant in this study, to help her navigate financial aid and issues with setting appointments with her advisor. In the interview, I followed up with this and she answered "she was nice, more nicer and she was like, if you need help, you can call me you can text me. She will come in to you and asking you if you understand and she talks a lot. And she tell us how with her like her school life. Yes, she communicates with us, more than other teachers, so that's why." This sense of connection was also shaped by ESL instructors' sensitivity, willingness and knowledge of interaction with multilingual students. Sadiya felt more prompted to ask for help and communicate with this particular instructor rather than others by saying "if I am close to that teacher, I can explain her, like, or maybe if she knows me very well, she could understand, you know some teachers they understand you very well." Sadiya implied that other instructors might not understand her well because they are not "close" to her.

In Chapter 5, I unpack ideas of help seeking by multilingual students from the instructors' perspective. This help seeking only occurred with those instructors with whom multilingual students have experienced a fair and kind treatment but also the ones who provided feedback and were open as in "always come to us. Do you need more help?" Once again, students' past experiences with instructors determined their future interactions with other instructors and staff from the institution. This concept of needing "help" is delineated by students' lack of background but more importantly how TCC

services might not be targeted to multilingual and immigrant background students. Feeling dismissed or poorly treated is a predictor of the lack of help seeking. As I had shown in this section, when multilingual students described experiences of (lack of) caring, timely responsiveness and even discriminatory behaviors they did not do well in those classes or were inclined to drop out. This is why interactions with instructors contribute to the already mentioned students' feelings of not fitting unworthiness and deficiency expressed in the section of this finding related to how their description of language skills were connected to past experiences with the White Listening Subject.

Discussion

In this chapter I highlighted how students' ideologies about their language use and skills are permeated by an educational environment which sends implicit and explicit messages of language legitimization based on standard language practices performed by White Americans. Three main important elements are crucial in these ideas of legitimized languages. First, multilingual students' descriptions of their interaction with educators and their own past experiences with language learning. Second, how students reported the deficiencies in services received by instructors and institutions were bridged by peer support through language brokering and third how multilingual students' experiences in this community college need to be looked at beyond a language category. Consistent with other scholarship (e.g., Chang, 2016) I also found that multilingual students' learning at the community college was shaped by their socio-cultural background and future aspirations. Similar to Chang's (2016) finding, services provided to multilingual students were not aligned to students' needs. However, in my study, I particularly want to emphasize a lack of infrastructure in terms of personnel who understand that services to

multilingual immigrant students cannot be framed the same way as the default services provided to any other student. I demonstrated with interview and fieldnote data, examples of poor treatment, dismissal and lack of support identified by students from their interaction with educators in and outside classes as well as administrative staff from key student services offices such as advising and financial aid. I further offer a different perspective to the scholarship on multilingual students' lack of skills (Delgado et al., 2019) by providing a study that analyzes students' experiences beyond the ESL classes with a focus on general education classes from the first year.

I also demonstrated some significant nuanced dimensions of Rosa's (2016) standardization and languagelessness ideologies by looking at those terms from multilingual students themselves instead of educators. However, students' ideas of their own lack of language skills are still influenced by their interaction with "White Listening Subject" and circulating ideologies of what is valued in educational institutions, in this case, a community college. Students are not aware of these circulating ideologies, instead these can only be discerned from the eyes of an outsider, in this case, my figure as a researcher. I saw how these language standardization ideologies existed in this context and affected students and instructors' behaviors. Behaviors that at the same time shaped students' experiences and interactions with instructors and peers and resulted in specific academic challenges for the MLs.

This study also addresses the gap in the literature regarding a lack of critical qualitative research focused on multilingual students which are under researched in the conversations about themselves. I also use language theories that have been used to analyze educators' discourses to now analyze views of students regarding their

interaction with multilingual and non-multilingual peers as well as instructors to understand the complexities of students' experiences in college after they leave ESL programs.

CHAPTER V

LANGUAGE AND ACADEMIC PROFILING OF MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS: VIEWS FROM THE INSTRUCTORS

In this section I respond to the second research question: How do community college instructors perceive multilingual students' language identities and academic potential? I highlight instructors' perspectives, however, the evidence presented from the students' perspective allowed also for a nuanced response to this research question putting students' voices at the center of this study. I first unpack instructors' views of students regarding their cultural and linguistic background as well as their perceptions and expectations of language use. I also relate those academic expectations with instructors' descriptions of their interactions and relationships with students as well as the reported classroom practices. Second, I address the intersection of language and race explicitly voiced by instructors in which they recalled interactions with students and other instructors. Third, I analyzed the complexity and contradictoriness of interviewees' notions of multilingual students' lack of self-advocacy and help-seeking skills when participants discussed the gaps and deficiencies in services provided to students. I connect the expectations held by instructors with racialization of language and an ideology of language standardization manifested in the ways instructors set academic expectations for MLs. Once again, the White Listening Subject is connected to how instructors viewed students and discussed interactions with them.

The New Mainstream College Students

Connections among the views of students regarding culture, class and educational background shaped the instructors' language and academic expectations for multilingual students. In this first theme, I trace those connections through different sections in which I specifically addressed stereotypes and academic expectations on and beyond language parameters.

"It's not the language": Views of Students' Cultural, Class and Educational Background

In this section, I present evidence of instructors' beliefs and views of the students and the ways those views impact student-instructor interaction and relationship as well as their teaching practices. I also argue how some of those views influenced students' own ideas of their knowledge, abilities, languages, and skills in relation to what is valued in school and society. As a result, students projected limitations on their academic potential as I showed in chapter 4.

During the interviews with instructors, I asked a series of questions that prompted them to describe how they viewed the students regarding their different backgrounds. My questions often elicited views of the students from a cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic perspective. I analyzed these views in terms of their definition of "diverse" students, and whether instructors have a narrowed or more general view of students' backgrounds. Those views would often reflect how the faculty I interviewed planned certain classroom activities and how they interacted with students. Elizabeth and Angela, for example, when asked about students' backgrounds, an immediate connection to cultural backgrounds in terms of "food" or "cultural traditions" emerged. Elizabeth said,

"I'd love to talk to them about food, we love to talk about food and try food". Statements like this were common among instructors as a reference to culture and the diversity students represented in the classrooms. Faculty also often saw this diversity as an opportunity to "learn from them" as students can share their cultures. Based on those ideas of culture, Angela also commented on creating an activity in which multilingual students could "showcase themselves…one holiday that is specific for them, or one type of food." For Angela and Elizabeth this type of activity could encourage students to feel included in the class as "everybody gets to be part of it." Angela also mentioned that "old ESL students" often have careers at home before coming to the US. Disclaimers such as "I don't want to overgeneralize" or "other instructors" or "people tend to think" were common among instructors' responses regarding their views of students. But often, those disclaimers were accompanied by assumptions, generalizations, and stereotypes about students' backgrounds.

Students' Education, Language and Class. Chelsea, Joseph, and Melissa, instead of a focus on a narrowed way of looking at students' cultural backgrounds, they took a more holistic perspective of students in terms of education, language, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Chelsea explained:

> We have a lot of different backgrounds. Students that you know are different language proficiencies, different educational backgrounds. Different countries of origin, different ages variances come in the United States. People who've been in the US not very long. People have been in the US a fair while, so I mean that's what I kind of love about TCC. There's so many… there's not just one type of ESL student we have, really… So many, you know, within the field of TESOL, there's often kind of broken into different groups, but we kind of have a lot of students from a lot of different disciplines.

For Chelsea, multilingual students differed not only in language proficiency, levels of education, country of origin, disciplines and ages which means, for her, more than a language category. Later in the same interview, she expanded that some surveys used at TCC might treat students from an immigrant background in a "superficial way" as implying that the many circumstances and identities surrounding multilingual learners are complex, fluid and often might get overlooked by a general classification as ESL student. She asserted that often multilingual students' socioeconomic backgrounds shape their experiences in the classroom:

> I've had some students who work third shift, they're working all night, they're coming, you know, they get off work at 6 and come to class at 8:40, um, that's…they're gonna have a different educational experience than some who's like, you know, "I'm here, I'm young, just studying, I'm not doing anything else, I'm not working, I'm a full-time student.

Chelsea acknowledged that multilingual students working and studying full-time put upon themselves other pressures that students who do not work and can afford to go to school full-time do not have to deal with. Later in the interview, she commented on the stress that immigrant students go through, stress that "comes from being a poor person or working-class person in the US". This "stress" might prevent students from focusing solely on school and the community college might be overlooking that variety of circumstances. She continued by saying:

> immigrant students are sending money back to their family in their home country. And that's just so much more of a stressor about how much work you need to do, like, how many hours you're working each week, you're providing for yourself and your family here and then all your family back there and hard to have enough money…

Joseph also noted these differences during the interview by saying that students' socio-economic circumstances affect their access to education and how they experience

college. He mentioned: "socio-economically it has effects on, I see differences in education, education obtainment, so the students who are lower on the socio-economic class, tend to not have as much formal education, as the students who are a little bit higher, they tend to have more responsibilities outside the classroom." Other examples dealt with students' responsibilities with their families in their home countries just as Chelsea mentioned, Joseph said that "some students send money home." Joseph added educational background as another important element of students' performance at the community college. During the interviews, instructors often differentiated refugee students who had an informal educational background, or as Melissa described "school looked different for them" from students who "had a full career before" like the Cubans. These differences mentioned by instructors not only impacted how they viewed the students' future potential but also informed some of their pedagogical decisions.

Angela commented on having similar students in her classrooms who "have a full-time job and they go to work after they finish class, and they have third shift and or they have two shifts. She later explained that those work conditions "also play a role in how they manage the schoolwork…participation…if they read, do the homework…" It seemed like one of the indicators of students' capacities to succeed in the classes and deal with the workload, according to the instructors, is the other responsibilities they have outside the school and how school might come second to those responsibilities.

Differentiated Instruction according to Students' Background. Melissa and Jonathan indicated using strategies to collect student information not only to get to know them but to better prepare for future challenges. Joseph used a "literacy narrative" to help students "investigate their language practices and their relationship to their language

learning journey…backgrounds, so they talk a lot about where they came from, their experiences first getting here in the US, and challenges". Melissa created a student survey and when students who are in the "category of learning English" had missing assignments she checked the survey responses to understand "what's going on with the students." A student reporting on not having "Microsoft Word on their computers" or having attended (or not) school prior to attending TCC was helpful to understand how to approach the different situations with students' not doing homework. She also recalled an incident in which a student was committing plagiarism. Melissa stated: "I never think the student is deliberately doing anything that's quite wrong, right? In my mind, it's always 'what does this student not yet understand?'"

This point about plagiarism illustrated by Melissa coincided with my encounter with Amani at the library in which she had no prior experience with the word "plagiarism" stating that in her country and her language, plagiarism did not exist and copying and pasting from the internet was a common practice. This type of situation was very frequent during my interactions with students in and after classes, especially those dealing with writing classes. Melissa continued explaining that she tried to understand the concept of "school" for students and what it meant for them instead of assuming no educational background. She indicated interacting with students and asking if they come from "schools with no books" or when "somebody came every day and taught you some lesson, right, I and that was what school was for you. And then you came to the United States?" Students' responses to those questions helped her understand students' struggles and act upon the issues in a responsive way without assuming students "don't know how to behave" as former experiences she had in other institutions where she worked.

Melissa provided another example recalling an incident in which two students who were siblings delivered the same responses to the assignments, and Melissa, during the interview, reported dealing with the situation as follows:

> *Melissa*: there was a brother and sister I had one summer, and they were taking the class together and I didn't realize they were brother and sister. I, you know, I had no idea and, uhm, I started noticing their answers were all the exact same answers and I thought "What is going on here?" I didn't, you know, I was just sort of a mystery to me. Well, so I asked and the sister said "well, I'm helping my brother 'cause he works so that you know we have. I'm really honest with them and say "I will be honest with you" and said "I'm not sure your culture is wrong. In fact, I'm pretty sure it's right", however.
>
> *Yohimar:* OK, yeah.
>
> *Melissa:* And I said, ah, OK, well and I what I do just so, like, maybe it's helpful for you to know what I say to them about it is that I get that this is really different, you know?
>
> *Yohimar:* Yes.
>
> Melissa: In our country. It's not, it's OK for you to help him, but it's not OK for him to have the same answer or not think of his own answer.
>
> And I said, you know, in our country, people expect you to have your own answer to something, and I know that is really different than what your country or your culture, would say? Well, of course you should help him. He's feeding your family.
>
> We don't live in that culture right now, and if you do this in my class, I'm going to talk it through with you. But if you do it in another professor's class, they're going to fail you. They may even report you and you may, you know, So, I, it's my job to make sure you understand how this system works, whether we agree with it or not.
>
> And so, I'm really honest with them and say, you know, I'm not really convinced that this is the right way to do things, but it is the way it's done.

This excerpt represents an example of how Melissa engaged in a discussion of students based on a differentiation of students' cultures versus the US when she said "our culture" and "your culture" Instead of punishing the students for plagiarism, she assumes that students' behaviors comes from a lack of understanding of US culture and a conduct

typical of the students' cultural background in which family is valued in a way that copying from your sibling's homework might be a common accepted practice.

