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EDUCATORS' PERSPECTIVES ON COMPLEX ISSUES RELATED TO SUPPORTING

IMMIGRANT-ORIGIN STUDENTS AND MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS

Dissertation

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Educators' Perspectives on Complex Issues Related to Supporting Immigrant-Origin Students and Multilingual Learners

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Abstract

Diversity in U.S. schools has increased significantly over the last decades. One in four children under 18 live with at least one immigrant parent, and 22% of U.S. residents aged five or older report speaking a language other than English at home (Esterline & Batalova, 2022). The experiences of immigrant-origin students vary depending on contextual factors such as individual school's policies and practices, the community where the school is located, as well as national and state legislation (Portes & Rumbaut, 2014; Golash-Boza & Valdez, 2018). This three-paper dissertation aims to understand the nuances of educating immigrant-origin students from the perspective of educators in distinct contexts.

The first paper is a qualitative interview study in a Texas school district near the US/Mexico border. I investigated the language ideologies that underlie educators' perspectives on language separation in Dual Language Bilingual Education (DLBE) classrooms. Educators in this study held complex ideologies about language separation in DL classrooms, informed by their view on the district's students and families, the dynamic language practices of their border community, professional development, and testing and district policy requirements.

The second paper presents a case study of a highly diverse school district in Illinois that established a district-wide ESL endorsement requirement. For this study, I interviewed educators

and analyzed district documentation to understand the policy goals that guided the district to create this policy and how educators made sense of it. While policy goals were shared by educators in all roles, there was not enough space for collective sensemaking for teachers, who were critical of how policy implementation affected them.

The third paper offers a comparative interview study of two school districts in Texas and Illinois with very different geographical locations, student demographics, and racial/ethnic makeup of their teacher force. This study examines how context shaped educators' attitudes and beliefs toward immigrant-origin students and families. Despite differences, educators from both districts who had experience working with immigrant populations shared similar and positive attitudes regarding immigrant-origin students and families' assets, needs, and dispositions toward school.

These results may help inform district language policy, policy implementation, and hiring decisions.

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I. Introduction

The U.S. has historically been a country of immigrants, and recently immigration rates have reached their highest point (Esterline & Batalova, 2022). Those numbers are reflected in the school population, where 1 in 4 children live with at least one immigrant parent (Esterline & Batalova, 2022). The diversity of educational and social contexts creates complexity for educators when enacting practices to support their immigrant-origin students and their families, even in districts where teachers and administrators share the common goal of advocating for those students. In those cases, school districts may decide to implement programs or policies that align with what are commonly referred to as "best practices." However, at the time of their implementation, educators may realize that, in their local context, there is a need for a more extensive discussion about policies' goals and how they align with the community's values and interests (Allen & Penuel, 2015; Coburn, 2005). Investigating the nuanced ways educators in different roles and with different perspectives interpret those policies can help inform policy initiatives and implementation across school districts.

This three-paper dissertation aims to understand the nuances of educating immigrant-origin students, from the perspective of educators. To reach this goal, I worked with two school districts with a high population of immigrant-origin students, one in Texas and one in Illinois. Both districts, while very different in their geographical location, student demographics, and racial/ethnic makeup of their teacher force, are working to support their students in their diverse needs. While their goals are similar,

their efforts are contingent on the characteristics of their contexts of reception (COR;

Portes & Rumbaut, 2014; Marrow, 2011) of immigrant-origin students, that is, the

structural and cultural features of the context that affect the experiences of immigrants. In

each of those sites, I focused on questions relevant to the district's unique characteristics,

reflecting tensions in district-wide efforts to support immigrant-origin students. In the

first paper, I paid attention to the language ideologies of educators working in a dual

language program regarding strict language separation in the program's classrooms. The

second paper addressed support for students classified as English Learners (ELs), but in

the form of a district-wide policy of teachers' ESL endorsements, to better understand the

goals of this policy and how educators made sense of it. In the third paper, I examined

educators' attitudes toward immigrant-origin students and families in two school districts

with different CORs. Exploring these issues is relevant in educational contexts where

student diversity has become the norm.

Problem Statement

Over the last decades, diversity in U.S. schools has increased significantly. In

2019, 26 percent of children under 18 lived with at least one immigrant parent, from 19%

in 2000 (Esterline & Batalova, 2022). While most of these children are U.S.-born, 22% of

U.S. residents aged five or older reported speaking a language other than English at home

(Esterline & Batalova, 2022). According to data from 2020 in public schools, 10.3% of

students were classified as English Learners, in contrast with 9.2% in 2010 (National

Center for Education Statistics, 2023).

The experiences of immigrant-origin students in US schools can vary depending on several factors, such as the individual school's policies and practices, and the community in which the school is located (Portes & Rumbaut, 2014; Golash-Boza & Valdez, 2018). For example, in some areas where schools have been historically immigrant-serving, there are robust systems of support placed for immigrant-origin students and families. At the same time, other regions that have only recently become a destination for immigrants may be unprepared to adequately support the needs of their recently arrived students and their families (Hopkins et al., 2015; Mangual Figueroa, 2013).

Regarding language instruction, support for multilingual learners varies widely depending on the state and district. Currently, schools around the country use different models for the education of multilingual learners, ranging from some that focus on the acquisition of the English language at the expense of the loss of the home language — pull-out or push-in English as a Second Language, Sheltered (or Structured) English Immersion—, and others that are bilingual in nature —Transitional Bilingual Education, Dual Language Bilingual Education (one way or two way) (García & Kleyn, 2016; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2017). According to federal laws and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requirements, each state has designed and implemented legislation about the education of students whose home language is different from English. This diversity in the models used across states and districts means that multilingual learners and their families are limited in their educational options

offered in their particular location and often cannot choose a program model that allows them to build on their first language skills and content knowledge.

Overview of the Papers

In this investigation, I worked with two school districts that serve a large population of immigrant-origin students, which differ in geographic location and student demographics, to understand the multiple perspectives of educators concerning issues that may pose a dilemma in their contexts. While most educators in those districts share positive views regarding immigrant-origin students and families and multilingual learners, they also differ in their perspectives about how district policies that support those student populations should be implemented.

Paper 1: "I have a problem with letting a child sink": Educator Language Ideologies About Language Separation in a Dual Language Program

In this first paper, I conducted a qualitative interview study in a Texas school district near the US/Mexico border. I investigated the ideologies that underlie educators' perspectives on language separation in Dual Language Bilingual Education (DLBE) classrooms in a social context where communication is based on fluid bilingual practices. The questions that guided my research were: What are educators' perceptions of the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of students and families who participate in the dual language program? What are the language ideologies held by educators who work in a dual language program related to strict language separation in the program's classrooms?

Strict Language Separation in DLBE. Dual Language Bilingual Education (DLBE) programs were created to support the goals of bilingualism/biliteracy, academic

success, and sociocultural competence for linguistically minoritized students (Lindholm-Leary, 2001). However, those programs have gone through a process of gentrification (Valdez et al., 2016), in which the needs of students from privileged backgrounds have been centered, raising concerns about the loss of access and opportunities for linguistically minoritized students in bilingual education (Flores & García, 2017; Valdés, 1997). One of the concerns about DLBE programs is the time allocated to both languages and the role of language separation. A strict language separation approach became a key component of the model to protect the minoritized language (Cloud et al., 2000; Collier & Thomas, 2005). However, more recent scholarship has proposed that this separation is not consistent with the realities of bilingual development (Palmer et al., 2014; Sánchez et al., 2018) and oversimplifies the languaging practices of multilingual learners (Hamman-Ortiz, 2019; Lee et al., 2008).

Theoretical Framework: Language Ideologies in DLBE. Language ideologies in DLBE are connected to the language policies instituted at different levels. Language policies shape and are shaped by language ideologies constructed in social practice (McCarty, 2011), making language policies dynamic and active (Mackinney, 2016). Research has stressed that policy can support specific language ideologies but cannot make policy actors adhere to those ideologies, even if they position themselves as on board with the policy (Berstein et al., 2021; Fitzsimmons-Doolan et al., 2017).

Recent scholarship has revealed that educators working in DLBE classrooms often held contrasting language ideologies on the use of translanguaging, linked to monoglossic and heteroglossic conceptions of language, not necessarily consistent with

the ones assumed in the program, which are connected to professional and personal factors (Henderson, 2017; Martínez et al., 2015; Park, 2023).

Educators who work in DLBE programs must reconcile their personal language beliefs with school requirements and language policy at different levels. Those who live in an immigrant community with fluid language practices also have the influence of ideologies transmitted for generations about what it means to be integrated into the US society. This paper aims to contribute to the literature on educators' language ideologies about strict language separation in DLBE classrooms by highlighting the perspective of those educators who live and teach in a border town.

Paper 2: Educators' Sensemaking on District-Wide ESL Endorsement Policy

The second paper is a case study of a highly diverse school district in Illinois, where district leadership decided to support their English Learners by gradually requiring teachers to ear their ESL endorsed. This piece aims to understand the goals that guided the district to create this policy and how educators make sense of the district policy according to their professional roles and their involvement with the creation and implementation of this policy. For this study, I interviewed educators who had roles related to working with EL students and analyzed district's documentation generated in the policy creation process, to answer these research questions: What are the policy goals that played a part in the creation and implementation of a district-wide ESL endorsement requirement in a school district in Illinois? How do educators in roles related to working with EL students make sense of this policy?

Policy Goals. In her policy analysis model, Stone (2012) understood policy issues in terms of goals, problems, and solutions to the problems. She conceptualized policy goals as values underlying policy debates in general: equity, efficiency, welfare, liberty, and security. For Stone (2012), (a) equity relates to issues of equal distribution, (b) efficiency is achieving an objective at the lower cost; (c) welfare is related to well-being in an ample sense of the word; (d) liberty as a policy goal presents a series of paradoxes for how we understand the concept and what are its limits; and (e) security is a psychological state connected to objective circumstances and subjective impressions. Informed by this framework, this study identifies the goals that led the school district to create and implement a district-wide ESL endorsement requirement to better understand what moved the district's leaders and how they prioritized specific goals in their decision-making.

Sensemaking Theory. Researchers have used sensemaking theory (Weick, 1995) to understand how educators create meanings in response to new policies introduced in their schools and districts. Sensemaking can be understood from a cognitive perspective as an active process of interaction of the policy with the individual's prior knowledge, beliefs, and values as embedded in their work context (Spillane et al., 2002). It can also be studied from a constructivist perspective, considering sensemaking as a process of social interaction and negotiation situated in the context of educators (Coburn, 2005). According to their role, educators contribute to the sensemaking processes in different ways. Even when leaders serve as intermediaries between teachers and district officials, teachers need to make sense of policy and implement it (Coburn 2001, 2005). Both

leaders and teachers must engage in collaborative sensemaking processes to respect the policy's goals while responding to their local educational contexts (Allen & Penuel, 2015; Coburn, 2001). Using sensemaking theory as a framework allowed me to understand how educators in different roles make sense of an ESL endorsement policy being implemented in a school district in Illinois with a sizeable population of English Learners.

In a school district with a large number of students classified as English Learners, leaders who care about those students prioritize their educational needs. When leaders decide to create and implement a district-wide policy that modifies how the EL program runs, educators participate in different degrees in creating and implementing a policy that would directly impact their everyday work. This paper aims to contribute to the education literature by focusing on the views of educators in different roles and how their sensemaking is affected by their alignment with district goals and issues related to their professional responsibilities.

Paper 3: Educators' Attitudes and Beliefs Toward Immigrant-Origin Students and Families in Two School Districts with Different Contexts of Reception

The third paper offers a comparative interview study of two school districts in Texas and Illinois. While both are historically immigrant-serving districts, they have important differences regarding their geographical location, student demographics, and racial/ethnic makeup of their teacher force. This study examines the role of contexts of reception on educators' attitudes and beliefs toward their immigrant-origin students and their families. The research questions this study addresses are: What are the features of the context of reception that those educators consider relevant to characterize the district

where they work? What are educators' attitudes and beliefs about immigrant-origin students and their families regarding who they are, their dispositions toward school, their needs, and their assets?

Contexts of Reception. To understand the experiences of immigrant-origin students and families in U.S. schools, I follow the approach of "contexts of reception" (COR) (Portes & Rumbaut, 2014), which "emphasizes how the structural and cultural features of the specific contexts that immigrants enter influence their experiences and opportunities for mobility, above and beyond the role played by their own individual characteristics or motivations" (Marrow, 2011, p. 9). Recent studies have explored how disparate access to services in different local schools shapes newcomers' school experiences, even if they come from a similar immigrant community (Russell & Mantilla-Blanco, 2022). Educators have a crucial role in shaping these contexts of reception that affect, in positive and negative ways, the experiences of immigrant-origin students at school (Dabach et al., 2018a; Golash-Boza & Valdez, 2018; Rodriguez & Crawford, 2022). Some school contexts have shown to be unprepared to provide a safe and affirming space for immigrant-origin students and families. In contrast, in many immigrant-serving school districts, educators work hard to create affirming contexts of reception for immigrant-origin students by creating spaces of safety and belonging for immigrant-origin students in schools (Lowenhaupt et al., 2021; Patel, 2018; Wong et al., 2018).

Teachers Attitudes and Beliefs Toward Immigrant-Origin Students. In this third paper, I am interested in understanding the attitudes and beliefs educators working

in different contexts of reception have toward their immigrant-origin students and their families. Research has shown that teachers who have negative attitudes about their students can adversely affect their learning (Barajas-López, 2014; Bruton & Robles-Piña, 2009; Youngs & Youngs, 2001). Literature on teachers' attitudes has emphasized language diversity over immigrant-origin background. Studies in the first group describe teachers' complex and contextually variable attitudes toward English Learners (Pettit, 2011; Polat & Mahalingappa, 2013; Walker et al., 2004). Concerning immigrant-origin students, the literature indicates that teachers' attitudes can influence the course of the educational experiences of this group of students (Blanchard & Muller, 2015; Dabach et al., 2018a; Dabach et al., 2018b).

In this paper, I build on the body of literature on educators' attitudes and beliefs to describe specifically those directed toward immigrant-origin students and families. Also, by connecting attitudes and beliefs with contexts of reception, I expect to illuminate how educators in two different CORs view the immigrant youth and families they serve.

Contribution of this Dissertation

Situated in a context of growing linguistic and cultural diversity of students and families in US schools, this dissertation contributes to our understanding of the key role of educators in supporting this population. Teachers and administrators have a great influence on the experiences of immigrant-origin students and families, and exploring their language ideologies, sensemaking processes, and attitudes and beliefs helps to build knowledge of how they perceive their students and understand how to serve them better.

This knowledge is relevant to teacher education and professional development that targets attitudinal aspects of teaching.

In this dissertation, the concept of contexts of reception is infused in the three papers. The relevance of COR for this dissertation entails an understanding of adequate support for culturally and linguistically diverse students as intrinsically connected with the features of the context. In this sense, educators who have developed an asset-based perspective toward diverse students and families deeply understand how policies at different levels affect the educational experiences of all their students and work hard to support them according to their specific needs. In this dissertation, the first two papers address language diversity. For the school district in Texas, located in a historically bilingual community, the existence of DLBE programs responds to their linguistic reality and the community's needs. In contrast, in the district in Illinois, where families speak more than 60 languages, it is not possible to opt for bilingual education for all, and their best approach is to get all teachers ESL endorsed to ensure that students get comprehensible input all day long. I deliberately chose to study how the two districts educate students classified as English Learners to highlight how, despite their contextual differences, educators in Texas and Illinois chose to create a favorable linguistic environment for their linguistically diverse students.

Working with school districts with a history of developing systems of support for culturally and linguistically diverse students and their families contributes to the literature that highlights sites of possibilities. The language and culture affirming practices I found researching in the districts in Texas and Illinois, as well as the challenges they face, could

inspire educators who are looking for new ways to support immigrant-origin students and families, especially those from new immigrant destinations, who may not have models in their own communities.

Researcher Positionality

My position as a researcher affects my perspective on my research topic, my interactions with the participants, and how I interpret the data. As a person who lived in a foreign country while conducting this research, I feel personally connected to the study of issues relating to immigration. My own experiences, even if my immigration circumstances are privileged, helped me to relate with many of my participants, who themselves are immigrants, come from an immigrant background, or have dedicated their careers to supporting immigrant-origin students and families.

Regarding language use, in my research site in Texas, the community is bilingual in English and Spanish, with a very fluid use of both languages. My bilingual skills in those two languages helped me better navigate this context and allowed me to communicate with my participants using their whole linguistic repertoire. Most participants integrated translanguaging into our communications, which I interpreted as a sign that they felt comfortable using their everyday languaging practices with me. However, I am conscious that by not being part of the same speech community and visiting from a researcher position, some participants showed a preference for the use of English, a language associated in the community with formal and academic situations.

Because this dissertation stems from a collaborative project I worked on during the entirety of my Ph.D. program, I established relationships with participants from both

research sites. As part of the larger project, we met in person for a whole weekend in Spring 2020, had several Zoom meetings during 2020 and 2021, visited the Texas district once in 2022 and the Illinois one twice in 2022 and 2023, besides the Zoom interviews that were part of my dissertation work. Especially with the educators who were our connections with the districts who happened to be district leaders in English Learners' education, I generated a bond because of our continuous communication and professional interests. As a researcher and a human, I feel compelled to honor those relationships in my studies. Thus, I write my interpretations from a place of respect and understanding of the context of each of my research sites and participants.

Lastly, being someone who has been learning about the US school system but has not experienced it myself somewhat constrained me; on the one hand, I have a more limited interpretation of participants' actions and words, but on the other hand, this allowed me to de-normalize what I saw and heard as new information contributing to my investigation. Most of the support systems offered by these two school districts which I had the opportunity to observe and document during my visits for this dissertation do not exist in my home country, Chile. Hence I believe my perspective is more optimistic towards what is being done in these research sites than it would have been if those practices were normalized from my experiences. This point of view does not preclude me from being critical, but I believe it allows me to be more appreciative of what involved educators can achieve.

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II. Paper 1. "I have a problem with letting a child sink": Educator Language Ideologies About Language Separation in a Dual Language Program

Abstract

Dual Language Bilingual Education (DLBE) programs have traditionally separated language by time, teacher, or subject matter to protect the minoritized language and safeguard its space in the learning process (Cloud et al., 2000; Collier & Thomas, 2005). However, this strict language separation is not congruent with the languaging practices of individuals who inhabit bi- or multilingual spaces where language fluidity is prevalent (Gort & Sembiante, 2015). This interview study with 12 teachers and administrators in a dual language program in Texas, close to the border with Mexico, explores the language ideologies of educators related to strict language separation in dual language classrooms. Findings revealed that educators held complex and nuanced language ideologies about language separation in DL classrooms, informed by their knowledge of students and families served by the school district, the dynamic language practices of their communities, the influences of professional development, and the requirements of district policy. This paper highlights the relevance of developing heteroglossic language policies consistent with the languaging practices of the communities served by schools to honor and value students' and educators' dynamic bilingualism.

Keywords: DLBE, language ideologies, translanguaging, educators, bilingual education

In the education of multilingual learners, Dual Language Bilingual Education (DLBE) programs are generally considered the most beneficial for students because of their additive nature; that is, these programs foster development in the native and second language (Brisk, 2006). Instead of focusing solely on the acquisition of the dominant societal language, both languages are cultivated and developed to promote bilingualism, biliteracy, biculturalism, and high academic achievement (Cervantes-Soon, 2014). Research on this type of program has found that those three goals of bilingual education are accomplished: most students from DLBE programs are rated as proficient in their two languages, and by about fifth grade, these students achieve at or above grade level in reading and math in the partner language (Lindholm-Leary & Borsato, 2006; Lindholm-Leary & Genesee, 2010; Rolstad et al., 2005).

Traditionally, dual language programs have separated language by time, teacher, and/or subject matter. The purpose of this strict separation has been to protect the minoritized language and safeguard its space in the learning process (Cloud et al., 2000; Collier & Thomas, 2005). However, this strict language separation differs from the languaging practices of individuals who inhabit bi- or multilingual spaces, where language fluidity is prevalent (Gort & Sembiante, 2015). Those flexible discursive practices of bilingual individuals, which go beyond the boundaries of named languages, are present in all communities and, in some contexts, are more evident. In borderlands, geopolitics limits can do little to contain their inhabitants' flexible languaging practices. In this study, I worked with a school district located in one of such spaces in Texas. This school district was located just on the border between the U.S. and México, where fluid

bilingualism is present in all aspects of life in the community. There, educators who work in the dual language program must grapple with the tension between enforcing a strict language separation in their classrooms, which is a central aspect of the DL program, versus welcoming the fluid language practices that are part of students' and teachers' daily lives.

Considering their experiences as members of this community, the diverse training in teacher education programs, and the policies and discourses surrounding the ideas of language use, it is probable that educators' perspectives on strict language separation in the dual language classroom are not homogenous. Previous literature has claimed that a strict language separation in DLBE reflects a deficit view on the languaging practices of bilingual communities (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; García, 2017; Freire & Feinauer, 2022; Palmer et al., 2014). Additionally, studies about the language ideologies of teachers who work in DLBE have found that they hold both monoglossic and heteroglossic views on language and bilingualism (Fitzsimmons-Doolan et al., 2017; Mackinney, 2016; Martínez et al., 2015; Park, 2023). In this interview study, with both teachers and administrators who work in a dual language program that has been functioning for more than 20 years, I am interested in exploring the following research questions: What are educators' perceptions of the cultural and linguistic background of students and families who participate in the dual language program? What are the language ideologies held by educators who work in a dual language program related to strict language separation in the program's classrooms?

In this paper, I explore the perspective of educators who live and work in a place of fluid language practices but, given their professional role, must deal with language policies that advocate for strict language separation in dual language classrooms. In doing so, I argue that, in a community where fluid discursive practices are the norm, educator ideologies on language separation in dual language classrooms reflect the complexities of the linguistic context in which they work. Educators are influenced by contrasting discourses of language separation as necessary to develop each language, which is consistent with policy requirements, on the one hand, and language flexibility in respecting students' backgrounds and languaging practices, which is coherent with educators' work experience and district-level PD, on the other.

Language Separation in DLBE

Dual Language Bilingual Education (DLBE) programs were created to change deficit notions that speaking a language other than the majority was a disadvantage for students in their academic trajectory. Instead of forcing them to lose their home language to get an education, dual language programs allowed students to become bilingual/biliterate, succeed academically, and develop sociocultural competence (those are described as the three goals of DLBE) (Lindholm-Leary, 2001). The term dual language encompasses two types of programs: One-way dual language programs (also known as Late-Exit Bilingual, Maintenance Bilingual, and Developmental Bilingual Education), which serve students classified as English Learners who are developing their L1, and Two-way programs (also called Dual Immersion or Two-Way Immersion), in

which half of the students speak a partner language and the other speak English at home (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2017).

In the US, a neoliberal view of bilingualism, related to movements of neoliberal school reforms (Chaparro, 2021) and school choice (Bernstein et al., 2021), has made Two-way Immersion (TWI) bilingual programs attractive to a broader audience of English speakers. Those families seek bilingual education as an opportunity for their children to develop work skills useful in a globalized market (Arteagoitia, & Yen, 2020; Katznelson & Bernstein, 2017). This new interest in bilingual education has entailed a proliferation of DLBE programs across the country. With the arrival of a new group of students and families to dual language programs, researchers share a concern about issues related to the lack of equitable access and opportunities for linguistically and racially minoritized students (Flores & García, 2017; Valdés, 1997). In what Valdez et al. (2016) called the gentrification of DLBE, programs are being designed and implemented to cater to students with more privilege, sometimes at the expense of historically marginalized groups.

One of the effects of gentrification is the trend of fiftyfication of dual language education (Freire & Delavan, 2021). Fiftyfication refers to privileging the model of 50:50 (equal language allocation in the partner language as in English) over other models that allocate more instructional time to the partner language, supporting the initial learning of language minoritized students. For Freire and Delavan (2021), this tendency privileges an equal language allocation instead of equitable education models.

Furthering the discussion about the roles of the two languages in TWI programs, recent research has questioned how those programs allocate time to both languages, as well as the role of a strict language separation. Traditionally, it has been understood that a strict language separation would protect the development of the minoritized language (Cloud et al., 2000; Collier & Thomas, 2005). However, researchers have discussed how this division ignores the realities of bilingual development (Palmer et al., 2014; Sánchez et al., 2018). Strict language separation reinforces the idea that, in dual language education, there are two groups of students and two languages. This view is an oversimplistic understanding of students' linguistic identities and languaging practices (Hamman-Ortiz, 2019; Lee et al., 2008). For students from contexts where linguistic hybridity is widespread, strict language separation limits their capacity to discuss difficult topics and take linguistic risks in order to express themselves (Palmer et al., 2014).

What underlies the language separation policy of DLBE programs is a monoglossic conception of language, which takes monolingualism as the norm and considers bilingualism as a "double monolingualism" in two distinct national languages (García, 2009). Because this view is tied to the idea of a standardized version of the languages, it entails a deficit perspective of "nonstandard" students' languaging practices and bicultural identities (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; García, 2017; Freire & Feinauer, 2022; Palmer et al., 2014).

The present study aims to contribute to the body of literature that problematizes strict language separation in dual language classrooms. It is linked to the body of work that has examined languaging practices in TWI programs on the U.S- Mexico border

(Achugar, 2008; Esquinca et al., 2014; Mortimer & Dolsa, 2020; Saavedra & Isquierdo, 2020). By exploring the language ideologies of educators working in a border district about language separation in DL programs, I intend to connect the realities of a community where language fluidity is the norm with established notions of language separation in DLBE.

Translanguaging in DLBE

In the linguistic context where this study was conducted, the actual languaging practices of students, educators, and the wider community are characterized by translanguaging. García (2009) defined translanguaging as the "multiple discursive practices in which bilinguals engage in order to make sense of their bilingual worlds" (p. 45). Translanguaging is centered on the bilingual individual who does not have two or more separate linguistic systems. Instead, the bilingual individual possesses a whole linguistic repertoire that contains elements socially assigned to name languages and uses this repertoire in their meaning-making actions to navigate social contexts (García, 2009, 2017).

A translanguaging pedagogy draws on students' funds of knowledge, allows them to experiment with new language forms, and integrates various languages and varieties (Gort & Sembiante, 2015). An increasing number of researchers have investigated the possibilities of translanguaging pedagogies in dual language classrooms for content and language learning (Somerville & Faltis, 2019; Henderson & Ingram, 2018) and the development of students' positive bilingual identities (García-Mateus & Palmer, 2017; Gort & Sembiante, 2015).

This paper connects to the literature that highlights the affordances and complexities of using translanguaging as a pedagogical strategy that honors the languaging practices of students and their families (Esquinca et al., 2014; Hamman, 2018; Martínez et al., 2015; Somerville & Faltis, 2019; Tian & Lau, 2023). By exploring educator language ideologies in a border context where translanguaging is prevalent, I am interested in understanding how educators perceive everyday languaging practices using their professional lens of working based on the principles of DLBE.

Language ideologies

The concept of language ideologies was originated in the field of linguistic anthropology by Silverstein (1979), who conceptualized it as "beliefs about language articulated by the users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use" (p. 193). Following this definition, Irvine (1989) built on the concept to highlight how language ideologies are inseparable from the sociocultural, political, and historical context.

Later, Kroskrity (2004) further developed the notion of language ideologies, which he elaborated on as five levels of organization. Some of the central notions of his definition are (a) language ideologies are socially constructed and promote the interest of specific social and cultural groups; (b) they are multiple due to the plurality of social divisions (thus, individuals hold ideologies rather than an ideology); (c) can be both articulated in speech and embodied in practice; (d) individuals vary in their awareness of their language ideologies (Kroskrity, 2004). Kroskrity (2004) added complexity to the

notion of language ideologies, emphasizing how the social and the individual, the spoken and the enacted, and the conscious and unconscious are intrinsically connected.

Language ideologies in DLBE are connected to the language policies instituted at different levels. On that matter, McCarty (2011) indicates that language policies shape and are shaped by language ideologies constructed in social practice. According to Mackinney (2016), this process makes language policies dynamic and active. Fitzsimmons-Doolan et al. (2017) worked with teachers and administrators involved in a district-wide implementation of a DLBE program and observed that educators held language ideologies aligned and misaligned with the pluralist approach of the program. Similarly, Berstein et al. (2021) found that preschool educators in their first month of implementing dual language education generally held pro-multilingual ideologies, but also had practical concerns. Those findings stress how policy can support specific language ideologies, but that does not imply that all policy actors will adhere to those ideologies automatically, even if they are on board with the policy.

Recent scholarship on language ideologies in DLBE has described how teachers conceptualize languaging practices and language separation in dual language classrooms. Martínez et al. (2015) found that teachers in Spanish-English DL classrooms held contrasting ideologies related to the use of translanguaging, some related to ideas of linguistic purism and others that privilege bilingualism, and that their language use and instructional practices were both in line and opposite to those stated ideologies. Henderson (2017) and Park (2023) also found that teachers espoused contradictory (linked to monoglossic and heteroglossic conceptions) language ideologies influenced by

factors such as language policy and testing pressure. This literature is relevant in showing how educators working in dual language classrooms do not necessarily hold language ideologies consistent with the ones assumed in the program, and that those complex and contradictory ideologies respond to a variety of factors.

Using this framework as a starting point will help me interpret the educators' language ideologies regarding language separation in dual language programs in a school district near the US/Mexico border. In a community where fluid bilingual language practices are the standard, educators are bound to have a complex set of language ideologies related to language separation in DLBE classrooms.

Methods

Study Context and Participants

This work is part of the PIECE project[1]. For this paper, I worked with data from one of those school districts in a qualitative interview study. The district was located in a small city in Texas, next to the border with Mexico. During my visit to the district, I witnessed that, in that context, transit between borders and language practices was fluid. In their everyday interactions, speakers used their entire linguistic repertoire, which includes elements of English and Spanish, as well as products of the contact of both languages. In general, educators and students shared the experience of coming from this

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[1] The PIECE project is a mixed-methods longitudinal study that took place from 2018-2023 through collaboration with six school districts across the US to explore educator practices to support immigrant-origin students and their families within specific contexts of reception. The project PI is Rebecca Lowenhaupt (Boston College), and the co-PIs are Ariana Mangual Figueroa (CUNY Graduate Center), Dafney Blanca Dabach (University of Washington), and Roberto Gonzales (University of Pennsylvania). The project received funding from the W.T. Grant and Spencer Foundations.

border space. In terms of demographics, more than 90% of students are described as Hispanic[2], while approximately 80% of teachers share the same ethnicity (Texas Education Agency, 2020).

In the district, about one-third of students are classified as English Learners. Language support for them is offered in the form of a two-way immersion dual language program or English as a Second Language classes (in general for middle school students, but some elementary school students are also enrolled in ESL classes). Approximately 35% of students in the district participated in the dual language program, including students who are not classified as ELs. They followed a 50/50 model, with half of the instruction in Spanish and the other half in English, which was implemented mainly by one day of instruction in Spanish and the next in English.

As part of the larger research project, I spent a week in the school district in the Spring of 2022. During this time, I had the chance to interview educators in a variety of roles and engage in observations. On that occasion, I interviewed 12 teachers and administrators, –seven teachers and five administrators– whose work is related to the functioning of DLBE programs in this school district. The district partner selected participants due to her knowledge of the educators on the research site.

Interviews were focused on knowing how those educators and their district support immigrant-origin students. Although the topic of those interviews did not directly

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[2] That is the classification used by the Texas Education Agency.

relate to language separation in the dual language program, they allowed me to identify the existence of different perspectives on the issue. To have a more in-depth account of the district's educators on their perceptions regarding strict language separation in the dual language program, between May and October 2023, I conducted a second round of interviews with the five participants who agreed to a follow-up via Zoom.

Table 1 gives more information about the participants' district roles, work experience, and extent of participation in this study.

Table 1

Study Participants

Pseudonym	Role	Years working in the district by 2023	Participation in which round of interviews
Cassandra	Dual Language teacher	12 years in the district	1
Edith	Dual Language teacher	11 years in the district	1
Eduardo	Dual Language teacher	Eight years teaching, three in the district	1 and 2
Inés	Dual Language teacher	28 years teaching	1
Jennifer	Elementary school principal	19 years in the district, five as principal	1 and 2
Lily	Elementary school principal	28 years in the district; eight years as principal	1 and 2
Margarita	Dual Language teacher	13 years in the district	1
Marisol	Dual Language teacher		1
Nina	Director of EL Services	Eight years in the role	1 and 2
Paz	Dual Language teacher	Six years in the district	1 and 2
Pilar	Elementary school assistant principal	21 years in the district	1

Regina	Elementary school principal	20 years in the district; 15 as principal	1

Data Collection

In the first phase of this study, I held 11 semi-structured interviews with 12 educators (one of the interviews was conducted with two participants). The interview protocols can be found in Appendix A and B. I conducted all the interviews over a span of three days in three elementary schools and the district's central office. I met the participants in their workplaces: classrooms, offices, and meeting rooms made available for our use. Because all participants and the research were Spanish/English bilinguals, participants selected the language of the interview according to preference. All but one interview was conducted in English, although some included elements of English/Spanish translanguaging. The interviews were audio recorded and later transcribed. After conducting this round of interviews, I was able to identify the focus of this study by considering recurring themes that emerged in the conversations.

With a clear purpose, I contacted all the participants from the first round of interviews and invited them to collaborate on the second phase of the study. Of the 12 initial participants, five of them agreed to a follow-up interview. For the second round of interviews, I engaged in conversations via Zoom with Lily, Nina, Jennifer, Paz, and Eduardo (one district-level administrator, two school principals, and two dual language

teachers). Those interviews had a duration of about 30-40 minutes. They were audio recorded and transcribed.

For the first round of interviews, after each day of my visit to the district, I wrote field notes (Emerson et al., 2011) to preserve important information about the context of the interviews and interactions with the participants. I also registered my first impressions as a researcher about issues discussed by the participants and others I considered relevant related to the context and interactions. For the second round of interviews, I wrote researcher memos after each interview to have a record of my first impressions and interpretations (Miles et al., 2014).

Data Analysis

I analyzed the interviews and field notes with a coding manual. I created an initial draft of the coding manual, which reflected language ideologies held by the interviewed educators, after reading all the data. This coding manual was subsequently edited after a first round of coding, consulting related literature, and getting feedback from mentors. With a refined version of the coding manual, I coded the data, making adjustments to integrate participants' voices when necessary. The codes reflect, on the one hand, educators' perceptions of the cultural and linguistic background of students and families in the dual language program. Those codes allowed me to identify how educators understood the context of the dual language program. On the other hand, there are codes that revealed educators' language ideologies, such as the value of being flexible and/or strict in the language separation, the languaging practices of educators and students, and

aspects of the linguistic context that may have influenced educators' perspectives on language separation. The coding manual can be found in Appendix C.

While coding, I wrote analytic memos (Miles et al., 2014) to reflect on the educators' ideologies regarding language separation in DLBE classrooms. I used the memos to identify and discuss different ideologies as expressed by participants. For each of the ideologies, I identified illustrative examples and counterexamples.

Findings

In this section, I first investigated the perceptions that educators who work in the dual language program have related to the cultural and linguistic background of students and families in the program to understand better how educators depict the context of the DL program. Later, I identified language ideologies that some or all participants manifested in the interviews related to the benefits of being strict or flexible in using (or allowing students to use) a language other than the language of the day during classroom interactions.

Educators' perceptions of the cultural and linguistic background of students and families who participate in the dual language program

In this section, I describe the perceptions that educators I spoke with manifested in the interviews, related to the cultural and linguistic background of students and families in the dual language program. Those educators' beliefs about participants of the dual language program and their social and linguistic context are useful to contextualize the language ideologies educators hold concerning language separation in DLBE.

Educators contrasted families that chose the dual language program with others that were placed in it. When educators I spoke with discussed families and their interest in having their children enrolled in the dual language program, there was a contrast between those families who were the most engaged with having bilingual and biliterate children, and who were more likely to want their children to learn English exclusively. Educators used different words to describe those families, but it was interesting how language, immigration status, education, and wealth were used as markers of that difference. One elementary school principal presented the issue in this way:

> Yeah, and you'll be surprised that the majority of our population for dual language, is from the doctors and the lawyers. It's, it's our, our Hispanic, you know, Mexican population that doesn't want the kids learning Spanish, which is mind-blowing to me. But the majority of the kids that I have in the program, they're all lawyers and doctors, and because they understand the power of two languages. (Jennifer, 2023)

Jennifer reported that, in her years working in the district, she had noticed that professional parents were most likely to choose the dual language program for their children than Mexican-origin families, who are more reluctant to have their children learning Spanish in school. This contrast is interesting because it assumes that educated and affluent families are the ones who are not from Hispanic, conflating issues of different order to describe the reality of families in the district. Jennifer was not the only educator I interviewed who described the families served by the program in terms of

language, wealth, and education. However, that does not mean that educators had a negative view of Mexican-origin families or did not understand their experiences.

Educators understood why Latine families may not want their children to learn Spanish. Educators were cognizant of the factors that influenced families' language choices. Educators interviewed understood that Latine parents' beliefs about the importance of learning English come from the difficulties they faced as non-native English speakers. As one teacher described:

> Tenemos que lidiar con toda esta cultura de rechazo y no aceptación al idioma español. Y todo viene a que cada familia ha sufrido algunos traumas, algunos traumas en su trayecto a llegar aquí, tantas cosas que cada familia ha vivido, entonces se refleja en los niños, en el rechazo o la aceptación del idioma [We have to deal with this whole culture of rejection and non-acceptance of the Spanish language. And it all comes down to the fact that each family has suffered some traumas, some traumas on their journey to get here, so many things that each family has experienced, so it is reflected in the children, in the rejection or acceptance of the language]. (Edith, 2022)

Educators like Edith came from the same cultural background as their students and understood that parents may have had a difficult way as recent immigrants, sometimes encountering discrimination for their languaging practices. For those families, it is key that their children speak English with what is perceived like a native accent, which for them can open the doors to success in the US. Families are not opposed to their children learning Spanish, but they think they can learn Spanish at home and think it may

not be as relevant academically. Educators in the program who were part of this study were aware of the reasons families may not consider learning Spanish as important as learning English in school.

Additionally, as I noticed in some interviews, educators expressed families realized that the dual language program extends only until fifth grade, and they may want their children to be fully prepared to be successful in later grades. According to some educators who participated in this study, students and families understood this message and acted accordingly, giving priority to the development of the English language.