In addition to providing commentary on the importance of knowing students' background, Chelsea and Joseph also reported using students' cultural and educational background information to plan their lessons. Chelsea commented on "eliciting participation in a variety of ways" to call for students' cultural background and what participation "looks like for them." She reported offering "ways for them to write and then communicate their ideas in writing…or ways for them to work in small groups or in partners"; she also described it as trying "to build a lot on prior knowledge, so instead of just me starting to explain something, I try to build from the knowledge of the class." The idea to use different ways of participation alludes to Chelsea's understanding that:

> some communities feel… have different values around like being the person to volunteer to speak during class. Like sometimes that in some places that scene is like "oh wow, that student's really smart" and in other cultures that scene is like "oh, that's student thinks they're flashy and they think they know it all". So, I know that that's kind of people that aren't going to have the same idea and like in the US, we tend to reward people raising their hand or speaking up in academic settings. So, I guess I just try not to waste so much of my understanding of their success in the class, or how much they're understanding the material based on like participation that isn't a good measurement of that stuff. That would be an example of how I know about people's backgrounds and how that influences it.

Chelsea understands that students' cultural background might motivate students to act differently when it comes to participation in class. She also makes an interesting comparison of what is valued in US classrooms when it comes to students' participation that might look different for multilingual students not being used to acting like other students in academic settings. So, Chelsea did not seem to measure multilingual students' success based on idealized versions of American classrooms because immigrant students

have different ideas of participation. Along with this idea of participation, Chelsea mentioned that even when she did not "want to make generalizations" about the students, she later added that:

> Have met a lot of people from Somalia, so I kind of have some ideas about maybe how they're thinking about things like family or education. And then there's, you know, I have… I don't have any students from China this semester but since I taught in China, I have some experience of how they approach education in China and how they might approach education here. So, what about, uhm, I have I only have two students from Mexico and since I speak Spanish sometimes when they're trying to understand a grammar point, I can tell that the way they're understanding it is because they're coming from a Spanish speaker background, so maybe I can kind of understand the linguistic. Uhm, if they're if they are translating in their head and it's like, it doesn't quite work or things like that

Despite not wanting to generalize, Chelsea's understanding of her students' background and her ideas of her own prior experiences with those cultures shaped her linguistic and academic expectations to compare them with students' prior experiences in their home countries such as the examples she gave of Somalia and China. She also uses her own linguistic background to express ideas of students' possible challenges with the language as in the example with Spanish speakers translating "in their heads". Joseph agreed with Chelsea on the notions of students' first language influencing "language learning and acquisition of English" and acknowledged that knowing students' "first language" allowed him "to see language transfer". Both, Chelsea, and Joseph, described popular assumptions of language learning and language interference that evoke a view of a language as an internal representation that allows organization of languages in multilingual students' brains.

In addition to socioeconomic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds, views of students from the instructors' perspectives also dealt with religion. Chelsea and Joseph

specifically gave examples of students' religious practices also influencing their performance in college. They both commented on students having religious responsibilities that made them "tired" and unable "to study". Chelsea mentioned that some students "don't have to work on the weekend, but their family spends all day at church on Sunday. They're at church from like, you know, 10:00 to 7:00 PM". These circumstances put a lot of "pressure" and "stress" on students as they must get "good grades" to later "being able to provide" for their families. Joseph on the other hand mentioned that the "requirements of Ramadan and what that means, what those entails, and the kind of strains and stresses that that puts on students when you can't eat or drink you're like, I still got to write that paper." Joseph explained that understanding "what students got going on" helped him make "small accommodations that could help them still be successful and still be able to celebrate that." Joseph does not only respect students' religious responsibilities but also included them in their everyday lessons. He provided examples in which students' research topics "that are applicable and important for their home contexts, so that I can learn more about it and so that they can start to think about it in a in a critical way and you know really kind of reflect on that as well." Joseph reported using students' backgrounds as an asset instead of a barrier to learning, setting achievable expectations that might be more meaningful to students.

Stereotypical Beliefs and Perceived Differences in Educational Backgrounds

When I asked instructor participants what their perceptions or knowledge about students' backgrounds were, an appealing comparison emerged from Joseph and Elizabeth's responses. First, Elizabeth responded by comparing her experiences working with "Cuban students who were medical doctors in their country." She described these

students as “the best students… who were very focused and understand the time that it takes to successfully, that you must put into successfully complete a course.” Having “formal education”, for Elizabeth, makes these students “unique” and “interesting to observe” as well as more focused on their educational success. She later explained that when students “who are formally educated come into our program” she “knows” they will “be very successful, I have no doubt no doubt about that.” Instructors believe that previous formal education is a predictor of success in a writing class and in community college because students with formal education have background knowledge required to navigate college.

On the contrary, when Elizabeth had “refugee students” she noticed “a great difficulty with the final paper because it's a research paper and so the idea of collecting, you know, gathering, research, and then properly citing that research is so foreign to them.” Instructors believed that refugee students lack of formal educational experience instead their efforts to support refugees as Melissa and Joseph did in their classes. Elizabeth continued giving other examples with other students. She talked about “Nepali students” who “are often more reserved, quieter, and don't want to challenge their professors in any way, because it's seen as a sign of disrespect, so those students were always the most difficult to get, for me, was the most difficult to get them engaged.” While Chelsea used different types of participation to engage students to make them feel more comfortable because of their cultural differences, Elizabeth’s ideas place students in a position in which they will have to adapt to the ideas of participation and academic skills “proper” of an “American” classroom.

While I noted students’ struggles with research papers during my fieldnotes and

they also commented on these issues during the interviews (see Amani, Ousman and Sadiya's cases in chapter 4), I also understand that students required more scaffolded instructions to grasp academic concepts and develop academic language to write research papers. She later juxtaposed the refugee students' "foreign ideas" of a research paper with the Cuban students who were doctors in Cuba. She elaborated by saying:

> This is not a foreign idea to collect information from various sources, put it together without plagiarizing. You know this is something that they've done, so the research aspect is the greatest one. Uhm, some students on the first draft, because they have, they've never written a research paper before. Maybe they have compiled bits of information from different sources, but then they don't include an analysis of their own, so it's just information from other sources. There's no interpretation of that, There's no introduction to a quote…

Elizabeth's experiences with students from Cuba, and other students from refugee backgrounds differed and was a predictor of future success in her class. Research activities were "foreign" for refugee students. This is an example of how instructors' perceptions of students' histories with school and language influenced teachers' ideas of what they could or could not accomplish. In chapter 6, I unpack these ideas of students' skills when I talk about instructors' academic expectations for multilingual students. So far, those predictions are based on students' prior educational background founded also on instructors' experiences of former students from certain countries of origin such as Cuba, Nepal, and some African countries.

Joseph, on the other hand, reiterated once again not wanting "to make too many assumptions about students before I meet them and talk to them and experience their work". He continued explaining that learning about "language transfer" and cultural and educational systems in students' home countries "can be a good thing" but later explained that instructors "want to be careful not to make those assumptions, you know, for

example, if it's students come from South Korea, I don't want to automatically assume, OK well they're good at writing but they're bad at speaking" he asserted that he prefers to wait until students "have turned in their first and second writing assignments, I've got a chance to communicate with them." Joseph's comments on assumptions still carried an implicit representation of South Korean students being commonly portrayed as "good writers" even though he acknowledged those are only "assumptions". He continued explaining that:

> I'm careful with my assumptions, and how I perceive them. I tend to perceive most of my multilingual or… multilingual sections I tend to perceive them as coming from a place of strength, because they are working with multiple languages and they've, they've kind of may not have mastered English yet but they still understand it to a, you know, an advanced level enough to be in a college classroom and things like that.

Joseph describes students' abilities to speak multiple languages as a "strength" but later described them as "not mastered English yet" this idea still reinforces a narrative that multilingual students' English skills are not good enough but then he later clarifies that their listening skills are "advanced enough" to be in a college classroom. This idea of emerging bilinguals being in college level classes is one of the most reinforced by students themselves not feeling good enough to be in college classrooms. Joseph's conflicting ideas of assets and deficit show how difficult it is for English speakers immersed in circulating ideologies of standardization of language views to grasp the idea of multilingual students deserving of being in college level classes because of their English language skills. Despite the best intentions and with a fair desire not to reinforce stereotypical beliefs of multilingual learners, Joseph's ideas of students still implied stereotypes based on cultural assumptions of students' countries of origin.

Joseph continued the conversation by emphasizing multilingual students' "strengths that may not be noticed" and "skills that monolingual people don't tend to have". He said that "I perceive them as coming from a place of strength." These strengths are probably overlooked by the college system because other people might not perceive them the same as he does. Although he focused on students' strengths, he later asserted that:

> The biggest challenge I've seen in a lot of students is a lack of confidence, and just how can I work to build your confidence level, so much of it is, isn't linguistic but it's just, just based on confidence, you know... "Am I confident enough to put myself out there and to try this assignment?" "Am I confident enough to put myself out there and communicate at a level, you know, schedule an appointment with a professor in their office?" right? Like. That's like, a big milestone for some students who are like I can have a one-on-one English conversation. You know, so I perceived them positively from a position of strength and really a position of needing to recognize the strength and the confidence within themselves, so that's really what I try to focus on.

Joseph wants to instill "confidence" in students and help them see themselves as valuable for speaking more than one language. But this idea of students not being "confident" might be otherwise related to their previous negative experiences with using English in public, their interaction with instructors, and their feelings of embarrassment that I unpacked in chapter 4. Also, these views about students' backgrounds, carrying positive or negative stereotypes, often dilucidated beliefs about language and English as a standard language, helped me understand how educators' beliefs about the language use they valued and what they believed language is reflected on their own views of learners and how they use language. These beliefs, as Banda (2018) suggest shape their pedagogical choices and how they positioned learners in "the continuum of academic ability" (p. 35).

Instructors' Beliefs and Perceptions about Multilingual Students' Academic Language Skills

In the previous section I unpacked instructors' views and understanding of students' cultural, educational and class background as a preamble to now highlight how those views intertwined with views of language and what instructors valued in the classroom in terms of language proficiency. When instructors were asked about their experiences having multilingual learners in the classroom and their perceptions about these students' language skills, they often referred to ideas of grammar, writing, accent, and ideas of language remediation for multilingual students. I connect instructors' views of students' language "correctness," accent, and perceived inabilities to language and academic expectations set for multilingual learners. In addition to influencing academic expectations, these views of language also shaped student-instructor relationships and interactions.

As Chelsea teaches a writing a class when describing students' expectations, she commented on wanting students to be able to:

> email another professor, I make her phone out and we type the email together and I explain why we're saying certain things there and how to format it. Because, you know, that could make a huge difference if someone is interacting with a professor in a way that it's perceived as rude. So, who's going to explain that?

She later continued explaining that in her class students should "be able to communicate complex ideas and opinions in English." Chelsea also emphasized wanting students "to have the tools to be able to express complex ideas in writing in English…that would be useful to them as they continue their journey towards their academic and career goals."

However, Abby criticized this focus on writing by saying the following about the ESL program at TCC: “it’s totally focused on writing, reading, and vocabulary. No speaking. So that's been the missing link. They have the courses on the books, but they don't offer them.” Melissa, during the interview, agreed with this critique by saying that students in the ESL program are not encouraged to speak. She said: “I heard them from my office, and they were often quiet so when students arrived in my freshman class, they are not used to speaking.” I often heard instructors during meetings commenting on “ESL students not having a lot of vocabulary” or “students are not good at speaking” and the lack of speaking skills required in college-level classes, more specifically those in the health-related programs.

The idea of a lack of speaking focus in the ESL program is contrasted by the opinions offered by Elizabeth who claimed that “there's a lot of speaking in the class. I kind of see myself as the role of facilitator for them so that they can, I want the communication to feel natural.” Elizabeth said that she accompanied speaking practices with a grammar focus; she explained that instead of a “grammar drills”, she uses role playing and casual conversation “in which they are asked to use that verb tense. And it's almost always met with humor too, so the students will be laughing, and I think they have a good time.” When instructors talked about multilingual students’ language skills, they also distinguished students using adjectives such as “non-native speakers of English” “traditional students” and “mainstream students” and based on those classifications, planned instruction in their classes and set academic expectations. For example, Joseph stated that in his face-to-face classes multilingual students are “stressing” about grammar “I need to know this grammar”, “I need to be better at grammar”, “I struggle with

grammar", "I really need to focus on grammar", and although he thinks that writing is about argumentative writing instead of grammar, he dedicated extra time in writing labs to grammar lessons so he can "serve his students"; while in his "mainstream writing classes" students might already know that.

Following this idea of how multilingual students are different from the mainstream student, Angela commented that "what I always tell him, like you can get in A, you just may have to put in more time than your counterpart that's grown up here in this type school system." She continued explaining that although she "feels horrible", she still tells her students that "put in more time than a traditional student because they're going to have to spend more time at tutoring, at the writing center, at all these things and so, you know, you know a lot of times if they start getting discouraged with their grades in other classes." Angela thinks that multilingual students are at a disadvantage and need more support and more effort than the "traditional student" due to their lack of prior experiences with schooling in the US. These ideas of students being at a disadvantage may come from their views about perceived ideas of what students can accomplish in relation to their current English language abilities.

Angela later explained that Math might not represent a challenge for multilingual students "because they can communicate the answer, you don't have to do it in full sentence is grammatically correct" however classes like psychology classes, writing classes, and their reading class are a "problem". Thus, in classes that required students to produce oral and written language in a "correct" way they will likely have to "make more effort" and "ask for help." She later added that multilingual students also had "a hard time putting things in their own words" instead of copying and pasting. Based on these

ideas of students needing extra support, Elizabeth commented on TCC having writing classes tailored to "nonnative speakers of English" in which they have "they have 30 extra minutes for each class period, so we usually do grammar review in those 30 minutes. So, it's just a supplement to what I would do if everything else is the same as it would be in a regular writing class except for that extra 30 minutes for each class." Once again instructors emphasized the need for multilingual students to improve their writing skills through a grammar-focused approach. I analyze this recurrent attention on correctness as the reason why multilingual students during the interviews often referred to grammar skills and correctness of language as the center of their deficiencies in English. So, if students are often told they need to produce "correct" English then they would likely internalize these beliefs based on interaction with instructors.