Educators considered English-speaking students as "participants" who chose to be in the DL program, in contrast with Spanish-speaking ones who were placed in the DL program. Some educators referred to English-speaking students in the dual language program as "participants", to mark that they are not the default student in the program. Most educators discussed students in the dual language program as being Spanish-dominant, which is accurate considering the district data. However, this marks English-dominant students as different and special. One of the teachers mentioned:

> But the kids that you do have that are more Spanish dominant, and that need to be in the dual language program as opposed to the ones that we have a lot of here that are participants in the program. And their parents want them to, you know, learn a second language like Spanish as a second language. (Eduardo, 2023)

Eduardo here was referring to the district policy of the DL program, in which students who are classified as English Learners and whose dominant language is Spanish are

placed in the dual language program, unless their parents refuse. For English-dominant families, students are placed by default in English-only education, unless they opt-in to the dual language program. The contrast that Eduardo made between some students who need to be in the program versus others who are there by choice can be interpreted as considering that learning Spanish is a conscious choice made by English-speaking families while learning English is the default course of action for Spanish-speaking students. This view of students reflected the idea that English-speaking families put their children in the DL program, they do so because they value bilingualism, while Spanish-dominant ones have their children in the program because administration placed them there, which obscures those Latine-origin families who may value bilingualism as much as Anglo ones.

Educators were worried about the effects of losing families' language.
Although they understood where Spanish-speaking families come from, educators I spoke with knew the relevance of keeping the heritage language and culture. Teachers and administrators described working hard to convince families to keep their children in the dual language program, for academic and cultural reasons. One teacher explained her perspective:

> I want them to feel important because it is important to want to continue it. The same with parents, because some parents, some immigrant parents want their kids just to learn English. I understand they want them to be successful, but they don't understand how their own language is just as important and to continue it and not forget it. (Margarita, 2022)

Margarita and many others were determined to make families understand that success does not only happen in English and that being bilingual is highly regarded in educational and professional settings. Other educators also mentioned wanting to help their students feel proud of being bilingual.

Interviewed educators in the district felt different responsibilities toward different types of families. They suggested that the majority of participants in the DL program, Spanish-dominant children, come from families who do not give much importance to giving their children bilingual education, although they are probably bilingual themselves. While they may value learning Spanish as a social language, they view English as the language of education. For this reason, educators felt responsible for explaining the value of bilingual education to these families, so their children can be proficient in their home language while adding English. In contrast, English-dominant students were not considered as needing a second language but opted for it because their families understand how being bilingual can be an asset. In their case, educators felt they did not need to explain to those families the value of bilingualism.

Educator language ideologies related to language separation in DL classrooms

In this section, I describe the language ideologies related to language separation in the dual language program that I identified in the interviews with the educators. Those language ideologies represent beliefs that some or all the educators I spoke with manifested in the interviews. The language ideologies identified among participants represent a diversity of perspectives that are not necessarily aligned with unifying principles, demonstrating the multiplicity of language ideologies. I was able to identify

different language ideologies that favored language flexibility in dual language classrooms and others that favored strict language separation. To better understand this section, it is useful to remember the context of the school district, which follows a 50/50 model in the dual language program, where instruction is given in English half of the time and the other half is in Spanish.

Ideologies that favor language flexibility in dual language classrooms.

Educators believed that accepting students' flexible languaging practices in the classroom makes them feel welcome. Most educators interviewed in this study stressed that one of the main benefits of allowing a certain degree of flexibility on the languaging practices of students in the DL classrooms is that it helps students to feel comfortable and welcome in the classroom. Teachers and administrators expressed similar ideas about how the social and emotional well-being of students was worth the interruption of the regular functioning of the DL program. As the principal of one of the elementary schools in the district declared: "I never want to see a kid embarrassed or sad because the teacher said "hoy día es en español, no puedes hablar inglés" [today is Spanish day, you cannot speak in English]" (Jennifer, 2023).

In this dual language program, educators realized that allowing flexibility in the language used by students in the classroom creates a safe space for learning, and, instead of preventing students from learning the second language, it gives them opportunities to participate in the class before they are fluent in that language. One of the elementary teachers described it well:

I always try to do it in their language so they can feel support, and even with my

students, because I notice that when they don't have much of the English they

tend to shy away. As much as I push English, I still want them to feel comfortable

that I'm approachable in their native language. I just like them to feel welcome,

and that they have the same quality of education as my other students. (Marisol,

2022)

In addition to centering her students' engagement and comfort, Marisol stressed

that welcoming the use of students' native language allowed them to access the content.

For her, being flexible with the language of the day is not a matter of forgetting the

program focus, but an equity issue.

Some educators believed that translanguaging is a natural part of bilinguals'

languaging practices. In my visit to the district, as well as in the interviews, I was able

to recognize that translanguaging is part of the everyday languaging practices of

educators in the district. Educators in the schools did not limit themselves to named

languages when they have social conversations, or when discussing educational issues

among themselves, as noted in my field notes. Naturalizing translanguaging as normal for

bilingual individuals is reflected in the perspective of one elementary school principal:

I think it's allowing, I think, even as adults, I think anyone that's bilingual, I think

we all translanguage. I mean, it's part of the culture, it's part of our understanding.

So, there's really not as you know, we don't we don't teach it right. It's just

something that naturally happens when you talk about second language

acquisition. I mean, that's just part of the process. And even as proficient as you

are in both languages, I personally translanguage a lot because sometimes, you know, you just don't find the word and it doesn't exist. (Jennifer, 2023)

In the quote, Jennifer recognized the languaging practices of her community as natural, and not indicative of a lesser language proficiency in one or two languages. For her, translanguaging is not seen as something that you need to teach students because it is part of who they are and their natural language practices. Some educators also made references to how professional development helped them to understand what translanguaging is and develop positive views about it. An elementary teacher shared:

I know that they are saying that it's fine and that it's a new thing and it's translanguaging. It has a name now. When I was growing up here, it was called Spanglish, which is—I feel—the same thing as translanguaging, but from what I've learned in different professional developments is the child is just expressing what they know. Like for example, *planching*, they know that it means *planchar* but ironing at the same time. They know that it's the verb *planchar*, but *ing* because they're currently doing it. (Paz, 2022)

Paz gave an illustrative example of how the use of translanguaging shows that students have knowledge of linguistic features of both languages. She also made reference to the way those flexible language practices were called pejoratively as Spanglish, and now, through professional development, she understood the value of translanguaging beyond the language ideologies she previously held, and that were instilled in her since her youth.

Some educators believed that, in classrooms, student translanguaging is part of the language acquisition process. For most educators in the DL program, student translanguaging in the classroom was seen as part of the language acquisition process, and its use is respected and valued. The educators I spoke with were knowledgeable of translanguaging theory and have received professional development related to the topic, just as mentioned by Paz in the quotation in the previous section. According to what educators shared, the PD they received helped them change their earlier conceptions of what language practices were adequate in the classroom. A dual language teacher explained:

> If we're having a conversation, a regular conversation, or if they're asking a
> question, and they go some in and out, English and Spanish, I used to before
> correct them a little bit in terms—like try to show them the words, but I've
> learned through some professional development that it's okay to let the kids go
> back and forth because if they might not know a word in Spanish or in English,
> they're gonna get—they'll get better at it with the context cues and things like
> that. (Eduardo, 2022)

Professional development seems to have had a great impact on the way educators in the district value students' fluid language practices. For some educators, it means to be completely flexible with students' languaging in the classroom. For instance, an elementary school principal mentioned: "We already know that it takes five to seven years for kids to acquire a new language and to be successful. So, if they [the students] want to translanguage all day, let it be it." (Jessica, 2023).

However, this perspective of embracing student translanguaging without setting limits is not unanimous. Some educators in the district, mostly administrators, considered translanguaging in the classroom as a tool to expand students' language repertoires in each of the named languages without losing the perspective of keeping the development of each of those languages separate. The director of academic language services explained her views on translanguaging:

> En lo que se refiere a translanguaging, les digo que es no más como un enlace, o como lo llama el doctor Medina, un puente para la mejora, hacer la conexión con un concepto, con el niño, pero no es explicar, no es trabajar, no es dar todo en inglés. Es a lo mejor dar una palabra, una frase que el niño pueda conectar con el contenido que están haciendo en el otro idioma [When it comes to translanguaging, I tell them that it is no more like a link, or as Dr. Medina calls it, a bridge for improvement, making the connection with a concept, with the child, but it is not explaining, it is not working, is not giving everything in English. It is perhaps to give a word, a phrase that the child can connect with the content they are learning in the other language]. (Nina, 2023)

In Nina's words, it is possible to understand that she wanted translanguaging to have a limited use, not because she was worried about students confusing the languages but because she cared about both languages being equally represented in the program. She used the metaphor of translanguaging as a bridge to explain how it allows teachers to take what the students say and connect it with the target language. In this way, translanguaging has its moment and its space in the classroom.

The contrast between educators' perspectives is not related to the value of integrating translanguaging in the classroom but to when and how to do it. For some educators, like Jessica, it should be allowed whenever a student felt necessary. For others like Nina, translanguaging should have a specific role and be used with a pedagogical intention.

Ideologies that favor strict language separation in dual language classrooms.

Some educators believed that translanguaging is frequent in the community, but not ideal for school. The idea that students' translanguaging is part of their language learning process was spread among the educators interviewed. However, for others, this practice should not be welcomed in school. Lilly, an elementary school principal, is one of them. She stated:

> So I think in this area, it's very normal for kids to switch, the problem we have is that we mix the languages, right? We create Spanglish or we, you know, and so that's the issue that as a community, we have to make the conscious effort to separate to stick to the academic Spanish more than the social Spanish. (Lilly, 2023)

For educators like Lilly, school is a space for academic language, and translanguaging is not part of it. That does not mean that those educators were not in favor or did not practice translanguaging themselves. For them, it is a linguistic reality, part of the discursive practices of their community, but one that they consider incorrect. For this reason, they believed that hybrid language practices should not be encouraged in a DL program.

Some educators believed that strict language separation in the DL program allows students to develop both languages. For the educators in the district I interviewed, mostly for administrators, it was very important to keep the strict language separation in DL classrooms. Those educators cared about the development of each language in the program, and they feared that if each language were not practiced independently, students would rely on their previous linguistic knowledge instead of expanding their language repertoire. This sentiment is reflected in the words of a former elementary school principal:

> We have them practice, and we model. We try not to discourage them, you know, but actually encourage them to use their language and practice it. Because if they know that we're gonna break, then they're not going to do it right. If they know that we're going to conform to them, then they're not going to practice the language, and just like anything, if you don't practice something, you're not going to learn it, or you're it's not going to come as second nature to you. (Lilly, 2023)

Administrators in this study cared about the functioning of the dual language program. If the goal is for students to be bilingual and biliterate, they need to develop language skills both in English and Spanish. From this perspective, if strict language separation is not enforced, it is too easy for students to rely on the language they are more proficient in without making the necessary effort to learn the other language.

Some educators believed strict language separation is necessary to respect the DLBE principles of fidelity and consistency. As mentioned, administrators who participated in the study cared deeply about the success of the DL program, and, in this respect, they were committed to following the DLBE principles of fidelity and consistency. Those were mentioned several times in the interviews with administrators, such as this excerpt from an interview with an elementary school principal:

> The other way that we and, I guess is the most important to me, way is to be true to the program that you are following. Be consistent with the program that you are following, and monitoring that the program is done correctly. […] We need to push our teachers and monitor that the model is followed with fidelity. I think I know the fidelity to the dual program that we have in the district is what has made us successful and has really produced out of the program truly bilingual students that feel confident to speak two languages and, like she said, that they have the pride in their background culture. (Regina, 2022)

Educators I spoke with felt responsible for keeping the elements of the program that have led to its success and respecting language separation is part of it. Following faithfully the policy of 50/50 time separation and being consistent with this language allocation was a priority for administrators, who reinforced those principles by visiting classrooms and creating ways to make the language separation clear for teachers and students. For instance, the district decided to establish that Spanish days are color-coded with green and English days with red. In this way, there are colored signs outside of the

school each day and yearly calendars that indicate which day corresponds to which language.

Some educators believed teachers are responsible for upholding language separation in dual language classrooms. I already discussed the value that educators give to being flexible for the sake of students' well-being. While valuing the flexible language practices of students, teachers were expected to be faithful to the language of the day. As an elementary school principal described:

> Is a non-negotiable for teachers to stay truthful to the language of instruction, but they are encouraged to use strategies, right? that are going to support the kids like shelter instruction or SIOP or whatever instructional strategies they need to support the child. So, the teachers, really, it is very important for them to remain truthful to the language of instruction. Because that kind of sets the tone for the child as far as the expectations. (Jennifer, 2023)

In this sense, expectations for teachers were different than for students. Even if students and teachers are part of the same discursive communities, teachers have a role in school that makes them responsible for students' bilingual development. Teachers must balance multiple aspects of their professional identity, such as implementing district policy, which means separating the languages for instruction, while remaining faithful to their own language ideologies, which may be more aligned with language flexibility.

Educators who worked in the dual language program in this school district held diverse language ideologies related to language separation in the program. While some

may seem contradictory, they show how those educators have built a nuanced approach to the best way to conduct the program. Teachers were highly influenced by professional development that led them to adopt a positive view of students' translanguaging in the classroom. Administrators also recognized the value of translanguaging as a bridge to learning a new language, but they also felt responsible for maintaining the fidelity and consistency of the program, for which the development of each of the languages separately was necessary. All educators expressed a commitment to keeping the high level of the program and preparing new generations of bilingual and biliterate students; in addition, they were also committed to their student's well-being and providing them with an educational environment that allowed them to thrive.

Discussion and Implications

Because language ideologies are socially constructed, those held by educators interviewed for this study are intrinsically connected to the context in which the dual language program is situated. The perceptions that educators have about students and families who participate in the program reflect the cultural, political, and institutional contexts in which they do their job. Educators, coming from similar ethnic and cultural groups as their students, developed nuanced language perceptions about their linguistic context and families' views on dual language programs. On the one hand, educators held hegemonic beliefs about the disinterest of Spanish-speaking families in bilingual education, and, on the other, they were aware that those views were part of larger discourses about the value of speaking English with a native accent, and English being the language of success in the US. On the other, educators interviewed for this study were

aware of the historical trauma of Spanish-speaking communities regarding speaking Spanish in schools, which has been described in US-Mexico border areas (Saavedra & Isquierdo, 2020).

The educators I spoke with held complex and nuanced language ideologies related to language separation in DL classrooms. They knew that translanguaging is a natural languaging practice of bilingual individuals and understood that allowing students' translanguaging in the classroom was beneficial for them and helped them feel welcome and engaged in class. However, some thought that translanguaging is not entirely appropriate in academic contexts and, thus, should be limited in the classroom. Some educators in this study also considered translanguaging as a support for the language learning process, which could disappear as students develop language proficiency in both their languages separately. Those findings are consistent with the work of Martinez et al. (2015), who described that language ideologies and teaching practices of teachers working in a dual language program sometimes aligned with discourses of linguistic purism while reflecting ideologies that privileged Spanish and multilingualism.

This study joins a larger body of research on the language ideologies of educators who work in DLBE. In those studies, findings show that educators hold multiple and often contrasting language ideologies (Fitzsimmons-Doolan et al., 2017; Mackinney, 2016; Martínez et al., 2015; Park, 2023). From my perspective, educators' language ideologies on language separation are multiple but not contradictory. Previous literature has described that teachers working in dual language have a positive view of multilingualism, but their perspectives are also connected with policy requirements,

which often reflect a more monoglossic ideology (Bernstein et al., 2021; Fitzsimmons-Doolan et al., 2017; Mackinney, 2016; Park, 2023). Similarly, educators in this study held perspectives informed by their various work requirements, which made them adopt different approaches in order to be responsive to their students' needs and language identities, as well as respond to testing and policy requirements. Educators were able to integrate those seemingly contrasting language ideologies into a multi-dimensional perspective.

Similarly to those studies, the apparent contradictions in the language ideologies held by educators in this study can be partially explained by two related factors: educators' roles and policy messages. Concerning roles, there was a difference between the beliefs of teachers and administrators regarding the value of flexibility and strictness in language separation in DL classrooms. In general, teachers gave more value to giving space to flexible language practices because they focused on students' participation and engagement in the learning process. They have an everyday relationship with students, and they care about making them feel included and valuing their contributions, independent of the language of instruction. Administrators, on their part, have the duty of ensuring that policy is being implemented with fidelity, and they have a broader view of what works for the program in general. Because of their role, they must pay attention to standardized test scores; thus, they must ensure that each language is being developed according to the curriculum. Of course, that does not mean that teachers do not follow the language of the day or that administrators are oblivious to students' sense of belonging in school, but it helps explain the different focuses related to views on language separation

found in this study. Future research could help illuminate the relationship between language ideologies related to language separation and educators' roles.

Policy messages are another factor that may influence educators' contradictory language ideologies, as has been described in previous literature (Fitzsimmons-Doolan et al., 2017; Mackinney, 2016; Park, 2023). Formal policies in the program favor language separation in DL classrooms. The district has implemented a system of color-coded posters to indicate the language of the day for students and teachers, and administrators visit classrooms to make sure the language of the day is being respected. Also, students are tested in English and Spanish separately, which gives teachers and administrators incentives to be faithful to the language of the day policy. However, the district also offers educators professional development that emphasizes the value of translanguaging and valuing students' full linguistic repertoire. Educators I spoke with made references to PD in this topic, and discussed how those sessions helped them to change their perspectives on translanguaging. Those two opposing messages are internalized by educators, who try to make sense of everything they are being asked to perform. Each educator reached their own balance between those contrasting messages, which sometimes implies working around the formal policies for the program. As an implication for policy, school districts should work with educators in their sensemaking processes to ensure that messages sent follow an internal logic that allows all educators to understand the policy messages in a congruent way.

Related to the influence of professional development, educators in this study discussed the role of PD in changing their language ideologies, specifically related to

translanguaging, which coincides with the findings of previous research on language ideologies in DLBE (Fitzsimmons-Doolan et al., 2017). This fact speaks to how language ideologies are socially constructed and dynamic (Kroskrity, 2004), thus professional development initiatives can be powerful tools to support more heteroglossic language ideologies for educators working in dual language settings, especially in border areas where the ordinary languaging practices of communities have historically been deemed inappropriate for school (Saavedra & Isquierdo, 2020).

As an implication for district policy, school districts, especially those located in border areas, must take a clear stance toward their communities' language practices, which should be reflected in district-wide professional development for educators in all sorts of roles.   If there is a genuine commitment to honor students' languaging practices, this professional development should be focused on going beyond the acceptance of students' translanguaging to the development of purposeful translanguaging pedagogies. As Palmer et al. (2014) stated, if dynamic bilingualism is the goal, teachers should move beyond acceptance to engage themselves purposefully in dynamic bilingualism, to model and encourage it. Students would benefit from the validation of their language practices not only as a scaffolding but also to empower them and their communities (García, 2017).

This study highlighted the complex and nuanced language ideologies educators working in a dual language program held about language separation in DL classrooms. Their perspectives were informed by their view on the students and families served by the school district, the dynamic language practices of their community, the influence of professional development, and the requirements of testing and district policy. This paper

contributes to the literature that highlights the relevance of developing heteroglossic

language policies that are consistent with the languaging practices of the communities

served by schools to honor and value students' and educators' dynamic bilingualism.

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III. Paper 2. Educators' Sensemaking on District-Wide ESL Endorsement Policy

Abstract

In the US, the majority of students classified as English Learners (ELs) receive most of the instruction from regular classroom teachers, who need preparation to work with increasingly diverse EL students. In this paper, I present results from a study of one culturally and linguistically diverse school district in Illinois that implemented a district-wide ESL endorsement requirement. In this qualitative case study, I used interviews with educators and district documentation generated in the policy creation process to better understand 1) the policy goals that guided the district in creating the ESL endorsement requirement and 2) how educators in roles related to working with EL students made sense of this policy. Findings revealed that the main policy goals were equity and welfare for EL students, greatly influenced by district leadership's previous experiences with and knowledge about EL education. The district leaders also had teachers' job security and financial welfare in mind when creating the policy and intended it as a positive inducement. However, the need for further collective sensemaking led some teachers to interpret the policy as a mandate instead of an incentive. Ultimately, the policy implementation was successful due to the shared policy goals. Implications for policy and leadership are discussed.