But Abby, instead of writing and grammar, she reported having some students that "were incredibly hard to understand", and later elaborated on having "students from Argentina" and "an Islamic student" who were also hard to understand; so, she thinks that TCC is not providing the conversational classes that would allow these students to improve speaking skills. She later detailed that the issues with students in the health programs is that they are "good at the classwork, by the time they get to the clinicals at the end, and can't speak well, they have a terrible time." Instructors' concerns about multilingual students in the health programs encouraged Abby to request the administration for extra support for multilingual students in communication classes after testing out of the ESL program.

Taking into consideration these ideas of multilingual students being different than other students, I asked Joseph what differences he saw among what he called

"Mainstream" and "Multilingual" and he reported on differences "in terms of time, how long it takes to accomplish a task". For example, if he assigns a 20-page reading, he must "understand that students who are processing a second language, it's going to take them longer to read through that, some students have their levels very advanced in English, you know, they may just breeze through and kind of be at the same level as anybody else". So, give these multilingual students' slower reading pace, Joseph explained:

> I got to go through this, I've got to highlight words that I may not know, I got to look these words up, I got to stop reading, go to the dictionary, go to the source, you know what I mean so that back and forth and being able to do that.

In response to these students' characteristics and needs Joseph adapts his language use by "minimizing use of certain idioms", not being "too wordy" and "restat[ing] it again. So, I repeat myself a lot" and "[am] careful with the language." This type of adapted language Joseph uses is tailored to "[a] student [who] doesn't have much English, you know they're limited English proficient" Joseph endorsed the common idea of multilingual students having "limited English" skills which can be compared to how students referred to themselves during the interviews presented in chapter 4. The adaptations provided are based on a generalized view of students not having the necessary English skills needed to understand what is being said in the classroom. These views of students' language abilities often permeated what instructors thought multilingual students could accomplish in their classes and in college, so in the next section I present evidence on how instructors articulated their academic expectations for multilingual students.

Academic Expectations based on Cultural and Linguistic Assumptions

To elicit information from instructors about their expectations for multilingual

students, I asked several relevant questions related to expectations but also notions of success in classes and college in general. Responses to those questions revealed and repeated a pattern in terms of instructors appealing to expectations in relation to students' linguistic skills but also on other parameters such as their attitudes, skills, and values that students might lack. For instance, Elizabeth mentioned that students' "attitude about the workload" is more important than the "willingness to put in the work outside of the class". In several opportunities during the interview, she commented on some multilingual students taking "too lax of an approach to the course" in addition to those who "have a full-time job" or "caring for their families". She mentioned that at the beginning of the semester, "if I look at the group as a whole, I can usually identify pretty quickly who will be successful in the class and who will fail... But it's usually less than half that are really, truly prepared." In contrast to what Joseph and Chelsea did by getting to know the students first, Elizabeth thinks that students' attitudes toward the workload predict their success in her class. By "too lax of an approach" Elizabeth implies that multilingual students might not be approaching her course with the right attitude. Putting in the effort to complete the assignments by coming to class is not enough and those perceived attitudes helped her set expectations for these students.

But expectations for instructors looked differently. Just as Elizabeth did, Angela and Abby also focused their expectations on matters other than academics. For example, Angela emphasized the importance of "asking for help when they need it, not when they're so far behind, but as soon as they don't understand something, ask and keep asking." These ideas of help seeking imply that students are also responsible for receiving "the help" when getting help needs a counterpart who must also be willing to help. On

this “asking for help” as an expectation, Melissa also commented that “the most important thing I want them to understand as well. If I take a class where I have to write a paper, I know I need to go to the library to get help.” In this respect Elizabeth commented that “seeking the resources. Just asking their instructors… ‘where can I get help’ if I need it is important, just that little simple question.”

But also “feeling comfortable and confident, more comfortable, more confident in themselves, and being able to communicate when they need something” are critical, according to Elizabeth. Elizabeth continued explaining that:

> a lot of times these students feel inadequate or, I hate to even say this, but I think sometimes they feel dumb because maybe they've been treated that way by other people and so I want them to know when they leave like you are not dumb, you are incredible. You know this is my goal for them. Boost them up, you know.

I would then question this idea of confidence if students “feeling dumb” is due to the interaction with “people” who made them feel “inadequate.” In chapter 4, I provided evidence from students’ interviews in which students’ inability to participate in class or just being “comfortable” comes from their previous negative experiences and interactions with instructors and other students. This notion of confidence reinforced by instructors during the interviews is not solely the responsibility of the student and Elizabeth agreed with that when she commented on students being “treated that way by other people.” There is a connection between confidence, communication and asking for help according to the instructors. If students are more confident, they could communicate effectively to seek help and this “effort can go a long way” because students are showing instructors “care” and “effort” in the class. Asking for help is then an indication that students are invested in the class and consequently care about college and their education. Joseph also

commented that communication is crucial for students because

> some students will send an e-mail, I'll send the response and then that's it, they'll never respond back to that e-mail, they'll never ask follow-up questions, they'll never… you know, if their…. is varied sometimes they'll never send the follow-up, they'll never say 'hey just checking in, just seeing if you are available', they'll just 'OK I can see […]', you know, that kind of thing.

Following up, being consistent in communication with the instructor, are indicators of success of students in Joseph's class. On this idea of communication, Chelsea, suggested a different view of communication more related to the speaking ability of communicating, she mentioned "I want them to be able to communicate complex ideas and opinions in English." Chelsea is more concerned about students' language ability to write and speak in English. Communication with instructors might also help students set their own expectations for classes. Elizabeth mentioned that she wants students "to reduce the course load a little bit" because "students taking like four or five classes, and to me that's just way too many for a first semester of college for nonnative speaker of English to take five classes you know, so I think managing expectations and time." Chelsea commented on a similar idea in terms of "time management" so students can do homework on time without piling up assignments for the end of the semester.

More related to academics, Elizabeth set expectations focused on writing conventions such as "interpreting ideas… using transitions appropriately…developing a proper thesis statement using parallel verbs". Later emphasizing research skills, Elizabeth added research is a "big one" as implying the focus of her class is on the research paper. She wants students "to be able to collect, you know, to understand, better understand the process of gathering, research". Angela also provided specific examples of academics

highlighting expectations focused on writing and students attending tutoring services to "get help" with their writing.

Joseph, on the contrary, reported setting expectations according to students' backgrounds. The excerpt below provides an explanation of Joseph's adapted expectations:

> Some students are going to come here, very, very, prepared and adapt to that academic conventions very easily, whereas other students are going to come here with zero preparation or very little preparation and I think as instructors, it is our responsibility and it's our job to meet them where they're at, and to not place unfair expectations on students, so if you come into my classroom, and you can only draft, maybe a paragraph you can't quite get to a full page yet, I'm not going to expect you to write me a perfect 8 to 10-page research paper by the end of that semester, that may not be doable for you in a few months. For me, early on in the semester, I set the goal… I have them really set their own goals.

Many implications derived from Joseph's expectations regarding multilingual students. First, students' prior experiences and what he called "preparation" is crucial for the setting of expectations. But a fine line might divide setting "fair" expectations and undermining students' abilities to accomplish those writing goals. I understand that students would also need to be able to learn and develop their writing skills in each class they take.

"Interaction with the Students is very Emotional": How Instructors Describe their Relationship and Interaction with Multilingual Students

Up to now I had unpacked instructors' 'views and beliefs on students' language and academic abilities, most often related to their cultural and educational background. However, during the interviews, observations, and interactions with instructors, I noticed a pattern connected to ideas of emotions, relationship, and bonding that, to me, also highlighted beliefs about the students. That is, their views are reflected in their interaction with students but also their interaction with students helped them create concepts of them

as students and humans.

When I asked instructors how they would describe their relationship with the students and what their favorite part of working with multilingual students was, they were more likely to respond with statements like “it’s good”, “I like the diversity behind it” and “I like having students from different parts of the world.” But I also noticed some patterns in terms of the development of those relationships based on the perceptions or views they had just shared about students. For example, Angela and Joseph used descriptions more related to emotions and the human connection with students. Joseph mentioned that “interaction with students is very emotional” because “if they like you, they want to do well in your class right so they, there's a level of accountability that develops…” Thus, if students “like” the instructor then they might be more willing to do the work because the instructor will have a “conversation” with them. Angela commented something similar when she claimed if students “realize you know you're a warm, friendly face, then they have a tendency to talk more about their personal stuff.” That personal connection she often mentioned encouraged students to “[feel] more comfortable” to participate in class. “[A] lot of times if I can at least get them to talk about anything personal, a lot of times that kind of parlays into more participation”, Angela added.

Melissa, on the other hand, asserted that her relationship with students is “good” because she “understands”, because she “[has] taught” in many different schools so she knows “a lot about their country's history and their cultures” and, “[has] taken the time to learn about them and actually [has] taught other people about their countries and their cultures, and I'm interested in learning more of that.” Because of this interest in knowing

about students' cultures, their relationship is that of a "teacher-learner" and that she enters the classroom and asks herself "How can I reach this student?" Later in the interview, Melissa shared an anecdote with a student with whom she built "the level of trust" when the student shared a very personal experience related to "trauma" that was causing her to want to drop out.

Abby described her relationship with students as that of an "advocate" and provided examples in which she "helped" students in two different scenarios. One in which she called security for a student who was "yelling at a young woman, and she had the hijab". Abby said that it was during the times that "Trump was president" and this student was "blaming the student with hijab for stuff and she was just kind of frozen." She commented that another faculty was present and did not seem to care while she jumped in and told this student that "He was totally out of line." These types of incidents seemed to be common among Muslim students and were also voiced by some students during the interviews and focus group. Another way in which Abby related with students was by connecting assignments to their experiences in their countries. She asked them "what art is important in your country? "How do you see this?". She added: "All of my assignments ask them for their experience of something. And I get some really incredible answers. And I always respond to them." Such activities helped Abby to build a relationship with students and at the same time spark their interest in her class. She later said, "I've had a number of ESL students who don't particularly write well, and I give them the opportunity…and I had one guy who rewrote all these papers 4 times, but he got an A, and he said, "do you teach chemistry?" Abby explained that those are memorable moments for students who later stopped by her office and kept the contact after the

semester was over.

Chelsea also commented on opportunities in which students still reached out to her for help navigating different issues with college. She asserted: “I have students that technically aren't my advisees anymore, but we keep the relationship, so I still see them a lot.” I noticed during my observations how Sadiya usually emailed Chelsea asking questions about advising and even assignments because she felt “close to her.” These ideas of closeness circled back to what Joseph and Angela mentioned that if multilingual students “like you” or “realize you have a warm face” they will seek that connection and ask for help because multilingual students need more “handholding” than other students.

All the instructors seemed to have referred to their students on an emotional level and connectedness in terms of cultural awareness, finding a common ground to relate to students as a relationship-building strategy with students. All instructors appealed to the human side of students, viewing students as wanting that connection too. They all highlighted examples in which students lacked the academic skills to complete writing classes or when students missed assignments to build a relationship with them that will help students succeed in college. All the examples revealed moments in which instructors “advocated” or saved the students from failing. I wonder if these views of students and efforts of remediation helped reinforce the common narratives I encountered during my initial meetings; namely, that “ESL students are needy.”

While those instructors who claimed to follow a more humanistic approach to teaching seemed to help students succeed, there are “other instructors” that were continually mentioned by all my interviewees who do not seem to follow the same approach to interact and work with multilingual students. In the next section, I show

evidence of how instructor participants for this study referred to other faculty members who might have a different view on multilingual students and consequently treat them accordingly.

"The Other Instructors": Racialization of Language and Linguistic Discrimination

When I first started visiting TCC as a potential site to pursue this research idea, I often heard instructors during the meetings talking about incidents of unfair treatment on behalf of "other instructors" but always as a general idea without naming specific examples. So, during my interviews these comments resurfaced as instructors shared second-hand experiences, conversations, and incidents in which these "other instructors" supposedly exhibited discriminating views of students. The interviewees also mentioned specific "racist" incidents and unfair treatment from these "other instructors" towards multilingual students.

"Get those people out of my class, get those ESL people out of my class, I can't help them, you know, they're not doing the work" Abby exclaimed during the interview quoting an instructor who referred to multilingual students in such a way during a public meeting with faculty members. Abby expressed being "really upset" but at the same time she acknowledged that this faculty member "was articulating the ugly truth, which was, we're not prepared to deal with these students, what do we do?" This incident prompted her to create an action plan to support multilingual students and train instructors. As part of this action plan, Abby stated that instead of focusing on the students, faculty members also needed to be accountable; she added "it's not just training the students, but it's also helping the faculty, which is what I wanted. That was one of my non articulated issues, but I really wanted our faculty to see that they've got to make changes too." Through this

initiative Abby expected instructors to change their views about students and accommodate their classes to meet multilingual students' needs and any other "failing student." To this matter about instructors, she added that "we don't need to isolate the ESL students in a negative way, but there's plenty of other students who aren't succeeding either, and they're not screaming about them, but you know, we need to be available and change the way we function." These excerpts taken from Abby's interview suggest that the characteristics of "ESL students" are particular and represent more challenges from instructors than any other students who might also be struggling. Language might be the element differentiating "ESL students" from the other "failing students."

To this idea of "other instructors'" views of multilingual students, Joseph commented with a similar perspective as Abby during the interview. He added that "I've seen some faculty that perceived them as just, like, Alien. I don't, I don't know what to do, I don't, I'm scared to do anything because I don't want to offend them, I don't want to do this, so people see them as deficient. I think that's probably one of the more common reactions." In addition to providing commentary on the idea of other faculty members lacking the knowledge to work with multilingual students, Joseph continued: "teachers will see them as being…unprepared, shouldn't be in this classroom until they're able to get to a certain level they've got to be able to draft at least a paragraph or they shouldn't be in my class." This notion of multilingual students being "deficient" once again comes from their deficient writing abilities and the expectations of the language these students should be able to produce to take college-level classes.

The reasons behind those views and actions, according to Melissa and Angela, is not because instructors "are not good people, but more they felt the college wasn't

recognizing what was happening." Melissa explained that during her interactions with other instructors she "could feel the frustration" because "we have been doing things a certain way for a long time and now we have all these students who need us to do it a different way" and instructors lack "training" to make those changes. Angela added that opposite of the "ESL staff …who love what they do. I think they have a passion for it", there are "a few instructors that are not comfortable with channel, you know work through language barriers and that's going to be a huge turn off for our students." Another reason for instructors feeling this way about multilingual students is "because other instructors don't speak the language, they get uncomfortable and it makes them start acting awkward and I notice like other instructors won't joke around, or, you know, play around with some of the students." Thus, the instructor interviewees suggested that negative views of the multilingual students are due to a lack of training and skills to work with students who need a different approach to teaching because of their linguistic background.

Instructors just need to "rephrase" their language instead of "patronizing them [students] or talking down to them…ESL students aren't stupid, they pick up on that, I think that turns them off from other instructors because they're like you're talking to me like I'm stupid, you know? I'm not stupid" added Angela when I asked about perceptions of multilingual students in the college. To Angela, "patronizing" students impacted them in a way that they "turned off". These reactions and feelings explained by Angela validated what students discussed in chapter 4 when describing their experiences with instructors outside the ESL program, more specifically Siti's interactions with her writing instructor who made her "feel stupid".

While most of the instructor participants of this study agreed that other faculty members viewed multilingual students as deficient and did not take the time and effort to support them, Angela added a new perspective to this issue. She asserted: “I've seen some instructors that, you know, almost baby or coddle our ESL students to where they won't let him struggle with some of the material, and they almost do it for them.” This notion of “coddling” multilingual students is also problematic, to Angela. This represents a view of learning in which letting “students struggle with materials” might be considered beneficial and necessary to develop language and academic skills.

Melissa also provided commentary on conversations she had with students reflecting a similar notion on what Angela explained. She said:

> I have had some students tell me that they feel like they are perceived as being not as intelligent because they don't speak English and I know that from my own research that that's an issue that a lot of professors perceive their students that don't speak English as not very smart and so I try to be really supportive around that and help them understand that that's wrong, right? It's not, it's not... It's a form of racism and prejudice and that it’s important… I want them to understand what it is, so they know it's nothing to do with anything they're doing. You know, does that make sense?

In contrast to the subtle ways in which Joseph, Abby and even Angela referred to those views and incidents with the multilingual students, Melissa clearly identified those behaviors as “racism and prejudice” on behalf of “other professors”. This racism was based on language as she referred to the students that “don’t speak English.” During my class observation, I witnessed Melissa having these types of discussions during a class on cultural differences. A unit in her syllabus discussed instances of racism and discrimination in school and the workplace. During the interview, Melissa alluded to these conversations during class and said:

> I told them ‘You're not the problem. You know, your accent is not, should not, that should not be happening to you at work, and there's things you can do about that, right? You don't. You don't have to tolerate that’ and a lot of them would say to me, especially a lot of the Cuban students have said to me, 'you know, it was really helpful for me when you said that because I have customers, sometimes who give me funny looks. And then I think, oh maybe I shouldn't be doing this job’.

As I highlighted in the first section of chapter 4, students are often concerned about accent. This comment from Melissa demonstrates that students’ interactions with the “White American” who would “make fun” of them or as Melissa mentioned “give them the funny looks” influenced students’ deficient views of their English language use and their sense of belonging in places such as a job and school. This notion of “funny” is one of the ways in which multilingual speakers can be perceived because of the way they language in relation to what is perceived as “standardized” English pronunciation. These notions about English pronunciation connect to the larger ideology of standardization of language in which other language varieties and accents are seen as deficient.

Just as Melissa did with identifying and classifying these issues as racism, Joseph also described “perceptions” and “the kind of treatment” that multilingual students received as “racist.” He shared an example of a conversation he had with a student by saying:

> I heard some experiences of students who are like, ‘this professor or this person is clearly racist, and I think that the treatment I’m getting you know, the way I’ve been treated is based on my race, and not my language’, and I think there’s some truth to that, how we perceive… it’s a different experience for a black Cuban than a white Cuban here you know, at the college for sure the experience in the campus things like that, and the services they receive, I’m sure it’s a completely different experience, so, while it’s good to focus on diversity and things like that I think that faculty and staff need to be cognizant that this is not a homogenous group of just ESL students, there’s a lot of identities and other factors that play and work, umm within the group of ESL.

Joseph openly distinguished a relationship between language and race regarding the treatment that multilingual students received from "other professors." He provided an example of the complex intersection of race and ethnicity among Latinos. A white and black Cuban, according to Joseph, can receive different treatment that students were clearly able to identify and share with him. Joseph also critiqued the notion of "ESL students" as a monolithic group and pointed out the multiplicity of identities carried by multilingual students regarding language and race. In the literature review, I highlighted the role "ESL" classification and the label "ESL student" have on multilingual students' experiences in educational institutions, not only because of the possible treatment but the potential future opportunities and/or limitations represented by this classification/label.

Joseph also provided commentary on this idea of "diversity" that I unpacked throughout this chapter from the perspective of instructors who "enjoy" having this "diverse" group of students in their classrooms. Joseph considered that instructors' racial and ethnic identity play a role in how they perceive, treat, and teach multilingual students. He said: "overwhelmingly our faculty is white and older, and part of this you know, and mainly monolingual in English," presumably suggesting that instructors being "white" is the reason why these racist incidents occur. He later added "faculty should, to a reasonable point, reflect the student body, I think obviously you know, in terms of ethnicity, race, background, linguistic background, to a certain extent…I think there's a lot of work to be done there." Joseph recognizes that serving multilingual students requires institutional changes regarding personnel. The change in faculty could represent better services to multilingual students. He also emphasized training and "ongoing professional development" required for full time faculty. He also indicated "we need

more people with TESOL backgrounds and things like that, that can understand the student population."

All the above suggestions expressed by Joseph called for intentional institutional efforts to better serve multilingual students who obviously are, to Joseph, more than a language category. He explicitly called for the establishment of initiatives that promote not only representation and belonging for students but also have implications for teaching with a linguistic diversity focus. Joseph's answers reflected his experience as the only faculty of color and multilingual I interviewed in this research study. Thus, when instructors are non-white and multilingual, they could probably relate more to students. He continued explaining:

> I get both sides of that" because he is "luckily fortunately fallen on the positive side of that I have a lot of students who know that I, that my background is in this, that, you know I've been through this process of learning a language and my family, you know, are, even though we come from a Caribbean Island, we've had the citizenship, still understand the immigrant experience and I think a lot of my students tend to see elements of themselves in me, and I think that helps a lot with rapport. And I tend to be a lot more flexible and understanding of differences in language, just because I've been there myself, I've, you know, learned languages myself, I've lived in a foreign country by myself without speaking the language, and had to pick up enough to kind of live and so I've been there and I've seen that kind of stuff, and for me it's, it's like "Ok, I see myself in them as well.

These experiences Joseph shared distinguished him from "the other instructors" interviewees referred to throughout interviews. Race is not an isolated concept and lived experiences of educators notably influenced Joseph's views of students, views of teaching and the challenges of serving linguistically diverse students in community college classrooms. Responses like this revealed how language ideologies and identities are intertwined in the discourses used by instructors. When Joseph said "I see myself in them as well" he explicitly articulated the reasons behind his views and teaching

practices he commented on during the interview.

Serving Multilingual Students: Institutional Challenges, Disruptions and Visions

In this theme, I addressed instructors' notions of multilingual students' help-seeking inabilities in contrast to the actual services provided in the community college. Throughout the first theme of this chapter, I highlighted how instructors showed expectations for multilingual students being able to ask for help and use the resources available in the college; however, in this section, I contrast those expectations with their critiques of the services provided by the college, the gaps and their visions to better serve multilingual students.

"Just letting them know what resources are available to them is huge, you know? They sometimes don't even know the building" (Elizabeth); "persistence and affective communication is probably the most important for success" (Joseph); "our students do not do a good job asking for help" (Angela). Expressions like these were common among instructors and I unpacked some of them during the section on academic expectations. Throughout the interviews, some of the beliefs among instructors were those of students getting to know and using the academic resources available for them in the college. Angela explained: "I'm trying to take more advantage of tutoring and things on campus" while Elizabeth also suggested that "her biggest thing is them using the resources such as tutoring in the writing center." Angela focused their explanations on the tutoring services and writing center provided by the library as a future focus for her multilingual students to "seek help" and possibly improve her grades.

Joseph, additionally mentioned "resources for, advising, we have career, um, if they are not sure what they want to do, there's a career professional development or

something...the writing center, learning services (pseudonym), math centers have tutoring at certain hours, so all of these resources exist." Instructors affirmed an existence of resources that multilingual students needed but did not utilize, possibly for a lack of knowledge or even "pride" as Angela mentioned.

While the possibilities to support students exist, Joseph indicated that "the rate at which students actually use it is kind of low, so I think taking advantage of all these resources, being assertive in their education would be a big step forward in terms of being successful, nobody is going to hold your hand, nobody is going to help you." To Joseph, students should advocate for themselves and be more agentive to be successful in college. This notion of assertiveness would imply that multilingual students are aware of those resources and their rights to use them. Joseph continued by saying that students should "make needs and wants known, um, essentially and, if you have a problem, you keep working until you get that problem fixed." These assertive qualities were sometimes obscured by the deep-seated ingrained prejudice many staff and faculty members may have had of the students. Even when students might be willing to ask for help, they sometimes encountered negative attitudes and treatment that prevented them from using those resources or reaching out to those individuals again. Joseph, himself, indicated "I don't want to direct a student to someone who's going to be hostile to them." This strategy employed by Joseph suggests that there might be staff acting "hostile" with students. Siti and Sadiya commented something similar during their interviews and I unpacked some of those experiences in chapter 4, section 3.

Even when instructors identified resources to be used by multilingual students they also talked about the gaps in resources and the changes the college should do to be

able to fully serve multilingual students. This seems contradictory and Angela commented on this gap by saying that:

> with tutoring, like if you think you need tutoring, set it up now because we don't have a whole lot of tutors, so if you walk in on Monday for tutoring, they may not be able to see you for two weeks. So just you know, the short staff part, I think is our biggest challenge as far as TCC as a whole, but I think the resources available. I think the people that are that are there genuinely want to help and they do a good job helping. I just wish we had more availability.

Even if students were to use these resources, the limited availability of personnel could impede them the access. Students' lack of awareness and willingness to "ask for help" is not then the only obstacle to get assisted but rather also the distribution, availability, and timing to access these resources.

According to Elizabeth, COVID-19 social distancing guidelines and remote teaching also made it impossible for students to access resources. She hopes that "hopefully next semester will be, in person, in person tutoring and I, I think that that will make a huge difference for students to be able to go to the library, the learning services and receive tutoring in person. I think it will be a great help to them." Elizabeth suggested that multilingual students read at a slower pace and often having to translate "on the margins" prevent them from "grasping the main idea of an essay" so tutoring would be of great help to learn reading strategies and support for their writing.

In addition to tutoring, Abby talked about the benefits of having an ESL coach for multilingual students. She explicitly expressed that the coach can "help that transition out of ESL into their regular classes, the bridge classes, as they call them, so that's been helpful." During the interviews, students also indicated that having a person in addition to their instructors who personalized instruction, provided scaffolded and additional support

to do homework, and explained instructions has been crucial for their academic achievement.

In addition to providing commentary on the availability of resources, students' use of the resources and lack thereof, some instructors provided suggestions and solutions to those disparities, and here I called them visions. Abby commented on specific progress to get funding to create "bridge classes" that support the transition from ESL program to college level classes although she reported encountering some resistance from a few departments. In addition to the ESL instructional coach, which was the position I held during the development of this study, Abby had been working on requesting ESL focused-tutoring services in the library as well as doing some research "to collect the problems." Abby added that the college needed accurate data on needs, faculty needs and more specifically to create databases with specific information with "ESL students'" educational backgrounds, language placement and demographic characteristics. On this point about demographics, Chelsea wondered "But what about the students that are multilingual and were never in ESL? We don't have to collect that information." She later said: "Also I think the whole college needs to make a shift to think about multilingualism as a norm and not an exception because I think that we don't have accurate numbers." These numbers would probably help the college to place resources more accurately and place students in classes in which their needs can be better met. As part of the solutions, Abby suggested that "they need to come up with different tracks" for multilingual students in which classes are tailored to their needs instead of mainstreaming them in general college-level classes.

Following with solutions and visions, Joseph suggested that "I can in any way help develop professionally colleagues and other areas of the college to better work with these students so that I can point them in a direction that's going to be friendly, accepting and inclusive of them." To the comment of more friendly environments to MLs, Chelsea suggested something similar. She indicated that there are parts of the college that are really slow to change and slow to see…different needs and changing needs and kind of adapting to what that means. So, I definitely think there's improvements to be made." Joseph and Chelsea recognized that changes needed to be made in terms of how the institution embraced multilingualism and diversity starting from making changes in their systems, procedures and services to students that are not only multilingual learners but also who historically have been classified as "ESL". These efforts require personnel who are "inclusive" and "friendly" alluding to the professional development emphasis for faculty to work with linguistically and racially diverse students.