Keywords: English Learners, educators, sensemaking, policy goals, ESL endorsement

Among the overall trend of increasing diversity in U.S. classrooms, one of the most notable is linguistic diversity. In the US, 22% of residents aged five or older reported speaking a language other than English at home (Esterline & Batalova, 2022). In school, 10.1% of students were classified as English Learners (ELs) (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). Although ELs were traditionally concentrated in Southwestern states, they are now present nationwide, even in states that have not historically served linguistically diverse students (Camarota & Zeigler, 2014). Researchers have estimated that 42% of all U.S. public school teachers have at least one EL in their class (Franco-Fuenmayor et al., 2015).

Despite this growing diversity in classrooms, the majority of ELs receive most, if not all, of their instruction from regular classroom teachers due to EL enrollment outpacing the capacity of bilingual and ESL programs and the adoption of English-only policies in some states (Hopkins et al., 2015; Villegas et al., 2018). Classroom teachers, in contrast with the diversity of their students, continue to be homogeneously White, English monolingual, middle class, and female (Haddix, 2017). Evidence shows that most teachers do not feel prepared to work with ELs because they have not had enough opportunities to develop the conceptual knowledge needed to teach those students (Lucas et al.2018).

Considering that the demographic change in the student population has largely outpaced the diversification of the teacher force, schools must welcome new communities of students without expertise or educational resources to support ELs (Capps et al., 2005; Lowenhaupt & Reeves, 2015; Marrow, 2011; Quiñones-Benitez, 2003). To face this

reality, researchers have advocated for increased preparation of classroom teachers (non-specialist teachers) to work with linguistically diverse students (Lowenhaupt & Reeves, 2015; O'Hara & Pritchard, 2008). Research has indicated that "the most successful teachers of ELs have identifiable pedagogical and cultural skills and knowledge" (Gándara et al., 2005, p. 3). Preparing teachers to work with linguistically diverse students is an absolute necessity if we want to support the academic success of all students. This requires a shift in the approach to and mechanisms for training all teachers, not just those with a specialization in supporting ELs.

In this paper, I examine how one highly linguistically diverse school district in Illinois undertook a review of its EL program by implementing a series of improvements to its programming, one of which is to have all their teachers ESL endorsed. During the design and implementation of this district policy, educators in different roles have gone through sensemaking processes to understand and integrate the changes that the new policy brings to their professional roles. To understand the sensemaking processes of educators with a history of working with linguistically diverse students concerning this districts' initiative for professional development, I analyzed interviews with educators in the district whose roles are related to working with EL students and district documentation generated in the policy creation process. My work was guided by these research questions: What are the policy goals that played a part in the creation and implementation of a district-wide ESL endorsement requirement in a school district in Illinois? How do educators in roles related to working with EL students make sense of this policy?

In this study, I argue that a district-wide ESL endorsement requirement policy that focuses on the goal of equity for EL students can only be successful if teachers' needs for support are also centered during policy creation and implementation. By not paying enough attention to this aspect of policy implementation, the school district may be hindering its efforts to address the language needs of EL students. This paper contributes to the literature on policies that support English Learners by emphasizing the relevance of collective sensemaking processes to reach policy goals focused on equity for multilingual learners.

Theoretical Framework

Policy Reform: Policy Goals

In her policy analysis model, Stone (2012) understood policy problems in terms of goals, problems born from the discrepancy between those goals and reality, and solutions to the problems. However, her model was not based purely on rationality or implied following a linear order to solve policy issues. The model also focused on the strategic nature of political reasoning, of "trying to get others to see a situation as one thing rather than another" (Stone, 2012, p. 11).

For this paper, I focused mostly on policy goals, which Stone (2012) conceptualized not as specific goals of individual policy issues but as values underlying policy debates. Those goals are aspirations for the community but can be interpreted in contradictory ways, which creates controversies over particular policies. The policy goals discussed by Stone (2012) are equity, efficiency, welfare, liberty, and security.

(a) Equity. Stone (2012) defined the policy goal of equity as it relates to issues of equal distribution. According to the author, when discussing equity, there are conflicts in conceptualizing what is considered equal from different perspectives. In this sense, equity sometimes means inequality because an equal distribution does not necessarily imply giving everyone the same.

(b) Efficiency. For Stone (2012), efficiency is achieving an objective at the lower cost. She considered efficiency not a goal in itself but a way to attain the most benefit with the same resources. Although the idea that equality and efficiency are fundamentally incompatible is widespread, Stone (2012) asserted that the argument does not hold up against the evidence; equity and prosperity can go hand in hand.

(c) Welfare. Stone (2012) discussed welfare as related to well-being in an ample sense. First, what is considered necessary is not the same for everyone. Second, there are different dimensions of needs, including material and symbolic. Stone (2012) stated that those multiple ways of defining needs result in different conceptions of welfare.

(d) Liberty. When writing about the goal of liberty, Stone (2012) focused on the fundamental question it presents for policy makers: Under which circumstances should public policy limit individual autonomy? For the author, liberty thus presents a series of paradoxes for understanding liberty and its limits.

(e) Security. In connection with the goal of security, Stone (2012) maintained that while feelings of insecurity are connected with objective circumstances, security is a psychological state and thus can be influenced by other factors. In the face of danger, leaders must find ways of producing security.

Another aspect of Stone's (2012) model that is useful for this study is the analysis of the policy instruments that can be used to solve policy problems by attempting to change people's behavior. While the model described five policy instruments — incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers— for this paper, the one that helped me the most to understand the policy issue presented in the case is incentives. Those are understood by Stone (2012) as ways to get other people to choose the actions we want them to choose by creating either positive inducements or deterrents, which are two sides of the "motivational coin." In this study, incentives, and the way they were interpreted by policy actors were key in the success of the policy implementation process.

For this study, I use this model to understand better the values that guided a school district to create a district-wide ESL endorsement requirement and how educators in different roles made sense of the policy in light of its stated goals. Identifying the values that led the school district in the creation of an ESL endorsement requirement will help me better understand what the district's priorities were for creating the policy and its focus when making decisions about how to go about its implementation.

Sensemaking Theory

When a school district implements a new instructional policy, educators must grapple with the changes it brings to their work. Policy implementation theory has

described how educators make sense of policy messages and implement them in their work (Coburn, 2001; Spillane et al., 2002b). Researchers have used sensemaking theory (Weick, 1995) to understand how educators create meanings in response to new policies introduced in their schools and districts.

From a cognitive perspective, sensemaking is an ongoing and active process in which implementing agents understand policy messages in the interaction of the policy with their prior knowledge, beliefs, and values as embedded in their work context (Spillane et al., 2002b). From a constructivist perspective, researchers have focused on the collective nature of sensemaking as a process of social interaction and negotiation deeply situated in educators' contexts (Coburn, 2005). When we think about sensemaking, we must consider both aspects: not only how individual educators make sense of policies by themselves and based on their own experiences and identities, but also how this process is influenced by conversations and messages present in their schools and districts.

Prior scholarship has shown how educators in different roles contribute to the sensemaking process of new policies in diverse ways. For example, in the case of leaders, their role sets their sensemaking processes on multiple levels. As intermediaries between teachers and district officials, leaders place their sensemaking processes as nested in the school culture's values, norms, beliefs, and traditions (Spillane et al., 2002a). As professionals and individuals, leaders' sensemaking and their actions regarding policy implementation are also connected to their personal identities (Spillane et al., 2002a) and their understanding of the contents of the policy (Coburn, 2005). In collective

sensemaking processes, school leaders are in charge of shaping access to the ideas presented in policies, creating conditions for teacher learning about them, and participating in the social process of interpreting and adapting the policies (Coburn, 2005). In that sense, leaders influence the focus and direction of teachers' sensemaking (Coburn, 2005; Ganon-Shilon & Schechter, 2017).

Teachers participate in school policy implementation by making sense of and implementing the policy. In their sensemaking processes, teachers construct their understanding of policies based on their individual worldviews and practices, as well as shared understandings (Coburn, 2001). In the collective sensemaking processes, teachers must resolve conflicting goals of implementing policies while responding to the demands of their local educational contexts (Allen & Penuel, 2015). In that regard, teachers need conditions to engage in collaborative and sustained sensemaking to work through those inconsistencies (Coburn, 2001). Additionally, emotions play an important role in teachers' sensemaking. Schmidt and Datnow (2005) found that when teachers made sense of reform at the school level, they attached little emotion to it, but when that sensemaking was connected to their classroom practice, it led to a variety of emotional responses, positive and negative.

In this case study, I am interested in investigating the collective and individual sensemaking processes in a school district that decided to implement a new policy regarding their teachers' preparation to work with ELs. By interviewing educators in different roles, I aim to understand how they make sense of this policy according to their role in the policy creation process and their role in its implementation.

Methods

Study Context and Participants

This study is part of the PIECE project[3]. This paper utilizes a qualitative case study design (Yin, 2018) to work with data from one highly culturally and linguistically diverse school district in Illinois. Students come from varied ethnic, linguistic, and religious backgrounds. According to the district leaders, more than 60 languages are spoken by the families in the district, and there is no predominant language.

As part of the larger research project, I traveled to this school district in May 2022. On that visit, I met with teachers and administrators to interview them about how the district supports immigrant-origin students. In April 2023, I visited the district again for a two-day site visit for the professional learning network focused on the newcomer program. We observed classrooms, interviewed teachers and administrators, and had informal conversations with educators from the district. On those occasions, I familiarized myself with the district and could understand more the support they have created for immigrant-origin students in general and students classified as English Learners in particular.

Following those conversations, I became interested in the district's initiative to get all their teachers ESL endorsed as part of the redesign of their EL program. Teachers

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[3] The PIECE project is a mixed-methods longitudinal study that took place from 2018-2023 through collaboration with six school districts across the US to explore educator practices to support immigrant-origin students and their families within specific contexts of reception. The project PI is Rebecca Lowenhaupt (Boston College), and the co-PIs are Ariana Mangual Figueroa (CUNY Graduate Center), Dafney Blanca Dabach (University of Washington), and Roberto Gonzales (University of Pennsylvania). The project received funding from the W.T. Grant and Spencer Foundations.

were given a couple of years to complete coursework related to teaching ESL students and clinical experience teaching ESL to receive their endorsement. With the support of the district's Director of EL Services, I was able to gather district documentation on the work of the Learning Team that redesigned the EL program, of which the ESL endorsement policy is a part. Additionally, between Spring and Fall 2023, I interviewed teachers and administrators in different roles whose work was impacted by the ESL endorsement policy and/or were part of the Learning Team to understand how they made sense of the policy and how it affected their work.

Data Collection

I used interviews with educators as a main data source to study how educators in the district make sense of the ESL endorsement requirement policy. From Spring to Fall 2023, I conducted interviews via Zoom with seven educators from the district who were involved with the implementation of district-wide ESL endorsements, either because they were part of the Learning team or because the policy affected their work. Those educators have different roles in the district: some have administrative positions, and others are in roles directly related to working with EL students who were impacted by the policy. Five interviews were conducted in English and two in Spanish, according to interviewees' preference. The interviews were recorded and later transcribed (the interview protocol can be found in Appendix D). In Table 2, there are more details about the participants' pseudonyms, roles, and participation in the Learning Team.

Table 2

Study Participants

Pseudonym	Role
Alyssa	Foreign Language Teacher
Angela	Director of EL services
Farah	School-level administrator
John	Superintendent
Katie	EL Resource Teacher
Patricia	District-level administrator
Sara	Foreign Language Teacher

To build the case background, I used the field notes (Emerson et al., 2011) I wrote during my 2022 and 2023 visits to the district, where I documented important information about the context of the district, my interactions with the educators I met, the classrooms I observed, as well as my first impressions as a researcher about the main topics discussed by the participants and those issues that I considered relevant.

As an additional data source, I analyzed the working documents used in the six sessions during which the Learning Team met from April to November 2017 with the goal of updating the EL program. This documentation data was shared with me by the district's Director of EL Services, who led the Learning Team and designed the policy creation process. The first four sessions were called Discover and aimed to familiarize the Learning Team with the legal parameters around EL programming and the current literature on second language learning. The fifth and sixth sessions were called Design and had the objective of analyzing all the information learned in the Discover phase in order to design an EL program that followed literature and empirical evidence and worked with the district resources and context. Appendix E has a detailed list of all the 56 documents used in the Learning Team meetings.

Data Analysis

For the analysis of the interviews, field notes, and documentation, I conducted a first cycle of coding (Miles et al., 2014) in which I applied deductive codes derived from my research objectives and literature review. In this cycle, I coded for Stone's (1997) policy goals, policy actors, policy stages, and sensemaking process. As a first approach to data analysis, those codes allowed me to identify the main elements of the policy creation and implementation process, as well as the sensemaking process unfolding. The coding manual can be found in Appendix F.

In the second phase, I generated Pattern Codes (Miles et al., 2014) to group the codes produced in the first cycle and identify themes that allowed me to answer the two research questions. During each coding cycle, I wrote analytic memos (Miles et al., 2014) that helped me document my thinking process and drive future analytic decisions. Finally, I created descriptive matrices to examine subthemes and identify illustrative examples and counterexamples (Miles et al., 2014). The result of this phase was the identification of three themes related to the policy goals that motivated the school district to require ESL endorsements from teachers (Research Question 1) and three themes related to the sensemaking process of educators in response to this policy (Research Question 2). Table 3 shows the procedures for the two phases of analysis.

Table 3

Phases of Analysis

	Interviews	Documents
Phase 1: Deductive coding	• Policy goals • Policy actors • Policy stages • Sensemaking process	• Policy goals • Policy actors
Phase 2: Themes	RQ1: policy goals 1. English Learners' welfare and achieving equity are the main policy goals. 2. The policy was designed for equity and efficiency in the district. 3. Teachers' welfare and security was considered as a policy goal, but their liberty of choice was not a major focus. RQ2: sensemaking process 1. District leaders used their previous expertise in EL education to make sense of the district's needs for the design of a new EL program. 2. Communication between district leaders and teachers led to dissimilar teacher sensemaking about the ESL endorsement requirement. 3. Teachers, as policy implementers, saw their job responsibilities change the most, and so their sensemaking process reflected both their commitment to the policy goals and a critical view of the policy implementation.	

Findings

Policy Goals

In this section, I seek to answer the first research question related to the policy goals that drove a diverse school district in Illinois to create and implement a district-wide ESL endorsement requirement. To answer this question, I analyzed interview data and working documents from the learning team that designed the policy. I identified three main themes that represent how different policy goals and policy actors were prioritized

in the ESL endorsement policy. Understanding the goals that led the school district to revise its EL program serves to ground educators' sensemaking processes in the context where the new policy was developed. Educators aligned or responded to those values according to the opportunities they had to make sense of it individually and collectively.

Theme 1. English Learners' welfare and achieving equity were the main policy goals. Throughout the interviews and documentation, equity and welfare for ELs were present as the most important goals for creating and implementing the policy.

During the process of policy creation, the learning team reviewed the federal and state legal parameters around EL instruction and reviewed the current research related to the benefits of bilingualism and second language instruction. In the documents created to summarize the main takeaways of this literature review, the learning team concluded that it was key to "Ensure EL students have equal opportunities to meaningfully participate in all curricular and extra-curricular activities" (S1-K. Team Work. Compiled Resonating Aspects of the Legal Parameters) and that "Good instruction is good for ELs, but specific strategies, designed for ELs, should be included" (S2-R. Team Work. Compiled Review of Exemplary Practice in ESL Instruction). In both cases, the learning team grounded their policy creation process in two main pillars: to secure EL's equitable access to instruction and school activities, just as any other student in the district, while giving them the specific language support that allows them to learn. Those principles guided the learning team's sensemaking process and were built into the policy to guide how the whole district would make sense of it.

Those same goals were represented in the interviews, particularly in those with administrators. For instance, the superintendent discussed one of the reasons for moving away from a pull-out model:

> And what they've done historically is they were pulling kids out of science. So, our EL students weren't getting science instruction, which was a little bit alarming. In my first year, I did a visit at the high school to their STEM lab. And I was talking to the teacher, and he said "Yeah, we get so few EL students from your district in our program." And I kind of put two and two together; that's because we weren't providing them with a whole lot of science instruction. (John, superintendent)

As John explained, ELs were being pulled out during science instruction, which affected their knowledge and motivation to pursue STEM classes in high school. Realizing that the previous model was not giving EL students access to equitable education was one of the motivations that led the district to redesign the EL program. In the program redesign, no students are pulled out, and they stay in their classrooms with the rest of their peers.

Regarding how the new EL program better supports EL students' language development, the director of EL services and leader of the learning team explained:

> Under the old model, kids- because you have one or two, I mean, there's only X number of hours in the day. So, kids were only getting about 90 minutes at the max. In some cases, it was 60 or 45 minutes, in a six-hour day, that was

comprehensible. The rest was just wah, wah, blah, blah. And now, you've got

children who are getting six hours of instruction each day, that is comprehensible,

that is at their zone of proximal development, that is calibrated to their language

proficiency level. So that scaffolds and accelerates their development to the next

level. (Angela, Director of EL services)

According to this quote, equity was understood both as sharing the classroom

with the general population of students and also as having the same opportunities to learn

the contents. By having all teachers ESL endorsed, the district sought to achieve its

equity goal and guarantee that in every classroom, students were getting comprehensible

input and instruction adapted to their language needs.

Theme 2: The policy was designed to balance equity and efficiency. When

designing the policy, the learning team chose an EL instruction model that prioritized

equity and students' welfare, but also considered what was more efficient for the district.

During its last session, the learning team created presentations with recommendations for

school leaders. The goals of equity and welfare are evident in those recommendations.

One example of equity understood as equal access to the content is: "Building

competency of all teachers to differentiate for language proficiency levels," (S6-S.

FINAL PPT 12.18.17 K-5 Faculty Mtg. Presentation) in which the ESL endorsement

required is referred to as a way to reach all students in all content areas without excluding

them from mainstream classrooms. The same document also states that "ELs are

considered at the front end of any initiative," which highlights that their welfare is of

paramount importance to the district. This connects to the previous finding, illustrating

that district leaders had equity as an explicit goal when starting the policy creation process.

Another priority for the learning team considered efficiency, financially, and in terms of available resources. In connection to the financial aspect, in one of the process documents of the learning team, it is stated that "Pull Out ESL instruction is the most expensive and least effective EL Program Model" (S5-G. Team Work. Take-Aways to Share with Colleagues). That is, the model that was being used by the district was not only modified because it was not beneficial for students but also because of its cost. During policy creation, the learning team contemplated different program models and analyzed their benefits and drawbacks. As the learning team leader, Angela manifested that finances were one of the factors that mattered in the final decision: "For example, I knew that co-teaching would not be a recommendation that would fly. So, I explained to them why that would not be implemented, why the board would reject that, namely, because it's too expensive" (Angela, Director of EL services). Because of her experience as a consultant and her expertise in EL education, Angela knew that the program model chosen by the learning team would have to meet several different goals, one being its cost. As an administrator, she was aware of the financial constraints of school districts, and she led the learning team to include this consideration.