Finally, other changes according to the instructors should involve the inclusion of standardized testing or frameworks to measure MLs' language abilities in order to help placement. Angela suggests that looking at the "benchmark tests that they have to pass in order to once they get to me, because a lot of you know, like I said, we've got a lot of variety, not variety, but we've got a lot of, a lot of there's too much of a variance from where considered low to high performing" Angela referred to the classification of multilingual learners according to their language proficiency because it doesn't seem to involve a standardized measure to distinguish "performance levels" among multilingual students.

Discussion

Although some of the themes reviewed in this chapter responded to the questions I prepared for the interview with the instructors, some others emerged spontaneously throughout the interviews and fieldnotes, especially the connections between language and race and how "others" stereotyped multilingual students. Broadly discussed in the most recent scholarship on multilingual learners, the classification and tracking of these students lacked language proficiency information especially when students are not international but newcomers and generation 1.5 (Kanno & Harklau, 2012); and my findings support and expand this claim by how some instructors explained that the information about students' language assessment and proficiency is not comprehensive enough to know what is the accurate level of English students have after finishing the ESL program.

The academic expectations of instructors were mostly focused on students' personal characteristics and values such as communication skills, developing confidence and help-seeking abilities. Thus, I expand and contribute to the work of Duff (2005) and other scholars on K-12 scholarship, regarding the "ESL students'" lack of cultural skills and focus on personal characteristics but this time with emphasis on post-secondary schools. I connect these findings also with evidence from chapter 4 in which students' data contested that participating in class and communicating with instructors and/or college staff are often hindered by the shame, fears, and embarrassment that comes from perceived deficient skills in English such as having a foreign accent and incorrect grammar.

In tune with the scholarship on language ideologies focused on power relations,

and broader social and cultural beliefs about speakers (Erickson & Shultz, 1982; He, 2003; Rampton, 2005; Rymes, 2001), I also found that more than perceptions about language use, instructors had views of the students' cultural values, personal characteristics, and skills. Even when instructors wanted to avoid generalizations about the students, they often discussed ideas, stereotypes about students' cultures and marked specific differences about refugees and Cubans, for example. These unspoken and unconscious assumptions about the students have effects on the type of learning promoted and privileged in the classroom and what instructors wanted students to achieve. Instructors discussed expectations about writing and grammar that resembled students' fears, worries and perceptions of their own language skills regarding a lack of "good" grammar and academic English skills necessary to write papers in English required in their college-level classes.

Even instructors who demonstrated progressive, culturally responsive practices in their views and classroom practices made distinctive considerations about students' cultures valuing family time and work that might keep them from assimilating to the American school conventions and rules. When Melissa said, "your culture is not wrong" but "we do things different here", she implied that accepted behaviors in students' cultures are unacceptable here in the American school conventions. I connect this to Bourdieu's ideas on linguistic and cultural competence that students might lack and institutions value and that is specific to the mainstream culture. So, if multilingual students want to succeed in college they should assimilate or learn the behaviors of the mainstream, or the "traditional students" as named by some instructors. Instructors often discussed differences between "native and non-native speakers" reflecting then unspoken

ideas of language separation and native speakerism connected to the broader circulating ideologies of language standardization and unintentionally placing their own language practices as the legitimate. I discuss these ideas of native speakerism in the next chapter, first section.

When claiming that relationships with students were "emotional" or their tendencies to bring up personal matters into conversations once students feel comfortable, I suspect that instructors are split between aesthetic and authentic care (Cammarota & Romero, 2006; Valenzuela, 1999) in relation to the educational literature on "care". While instructors recognize students' socio-economic constraints, situations with work and family responsibilities, and their needs for human connection, the interviewees put a tremendous emphasis on students' performing well by focusing on the development of skills to write paragraphs and pages for assignments that prepare them for the demands of college-level classes.

Once interviewees referred to "other instructors" is when opinions of racism and prejudice came to light. These "other instructors'" views and teaching practices based on deficient beliefs about the students, I understand, were part of the general views of the college regarding multilingual students, seeing them as the exception instead of the new mainstream students. I also contribute and expand to the literature on racialization of multilingual learners or emerging bilinguals (Flores, 2020; Rosa, 2019) in relation to the stereotypes focused on students' classification as a racially minoritized group linguistically profiled as deficient by the White Listening Subject. These findings also support the claims by Bunch and Kibler (2010) and Kibler et al. (2011) regarding

instructors' considering multilingual students' language skills inadequate for college level classes. I expand on all these discussions in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter, I review my findings from the previous two chapters and discuss their implications and connections to literature on language ideologies and standardization of language, language as symbolic power and the process of language racialization. First, I summarize and discuss the findings of the study. Second, I discuss how these findings support, expand, and contrast the current scholarship on multilingual learners in community colleges. In doing so, I draw on literature related to how multilingual students are historically deemed as deficient language users by listening subjects. I examine their language racialization through the discussion of their linguistic practices and the perceptions of academic language and personal qualities expected by their instructors. Later I discuss the contributions of this study to the scholarship on the White Listening Subject and racialization of language as part of the general ideologies of language standardization, first by analyzing students' perspectives and then instructors. Finally, the limitations of this study and the recommendations for future research on multilingual students in community colleges.

Summary of Research Findings

After analyzing the data from interviews and fieldnotes, I developed main findings related to how multilingual students communicated their experiences in the community college with an emphasis on language learning and linguistic profiling. As discussed in chapter 4, students' perceived deficiencies in academic English were shaped

by their own ideas of accent, use of grammar and an idealized English proficiency. This idealized English proficiency is taken up through years of schooling in and outside the US and their history with language use. Students' past and current experiences with their classification as "ESL students", I argue, formed language identities in which they see themselves as deficient in comparison to the white native speaker of English. I explicitly connected accent and correctness with the construct of race and more specifically Whiteness and White Mainstream English. This undermining of language skills comes from years of interaction and socialization in educational spaces in which their languaging is profiled as deficient. So, multilingual students found in their inner groups of bilingual peers a space of support in which language brokering was crucial for completing homework and navigating college procedures in general. The interactions with their college instructors and other staff are an influencing factor in the development of self-beliefs about academic language use and capabilities as college students. Students then negotiated identities as English language users through the understanding of beliefs about their own language skills and what language practices were valued in college. This negotiation of identities as "ESL students" were impacted by their socialization in academic and non-academic contexts which sent hidden messages of language deficiency and those messages is what some scholars such as Alim et al. (2016), Garcia (2020), Flores (2020) call ideologies of language standardization and languagelessness (Rosa, 2016).

In chapter 5, I analyzed the different ways in which college instructors described multilingual students as a cultural, class and linguistic category. Often, stereotyping multilingual students according to their country of origin and making assumptions about

their educational values and personal characteristics and distinguishing them from "traditional students", instructors revealed language ideologies that racialized multilingual students through an idealized lens of language standardization. Through the eyes of their instructors, multilingual students need to assimilate to American conventions and academic expectations. However, most often academic expectations were focused on the development of personal qualities like confidence and self-advocacy that overlook the gaps in services on behalf of the college. In bringing these perceptions to light, I affirm Kanno and Cromley (2013, 2015), Harklau (2000), Kibler et al. (2011) and others' findings who claimed that multilingual students in college are underserved, misplaced in ESL classes, and discriminated against. My findings also extend this previous work by providing a different approach to look at the problem of being underserved and discrimination of MLs in community colleges. In this study, I provided a lens focused on access to resources and broader social structures that privilege English and native speakers of English shaping circulating ideologies of language standardization in the community college. These broader ideologies of English as standard language shaped and sometimes negatively impact MLs' academic experiences in college.

Discussion of Research Findings

The White American: Perceiving and Understanding the Standardization of Language

Recall that scholarship on the study of language in the field of education, educational linguistics, and linguistic anthropology has been shifted by the work of scholars in K-12 spaces who call for a change focused on race and the coloniality of English (Garcia 2020; Flores, 2020; Paris & Alim, 2016, Seltzer, 2019; Rosa; 2019). Languaging has been used as a preferred term to define language as an acting verb

involving the lived experiences of racialized and minoritized bilinguals and their everyday interactions. This view of language aims to fight standardized views and separation of languages which have political and social implications by the privilege given to White Mainstream English (Baker-Bell, 2020). Despite this shift, little scholarship focuses on the experiences of bilinguals in postsecondary institutions in which some of the issues found regarding discrimination and marginalization of racialized bilinguals are also prevalent. To address this gap, I contribute to the study of ideologies of language standardization with roots in the coloniality of language (Veronelli, 2015) and the hegemony of English (Macedo et al., 2016) with a focus on multilingual learners in community colleges. Although there is research done in community colleges, these are spaces still historically under researched especially regarding multilingual learners. Often, the literature on multilingual learners is done in K12 spaces and mostly focused on what teachers and administrators expect from students. My main contributions rely on the study of access and services to multilingual learners from students' perspectives. By listening and analyzing what students' experiences are in college, I learned firsthand how initial placement and taking their first college-level classes impacted their own perceptions of themselves but also how others perceived them and their language abilities in the long term.

During the interviews, most MLs deemed their language skills as deficient when they asserted their lack of "American accent" (Romi), declared that they were "afraid to make mistakes" (Sadiya) or confessed "My English is not as full" (Carlos) when they compared themselves to an idealized version of English they perceived as legitimate. These findings suggest that MLs were internalizing years of interaction and socialization

with the “White American" as the “White Listening Subject” which Flores (2021) claims, is not an “individual but an ideological position that can be inhabited by any institutional actor regardless of their racial identity.” I drew on this broader ideology of language standardization to explain how student-participants of this research study deemed their linguistic abilities as “not full” “not good” “not fluent” in comparison to the White American. Rosa (2016) explains that “ideologies of language standardization are often understood to stigmatize particular linguistic practices perceived as deviating from prescriptive norms, racialized ideologies of languagelessness call into question linguistic competence—and, by extension, legitimate personhood—altogether” (p. 163). Other research on language standardization often recreates ideological views that comes from educators and administrators; however, I add that these views can be embodied by the marginalized group themselves due to their interaction with the White American. Analyzing and understanding students’ positions helped me learned how these ideologies become pervasive and affect their own progress in college.

Another example of the White Listening Subject as a position that can be embodied by any person was manifested when Siti specifically doubted that the incident in which her instructor, who was not White, laughed about her pronunciation, was racially charged because she is a Muslim woman. She reflected on his interactions with other Muslim women but struggled to connect the episode to racism. She said, “but he is not White”, When students interacted with instructors, co-workers and other students in the classroom who were not multilingual, those individuals were inhabiting this ideological position of “White Listening Subject.” (Baker-Bell, 2017). My findings support the definition of the White Listening Subject as an ideological position and add

that the MLs as speakers of multiple language may only see the White Listening Subject when it is embodied by a White American in a position of power such as instructors. This nuanced lens may help researchers interested in the relationship of Whiteness, power and language understand that the study of broader societal ideologies is necessary to unveil hidden beliefs affecting behaviors in the classrooms and institutions serving MLs. Also, analysis of even the smallest interaction between educators and students can reveal the ideologies that may later affect lesson planning, feedback and even assessment.

Multilingual students often perceived "Americans" in a position of power and authority who could "fix" their language, have a "correct accent" and who sometimes "don't understand" what they say in conversations. The White Listening Subject has, implicitly and in some cases explicitly, taught multilingual students that they are "difficult to understand" as one of the instructor-participants mentioned in the interview. When this listening subject laughed at, rolled their eyes and dismissed multilingual students, an implicit message of inadequacy was being sent. Thus, students' feelings of embarrassment, shyness and lack of confidence are not only individually produced in isolation, instead these are produced by the socialization with whoever represents the figure of the White Listening Subject. These findings also in a way nuanced the scholarship on standardization of language ideologies, since not only the White Listening Subject represented by instructors stigmatized and delegitimized multilingual students' language practices but MLs also expressed tensions when native English-speaking peers were present in the classroom. In fact, MLs often expressed how they differed from other students who spoke "only one language" (Romi). Understanding how the White American voices in the classroom also represented a tension for MLs may help

instructors create spaces in which MLs interact and benefit from those interactions in a positive way. These opportunities may debunk MLs' ideas of not fitting and promote a sense a belonging in college.

MLs were also an object of language standardization ideologies when being with other multilinguals made them feel comfortable and safe, versus being in classrooms in which only English is spoken, and the "native" speakers are the legitimate speakers of English. Other research with African American students suggested that behind students' views and experiences with the White Listening Subject is hidden a gatekeeping mechanism represented by the term Academic English which privileges linguistic norms of whites (Baker-Bell, 2017, 2020). This research demonstrated that stigmas tied to non-standard English have a long history in the US that have not changed despite efforts for the past 85 years (Baker-Bell, 2020). I expand this research by adding a lens on Academic English from immigrant students, whose experiences might be similar to other students of color in the US, but different in the way that most of these students are foreign born and learned English as an additional language upon arrival to the US (except Yitzy and Ousman). Delineating these differences among students of color represent a different perspective in the theorization of the concept of White Listening Subject and how academic English represents a gatekeeping mechanism in different ways for foreign born students of color who are often classified as "ESL students."