Another aspect of efficiency that was considered in the policy creation process was available resources in the form of teachers' previous qualifications. As the director of EL services recounted, the district administrators realized that they had teachers who

already had an ESL endorsement, which could make the transition to an ESL endorsement requirement smoother. In her words:

> So, I got an idea to look in personnel records, to see if we had people that were employed in the district already, who had their ESL endorsement, but we're not using it were placed as classroom teachers, but weren't called upon to use their ESL endorsement. […] So then, when I looked at how many people we actually had in the district with the ESL endorsement, that's when I started thinking that we might be able to move in the direction of having all of our teachers meet their goal of obtaining an ESL endorsement. And when I saw that that was possible, that's when I started thinking about how we might kind of leverage that expertise to a different program model. (Angela, Director of EL services)

In terms of decision-making, having a group of teachers who were already ESL-endorsed certainly made requiring it for everyone much easier. There were available teachers to start working with the groups of mostly EL students promptly, and the district would have to reimburse for getting the endorsement to a smaller number of educators.

While equity was the main policy goal in redesigning the EL program, district leaders were also required to consider efficiency in their decisions. Achieving equity while considering practical aspects is an essential element of policy creation that, for this school district, seems not to have been necessarily opposed.

Theme 3: Teachers' welfare and security were considered as secondary policy goals, but their liberty of choice was not a major focus. In the policy creation

process, administrators thought about the impact that requiring an ESL endorsement would have on teachers. They knew that teachers would have to see the benefits of this new policy if the new EL program design was to be successful. The administration framed the new district policy in a way that could convince teachers of its benefits. The superintendent explained:

> Yeah, so I kind of use the word manipulated, right? I kind of manipulated that a little bit. So, there's there wasn't really a requirement. There is an incentive. One, you'll get paid more money, and it'll get paid for. The other part of that incentive, which you could look at either way, is that there's additional job security as sort of an incentive. If you didn't get it, and we needed to reduce the number of teachers, you might lose your job. So, you know, there's sort of the threat. Part of that, I guess, is that you could potentially lose a job. But we tried to give people, you know, we gave them tons of advance notice, we gave them the places they could sign up for courses. If we made it so that they wouldn't be financially impacted by having to take the courses, so we tried to do everything we could, so that people wouldn't pay the negative consequence of losing their job. If they did, that was really their choice. (John, superintendent)

In this quote, the superintendent described how he framed the ESL endorsement requirement to teachers as an incentive instead of a requirement to guide their sensemaking process in a positive direction. By designing the policy with teachers in mind, the district aimed to reach two additional policy goals: welfare and security for teachers. First, the policy would pursue teachers' welfare because getting an additional

endorsement would increase their salaries. Administrators knew that the change would impact teachers' workload, so it was important to ensure that more work meant a higher income to convince teachers. Secondly, the district presented getting an ESL endorsement as an incentive to get job security. If teachers got the endorsement, they were protected from being fired in case of needing to reduce teachers.

The superintendent was aware that this second point could be interpreted as both an incentive and a threat. Thus, the district made efforts so that teachers would not receive all the negative impacts of this new policy. In a way, the superintendent was trying to predict the different ways in which teachers could make sense of the policy, depending on how it was framed, and found a way to guide teachers' sensemaking in favor of a positive interpretation which was intended with this policy.

In sum, the district policy goals were focused on equity and welfare, primarily for students. The revision of the EL program was motivated by the realization that EL students were not getting the same quality of instruction as their peers, which limited their future possibilities. While the district also paid attention to teachers' welfare and security, those were secondary goals of the policy. The district tried not to harm teachers while doing what was best for EL students and found ways to incentivize teachers to adhere to the new EL policy. By creating incentives for teachers to adhere to the policy, the district leaders attempted to ensure the new policy's success. Framing the ESL requirement as positive for teachers also guided their sensemaking process, which will be further discussed in the next section.

Sensemaking Process

In this section, I explore the second research question, related to the sensemaking process of educators in the district about the ESL endorsement policy. For the analysis, I worked with interviews with educators in different roles, for whom the new EL education policy affected their professional role. Three themes are discussed regarding educators' perspectives.

Theme 1. District leaders used their previous expertise in EL education to make sense of the district's needs when designing a new EL program. The policy creation and implementation processes were heavily influenced by the sensemaking of district leaders, especially the superintendent and the director of EL services. The superintendent's background as a bilingual educator made him more sensitive to issues related to EL students, as he described: "My master's was in bilingual instruction and curriculum and instruction. So, I was kind of aware or painfully aware that that program model did not feel like it was really serving children very well" (John, district-level administrator). His previous knowledge and expertise were key to putting EL students' interests at the center and deciding to change the EL policy.

When the superintendent realized the EL program was not effective for EL students, he knew he had to hire someone to start a process of policy change. He discussed what he did next:

> So I went to the board, you know, to talk to them about my concerns about how we were serving or not serving our EL children very well. And they agreed to let me create a halftime EL director position. So, I posted that and found Angela

again, we have known each other. I took an EL assessment class with her at the

very beginning of my career almost 30 years ago. She signed on for the halftime

position. The following year, I was able to convince the board to make it a full-

time position. And we immediately launched a learning team to look at program

models and program design. (John, superintendent)

The process that led to the creation of an ESL endorsement requirement would

have been very different if it was not for the superintendent's background knowledge and

connections, which allowed him not only to identify a problem, but also gave him the

tools to reach his connections to plan for a prompt solution. The superintendent hired

Angela, who he knew shared his perspective on the education of EL students, which

ensured that her sensemaking would be consistent with his. On top of knowing each other

previously, Angela's vast experience in the area made her an excellent candidate for the

role of starting a policy change. As John recounted:

Angela was very well suited for that, because of her years of professorial work in

ESL endorsement classes. And she's a published author. So, I basically charged

her with leading the team to do site visits, look at the research, look at the context

of, you know, what it looks like here in our district. (John, superintendent)

In the case of this district, the policy creation process was expedited by the

existence of previous professional relationships between the superintendent and the

newly hired, at the time, director of EL services. Angela arrived at the district with a vast

knowledge of EL programs, which she put to service in the design of the new policy. She

described her role in the learning team in this way:

Well, I led the learning team. And of course, I selected many of the resources that were reviewed, and we watched videos while we were eating dinner; we called it dinner theater. But I also, you know, told the members of the team, hey, if you have something that you want me to include in this, you know, giant binder of things, we're taking a look at, you know, just shoot it my way. But for the most part, you know, I kind of established the parameters for the learning team. And, you know, I did steer the committee's understanding and thinking about certain things. (Angela, learning team leader)

As the learning team leader, Angela was very aware of her influence on the collective sensemaking that occurred in the context of the learning team. By selecting the readings, watching resources, and organizing the site visits, Angela affected what perspectives would be considered valid in the design of the new EL program.

From the start of the policy process, from its genesis to its creation and implementation, the previous knowledge and expertise, as well as the relationships between the superintendent and the director of EL services, were key in setting the views that shaped the sensemaking process of the learning team. Those views were also what was communicated to the rest of the district.

Theme 2. Communication between district leaders and teachers led to dissimilar teacher sensemaking about the ESL endorsement requirement. As I described, the district aspired to communicate the ESL endorsement requirement to teachers as an incentive to get endorsed, rather than an imposition from the district. Teachers were given a number of years to get endorsed, and they got a 70%

reimbursement for taking the coursework needed. The district framed the issue as giving teachers options, as the superintendent's words reflect:

> We made it so that they wouldn't be financially impacted by having to take the courses, so we tried to do everything we could so that people wouldn't pay the negative consequence of losing their jobs. If they did, that was really their choice. (John, superintendent)

The idea that teachers had a choice in getting the ESL endorsement was not interpreted the same way by all teachers. As the receivers of this new policy, teachers made sense of it according to their personal understanding of the policy and the way it impacted their everyday work. For instance, a teacher already endorsed had a positive perspective on how the district dealt with this new policy. She said "Yo nunca lo sentí forzado, pero ya yo lo tenía" [I never felt it was forced, but I already had it] (Alyssa, foreign language teacher). Alyssa saw the ESL endorsement requirement as encouraged, not forced. However, she knew that her view was personal and not necessarily shared by all her colleagues.

As a foreign language teacher, Alyssa understood the importance of having knowledge about the language acquisition process, which may have affected her positive sensemaking of the requirement to get ESL endorsed. In the interview, she said: "yo pienso también que al tenerlo te ayuda a ser mejor maestro, independientemente si estás dándole clase a los estudiantes como segundo idioma o a la población general" [I also think that having it helps you be a better teacher, regardless of whether you are teaching second language students or the general population.] (Alyssa, foreign language teacher).

Alyssa made sense of the policy by considering what was best for EL students, which may also be rooted in her personal experience of speaking English as a second language. In the interview, she remembered the cultural differences she faced when she first arrived in the continental US: "Yo sé lo que se siente; yo no quiero que ellos se sientan así" [I know how it feels; I don't want them to feel that way] (Alyssa, foreign language teacher).

All teachers did not share this positive sensemaking of the ESL endorsement requirement, though, and some of them interpreted it as a threat. For instance, Sara, a foreign language teacher, stated:

Yo pienso que es como que hasta, fue una pequeña amenaza de que si no lo conseguías tal vez no tendrías trabajo también. Entonces, pues la gente que quiere mantener su trabajo, me imagino que se empezaron a tomar las clases [I think it's like it was even a little threat that if you didn't get it maybe you wouldn't have a job, too. So, well, people who want to keep their jobs, I imagine that they started taking the classes]. (Sara, foreign language teacher)

Sara, in contrast to Alyssa, interpreted the policy as an imposition, and a limitation to teachers' liberty. If teachers who did not get the endorsement were in danger of being fired, then getting was not an incentive, but an obligation. Sara made sense of the policy from the perspective of the practical constraints that getting or not getting the endorsement would bring to teachers. Although teachers could choose not to get endorsed and move to another school district, that may not be easy or practical for them, which limited the freedom that teachers have in choosing whether to get the endorsement or not. Teachers like Alyssa valued options and felt that the new policy limited theirs. This view

was shared by Katie, an ESL resource teacher, who worked supporting newly endorsed teachers. When asked about possible improvements to the EL policy, she shared:

> To be more, more teacher voice. I know, when that committee was formed to, you know, redesign the ESL program, many people on that committee felt like they weren't given a voice, I guess, that it was already pre-chosen, predetermined. And administrators were just kind of pushing them to make that decision when that's not the decision that they wanted to make. (Katie, ESL resource teacher)

Because Katie worked with teachers who were recently experiencing the realities of being an ESL teacher, she had the chance to hear many different opinions on the matter. From this quote, it is apparent that teachers felt that there needed to be more participation of teachers in the policy creation process, who could advocate for their professional needs.

Though the district considered that salary increases and the promise of job security would be enough incentive for teachers to get on board with the ESL requirement, some felt their liberty of choice was constrained, significantly influencing their sensemaking of the policy. Given the diversity in teachers' sensemaking, it appears that they would have benefited from more opportunities for collective sensemaking to support a more unified understanding of the policy. For example, not all teachers had clarity on the role that educators in different positions had in the policy creation process, which affected their sensemaking.

Theme 3. Teachers' sensemaking was complex and reflected both their commitment to the policy goals and a critical view of the policy implementation. As previously described, teachers felt their voices were not sufficiently heard during the policy creation process. In connection with the policy implementation, teachers' sensemaking processes were marked by a contrast between valuing the positive aspects of being ESL endorsed for them and their students versus focusing on the challenges they faced with this new policy.

On the one hand, teachers related to the policy goals of offering equitable education to EL students. Their sensemaking process was focused on the understanding that students in the district need linguistic support throughout the school day, and being ESL-endorsed allowed them to be the best teachers for those students. Alyssa, who shared her opinion and what she had heard from her colleagues, exemplified this view:

Y sinceramente, no he escuchado compañeros, por lo menos yo no he escuchado compañeros quejarse o decir... Porque yo creo que entendemos de que uno tiene que estar pendiente y saber a la población, la audiencia de uno que uno tiene. Y aquí los estudiantes de EL, tenemos muchos y aunque estudiantes que han salido del programa, pero continúan siendo ELs y también necesitan todavía estas estrategias, aunque ya hayan salido del programa. [And honestly, I have not heard colleagues, at least I have not heard colleagues complain or say... Because I think that we understand that one has to be aware of and know the population, the audience that one has. And here, EL students, we have many students who have exited the program, but they continue to be ELs and they also still need these

strategies, even though they have already exited the program]. (Alyssa, foreign language teacher)

As Alyssa explained, she and other colleagues understood the relevance of being endorsed because having the ESL endorsement allowed them to utilize strategies to provide accessible instruction for all students, even those who are not classified as ELs anymore. For teachers, connecting with their student population is necessary, and they were willing to go through the endorsement process for this goal.

However, teachers were also critical of how this policy was implemented in some aspects, especially related to how they had to become ESL teachers immediately after getting their endorsement. As Sara depicted: "Yo apenas, aunque haya tomado las clases, es diferente tomar una clase y luego que te metan y tú con zero experience poder, unless you are an ESL teacher" [I just, even though I have taken the classes, it is different to take a class and then they put you in and you have zero experience, unless you are an ESL teacher] (Sara, foreign language teachers). Teachers worried about having to teach EL students only equipped with what they learned in theory in their ESL endorsement classes. They were not against teaching EL students; they simply did not feel prepared to use the strategies they learned without a period of guided practice. Feeling a lack of support from the district steered teachers' sensemaking toward a more critical position of the ESL endorsement requirement. However, their sensemaking processes continue to evolve as they put into practice their endorsements. As Katie presented it:

Now you're thrown in there. But it's also good because I've seen a lot of when they are thrown in, I know, it's hard for them. But I've seen them change their

attitude and their mindset about working with English language learners. Like, it's hard, and it's, but I think they see that English language instruction is not just like teaching them vocabulary words; there are so many different things that can encompass the instruction. So, I mean, it's hard, but it's kind of throw them into, this is the reality of it. (Katie, ESL resource teacher)

Katie, whose work as an ESL resource teacher involved supporting teachers during their initial teaching period using their ESL endorsement, understood teachers' feelings of insecurity and uncertainty. She was also present to witness the moment in which teachers saw their hard work pay off and became better teachers for the EL students.

Because teachers need to feel supported in their new professional responsibilities, the role of staff who support newly endorsed teachers was key. In the case of this district, Katie was tasked with this position after being one of the three ESL specialists in the district. About their work with teachers, she described:

A lot of times like how to help their newcomer in the classroom. Teachers also seek out a lot of help with, you know, tailoring their instruction, their current curriculum for their English language learners in their class. Also, just, you know, like any strategies that I have, any quick tools anything to just really help them because a lot of teachers have just received their, their endorsements. (Katie, ESL resource teacher)

As a teacher, Katie supported her colleagues who recently received their ESL endorsements. She met with them individually, according to their needs, to see what they needed to become more confident teaching EL students. However, Katie's role also includes helping newcomer families and screening newcomer students. On top of that, Katie was the only ESL resource teacher in the district, which made her workload too large to meet everyone's needs. She shared her perspective on the issue:

> If they really wanted the teachers to feel- the ones that got their endorsements to feel like they're supported, I feel like they would have had an ESL specialist at each school. You know, like, it jumped from two ESL resource teachers at every school down to one, to me, this year, and then well, there hasn't been that much support provided. And I feel like that. I mean, that's where, and that's what I've been asking for all year. And the director of EL services has also been an advocate for me and, you know, the superintendent, and having more staff but that hasn't really been heard. (Katie, ESL resource teacher)

Katie based her criticism of the implementation of this policy on the need for more support for teachers who recently got their endorsements. She was aware that more than one person in her role was needed, for herself and for the other teachers who are looking for guidance. According to her words, those needs were known by the district leaders, but they have not been able to hire an additional ESL resource teacher to share responsibilities with Katie.

In the case of this district's ESL endorsement requirement implementation, teachers' sensemaking process was influenced by their favorable disposition toward

serving all students, especially in their linguistically diverse context. However, practical issues of lack of support personnel were also significant in shaping teachers' negative reactions to the policy. As policy implementers, teachers are highly sensitive to policy aspects that may affect their capacity to do their job confidently. They need to feel supported by district leaders if they are asked to modify their job responsibilities, even when they may align with the overall policy goals. Again, collective sensemaking that included teachers and administrators could have helped teachers feel their voices were being heard and may have helped appease their concerns.

Discussion and Implications

This study focuses on policy reform and sensemaking in a small school district in Illinois that implemented a district-wide ESL endorsement requirement. By analyzing interviews with educators in different roles related to working with EL students and documents used during the policy creation process, I investigated the policy goals that led the district to create and implement the ESL endorsement requirement and how educators made sense of this policy. In doing so, I developed an understanding of the relevance of sharing policy goals and making spaces for collective sensemaking in policy reform.

When analyzing the policy process, it is important to understand the policy goals that lead to policymaking. From Stone's (2012) perspective, policy problems start with the discrepancy between policy goals and reality and are solved by looking for solutions to these problems. In this case, district leaders became aware that, by pulling out ELs for ESL instruction, students were losing valuable content instruction and opportunities to share with their peers. This reality conflicted with the goals of equity and welfare of the

district, which motivated leaders to revise the EL program. The policy goals of equity and welfare for EL students were prioritized by the district because district leaders had previous knowledge and expertise in EL education. This background made them more attuned to the needs of this group of students and helped them identify the problem.

Leaders with knowledge and expertise in EL education were key in originating and creating the policy. As Spillane et al. (2002a) stated, leaders shape collective sensemaking influenced by their understanding of the subject matter and the realities of schools. In this school district, identifying issues of equity and welfare as the goals of reform allowed leaders to build support for redesigning the EL program. In the interviews, educators with different roles shared these goals of equity and welfare for EL students, indicating that collective sensemaking processes have led the community to feel responsible for the academic success of EL students.

While leaders initiated the policy process, they also sought to engage in collective policymaking by working with a team of educators in different roles. By doing so, district leaders recognized the collective nature of sensemaking based on social interaction and negotiation (Coburn, 2005). However, some educators felt that the director of EL services, as leader of the learning team, heavily influenced the development of materials revised by the learning team and that district leaders had an idea of what they wanted to do before launching the learning team. The learning team leader took her role as described by Coburn (2005), who explained that leaders influence sensemaking by shaping access to policy messages and influencing the direction of the conversation. In this policy creation process, different understandings of what it meant to be a part of the

learning team made some members feel they were not equal members of the collective sensemaking process.

District leaders considered teachers' needs in the policy design. As a policy mechanism (Stone, 2012), district leaders created incentives for teachers to get the ESL endorsement through positive inducements of securing their financial welfare and job security. Nevertheless, some teachers perceived the policy as a mandate limiting their freedom to choose if they wanted to teach EL students. Teachers consider their multiple professional demands when making sense of new policy (Allen & Penuel, 2015; Marshall et al., 2021), and for some, adding more professional obligations may have weighed more on how they made sense of the policy than the district's messages of how it would benefit them. Although those creating the policy intended to leverage one policy mechanism, an incentive, those impacted by the policy experienced it as a different mechanism, a mandate. More spaces for collective sensemaking could have helped clarify leaders' intentions while addressing teachers' worries about their increased workload.

Additionally, teachers made sense of the policy in different, almost opposite ways, which cements the idea that sensemaking is influenced by patterns of social interaction with colleagues and conditions for conversation in formal and informal settings (Coburn, 2001). In this case, leaders communicated the new endorsement requirement in a unified way, but the sensemaking happened in smaller communities that may not have similarly interpreted the district's intentions. While having diverse interpretations of the policy is a normal part of teachers' sensemaking processes, leaders play a role in helping teachers

navigate those differing perspectives to solve the issues that may arise due to those inconsistencies (Coburn, 2005; Ganon-Shilon & Schechter, 2017).