The notions of accent, grammar, and academic writing discussed either by students or instructors in this study support Martinez and Mejia's (2020) claims on academic language being rather than an "empirically observable set of linguistic features," an "idealized notion of the kinds of language valued in schools" (p. 53). This

idealized notion of language is legitimized in schools through the setting of academic expectations that benefit students from the dominant mainstream culture. I saw how instructors' expectations set for students indeed reflected an idea that being proficient in English is using complex ideas in writing, APA conventions, and writing long paragraphs–skills that multilingual students lacked and needed to work on to pass a class considered a college-level class. Instructors acting as the White Listening Subject here were using their own idealized version of academic language to represent mainstream standard English as the valued language in academic writing. This ideology of standard English was also present in students' interviews when they referred to other white American students in the classrooms. For example, when Romi and Sadiya talked about their feelings of easiness when only multilingual students were present in the classroom. These tensions regarding the presence of English-speaking peers in the classroom are examples of MLs' internalization of the circulating language standardization ideologies in an institution that values native speakerism. I also contribute to the research on ESL college writing (Liu & Tannacito, 2013; Matsuda, 2006) that highlights how monolingual ideologies that privilege English as the standard and only language in postsecondary institutions overlook bilingual students' abilities and knowledge of writing and affect foreign students' disposition towards writing. As in Liu and Tannacito (2013), in my findings I also revealed that the white privilege based on American-centered English language skills expectations shape students' perception of what are legitimate language practices that will result in successful academic writing. Although my findings differ in the way that these MLs were not specifically talking about writing, MLs discussed instances of language in speaking and in interaction with instructors who were mostly

identified as White.

Even the distinct terms used by instructors such as “nonnative speakers” and “traditional students” reinforce ideologies of standardization and legitimization of language. When students are deemed as not “having a lot of vocabulary” or as “not [being] good at speaking” they are being compared to the idealized version of native speakers who might not need to put forward the extra effort to understand instructions, complete assignments and navigate college in general. Multilingual students whose language skills are deemed as deficient need remediation and extra effort according to these instructors. Expectations rooted in nativespeakerism, the stereotypical beliefs of native speakers being more competent (Holliday, 2006) are usually centered on Whiteness (Ramjattan, 2015), and I confirmed them in this study. The expressions used by instructors and students when referring to MLs’ language practices confirm Thornbury’s (2006) claims that the native speaker is seen as having the abilities to use the language “accurately, fluently and appropriately” (p. 140) while nonnative speakers inherently lack these skills. My findings nuanced the work of Ramjattan (2015) on White English native speaking teachers because the privilege to native speakerism in my study are related to multilingual students’ language skills rather than teachers’. Also, although accent is included in how MLs described their language skills, there were other instances of language related to grammar and writing. These nuanced ways in which students described language skills may also reveal past experiences with the language and interaction with other teachers, not necessarily the current college instructors. Thus, these findings have implications for the research done about MLs in K12 spaces in which access to education is also impacted by ideologies of standardization of language.

Findings of this study also revealed that most instructors focused their expectations on matters other than academics as in Duff (2005), Kanno (2018) and others. Instructors' opinions on students' lack of confidence to advocate for themselves comes from views of assimilation of students to mainstream culture. Despite the best intentions, these expectations still enclosed assimilationist views of language and personhood that require students to communicate in a certain way, use certain language and behave in ways that often resemble the White American and the White American college students. Similar to Bartolome's (2010) study even when some instructors recognized that students' backgrounds are varied and can be stigmatized and generalized, their academic expectations were shaped by assimilationist views that I perceived as denigrating the cultural background of multilingual students. (Un)intentionally denigrating students' cultural background may impact students' sense of belonging and long-term ideas of self-worth that, as it has been researched, results in inaccurate self-reported linguistic skills that may cause language misplacement in future 4-year-institutions or even in the workforce.

Finally, my findings reveal the power of beliefs and language use behind student-teacher and student-student interactions in the classrooms in which laughing at a student's mispronunciation of words or "giving the funny looks" can send messages that get internalized by students and affect self-worth, self-concepts, and academic identities. Most of the students' comments and judgments of their abilities came from interactions with instructors, other students and staff at the college who might have sent implicit messages that reinforce inequalities in the long term. Students' negative experiences with a listening subject, who represented an authority in the classroom and the college,

possibly affected their confidence and how they viewed themselves as English speakers and college students. I expand then on the literature on language and identity (Edwards, 2009; Heller, 2011; Seltzer, 2020) by unpacking how students talked about themselves being "ESL students", and deficient speakers of English with a foreign accent. Sometimes this label threw upon themselves identities and expectations of what others thought students could accomplish and became a predictor of their future abilities. But it also allowed for a conflicting internal negotiation of identities between being an ESL student and a college student. Being ESL automatically excluded them from seeing themselves as college students and being college students meant they should aspire to act and produce language and complete activities like any other student. This label also allowed for an institutional long-term classification as students who needed language support. Other times, being an "ESL student" was seen as an opportunity for students who in the past have received more help from previous teachers in other schools. But that also shaped surrounding beliefs that "ESL students need more hand holding." Sometimes this negotiation of identities allowed for an understanding of the term "ESL" as those who "take too lax of an approach" or "skip classes" and make some students want to distance themselves from assuming this identity.

By focusing on community college students, I contribute to the study of this student population in research specifically about multilingual learners. The scholarship in this area is still scarce and mostly based on educators' perspectives and the analysis of the program contents and language assessment. Instead, in my research I provide a nuanced lens in the study of language standardization ideologies coming from the marginalized silenced group itself. I offer an additional perspective to understand the

impact that listening subjects have on the schooling experiences of MLs, in this case, the White Listening Subject. In my study, I use the White Listening Subject to explain how circulating ideologies about standardized language, correctness, accent, and fluency in the community college context get internalized by multilingual learners. The internalization of these ideologies occurred because of students' interaction with the White Americans who have judged MLs' language practices. These judgmental experiences and interactions with Whites may result in MLs deeming their own language practices as deficient and lacking accuracy. The White Listening Subject is also connected to the Whiteness and racialization of language in the way in which MLs do not perceive other speakers with the same ideologies as they perceive Whites. An example of this is evidenced in the section about feeling embarrassed and shy only when instructors and other American students are present in the classroom.

Racialization of Language and Academic Language Skills of Multilingual Students

While the standardization of language can lead to a process of racialization through assumptions that Whiteness and Mainstream White English are the norm, I want to also discuss how racialization happened in this research study through the creation of stereotypical beliefs of the students' cultural, class and educational background. Based on the scholarship on racialization of language, this process occurs when social structures influence language use and beliefs around language use and speakers; the instructors, when suggesting that "other instructors" demonstrated deficient views on the students and did not want them in their classrooms due to a lack of language proficiency necessary to accomplish college-level tasks, were linguistically profiling and discriminating against multilingual students.

Linguistic profiling informs how language as an embodied category of cultural capital can be used to deny minoritized groups access to other forms of capital. The identification of a person's race from their speech and using that information to discriminate based on race, has been documented in many different settings including schools. Particularly, non-standard language speakers are denied access to mainstream culture because they do not speak the expected idealized language with an expected accuracy in grammar, accent, and fluency. As a nuanced contribution to the literature on symbolic power, I found that multilingual learners were unaware of their linguistic capital because the perceptions of the White Americans, was that students did not write or speak English well due to pronunciation and grammar mistakes and fluency while speaking. My findings reveal how students' past negative experiences with an instructor, or a college staff prompted them to drop out of classes. On occasions, students faced financial loss for not being able to solve issues in offices like financial aid due to the person not being able to understand students or simply dismiss them once they hear an accent over the phone. Revealing the power that language has in tangible access to resources may offer possibilities for change in services and also in staff, administrators and instructors' treatment to students.

As Alim et al. (2020) claim, "the outcome of racialization is, of course, systemic racism, across all social, cultural, political, and economic contexts" (p. 3) of which educational institutions are part. My findings regarding linguistic discrimination enacted by "other instructors" and staff lead to racism and some interviewees explicitly identified these instances of racism. However, my findings nuanced the scholarship in linguistic discrimination in the way that most of the data collected demonstrated subtle ways in

which reinforcing stereotypes about students' background could lead to discrimination. Stereotypical assumptions such as Asian students being more reserved and quieter, Cubans being more educated while research and education was a "foreign" idea for refugee students; can easily rear unconscious practices. While I understand that these assumptions come from instructors' experiences teaching similar students in the past, expectations based on those stereotypical beliefs were set and possibly shaped their future interactions with such students. Instructors again are acting as the White Listening Subject by comparing students' academic skills to the idealized version of academic identities and skills usually found with White students.

Instructors constantly referred to students' socio-economic backgrounds as a crucial element of their college experience and what they accomplish in any given class. Thus, the classification of "ESL student" is indeed a narrowed definition for the multiplicity of identities enacted by these students who come from different countries, speak a variety of languages, and are also classified as Latinos, African, and Muslim. I concur then with Alim et al. (2020), Spears (2020), Rosa (2016) and others who analyze racialization by looking at language, race, and class as jointly organized. My findings suggest that multilingual students' experience in college is mostly shaped by being a working-class student who, according to instructors, work full-time, help family, and can't have the same outcomes as those traditional students who do not face the same struggles. I saw how the differentiation of "traditional student" and "ESL" or multilingual student often carried the weight of a differentiation of cultures portraying the immigrant student as failing to act White-Middle class. When instructors talk about advocacy and confidence, they are referring to the idealized characteristics of a White middle class

student. Although it is out of the scope of this research to study class, for me, it is important to acknowledge how these dominant discourses in macro contexts and institutional structures reproduce stereotypes against immigrant multilingual students.

Although instructors and students did not use the term "Academic Language" participants in this study often alluded to a dichotomy of complex ideas versus simple language or even a differentiation between speaking and writing. Through notions of grammar, academic vocabulary, writing conventions such as APA citations, abilities to write research papers and long essays, multilingual students were often framed as lacking those abilities to complete complex tasks required in their college-level classes. I propose that these findings also add nuance to the scholarship on academic language (Bunch & Martin, 2020; Bunch, 2021; Cummins, 1984; Jensen & Thompson, 2020). Recall the argument stated by Bunch and Martin (2020), who repeatedly found on research papers that "students, especially language learners or those speaking languages or varieties of language not privileged by dominant socioeconomic and racial groups, must learn to use specialized forms of language before being able to successfully engage in 'mainstream' content-area instruction." (p. 539). This argument is specifically relevant to understand my findings. The views on students' lacking academic language skills nuanced this argument when students talked about their skills and/or instructors described the experience of having multilingual students in their classrooms. Although other research has explained a dichotomy of the term academic language, by distinguishing between complex and simple language or specialized and general knowledge, I add that this term is often presented in ways in which educators do not realize they are using such dichotomies to frame students' language skills. In my study it was often covered by using

terms such as “research skills”, “plagiarism” or “language needed to take advanced classes.” Understanding these nuances of academic language may help reveal other ways in which educators might be unintentionally deeming MLs as deficient or lacking academic skills.

Wei (2022) in interpreting Rosa and Flores’s (2015) explanation of academic language claims that this term is “a category and a categorizing device that emerges as part of broader raciolinguistic ideologies that position racialized and minoritized learners as illegitimate language users, linguistically deficient and unacademic” (p. 178). I concur with Wei’s interpretation and with the scholarship on academic language as being used as a gatekeeping mechanism for academic achievement that also racializes multilingual students and is used to discriminate against them. As an educator myself, and multilingual researcher, I recognize that these idealized notions of academic language have shaped my education as institutions expect a researcher and graduate student to be able to read and write academic papers, but they have also been used to deny opportunities. Reinforcing the dichotomy of what is and what is not academic language brings educational inequalities since those conventions usually referred to “academic language” as attached to a specific way of languaging in English.

Bridging the Gap in College Services through Peer Support

Findings of this study revealed that an emotional level and connectedness was often sought by students and recognized by instructor interviewees who indicated to value any sort of connection with students in terms of cultural awareness and finding a common ground to relate to students to build relationships. Yet, those instances of cultural awareness, despite the best intentions to care for students, often revealed

instances of aesthetic care which Valenzuela (1999) defines as superficial caring in which educators prioritize the institutional structures and ideas of learning and achievement more than creating real nurturing and trusting relationships in which the real human is valued. I understand the difficulties of navigating systemic issues in education in which we, as educators, want students to succeed. Success for instructors was focused on the acquisition and development of language skills but also personal qualities perceived as valued and relevant for American society. As a response to this "care" students found support in their peers not only to feel free of embarrassment and fears but also to complete the required assignments. This lack of confidence concurrently mentioned by instructors, I would like to argue, calls for an understanding of *Confianza*, which scholars such as Bartlett and Garcia (2011) and Alvarez (2017) claim involves a reciprocating relationship where individuals feel cared for. As a researcher, I found patterns in the data when students talked about their interactions with instructors, they often referred to instructors, who genuinely "wanted to help", provided audiovisual materials, scaffolded instructions, made classes fun, as "easy" and "nice". But on a deeper level of interpretation, and to contribute to the research about *Confianza*, I see these connections as accounting for students' needs for real humanizing practices in which their individual needs are met. That is why the ESL instructor was highlighted as an exception of practice in terms of positive reinforcements, good relationships, "fun" classes, and "support." These findings expand the work of Poza (2019) and Villegas (2007) in K12 spaces, in which teachers' dispositions regarding language diversity positively shaped the curriculum, lesson planning and language practices. I add that these instances of students' searching for authentic connections with the instructors can not only happen in language

classrooms and in K12 spaces. I demonstrate that even when students are young adults, they still need and will seek connections with education beyond the aesthetic ways in which learning content is emphasized.

This *Confianza* was also found in peer support. Multilingual learners frequently found support in peers during classroom interactions, homework, and any other activities that involved college such as registration, navigation of financial aid, and solving any other administrative issue. This support often involved instances of language brokering inside the classroom.

In contrast to the limited literature on language brokering--often restricted to parent-children relationships in which language brokering was used for legal purposes, medical appointments, housing, etc. and represented a burden for children (Esquivel, 2012; Guan et al., 2014; Orellana et al., 2009;)--my findings expand this literature by offering examples of language brokering at the level of higher education and the bridging of language barriers among peers. Students used language brokering to mediate learning in the classroom (e.g., sending text messages to classmates, translating and interpreting homework for peers) but also to bridge a lack of navigational skills that can often be mistaken as language deficiencies. The lack of navigational skills and support from staff in the college caused multilingual students to be placed in the wrong classes or to duplicate paperwork, as well as time consuming procedures that resulted in financial loss (e.g., when a staff member tried to place Ousman in ESL classes or when Ruhina spent two semesters paying out-of-state tuition). Only with peer support, students like Oneida, Ruhina, and Ousman, to name a few, solved the issues with registration, placement in classes, financial aid, and advising.

But *Confianza* in this research project was not limited to the building of relationships between instructors and students, language brokering and support among students, but also in the notions of students feeling "comfortable" in classrooms where other multilingual students were present and when instructors had demonstrated "they are trying to help" or "were happy to help" as Ruhina mentioned in the interview. When students did not feel like a burden, real *Confianza* flourished and developed throughout time. To this, I applied Alvarez's (2017) expanded definition of *Confianza* as "earned rapport…and trust that comes in the form of bidirectional learning that disrupts hierarchized power inequalities" (p. 220). As a researcher who was also the ESL instructional coach at TCC, I tried to earn this trust from students and instructors not only by being there and supporting students but also by questioning practices and views that reinforced narratives of discrimination.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Future Research

Conducting this research study during the onset of a world pandemic affected the ways I imagined this project. First, my observation which I thought was going to be crucial for the study so I could focus on the study of students and instructors in the classroom, became secondary. I bent my research ideas to comply with the requirements of the college, which, found it overwhelming to ask instructors to be participants of a research study while shifting to remote and hybrid learning. The pandemic also revealed the exacerbation of inequalities regarding access to education for multilingual learners. I learned firsthand how processes thought to be carried out face to face were now online and students' access to resources became more problematic. As I centered voices of minoritized students usually absent in research about language ideologies, this study

invites educators to look closely at their interactions with students in the classroom and how those interactions innocently and unintentionally might be reinforcing stereotypes and negative narratives about multilingual learners.

I often questioned my own beliefs about the students I was working with and how in my interactions with instructors I might have also agreed on ideas that delegitimize multilingual learners' languaging practices. As I stated in chapter 2, more than condemning teachers on their beliefs and practices, and to align with Poza (2019), it is necessary to provide spaces to dialogue with educators about how their ideologies or dispositions may often unintentionally marginalize multilingual students' language practices. As language ideologies are connected to the larger sociopolitical context of society, and center speakers' point of view (Erickson, 2004; Wortham, 2008) then, all ideologies of language are valid until they negatively affect human beings and that's what I am trying to reflect on as a main takeaway of this study. I also reflect on the ways in which I might have perpetuated raciolinguistic ideologies by my own research ideas, my interview questions, the authority represented by my presence as a researcher and more experienced bilingual, and finally by the implicit self-interest that conducting research for academic purposes entails.

Recommendations for Future Research

I argue that future studies on multilingual learners include the voices of students in a holistic way. As I attempted to study the experiences of multilingual students in a community college, these views are still restricted to a small sample of participants. Future studies that document the experiences of multilingual students should include a bigger sample and broaden the focus to include the process of racialization of students

from the gender, sexuality, class, language, and race lenses. This analysis will allow for an intersectional view of the students to better understand the unique ways in which these dynamics play a role in their access to education.

I also understand that the study of language ideologies has always been a matter of the field of anthropology and linguistics and that the educational views have always been conceived as limited. However, if researchers in the education field see how cultural and language beliefs of the students shape their classroom practices, their planning, and the policies of the schools, then educators can have a more holistic understanding of students' experiences in and outside the classroom.

I am also aware of the critiques that racialization of language and the views of bilingualism supported in this study regarding the lack of practical implications for teaching. However, I suggest that studies like this one open possibilities for change in postsecondary institutions serving multilingual students. As seen in this study, students' experiences, and the connections I made with the instructors' views may offer possibilities to the community college to implement change. Some of the instructors of this study understood the limitations in services to multilingual students provided by the college, criticized the lack of services and offered suggestions in terms of the diversification of the faculty to reflect the student population.

As I found in some of the literature about multilingual learners in postsecondary education, information about this student population is sometimes incomplete and inaccurate which represents an obstacle for students getting the right services. In this study, I found how students were often placed in the wrong ESL classes or college-level classes due to a lack of understanding and/or straightforward policies that classify

multilingual learners according to specific needs. Then, future research should also focus on the evaluation of programs that serve multilingual students in community colleges, beyond the ESL services to have a bigger picture of the characteristics, backgrounds, and academic needs.

Finally, while multilingual students have been studied in community colleges in terms of attainment of higher education and introduction to the workforce, there is a gap in research with emphasis on student-faculty relationship. While I offered some insights in this matter, I recommend future studies to focus on college level classes beyond writing and general education classes because participants of this study often discussed instances of discrimination and unfair treatment when students transitioned to their majors such as nursing, communications, etc. By expanding the study of experiences of multilingual learners in these areas, we can contribute to the study of pedagogical orientations that involves faculty who historically have been deemed as lacking the skills to teach multilingual students previously classified as "ESL." I also suggest that the study of language standardization ideologies can promote powerful ways to understand how institutions structure and operationalize services to MLs. If educational institutions are aware of how they might be reinforcing circulation ideologies of language standardization, they can probably implement conscious changes in services resulting in more equitable practices to linguistically diverse students.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Student interview protocols

Interview Protocol: Wave 1

Identification questions:

Were you born in the US? _____

If not, how long have you lived here? _____

Where is your family from? _____

1. Tell me about the time when you came to the US and entered the school?
2. What could you see/hear? How did it look to you?
3. What challenges/problems did you have when you came to the US?
   Follow up: How did you cope with what was going on?

   How did that affect you or make you feel/think? 'How did you feel about that now?

4. How did your family support you?
5. Did you ask anyone for help?
   Were your friends or classmates facing the same?

6. Where were your friends? Or who were your friends?
7. Has there been anything you wish had been different...?

Language-related questions

1. When and how did you learn English? Tell me about your experiences in your home country and here in the US. Describe the experience
2. When do you speak your home language versus English?
   In what contexts?

3. If someone you know is bilingual, what language do you prefer to use? Why?
4. What language do you feel more comfortable to use with your friends?
5. What language do you use at home? Why?
6. What language do you use in public places?
7. How would you describe your competence in English

Follow up or rephrase: Can you evaluate your competence in English? From 1 to 10? Why?

Can you evaluate your competence in your home language? From 1 to 10? why?

Interview Protocol: Wave 2. Classes at TCC

1. What classes are you taking now? What is your major?
2. Describe the classes you are taking and your instructors.
3. How are you doing in those classes?
4. What challenges are you facing in those classes?
5. When you don't know how to say something in class, what do you do?
6. When using L1 in the classroom, how does your teacher/instructor react?
7. How do you do homework? In groups? Individually? Do you get help?
8. When do you work in groups, what languages do you use and with whom?
9. How is the college supporting you as a student?
10. What ESL services do you receive in this college?
11. How was your experience learning English? added on June 14th
    Follow up: What do you think is the best way to learn English?
12. Why do you think it is important to learn English in the US?
13. What languages do you use in college? Can you describe a situation in which you use such language (s)?
14. How do you feel when you have to talk in class?
15. Do you feel comfortable expressing your opinions in class? Why?
16. What issues do you face in this institution as an ESL/immigrant student?
17. How do you think your teachers/instructors see/perceive you at TCC?
18. How do you think your teachers/instructors see/perceive other ESL/immigrant students?
19. How does your instructor meet your needs?
20. How do you know your teacher/instructor cares about your needs?
21. Tell me about your favorite classes/teachers/instructors
22. Tell me about your least favorite instructor
23. Tell me about one time when you have wished things were different in your classes, or school in general.
24. What do you think your instructor expects from you? (What are their expectations)
25. What are your plans after finishing your degree at the community college?
26. Do you think that race/racism plays a role in your experience at TCC?

Appendix B

Instructor Interview Protocol

Introductory questions:

1. Name
2. What classes do you teach?
3. Do you know any other language?
4. How long have you worked at the community college?
5. Where did you teach before?
6. How do you identify yourself?
7. How would you describe your race and ethnicity?

About ESL students

8. How many ESL students do you have in your class (es)?
9. What do you know about your ESL/bilingual students?
10. What do you think of the language skills of your ESL students?
11. Can you describe your relationship with your ESL students?
    Can you describe your interaction with the ESL students in your class? What do they do? What is their usual behavior in your classes?
12. What do you know about your ESL students' cultures and backgrounds?
13. How do you perceive/view your ESL students you have worked with?
14. What do you think of the ESL population in general at TCC?
    What do you expect your ESL students to accomplish in your class?
15. How are the ESL students different from any other student?
16. What accommodations do you have to make when you have ESL students in your class?
17. What was your favorite part about having ESL students in your class? What are some challenges?
18. How do you think this institution serves the ESL population?
19. What do you think it is the best way to serve the ESL population?
20. What do you think ESL students have to do to succeed in your class?
21. What do you think ESL students need to succeed in college?
22. Do you think that their race and ethnicity play a role in their academic performance? Follow up from my interview with Joseph Or in how they are perceived?
    Follow up: what about the socio-economic background?

23. Can you tell me about any ESL student in your class? A memorable moment with them?

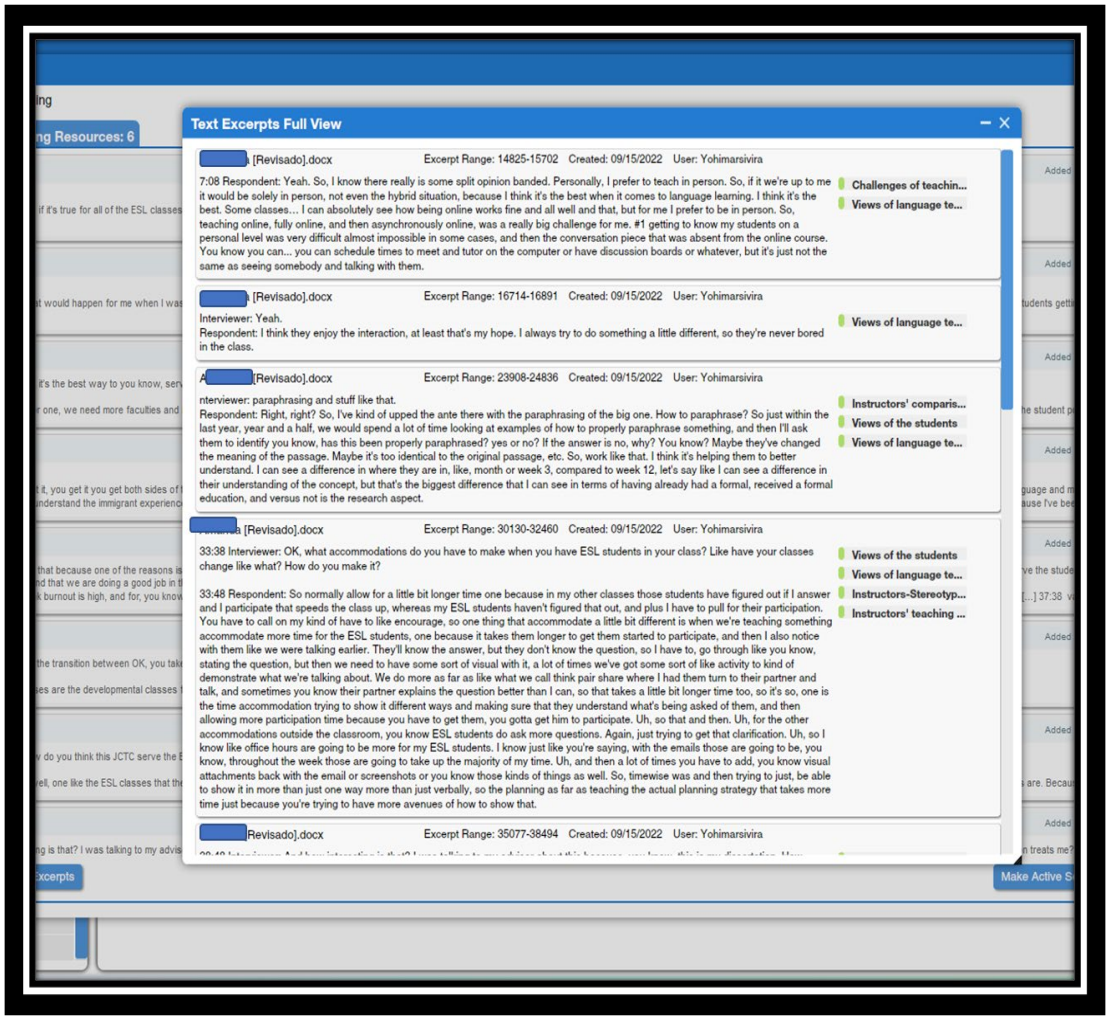
Appendix C

memos	occurrence	codes	occurrence
“overwhelmingly our faculty is white”	1	"ESL friendly"	1
Accent	1	Challenges of teaching online	
Instructor- student interaction	19	Class content	15
Effort and more work	3	Classification of ESL students	11
Instructors’ cultural views	18	Difference bt ESL and multilingual students	
Instructors’ relationship with ML students	13	Diversity	
Transition from EL to other classes	2	efforts for remediation	4
Perceptions of ML students' participation	7	Emphasis on writing	6
Perceptions of Student's language skills	23	Examples of teaching resources	
"Students don’t do a good job asking for help"	10	Grammar focus	5
Instructors’ accommodations to ML students	11	Ideas of socio'-'economic backgrounds	
'Ideas of students' educational values	11	Instructors' comparison of students	16
Reflections	2	Instructors' identity and background	
Interviewer interactions	5	Instructors' languages	
Instructors' challenges working with ML students	9	Instructors'-' student support	
Instructors’ ideas of services for ML students	7	Instructors' teaching challenges	10
Views of Students Backgrounds	19	Instructors'-'Stereotypes of Students	8
Instructors Academic Expectations	24	Views of language teaching	12
Instructors’ language expectations for ML students	12	Views of other instructors	17
Instructors’ ideas of students’ use of resources	6	Views of the students	37
Great quotes	10	Racist incidents	6
Perceptions of Students' backgrounds	24	Role of the ESL Inst Coach	
Instructors' views of language	17	Professional Development	
Instructors’ strategies to know the students	7	Student placement	6