Policy implementation also influenced teachers' sensemaking processes. As the policy was unrolled, teachers considered that there was insufficient support for those who had recently gotten their ESL endorsement, which affected their confidence in being able to educate all their students successfully. The district risked teachers' alignment with the district goals by not hiring enough personnel to help teachers put into practice what they learned in their endorsement coursework, which was originally contemplated in the design of the policy. As an implication for policy, these findings indicate that not implementing a seemingly small part of the policy can greatly impact teachers' sensemaking and willingness to enact the policy. School districts should be very observant of the role that each element of the policy plays in its success.

Another implication of this study is the relevance of district leaders' considering teachers' needs in policy creation processes and centering their voices. In this case, district leaders took into account teachers in the policy creation process and decided to incentivize them based on economic welfare and job security. However, some teachers were also worried about taking on the responsibility of teaching EL students right after getting their ESL endorsement when they did not feel competent yet to do so. Teachers' feelings toward their teaching practice were key to how they regarded the policy. As Schmidt and Datnow (2005) described, when making sense of policy connected to teachers' classroom practice, emotions play an important role in their sensemaking. If teachers had a more central role in the policy creation process, the district could have

realized how important it was to support teachers during policy implementation when they needed guidance on applying the knowledge gained in their ESL endorsement coursework.

While offering insights into district policy reform and educators' sensemaking, this study has some limitations that are important to keep in mind when interpreting findings. One of them is the number and role of educators interviewed. Although an effort was made to invite educators with different roles to participate in the study, those who accepted the invitation reflected most, but not all, positions. It would have been beneficial to have interviewed more teachers, especially those who were part of the learning team and others who had recently gotten their ESL endorsement, to have a more comprehensive view of teachers' sensemaking processes. A follow-up study could illuminate those aspects and describe how educators' sensemaking has evolved as policy implementation has unfolded.

Furthermore, having access to educators at different times of the policy process would have been beneficial in understanding how their sensemaking processes occurred. It is possible that educators' views on the ESL endorsement requirement changed from the creation phase to after its implementation. Although I was able to analyze documents produced during the policy creation phase, it is possible that participants' retrospective views of the process led to different understandings about the initial goal-setting stage of the process. Future studies may follow the process more closely and from the start to help document the sensemaking processes as they occur, individually or collectively.

As a case study of the policy process, this is situated in a particular context at a particular time. Future work could document similar initiatives in additional school districts to investigate if the themes that surfaced in this study are similar or different in other cases. Analyzing other cases of districts implementing ESL endorsement requirements could lead to a better understanding of the factors that led to a successful policy process.

In this paper, I studied one school district policy process requiring an ESL endorsement for all teachers to better serve their EL population. The district was guided by the policy goals of equity and welfare for EL students and considered teachers' job security and economic welfare. However, because of the shared policy goals, district leaders did not attend as much as they could have to educators' collective sensemaking. This need for further collective sensemaking led to a mismatch in interpreting the mechanisms built into the policy. Some teachers viewed what was supposed to be an incentive as a mandate. Although this led to some resistance from teachers, the ultimate implementation was successful in moving the district toward addressing the policy goals as they were shared by the whole community. This study adds to the literature by highlighting how opportunities for collective sensemaking are key to the success of policy reform.

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IV. Paper 3. Educators' Attitudes and Beliefs Toward Immigrant-Origin Students and Families in Two School Districts with Different Contexts of Reception

Abstract

For immigrant-origin students and families, schools are crucial contexts of reception (CORs) that greatly impact their immigration experiences. Educators, because they are in regular contact with immigrant youth and their families, can be considered as "human contexts of reception" (Dabach, 2011) and play a key role in the educational trajectory of this group of students. In this comparative case study, I used qualitative interviews with educators in various roles in two school districts with distinct CORs in Illinois and Texas to explore their attitudes and beliefs toward immigrant-origin students and families. Findings indicate that teachers and administrators working in two districts with different CORs (regarding location, students' origin, languages, religion, and educators' demographics) have similar positive perspectives regarding immigrant-origin students and families' dispositions toward school, assets, and needs. In both districts, educators with knowledge about working in contexts of immigration and those with personal experiences with the topic held positive attitudes and beliefs toward immigrant-origin students and families. Educators, as key components of the context where immigrants arrive, can help create welcoming environments when they are aware of the local, state, and national features of the COR. This study has implications both for teacher education and for district policy.

Keywords: context of reception, educators' attitudes, educators' beliefs, immigrant-origin students, immigrant-origin students

As the immigrant-origin population in the US continues growing, researchers have focused on understanding the role of educational institutions in integrating immigrant-origin children and families into their host communities. In 2019, 26% of children under 18 lived with at least one immigrant parent (Esterline & Batalova, 2022), an increase of 7% since 2000. That means that about a quarter of children of school age have experienced the challenges of immigrating themselves or through their parents.

Prior literature on the contexts of reception (COR) (Portes & Rumbaut, 2014) has focused on the characteristics of host communities that shape immigrants' experiences, including economic, social, political, and legal aspects (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006). For immigrant-origin youth and their families, schools are important contexts of reception (COR) that impact their educational trajectories and outcomes in either positive or negative ways (Adai, 2016; Dabach, 2014; Thomson et al., 2020). In the school context, research has referred to educators, the people who are frequently in context with immigrant students and families, as "human contexts of reception" (Dabach, 2011). How educators think and act toward immigrant-origin students and families is a central aspect of their educational path and how welcome they feel in schools.

Research on the relationship between immigrant-origin students and families with adults in schools has described the influence of educators on how those students feel at school. Researchers have found that immigrant-origin students, especially first-generation immigrants, attach great importance to their relationship with teachers (den Brok et al., 2010; Peguero & Bondy, 2011). For immigrant students, teachers can offer protection and

support, but adults in school can also be a source of indifference and cultural insensitivity, as Suárez-Orozco et al. (2009) described in their work with newcomer immigrant youth.

Educators can foster or hinder the development of a sense of belonging in school for immigrant-origin students those students (Brezicha & Miranda, 2022; Lowenhaupt et al., 2021). Chiu et al. (2012) found that immigrant students felt less sense of belonging than native students, but teachers were key in helping them increase that sense of belonging. Student engagement is another area in which educators play an essential role. In their work with Latin American immigrant students, Green et al. (2008) found that student engagement was linked to the support students perceived from adults in school and that positive relationships can help immigrant students in their academic adjustment to school.

For immigrant-origin families, how they engage with school often differs from how schools in the context of reception expect from families, which is sometimes interpreted in schools as a lack of engagement from immigrant parents (De Gaetano, 2007; Walker et al., 2011). However, involvement with school is key to children's well-being and overall academic performance, including academic achievement, school attendance, and motivation (Fan & Chen, 2001; Wilder, 2014). Studying how educators perceive immigrant-origin families can help understand how they support those families and what are some of the specific strategies they have developed in their practices to engage them.

In this study, I analyze qualitative data from two immigrant-serving school districts with different contexts of reception. In addition to distinctions in geography and institutions, the educators themselves differ in significant ways that allow for interesting comparisons. The first district is located on the U.S.-Mexico border, where educators and students share similar ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, as well as experiences of immigration. The second is in a highly diverse suburban area in Illinois, where immigrant-origin students come from various countries, but educators do not necessarily share the same background, and few have their own personal immigration experiences.

Considering the diversity of these contexts of reception, for this paper, I interviewed educators who have roles related to serving immigrant-origin students and families to address the following research questions: What are the features of the context of reception that those educators consider relevant to characterize the district where they work? What are educators' attitudes and beliefs about immigrant-origin students and their families regarding who they are, their dispositions toward school, their needs, and their assets?

This paper aims to understand the relationship between the features of the CORs and the attitudes and beliefs that educators working in those contexts develop. Moreover, this study intends to bridge the literature on educators' beliefs and attitudes with that of educators as human CORs.

Educators' Attitudes and Beliefs Toward Immigrant-Origin Students and Families:

A Review of the Literature

In this section, I review the literature on teachers' attitudes toward students and their families, specifically those of immigrant origin. First, I define what we understand as attitudes and beliefs and why it is important to study those of teachers and other educators. Secondly, I go through the current literature on teachers' attitudes and beliefs toward students, which has been focused on those who are linguistically diverse or classified as English Learners (ELs). Lastly, I review the literature on educators and their views on immigrant-origin families. By putting together those bodies of literature, it is possible to situate this study on the current literature and identify its contribution.

Teachers' Attitudes and Beliefs

The attitudes that teachers have toward their students have been studied in connection with the impacts that they have on instructional practices and, ultimately, students' academic achievement (Flores & Smith, 2009; Polat & Mahalingappa, 2013). Teachers with negative attitudes about their students can adversely affect their learning (Youngs & Youngs, 2001). Literature has described how teachers who hold deficit thinking toward their students from historically oppressed groups attribute students' challenges in education to individual, familial, or community characteristics (Patton Davis & Museus, 2019; Valencia, 1997, 2010). Those teachers underscore the role of large systems of oppression in the difficulties that put students and their families at a disadvantage in school (Patton Davis & Museus, 2019). By holding those deficit views, teachers may have lower expectations of students from historically disadvantaged

populations (Bruton & Robles-Piña, 2009), which can predispose students to feel disengaged in school (Barajas-López, 2014).

In terms of what is understood as teachers' attitudes, this body of literature is intimately linked with that of beliefs (Flores & Smith, 2009). Some researchers have used both terms interchangeably (Pettit, 2011) or have even decided to operationalize a composite of both (see Flores & Smith, 2009, use of attitudinal beliefs). Related studies have also been conducted using the concepts of teachers' views, perspectives, and perceptions (Flores & Smith, 2009). Although most of the work on teachers' attitudes does not necessarily define the concept, some researchers have offered insights into what can be considered attitudes, especially to differentiate it from beliefs. For example, Richardson (1996) offers a helpful way to separate both concepts, in which attitudes are affective while beliefs are cognitive. For the purpose of this study, the differentiation between attitudes and beliefs is not as relevant, given that both "learned predispositions to respond to an object in a favorable or unfavorable way" (Richardson, 1996) and propositions accepted as true by the individual holding the belief (Richardson, 1996) are included in the analysis. In the design of the present study both attitudes and beliefs are useful for examining how educators view immigrant-origin students and families.

Teachers' Attitudes Toward Linguistically Diverse Students

Even though researchers have investigated teachers' predisposition toward diverse students in terms of language, culture, race, and dis/ability, teachers' attitudes toward immigrant-origin students have not been a well-developed topic of study (Vigren et al., 2022). Most studies that involve students from immigrant backgrounds are focused on

linguistic or cultural diversity. A prolific topic in the literature has been how teachers'
attitudes and beliefs affect English Learners. Studies in this area have shown that teachers
hold complex attitudes and beliefs toward linguistically diverse learners.

In a literature review on teachers' beliefs about ELs in mainstream classrooms,
Pettit (2011) found that "teachers hold many misconceptions about second language
learning, bilingualism, and the role of the ESOL teacher" (p. 132). Those misconceptions
included that students should be fluent in English in one or two years and that using the
first language interferes with second language acquisition, both at home and in the
classroom (Pettit, 2011). Additionally, according to research, teachers held mostly
negative beliefs about ELs' academic ability and potential (Lucas et al., 2004). Also,
mainstream teachers have concerns about the difficulties of including ELs in mainstream
classrooms (Pettit, 2011; Polat & Mahalingappa, 2013). Furthermore, researchers have
found that teachers are mostly welcoming to ELs and hold positive attitudes toward their
inclusion in mainstream classrooms; however, they were apprehensive about including
ELs in their own classrooms (Lucas et al., 2004; Reeves, 2006).

Concerning the variables associated with teachers' beliefs about English
Language Learners (ELLs), Lucas et al. (2004) conducted a literature review where they
identified that positive beliefs about ELLs were connected with: (a) experience with
diversity and/or ELLs inside and outside school; (b) teacher preparation related to
working with ELLs or having studied foreign languages or taken courses about
multicultural education; (c) background factors such as teachers' language, ethnicity, and
gender; and (d) contextual factors such as school culture, exposure to linguistic diversity,

discourse of administrators, and history, nature, and size of immigrant populations. For instance, Walker et al. (2004) found that teachers' attitudes generally varied according to contextual variables that affected their working conditions, such as lack of training, too many work-related responsibilities, negative administrator attitudes, and misinformation about EL education.

More specifically related to educators working with immigrant-origin students, the literature suggests that teachers' attitudes make a difference in the educational trajectories of those students (Blanchard & Muller, 2015; Dabach et al., 2018a; Dabach et al., 2018b). This paper aims to contribute to this growing body of research by focusing on educators' attitudes and beliefs toward the group of immigrant-origin students and families instead of the most often researched category of EL students.

Educators' Attitudes Toward Immigrant-Origin Families

Although there is not much research on educators' attitudes and beliefs about immigrant-origin families (Soutullo et al., 2016), the literature on family engagement offers a good perspective on the relationship between immigrant-origin families and schools. Researchers have focused on family engagement because it has been associated with students' socioemotional and academic outcomes, including academic achievement, school attendance, and motivation (Fan & Chen, 2001; McWayne et al., 2013; Wilder, 2014).

Research on family engagement has described a disconnect between US schools' expectations and those of immigrant-origin families regarding family engagement. US schools expect parents to be involved in school-based activities, such as attending parent-

teacher conferences and workshops, volunteering, as well as supporting their children at home (Epstein, 1995; Hutsinger & Jose, 2009). In contrast, for many immigrant parents, home-based engagement is how they participate in the education of their children (McWayne et al., 2013).

In many cases, immigrant parents must work long hours, which limits their capacity to attend school functions (Georgis et al., 2014). Besides, parents whose first language is not English may feel self-conscious about communicating with teachers and administrators (Georgis et al., 2014; Turney & Kao, 2009). Moreover, families may believe that making suggestions or interfering with the work of school is disrespectful (González et al., 2013; Walker et al., 2011). These discontinuities can cause some educators to believe that immigrant parents do not care for their children's education (De Gaetano, 2007; Mena, 2011; Walker et al., 2011).

This study aims to bridge the literature on educators' attitudes and beliefs and that of family engagement to further understand how educators perceive the involvement of immigrant-origin parents in schools. Teachers' and educators' beliefs about immigrant-origin families are central to the practices they implement to communicate with and support those families.

Theoretical Framework: Contexts of Reception

Researchers who have studied the experiences of integration of immigrant-origin students and their families have pointed out the importance of considering the "contexts of reception" (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006, 2014) of their arrival. The concept has emphasized "how the structural and cultural features of the specific contexts that

immigrants enter influence their experiences and opportunities for mobility, above and beyond the role played by their own individual characteristics or motivations" (Marrow, 2011, p. 9). Research on COR has studied the economic, social, political, and legal characteristics of host communities that shape the experiences of immigrants (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006).

Recently, Golash-Boza and Valdez (2018) introduced the concept of "nested contexts of reception" to highlight how policies at the local, state, and national levels affect the educational experiences of immigrants in uneven ways. At the state level, the resources offered to immigrant-origin students and families differ between those states that are traditional immigration destinations and new immigration destinations (Hopkins et al., 2015; Mangual Figueroa, 2013). At the school level, policies and practices shape immigrant-origin students' educational environments (Thompson et al., 2020).

At the more individual level, scholars have focused on what Dabach (2011) calls the "human contexts of reception," that is, those who regularly come into contact with immigrants. For immigrant-origin students, educators are crucial in shaping contexts of reception that could be positive or damaging for them and their educational trajectories (Adai, 2016; Dabach et al., 2018a; Dabach et al., 2018b; Golash-Boza & Valdez, 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2022).

This body of literature intends to understand how educators shape immigrant-origin students' sense of belonging in school by enacting practices that support or undermine students' "feelings of comfort, welcome, and safety" (Lowenhaupt et al., 2021) in educational spaces (Dabach et al., 2018b; DeNicolo et al., 2017; Jeffe-Walter &

Lee, 2018). In this study, I add to the literature on educators as contexts of reception by connecting the research on educators' practices to support immigrant-origin students to the understanding of teachers' attitudes toward those students that influence their practices.

Methods

Study Context and Participants

This work was developed as part of the PIECE project[4]. For the purposes of this paper, I analyzed interview data from two school districts to conduct a comparative analysis (Gibbs, 2007). One district is located in a small Texas city near Mexico's border. Histories of movement within this border space are common for students and educators. Educators and students, in their majority, share ethnic backgrounds, and English/Spanish bilingualism is the norm. The second is a highly culturally and linguistically diverse school district in Illinois. There, immigrant-origin students come from diverse ethnic, linguistic, and religious backgrounds. Educators do not share the same level of diversity, although according to the district leaders, they are working hard to hire educators whose backgrounds resemble those of their students.

In Table 4, there is more information about both districts regarding location, size, demographics of immigrant-origin students, and programs offered to support multilingual learners.

Table 4

Districts Description

District State	Texas	Illinois
Locale	Small town near city	Small suburb
Approximate student enrollment in 2023	6200	1700
Teacher/student ratio	15:1	15:1
Demographics of immigrant-origin students	Primarily Spanish-speaking	Heterogeneous
% of ELs	31%	30%
Programs offered to ELs	Dual language bilingual education, ESL	ESL, bilingual education

In Spring 2022, I traveled to both school districts to collect data. In both places, my visit was organized by our district partners, who coordinated interviews with teachers and administrators with roles related to working with immigrant-origin students and their families. In the Texas district, the study participants consisted of twelve educators. The group includes a district-level administrator, four school-level administrators, and seven dual-language teachers. In the Illinois district, eleven educators were part of the study. Five are district-level administrators (among them the superintendent and the director of EL services), three are school administrators, and three are teachers. In Appendix G, there is more detailed information about the participants, including their roles, their professional experience in the district, and their race and/or ethnicity.

Data Collection

In Texas, I held 11 semi-structured interviews with 12 educators (see Appendix A for the interview protocols). I conducted all the interviews over three days in three elementary schools and the district's central office. In Illinois, I interviewed 11 educators in the span of four days in the district's central office, in three elementary schools and one middle school. In both places, I used the same interview protocol. The interviews were conducted in classrooms, offices, and meeting rooms that were made available to us. Interviews were conducted in English, with the exception of one from the Texas district, which was conducted in Spanish at the choice of the educator. The interviews were audio recorded and later transcribed.

Each day, when my visit to the district ended, I wrote field notes (Emerson et al., 2011) to preserve important information about the context of the interviews and interactions with the participants. I registered my first impressions as a researcher about recurring topics discussed and relevant issues regarding my research interests.

Data Analysis

To analyze the data, I conducted a comparative analysis (Gibbs, 2007). The goal of this analysis was to compare the attitudes and beliefs of educators in each district regarding their immigrant-origin students and to identify the features of each context of reception that may affect those differences.

As a first step in the analysis, I conducted a first cycle of coding for each district using Values Coding (Miles et al., 2014), which allowed me to identify values, attitudes, and beliefs that participants had toward their immigrant-origin students. In this cycle, I

also coded for the context of reception to identify how educators discursively built the context in which immigrants are received and what are the characteristics of this context according to them. In the coding process, I was open to the emergence of sub-codes that relate to specific aspects of the values codes that helped enrich my understanding.

Afterward, in a second coding cycle, I generated Pattern Codes (Miles et al., 2014) to summarize and systematize the codes generated in the first cycle. In each coding cycle, I wrote analytic memos (Miles et al., 2014) that helped document my thinking process and drive my future analytic decisions. In the process of writing the analytic memos, I went back to my field notes to secure the consistency between my first impressions in the field and the later analysis.