Description of classes	9	Students feeling comfortable	
Instructors' description of ESL students	34	Trust	
		Students bonding	
		TCC services	22

Appendix D

Example of excerpts attached to codes



Appendix E

Observation Protocol

Date:	Name of the instructor:	Focus of the Class:
Time:	Notes:	Reflections
Questions:		

CURRICULUM VITAE

Yohimar A. Sivira Gonzalez

2330 Crittenden Dr, Louisville, KY, 40217

DOB: Venezuela- September 21, 1984

Education & Training

University of Louisville (Fall 2022)

PhD in Curriculum and Instruction: Languages, Literacies, Cultures and Communities

Southern Illinois University Carbondale (2018)

MA in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

Universidad de Carabobo, Venezuela **(2014)**

MA in Educational Research

Universidad Nacional Experimental Francisco de Miranda, Venezuela (**2007)**

BA in Foreign Language Teaching major in English, with honors *Magna Cum Laude*

Research Experience

- ***Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness,*** Summer Fellow in Partnership with Trust for Learning. **2022**
  Grant planning Ideal Learning Environments and Head Start Extension

- ***University of Louisville,*** College of Education and Human Development.

Graduate Research Associate for the Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Research Center **2018-2022**

A grant-funded project in which we evaluate and examine teaching practices in Reggio Emilio-inspired early learning centers located in low-income communities in West Louisville.

-Collaborated in preparation of the IRB proposal for the variety of grants and projects funded by the IECRC.

- Designed interview and observation protocols and a variety of research instruments

- Data collection and data analysis using N-Vivo and Dedoose

- Preparation of presentation for conferences and reports to the funders

- Preparing manuscripts for publications

- English as a Second Language training to student teachers participating in the Study Abroad Program in Ecuador.

- ***University of Louisville,*** College of Education and Human Development and College of Arts and Sciences***. Department of Elementary, Middle, and Secondary Teacher Education and Department of Sociology***

Graduate Bilingual Research Assistant for the Bilingual Peer Mentoring Project **2019-2022**

This is a grant-funded project in which we document a student-led bilingual peer mentoring program in a local high school.

-Collaborated in preparation of the IRB proposal and the variety of grants in which the research team has applied.

- Provided teaching and mentorship training to bilingual mentors who assist English Language Learners in their classes.

- Collaborated in the design and execution of interviews to teachers, administrators, and bilingual students.

- Collaborated in the data analysis process using Dedoose.

Scholarships, Fellowships and Awards

- Society For Research on Educational Effectiveness – Research Fellow **2022**
- University of Louisville Graduate School Dissertation Completion Award **2022**
- University of Louisville ***Holmes Scholar***. A program accredited by AACTE **2019-2022**
- Advanced Certificate in English Language Teaching (ACE), University of Oregon. **2017**
- Faculty development program ***Fulbright scholarship*** (LASPAU administered) **2015-2018**
- E-teacher program, US department of State, Office of English Language Programs **2012,2014**
- Researcher level A, Venezuelan Ministry of science and technology **2014,2016**

Recent presentations

- Sivira, Y. (2022) Know Before You Go: Emerging Research Impacting Philanthropy in Education. Grant Makers for Education Annual Conference. October 20th, 2022.
- Sivira, Y. (2022) Summer Fellows Research Findings. Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness Annual Conference. Washington DC, September 23rd, 2022.

- Andris, J; **Sivira**, Y.; Norton-Meier, L. (2022). Resiliency, Relationships, and Race: Early Childhood Teachers, Practices, and Systems. AERA, 2022, April 20-26, 2022.
- ***Sivira, Y.*** *(2022).* Multilingual students in college-level classes: a raciolinguistic study of language ideologies and academic expectations in a community college. ***Holmes Scholars Dissertation Funding Competition***. March 3rd, 2022.
- **Sivira**, Y. (2021). "I don't know the big words": How bilingual immigrant students perceive their language skills and academic experiences in a community college in the US. Bilingualism Matters online conference, Edinburgh, Scotland. October 24th, 2021
- Gast, M., Chisholm, J. & **Sivira**, Y. (2021) Bilingual Peer Mentoring, Symbolic Power, and Racialization of ESL Students in a Diverse School. Southeastern Immigration Studies Association (SEISA) Meeting. April 2021.
- **Sivira**, Y. (2021) Doing Qualitative Research in Early Learning Centers. UofL Annual Engaged Scholarship Symposium. March 2021.
- **Sivira**, Y. (2021). Language Ideologies and Linguistic Discrimination in College-level Classes. University of Kentucky, University of Louisville and University of Cincinnati Spring Research Conference, March 2021.
- **Sivira**, Y. (2021). Language Ideologies in a Bilingual Mentoring Program. AACTE 73rd Annual Meeting- Holmes Scholars Conference, March 2021.
- Norton-Meier, L., Andris, J., **Sivira**, Y. Pollard, J., Hattab, K. (2021). It is so hard to work on my practice when the ground keeps shifting under my feet:" How one group of urban early childhood teachers continued to transform their practice amidst administrative changes and a global pandemic while working in diverse, high poverty neighborhoods. Individual paper. Association of Teacher Educators Annual Conference, February 2021.
- Romero-Pino, B. & **Sivira**, Y. (2021) A Critical and Social Semiotic Analysis of a Venezuelan EFL textbook Collection. Individual presentation. AAAL conference, March 2021.
- Gast, M., Chisholm, J. & **Sivira**, Y. (2020) Bilingual Peer Mentoring, Symbolic Power, and Racialization of ESL Students in a Diverse School. SEISA conference, April 2021.
- **Sivira**, Y. (2020) Language ideologies in the ESL classroom. Invited panel presentation at Irish Association for Applied Linguistics (IRAAL) Postgraduate Special Interest Group. August 2020
- Gast, M., Chisholm, J., **Sivira**, Y., & Allen, J. (2020) Bilingual Peer Mentoring, Symbolic Power, and Racialization of ESL Students in a Diverse School. Invited presentation. MOSAIC Seminar, University of Birmingham, UK. February 18, 2020
- **Sivira** (2019) Managing effective Group work to engage ELLs in classroom interaction. NCTE 2019, Baltimore, MD. November 2019.
- **Sivira**, Y. (2017) "Teaching grammar to young learners" Master's Student forum TESOL International Convention, Seattle, USA. March 2017.

Publications

- Gast, M., Chisholm, J., **Sivira**, Y. & Douin, T. (2022) Racialized Moments in Qualitative Interviews: Confronting Colour-blind and Subtle Racism in Real Time" special issue on Racially-Just Epistemologies and Methodologies in the International *Journal of Research & Method in Education*. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1743727X.2022.2046726?journalCode=cwse20
- Gast, M., Chisholm, J. & **Sivira**, Y. Racialization of ´ESL Students´ in a Diverse School and Multilingual Latino/a Peer Mentors. International research journal *Race, Ethnicity*

and Education. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13613324.2022.2069737?journalCode=cree20

- Gast, M., Chisholm, J. **Sivira**, Y. Allen, J. (2020). "Peers Making Change: Bilingual Youth Mentoring English Learners." Louisville, KY: Cooperative Consortium for Transdisciplinary Social Justice Research. *Policy Brief submitted to Enid Trucios-Haynes and Cate Fosl, Cooperative Consortium for Transdisciplinary Social Justice Research, University of Louisville*

Publications in Spanish

- Castillo, E., Gamero, M., **Sivira**, Y. (2015) Teaching practice: Secondary English language teachers' perceptions. Article published in the journal for graduate studies no. 36 "La Enseñanza del Inglés en la Escuela Pública Venezolana: Evidencias, experiencias y perspectivas". Universidad Central de Venezuela jointly with British Council Venezuela. (179-187) April, 2015. Available https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/la-ense%C3%B1anza-de-ingl%C3%A9s-en-la-escuela-p%C3%BAblica-venezolana **All authors have contributed equally.**
- Castillo, E., Gamero, M., **Sivira**, Y. (2014) Highschool English Teachers Perceptions about Teaching practice in Falcon (in Spanish: *La práctica docente Concepciones de los profesores de Inglés de Secundaria*) published in the proceedings of Encuentro de Investigadores de la Linguistica: Nuevas perspectivas en el estudio del lenguaje. ISBN: 978-980-12-7136-9. Universidad Nacional Experimental Francisco de Miranda, Venezuela, 2014. **All authors have contributed equally.**

Publication in Spanish, Portuguese, and English

- Leal, L.; Do Nascimento, A.; Govea, L.; **Sivira**, Y.; Gamero, M. (2020). Book chapter: *Mental Illness and University Teaching Practices in Latin-American Countries*. In Diálogos na Educação e na Psicologia: Pesquisa educativa e psicológica na Ibero - América (pp.77-89).

Teaching Experience

- **Jefferson Community & Technical College**, Humanities Division **2021-2022**

English as a Second Language Instructional Coach

Assist faculty members in reviewing curriculum, assignments, and projects as well as coaching students in their classwork toward the goal of greater student success of ESL students in regular/mainstream classes.

- **University of Louisville College of Education and Human Development**. **2020-2021**

Graduate Teaching Assistant/Co-instructor

- Collaborate with the primary instructor of ***EDAP 525 World Englishes*** in the creation of online materials for the Blackboard platform.
- Assess students' homework, tasks, and tests.

Graduate Teaching Associate/ Co-instructor

- Created the syllabus for ***EDAP 642 Literacy Learning and Cultural Differences***. An asynchronous class for MAT students and Teacher Alternative Certification focused on the study of race, culture, and language differences in K12 classrooms.
- Co-taught the class along with another faculty member
- Collaborated with the primary instructor in the creation of online materials for Blackboard platform.
- Recorded lectures and videos to facilitate learning
- Assessed students' homework, tasks, and tests.

- **Southern Illinois University***,* Foreign Languages Department**.** **Spring 2018**

Primary Instructor

- Lectured Elementary Spanish II classes
- Created lesson plans and activities for classes
- Assessed student's homework, tasks, tests, etc
- Assessed students' online activity in the university platform (D2L)

Primary Instructor TESOL practicum (Listening and Speaking 101) **(Fall 2017)**

- Created lesson planning to teach a TESOL class designed for international students
- Taught and assess students' activities and assessments
- Observed TESOL classes to provide feedback to instructors and write observation logs.
- Created portfolios containing lesson planning, materials, tasks, and instructional syllabus.

Outside the US

- **British Council Colombia/ Bogota Public Schools-** English Without Borders Project **Fall 2021**

Remote Teacher and Consultant

- Teach online English as a Second Language to 9th and 10th grade students from Public Schools.
- Create online materials to teach English for synchronous and asynchronous sessions
- Assess students' work and manage testing through Richmond Platform
- Run reports of student progress to British Council Chapter Colombia

- **Universidad Nacional Experimental Francisco de Miranda, Graduate Studies**, Certificate in Secondary English Teaching (CISELT) in agreement with British Council Venezuela.

Coordinator and trainer of the advance graduate course on CISELT **2014-2016**

- Coordinated the diploma in secondary English language teaching in partnership with British Council Venezuela.
- Trained 12 secondary English teachers. Graded papers, portfolios, and course assignments.
- Observed teaching practice of secondary English teachers taking the course.
- Facilitated the training course to manage content and materials of the secondary English language teaching certificate for future tutors.
- Created online materials and activities to facilitate content and teaching.

- **Universidad Nacional Experimental Francisco de Miranda,** Venezuela, English Language Department,

Associate Instructor **2008-2016**

- Taught in the English as Foreign Language Program as a professor of writing composition (1 section of about 25 students), General English (4 sections of 20 students), English for specific purposes, Academic English.
- Elaborated and evaluated instructional designs and materials for the Teacher trainer program of the school of education; 18 instructional designs.

Service Opportunities

- Reviewer for Literacy Research: Theory, Method, and Practice Journal. Vol. 70. March 2021.
- Conference Proposal Reviewer for TESOL International Convention 2017
- Member of the Organizing Sub-committee of the Spring Research Conference, University of Louisville, March 2021.
- Venezuela TESOL moderator for the 2021 VenTESOL online Conference
- Venezuela TESOL e- teacher training program to train high school English teachers in English as a second language assessment

Community Outreach

- Volunteer mentor for middle and high school students at *Adelante Hispanic Achievers* **2018-2019**