As a next step, I conducted a comparative analysis (Gibbs, 2007) of both school districts relative to the educators' attitudes and beliefs and the context of reception of each case. To carry out the comparison, I created a table in which I located the codes and subcodes I identified in the previous phase of the analysis, one for the attitudes and beliefs and one for the context of reception. Using those tables, I was able to make a comparison of both cases (the table with the comparison can be found in Appendix H). By comparing two school districts with similar commitments to supporting immigrant-origin students but operating in different contexts of reception, this study will add to the growing literature on educators' attitudes toward immigrant-origin students, as well as the literature on contexts of reception.

Building the Context of Reception from Educators' Words

The school districts in this study were chosen by their unique characteristics, some described in the methods section. The school district in Illinois and the one in Texas are both places where immigrant communities have been established for a long time, but they differ in who is part of those immigrant communities and how schools act as contexts of reception. In this section, I portray how each site is built as a context of reception by educators. To achieve this goal, I identified two main aspects of context that educators in roles related to working with immigrant-origin students considered relevant to describe the context of reception: the demographic features of the community and the school and district characteristics that they felt facilitated or hindered the integration of immigrant-origin students and their families.

Demographic Features of the Community

In the Illinois district, educators described the community as a very diverse place. They portrayed the area where the district is in terms of the origin of its inhabitants, their racial/ethnic background, the languages they speak, and their religion. John, a district-level administrator, gave a broad characterization of the community:

> We have 65 languages. It's Jewish, it's Christian, it's Muslim. […] There's just such a rich amount of diversity here, and there's no dominant population. I think the white population's maybe 35, 38 percent, somewhere around there. (John, district-level administrator, IL)

According to him, the high racial, ethnic, and religious diversity, along with not having a dominant group in the district, makes this community different from other

immigrant-receiving places with a high concentration of people of few origins. Educators highlighted this fact as a source of opportunities and challenges in their work.

Educators in the district depicted the community as historically immigrant, although the groups have changed through the years. As they mentioned, this has been possible because Illinois is a sanctuary state for undocumented individuals, which made it easier for people of different origins to settle in this place. Although newcomers have traditionally settled in this town, the social and political context of the Trump administration and the COVID pandemic created a context where no newcomers arrived for some years. However, the context changed abruptly post-pandemic, and educators described how they are back to receiving newcomer students, as a district-level administrator shared: "This influx of newcomer students and immigrant students is happening because of what's going on in Ukraine and Afghanistan. A lot of our kiddos are coming from Afghanistan and some from Russia" (Patricia, district-level administrator, IL).

In contrast to the district in Illinois, educators in the Texas district described it as a much more homogenous place regarding the origin of immigrants, language, and culture. The geographic location of the district is the main reason for the social makeup of the community. The principal of one of the elementary schools put it concisely: "Immigrant students usually, in our case, our Spanish-speaking students are usually coming from Mexico. We are a border town, so the diversity is not—it's really Spanish." (Lilly, principal, TX).

The district's location on the border with Mexico impacts the characteristics of this community. One of the main elements is that it creates a context where immigration is the norm and not the exception. Educators explained that being of immigrant origin was shared by almost everyone: "Well, because of the area we're in, the majority are either immigrants or children of immigrants. I don't think I've ever worked with somebody who has not been an immigrant or whose language has not been Spanish" (Margarita, dual language teacher, TX). In this area, being of immigrant origin is not seen as being an "other," as someone external that comes to this place; instead, it is conceived as part of the natural transit between the borders. This continuous transit is something that is even done daily by some individuals, as one teacher shared:

> I know that a lot of our students come from [Mexican city], so they cross the bridge every single day, and they have to be in the bridge by 5:00 in the morning in order to be here on time because the lines are so long. (Inés, dual language teacher, TX)

As educators shared, in this area, families do not necessarily migrate to the US once and for all, but they do it in ways that make sense to their individual circumstances. For this reason, there are families who are second or third-generation immigrants; there are newcomers, migrants, and undocumented families, too. Lastly, while the large majority of immigrant-origin people come from Mexico and are Spanish-speaking, educators mentioned that there is also a smaller number of immigrants coming from other countries and who speak languages other than English or Spanish.

District and Schools Characteristics

Educators described their districts as contexts of reception for immigrant-origin families by referring to elements that made their district distinct. In the Illinois district, educators mentioned several programs designed to support immigrant-origin students and families. Regarding language support for students classified as English Learners, the district recently redesigned its EL program with the intention of having all their teachers ESL endorsed. Additionally, the district, following the Illinois law, implemented bilingual programs for students who speak the two major languages as a heritage language. A district-level administrator explained: "Then, in Illinois, once you cross a threshold of 20, you are mandated to provide bilingual instruction. First, we started with [language 1]. Then we started with [language 2] at one building. Then that morphed into [language 2] at a second building." (Angela, district-level administrator, IL). Even if the district has no majority groups, those two languages had enough speakers to grant the development of bilingual programs for them. According to educators in the district, other languages are close to the number necessary for creating those programs, but they have not yet reached those numbers.

Considering the broader community also supports new immigrants, the district recently created a newcomer program to support students and families. According to educators, this program consists of a summer program to help students and families understand and get acclimated to the US school system, US culture, and the community, as well as language and social support during the school year.

Specifically for families, the district recently created a role to assist families that are typically underrepresented and underserved. While this role was not designed only to serve immigrant-origin families, many have access to services through Helena, the program coordinator. Moreover, educators in the district emphasized the relevance of a parent center for EL parents. Regarding the center, its director shared: "My role is to make sure that the families of all ELL students […] are supported in every possible way, which in turn influences the positive progress of the students in the schools" (Fatima, district-level administrator, IL). Another way the district supports immigrant-origin families is by sending all district communications with a link so that the recipients can get a translated version of the text in the language of their choice. By having these programs, the district aims to be a favorable context of reception for immigrant-origin students and their families, where diversity is not an obstacle to building a relationship between the school and families.

In the Texas district, educators also described several programs designed to support immigrant-origin students and families. Regarding language support for students, the district offered English/Spanish dual language education at the elementary level, which is understandable given the social and linguistic features of the community. As a district-level administrator whose role is directly connected to the dual language program explained, "We follow a 50/50 model where students receive 50 percent of instruction in English, 50 percent of the instruction in Spanish. That translates to one day English, one day Spanish" (Nina, district-level administrator, TX). Dual language education existed in the district only during elementary school, and starting from middle school, instruction

was only in English, which did not sit well with some educators who considered the development of academic Spanish as key. Involving communication with families, the district sent information in English and Spanish, considering that those are the languages spoken in the community. Regarding access to resources in Spanish, educators mentioned being in a favorable position due to their geographic location, as explained by an elementary school principal:

> I believe we have more support and resources like textbooks and things in both languages all the way up to fifth grade, at least than in any other state. Of course, we're the larger state that has the border with Mexico. That could be one of the reasons that we have more support in Spanish than other states in the nation."
> (Rosa, principal, TX)

According to educators, another way the district supported immigrant-origin students and families was by identifying them in its system. Previously, educators only knew if students were immigrants when families shared that information with them directly. The current system allows educators to be aware of the needs of immigrant students. An elementary school principal described further:

> This is what this coding is for, to kind of start thinking what support can I give to that family? Is there anything that I need to do? Are there any extra programs I can offer? Can I do maybe a lesson that's going to connect where the child is from? (Jennifer, principal, TX).

For those families identified as immigrants or children identified as English Learners, the district had Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) aides at each campus who do home visits to support families of students who are not doing well and congratulate students who have reached academic or social milestones. In addition, high school students had mentors who had a relationship with them and were able to identify their needs and find ways to fulfill those.

Educators' Demographics

Educators in the district also described the context of reception regarding how their identities compare with the characteristics of students and their families. In the Illinois district, in contrast with the diversity used to describe the community, the staff is not particularly diverse. Most educators were described as white and from non-immigrant backgrounds, as illustrated by the words of the middle school principal: "It's not lost on me that the lived experience that kids have and the lived experience that most of the adults in this school have, do not match and that, that's problematic." (Tim, principal, IL). District leaders mentioned that the district is trying to hire more diverse educators. They realized the key role that educators with experiences of multilingualism and multiculturality play in helping students feel welcome in school. Educators from immigrant backgrounds affirmed that their identity influences their work. For instance, Maddie, one of the district EL Resource Teachers, shared: "Growing up as a second-generation [redacted for confidentiality], I feel like I identify a lot with my students. That's also something else that has inspired me to be in this role" (Maddie, EL Resource Teacher, IL).

In the Texas school district, educators' identities resemble those of their students. All educators I interviewed were of Mexican descent and Spanish speakers. Serving a community they strongly identify with was very important to educators, as reflected in the words of an assistant principal: "I think what motivates me to do this job is that I was in the same position that they were. I want to make sure that our students don't lose their first language the way I did" (Pilar, assistant principal, TX). Having a shared home language with families added to a context of reception where there is vast support for bilingual education because educators know by experience the importance of maintaining the home language. Educators in the district also realized that their shared identities with families helped them connect with them in terms of culture and experiences. In the words of a dual language teacher:

> Yeah, I think the advantage that we have here being on the border, is that the majority of teachers are immigrants themselves or come from immigrant families, so we know the culture. We can relate to the kids. We can relate to their families and the struggles they're going through. Also, that, I think, helps the parents to trust us because they know that we understand their children. (Margarita, dual language teacher, TX)

In this district, the shared identities of students and educators facilitate establishing support for immigrant-origin students and families. Because of educators' knowledge of the lived experiences of their students, they felt it was easier to connect with families and get them to open up about their needs and the difficulties of immigration.

Educators' Attitudes and Beliefs Toward Immigrant-Origin Students and Families

In this section, I compare the attitudes and beliefs that educators conveyed toward immigrant-origin students and their families in both districts. The comparison is structured according to the emerging topics identified in the interviews. Participants identified whom they considered immigrant-origin and which other groups they associated with immigrant-origin students and families. Educators also referred to their perspectives on immigrant-origin students and families' dispositions toward school, as well as their assets and needs. By analyzing educators' attitudes and beliefs toward immigrant-origin students and families, it is possible to understand the context of reception these educators create for recently arrived and more established families of immigrant origin.

Who are Considered Immigrant-origin Students and Families?

In both districts, there is a clear difference regarding how educators identify who is of immigrant origin. This distinction is closely connected to the characteristics of each context of reception, and it is relevant for this study because how educators identify who is of immigrant origin shapes how they think about supporting them.

In the Illinois district, immigrant-origin students and families are a much more distinct and recognizable group for teachers and administrators. Educators had a clear vision of whom they were discussing when talking about them. Probably because of the racial/ethnic difference between educators and students, the former had a very good idea of which students were of immigrant origin.

Educators associated the concept of immigrant origin with the categories of newcomers, English learners (and families having no English or very little), refugees, undocumented people, Hispanics/Latines, Muslims, second and third generation, and low-income families. Newcomers and English Learners were the groups mentioned more often in the interviews, probably because the district had recently created a newcomer program at a time, and they also reformulated their EL program in the last years. When educators talked about newcomers, they often discussed issues of language proficiency, as in this quote from the literacy specialist:

> This year, we started with having like a half-day newcomer program for our English language learners at the elementary level because we have received students coming with zero language. They are kind of proficient in their native language, but they're just newcomers. (Farah, school administrator, IL)

For educators in the district, it is very important to identify students and families with lower levels of English proficiency. There are so many languages represented in the district that offering language support and interpretation services is key to having a channel of communication with them; as a school principal described: "The languages are many. It's not like you could have a Pashto translator talk to all the parents when you're doing a presentation or something." (Tim, principal, IL).

In the Texas district, in comparison, educators have different perspectives of who is considered to be of immigrant origin. Because the community is located in a border area where most people share an ethnic background, some educators do not see their students as immigrant origin unless the school identifies them as such, while others

consider everyone in the community as coming from an immigrant origin. In the first group, there are educators like Paz, who only realized they had immigrant-origin students when the district introduced a code for them in the system: "My two students—if I had not seen them coded that way, I would have never known" (Paz, dual language teacher, TX). In contrast, educators like Edith had a very different perspective: "El 100 por ciento de los niños son de familias inmigrantes. Puede ser de primera generación, segunda o recién llegados de México" [100 percent of the children are from immigrant families. They can be first-generation, second-generation, or recent arrivals from Mexico] (Edith, dual language teacher, TX). In this sense, immigrant-origin students may fly under the radar for some educators because most students are of Mexican origin and have Spanish as their home language, independent of whether they recently arrived in the US or if their families have been in this country there for generations.

Educators in Texas associated some similar concepts to immigrant-origin students and families as their peers in Illinois: English Learners, undocumented individuals, low-income families, and second and third-generation immigrants were mentioned. Educators in this district, similarly to the ones in Illinois, usually associated immigrant-origin with English learners, because much of the support that immigrant-origin students receive is related to language, which is manifested in this quote: "I think our immigrant students are kind of blended, if you want to use that word, with our English learners" (Nina, district-level administrator, TX).

In addition, educators in the Texas district also connected immigrant-origin students with coming from Mexico, migrants, bilingual, and US-born children living

apart from their parents. Those last concepts are linked to the context of the border town where the district is located.

In short, who is considered of immigrant origin is different for educators in each district, and it depends on the location of the district, the origin of immigrant-origin families, and the identities of educators compared to those of students. Educators in both districts associate immigrants with institutionalized categories such as English learners and low-income. Those classifications are connected to the kinds of support most often offered by schools to immigrant-origin students and families.

Educators' Perceptions about Immigrant-origin Students' Dispositions Toward School

Educators in both districts had similar attitudes regarding the disposition of immigrant-origin students and families toward school. They held the belief that immigrant-origin families do not engage in schools as much as US schools expect from them. However, they were aware that families have several reasons for that. First, educators noted that schools in other countries do not have the same expectations from parents, especially regarding how active they are expected to be in schools. The principal of one of the elementary schools in Illinois shared her perspective:

> For example, in the time I was lucky enough to spend in [African country], families were hands-off. They sent the kids to school; you make that happen, and we'll be over here. We'll be happy when our educated children come back to us. But we have different expectations here in this country. We expect you to be involved. (Carol, principal, IL)

Educators recognized that immigrant-origin families might not be used to being involved in schools because they understood the roles of school and families as separate. Participants were also aware of all the issues that may keep immigrant-origin parents away from schools. A district-level administrator in the Texas district provided a comprehensive list of those reasons:

> Many times, I've heard teachers say they didn't come because they never cared. They've never showed up for the parent conference. Of course, you could see the parents like, "But we do care." I know you do, but the school system doesn't know that you have three jobs. The school system doesn't know that you're intimidated because you don't know the language. Maybe they're intimidated because they never went to school themselves, and they're afraid to come in and ask you. They're overwhelmed. (Nina, district-level administrator, TX)

In both school districts, educators understood that on top of time constraints, immigrant-origin families may feel inadequate when trying to communicate with teachers and administrators. They also mentioned that those parents may not even know that schools are places where much support can be offered. When people working in schools reached out and helped provide for families, educators shared that families "are very humble and modest and super appreciative of everything" (Helena, district-level administrator, IL).

Educators from the Texas district, in particular, emphasized that immigrant-origin students and families have a high regard for education, as one of the teachers further explained:

It's good to see that immigrant parents really care for their child's education because they know that they worked so hard, and once they get here, they're going to push them. They value it, and they make the child value it as well. Most of my A honor roll students are actually immigrants. (Inés, dual language teacher, TX)

Educators comprehended that even if families are not involved in schools in the traditional and expected way, that does not mean they do not attach importance to education and are not following their children's educational trajectory from their homes.

Another aspect of disposition toward school that educators discussed was families' beliefs regarding bilingual education. Educators in roles related to the dual language program in Texas and the Spanish resource teacher in the Illinois district perceived that some Spanish-speaking families were reluctant to enroll their children in bilingual education programs. Because those educators were part of the communities where those families come from, they comprehended the reasons for those reservations. The principal of an elementary school in Texas stated that "They [parents] want their children to speak English with native accents, to not be discriminated against like they were. It's easy to understand why they're thinking this way" (Lilly, principal, TX). In agreement with the principal, other educators also noticed how some students prefer English over Spanish, influenced by the cultural messages that position English as the language of success and belonging to the US.

In sum, educators in both districts shared attitudes toward immigrant-origin students and families' disposition toward school that consider the cultural perspectives of

those families and the material and practical reasons why they may not be involved in schools as expected in the US. Educators wanted immigrant parents to be more involved, not because they felt required to, but because they understood that schools in the US view the family/school relationship as a partnership.

Immigrant-origin Students and Families' Assets

Educators in both districts commented on what immigrant-origin students and families bring to schools. Although references to assets were not abundant, both groups focused on two kinds of assets: those related to their skills and those connected to their dispositions.

Participants from Texas and Illinois showed positive attitudes toward immigrant-origin students and families' language skills. Educators described how they talk to families to emphasize the importance of bilingualism and maintaining their home language. A positive view of the power of bilingualism is reflected in this quote from a dual-language teacher in Texas:

> I always teach the kinders, "You're doing everything twice. You're doing everything in two languages. The other kids only learn to read and write in English, but you're doing it in English and Spanish, so that's more books you can read, more people you can talk to." (Margarita, dual language teacher, TX)

In her words, Margarita showed a positive belief about emergent bilingual students. Instead of focusing on what they cannot do well, she centers their capacity to do all schoolwork in two languages, compared to monolingual students. This same attitude is

replicated in the educators from the Illinois district, who also commented on other valuable skills that immigrant-origin families brought with them. A district-level administrator who works with ELs parents focused on that group:

> So many immigrants, highly qualified immigrants, do not realize that their foreign credentials are very valued. They think that just because of a language barrier, that's nothing. "I'll have to go back and do the college," but that's not the case. Remember, it's just a language. It's not an entire qualification. (Fatima, district-level administrator, IL)

Because of her work with parents who are learning English, Fatima knows that immigrant-origin parents are often highly qualified and come to the US with knowledge and skills that are valued in the country. She gave more relevance to all that parents bring instead of focusing on the negative aspects of immigrating to a country where they have not yet mastered the language.

Apart from their language and work skills, educators in both districts showed positive attitudes toward immigrant-origin students and families' dispositions in schools. Educators described students as "hardworking," families as "appreciative," and, in general, spoke very well of how they conducted themselves and their disposition toward others. A good example of that is found in the words of a principal in Illinois who discussed bilingual students in her school: "They've been really helpful for welcoming newcomers, too" (Carol, principal, IL). Educators interviewed considered that immigrant-origin students and families arrive in the US with a positive approach, trying to improve their lives, appreciating the opportunities they have, and sharing what they have.

Immigrant-origin Students and Families' Needs

Educators in both districts extensively discussed what they perceived to be the needs of immigrant-origin students and families. The perception of those necessities is very similar for educators in the Texas and Illinois districts, and it mostly falls under the same three categories: language-related needs, basic needs, and socio-emotional needs.

Language-related needs. In Illinois and Texas, educators commented on the English language needs of immigrant-origin students and families and connected those needs with the district's programs. For students, Illinois participants alluded to the redesign of the EL program, with the newcomer programming and the ESL endorsement requirement for teachers, whereas educators from Texas referred to the district's dual language program. When discussing what students needed in terms of English language development, educators often focused on the support they had in place instead of centering the need as something negative. For example, one of the teachers in Texas explained:

> Well, we have the ELPS, the English Language Proficiency Standards. I go based off of that. I just see where the kids are and see how much support they need. Then from there, I just scaffold it. I think not only the ELPS but previous knowledge. (Paz, dual language teacher, TX)

Educators also considered families' language needs in their accounts. Participants had a positive attitude toward immigrant-origin families and considered that the district was key in facilitating communication with families. In this quote from a principal in

Illinois, it is possible to see how they conceived the interaction with families as a two-way:

> That translation piece is huge. We also contract with a service where you can call somebody on the phone and have whatever language translated. But there's a lot of gesturing and smiling and pointing. I'll break out my bad [language 1] and bad [language 3] and bad [language 4] just to be a model of, "It's not perfect, but we can still communicate even if we don't speak the same language all the time." But that's hard. (Carol, principal, IL)

Carol embodied an attitude of shared responsibility, which is reflected in the words of educators from both districts. Especially in the Illinois district, due to the language diversity, educators discussed all the district's systems to ensure communication with families. In the Texas district, because teachers and administrators could directly communicate with families in Spanish, the focus was more on offering parents ESL classes to support their English development.

Basic needs. Educators of both districts discussed the material needs of immigrant-origin students and families, which corresponds with the association that educators made between immigrant origin and low income. Participants had the belief that immigrant-origin families were more likely to need help with basic needs and assistance to understand how to access public benefits. Educators interviewed connected conversations around families' needs with the systems put into place by the districts to support families who have material needs. In the Illinois district, a district-level administrator who worked with families explained the scope of her recently created role:

That is also helping with very basic needs like housing and clothes and food. The job is not specifically for immigrant families, they just happen to represent most of the families that need help acclimating to the environment, that need the most help with financial assistance and housing, so it's not that I only serve them, but they represent a very big majority of who I serve here. (Helena, district-level administrator, IL)

Like Helena, educators in the Texas district also mentioned connecting immigrant-origin families with access to clothes and food and help covering bills, which was, in their case, connected to the role of parent liaison. Another issue that educators commented on was the lack of access to health-related services for immigrant-origin families, especially those with low-income and undocumented ones.

Educators from both districts did not judge families or take a paternalistic perspective toward their needs for essentials. Instead, they discussed how families had those needs, and the district created a way to take care of them. It is also important to mention that educators were aware that not all immigrant-origin families had those kinds of needs, and not all families with basic needs requirements are of immigrant origin.

Socio-emotional needs. Participants from both districts discussed the socio-emotional needs of immigrant-origin students and families. Regarding this topic, educators had attitudes that reflected an empathetic perspective on the challenges of immigration, focusing on the need to feel welcome in school. One dual language teacher from Texas illustrated this aspect:

I think it's very important for us to first address their emotional needs before even trying to teach them about a math problem. That's something that I've learned through my years of teaching. Is servicing that, their emotional needs, more than anything, so that they feel safe, so that they feel happy, so that they feel stable. When that is taken care of, then everything else can fall into place. (Marisol, dual language teacher, TX)

Marisol, like other educators in both districts, discussed how emotional distress affects students' learning process. Teachers and administrators mentioned issues like the trauma of families coming from war-stricken countries, having family members being deported, and fear of immigration enforcement raids as some of the factors affecting immigrant-origin children in schools. Participants' attitudes toward those socio-emotional needs came from a place of empathy and understanding of the relationship between emotions and cognition.

Regarding this need for safety, educators discussed how immigrant-origin families needed help with acclimating to the US culture, the US school system, and the community where they live. They also described families' need to keep their connection to their culture. Fatima, who works with EL parents in Illinois, explored this topic:

Connecting to someone that belongs to the same linguistic and cultural background is something huge. People have to understand that language and culture are very intertwined. […] Having someone to talk to within that same background can really be reassuring. (Fatima, district-level administrator, IL)

While educators understood the need to acclimate to the US, they were also aware of the importance of keeping one's culture and traditions. Educators interviewed described how both districts addressed this issue and found ways of connecting families.

In summary, educators interviewed had beliefs associated with considering immigrant-origin students and families as groups with a high level of needs in comparison to families who do not have this experience. However, in discussing those needs, teachers and administrators did not focus on those necessities as burdens for them or the district, but they framed them as part of the challenges of leaving behind one's country to integrate into a new one. Educators in both districts came from a place of understanding and compassion without being overprotective or erasing immigrant-origin families' autonomy. Regarding educators' identity, it did not seem to affect the capacity to be aware of immigrant-origin students' and families' needs. According to the interviews, all educators who had experience working with these families have developed an empathetic attitude toward them.

Discussion and Implications

In this paper, I studied the attitudes and beliefs of educators toward immigrant-origin students and families in two school districts with different contexts of reception. According to educators, the context of reception of the school district in Illinois had a very diverse student population regarding origin, languages, race and ethnicity, and religion, while educators did not reflect this diversity. In contrast, in the district in Texas, most educators and students shared identities of being of Mexican descent, speaking Spanish(?) and having a family history of immigration. However, in both districts,

schools had a series of programs to support their students and families in terms of language, material needs, and socio-emotional needs, which made them welcoming settings for immigrant-origin students and families.

Considering those contexts of reception, educators' attitudes and beliefs toward immigrant-origin students and families were surprisingly similar in both districts, with some differences related to their COR. Whereas in the Illinois district, educators easily recognized who was considered an immigrant, in the Texas district, some educators had inconsistent ideas about it. In both districts, educators held similar attitudes regarding immigrant-origin students and families' disposition toward school, what assets they bring to schools, and what their needs are. In general, educators had asset-based beliefs that reflected knowledge about the challenges of immigration, independent of whether the origin of this expertise was personal (as was the case of educators from Texas) or work-related experiences (as educators in Illinois).

Those findings suggest that educators in CORs favorable toward immigrant-origin students and families and who are experienced working with those populations share positive attitudes and beliefs toward immigrant-origin students and families, despite apparent differences in the COR regarding geographic location, characteristics of the immigrant population, and educators' identities. In the case of the educators interviewed for this study, the asset-based perspectives they shared were consistent with the research on students classified as English Learners and family engagement.

Literature has described that immigrant-origin families sometimes do not get involved in schools in the way that is expected in US schools for cultural and practical

reasons (De Gaetano, 2007; Mena, 2011; Walker et al., 2011). Educators in this study were aware of those reasons and understood that they needed to find ways to make families feel welcome in schools. For instance, educators discussed the importance of being able to communicate in the language of families. In the Texas district, this was not a problem because most educators spoke Spanish, the language spoken by immigrant-origin families. In the Illinois district, where more than 60 different languages were spoken, the district hired interpreters and bought translation software to ease communication with families. Research has described that immigrant-origin parents are often self-conscious about reaching teachers and administrators when they feel their level of English does not allow them to communicate as well as they wished (Georgis et al., 2014; Turney & Kao, 2009). Thus, the commitment to connect with families shown by educators in these school districts responds to one of the apprehensions that immigrant-origin families have when contacting schools.

One of the factors that may be playing a role in the asset-based perspective of educators interviewed for this study is the perspective of district leaders. In the review by Walker et al. (2014), leadership was found to be one of the contextual variables that affected teachers' attitudes. In the case of this study's districts, I interviewed educators in different leadership positions, such as a superintendent, both EL directors, some principals, and a vice principal. All of them had a clear perspective on how to make the district more welcoming to immigrant-origin students and families, and their leadership actions reflected this attention. For teachers, those leadership messages are key to

understanding what is expected of them in terms of their relationships with students and families.

Educators in this study exhibited the characteristics that have been described as associated with positive attitudes and beliefs toward ELs, such as having experience with diversity, having teacher preparation to work with those students, and having an identity that connects them to EL students (Youngs & Youngs, 2001; Lucas et al., 2014). For example, the Illinois district recently implemented a district-wide ESL requirement for educators in order to have all teachers prepared to work with linguistically diverse students. Findings from this paper suggest that those characteristics could also be associated with positive attitudes toward immigrant-origin students as a general group and not only toward those who speak English as a second language.

Furthermore, if we consider educators as "human contexts of reception" (Dabach, 2011), their attitudes and beliefs are an important part of the COR. This study aims to build on the literature of COR by trying to understand how educators view immigrant-origin students and families in connection to the wider context of reception. According to the findings, the district context seemed to have influenced the attitudes of educators toward immigrant-origin students and families; correspondingly, educators are the ones who generate the conditions that make a COR more accepting of immigrants.

Two implications for practice can be derived from this study in connection with the literature on educators' attitudes and beliefs. First, educators should develop more skills, knowledge, and dispositions to work with immigrant-origin students and families, which gives them more tools to understand possible cultural differences, manage the

misunderstandings that may arise, and build a welcoming community for everyone. Teacher preparation programs should integrate the development of multicultural competencies into their curriculum, and for teachers who are already in service, professional development that is relevant to their particular teaching context is needed.

As a second implication, it is essential to hire educators who resemble the student population. Although in this study, educators from the Illinois district who did not share identities and experiences with students were able to develop positive attitudes toward them, district leaders were aware that having staff that looked more like their students and families was one of the challenges that they were willing to take on to become an even more welcoming environment for immigrant-origin students and families.

There are some limitations to the findings that should be addressed. This study was conducted in only two school districts with a history of being immigrant-receiving contexts. Educators working in those districts count on support structures that have been built over decades and the experience of colleagues who have been working in the district for decades. In future research, it would be interesting to investigate educators' attitudes and beliefs about immigrant-origin students and families in new immigrant destinations where educators are recently finding out the best ways to work with immigrant-origin students and families.

Moreover, the participants of this study were educators whose roles are related to working with immigrant-origin students and families. Understanding how general education teachers view immigrant-origin students and families would be useful to understand better the context of reception that families face when arriving in the district.

Immigrant-origin students are often placed in general education classrooms with teachers who do not necessarily have the preparation or experience to work with immigrant populations. Previous research has shown that, in general, teachers held some negative beliefs about ELs (Lucas et al., 2004; Pettit, 2011). Future research could investigate if those negative beliefs also reach immigrant-origin students and families.

Conclusion

In this paper, I emphasized the relevance of positive educators' attitudes and beliefs in creating welcoming CORs for immigrant-origin students and families. Experience working with immigrant populations, personal familiarity with immigration, and leadership messages seemed to make educators more attuned to what immigrant-origin students and families go through in their everyday lives. By comparing two distinct contexts of reception, I was able to surface that educators are indeed a human context of reception, and the ones who are reaffirming for immigrant-origin students and families are the ones who are deeply aware if the factors that comprise the local, state, and national levels of context. Educators who have an asset-based perspective toward immigrants can make a big difference for students and families who experience the challenges of immigration, and examining their beliefs can help us understand how to prepare more teachers to be culturally relevant and sustaining.

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V. Conclusions

This section offers a discussion of the group of papers that comprise this dissertation. First, I return to each paper to review their main findings and takeaways. Next, I discuss the implications of this dissertation for language policy, district policy implementation, and district administration. Then, I reflect on the limitations of this dissertation. Last, I offer some final thoughts about the study.

Paper 1

The first paper is an interview study of teachers and administrators who worked in a dual language program in a Texas school district, close to the border with Mexico, where fluid language practices are prevalent. In this study, I explored the language ideologies of educators related to strict language separation in dual language classrooms. Findings revealed that educators held some language ideologies favoring language flexibility and others promoting strict language separation in DL classrooms. Those complex and nuanced language ideologies were informed by educators' knowledge of students and families served by the school district, the dynamic language practices of their community, the influence of professional development, and the requirements of district policy. This paper highlights the relevance of developing language policies consistent with the languaging practices of the communities served by schools to honor and value students' and educators' dynamic bilingualism.

Paper 2

The second paper is a qualitative case study of a culturally and linguistically diverse school district in Illinois that implemented a district-wide ESL endorsement

requirement. In this paper, I analyzed interviews of educators whose roles are related to working with EL students and district documentation generated in the policy creation process to understand the policy goals that guided the district to create this ESL endorsement requirement and how educators in roles related to working with EL students made sense of this policy. Findings indicate that equity and welfare for EL students were the main policy goals, greatly influenced by district leadership's previous experience and knowledge about EL education. The district leaders had teachers' job security and financial welfare in mind when creating the policy and intended those mechanisms to be a positive inducement. However, the need for further collective sensemaking led some teachers to interpret the policy as a mandate instead of an incentive. Ultimately, the policy implementation successfully moved the district toward addressing policy goals shared by the whole community. This study contributes to the literature by highlighting how opportunities for collective sensemaking with a focus on those who implement policy are key to the success of district policy reform.

Paper 3

The third paper is a comparative case study where I used qualitative interviews with educators in various roles in two school districts with distinct CORs in Illinois and Texas to explore their attitudes and beliefs toward immigrant-origin students and families. Findings indicate that educators working in two school districts with significant differences in CORs (in terms of location, students' origin, languages, and religion, as well as educators' demographics) have similar positive perspectives regarding immigrant-origin students and families' assets, needs, and dispositions toward school.

Experience working with immigrant populations, personal familiarity with immigration, and leadership messages seemed to make educators more attuned to what immigrant-origin students and families go through in their everyday lives. As key components of the context where immigrants arrive, educators can help create welcoming environments when they are aware of the local, state, and national features of the context of reception. This paper aims to understand the relationship between the features of the CORs and the attitudes and beliefs that educators working in those contexts develop. Educators are indeed a human context of reception, and the ones who are reaffirming for immigrant-origin students and families are the ones who are deeply aware of the factors that comprise the local, state, and national levels of context. This study intends to bridge the literature on educators' beliefs and attitudes with that of educators as human CORs.

Implications

Together, the three papers comprising this dissertation have implications for language policy, district policy implementation, and district administration. The findings of the first paper can help district policymakers make decisions about language policy in dual language classrooms. Although language separation is a feature of the model, how and when to include translanguaging needs to be a part of the district guidelines for teachers. As shown in the study, educators were open to respecting the languaging practices of their students in their classrooms, but they differed in how they conceived the role and extension that translanguaging should have in educational spaces. Clear guidelines could help teachers make decisions about how to include translanguaging with pedagogical purposes. As highlighted in this paper, district language policy concerning

language separation in DL classrooms should be responsive to the languaging practices of the community served by the district.

The second paper has implications for district policy implementation. In that study, I found that not having enough space for collective sensemaking negatively affected teachers' interpretation of the policy mechanisms built into a district policy that required them to get ESL endorsed. Those findings highlighted the importance of considering the collective nature of sensemaking for the success of district policy reform. Even in cases where the community shares policy goals, collective sensemaking is key, especially for teachers, who are the ones to implement policy.

Lastly, the third paper provides implications for district administration. The findings of this study indicated that educators with similar identities to those of immigrant students and families and those with experience working with immigrant populations had positive attitudes toward them. For example, in the Illinois district, educators with experience working with immigrant populations were also able to develop positive attitudes toward them, but district leaders were cognizant that having staff who resemble the student population was key to creating a welcoming environment for immigrant-origin students and families. District administrators should implement hiring practices that lead to increasing the number of educators who share identities with students and families, and those with adequate preparation for working with culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Directions for future research

Considering the first paper's findings, future research could further investigate the language ideologies of all kinds of educators, and not only teachers. Past research has focused mostly on teachers as the ones who put into practice those language ideologies in the classroom. However, this study revealed that educators in different roles in a dual language program held language ideologies that responded to their professional responsibilities. Future research could focus on the relationship between roles and language ideologies in other DLBE programs.

The findings of the second paper can direct future research into looking at how sensemaking processes occur in policy reform in school districts that implement ESL or similar endorsement requirements. Trends indicate that diversity in US schools will continue to grow; thus, it is expected that more school districts will require their staff to get training related to teaching students classified as English Learners. Researching the policy creation and implementation processes of new contexts, focusing on educator sensemaking, could help illuminate the factors that led districts to implement this kind of policy successfully.

The third paper investigated educators' attitudes and beliefs toward immigrant-origin students and families. Current research on teachers' attitudes has been focused on linguistic diversity, which creates a space for additional studies centered on beliefs about immigrant-origin students. Additionally, research on teachers' attitudes and beliefs has paid attention to how teachers perceive students, but beliefs about families have not been included in those studies. As the findings of this paper revealed, how educators view

those students and families affects the kinds of support schools offer for immigrant-origin students and families. Further research could add to the understanding of how educators' attitudes and beliefs are fundamental aspects of the contexts of reception for immigrants in US schools, especially in new immigrant destinations, where support systems are in the process of creation.

Limitations of this Dissertation

I recognize that these studies may have some limitations. First, I worked with two school districts that generally support immigrant-origin students and multilingual learners, which may have limited the perspectives of educators represented. Educators who work in contexts more favorable to immigrant-origin students may hold more positive views of them or are less likely to share negative perspectives openly. Therefore, the findings of this dissertation are not expected to be generalizable to educators working in different contexts.

Additionally, educators who participated in this study have roles connected to working with immigrant-origin students and their families or multilingual learners, many of whom have been in those positions for many years. For this reason, they are a particular group of educators who may have had more opportunities to develop asset-based perspectives toward their culturally and linguistically diverse students. In this sense, they do not represent all educators in their school districts. Further research with a broader selection of educators could explore the perspectives of teachers and administrators who work with the general population of students.

Final Thoughts

In this dissertation, I investigated educators' perspectives on issues related to supporting immigrant-origin students and multilingual learners. As the third paper highlights, educators are the human context of reception for immigrant-origin students. Because they are key to students' experiences in schools, their understanding of their work and the students they serve is crucial to creating more welcoming environments for culturally and linguistically diverse students. In the first paper, educators' perspectives, in the form of language ideologies, were shown to illuminate educators' inclination to accept students' translanguaging in dual language classrooms. The second paper, which studied another way of perception, this time educators' sensemaking, revealed that, as the district created and implemented an ESL endorsement requirement, the way teachers and administrators actively comprehended and responded to what the new policy expected from them was key to the success of the policy. Lastly, the third paper, indicated that educators' attitudes and beliefs —another way of studying perspectives— contributed to the support that was offered to immigrant-origin students and families, in large measure constructing the context of reception.

Educators who participated in the studies were located in two immigrant-serving school districts. Despite their differences, both districts have a history of working with immigrant populations and students with English as a second language. Through the years, they have developed systems of support for their student population with a profound knowledge of their lives and experiences. For this reason, in the three papers that comprise this dissertation, I intended to investigate nuanced issues in places that are

assumed to be supportive of immigrant-origin students and students classified as ELs. In addition, I interviewed educators whose roles are connected to working with those populations, and, therefore, it is not surprising that educators in my studies proved to have an asset-based perspective related working with culturally and linguistically diverse students. What this dissertation contributes is to help understand how those educators came to be supportive, how they understand the student population they serve, and what their role is in creating welcoming environments for students and families.

To emphasize the focus on complexity in each paper, in the first one, I learned that the language ideologies of educators related to language separation in DL classrooms were not dichotomous and were sensitive to the languaging practices of students and the community and influenced by multiple factors surrounding educators' work. In the second paper, I was able to understand how educators may share policy goals that benefit students classified as ELs, but they need collective sensemaking to reconcile their commitments to their students as well as concerns related to their professional responsibilities. The third paper allowed me to understand the connection between the COR and educators, in how supportive educators for immigrant-origin students and families are knowledgeable about the features of the COR but are also part of it.

This dissertation focused on supporting immigrant-origin students and students classified as ELs in two school districts in the US. However, considering global trends of increasing diversity in classrooms, there is a worldwide need to support ELs and newcomers, and thus, the issues examined in these three papers can be relevant to all contexts where there is a need to support culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Although this study was conducted in locations where there is a history of working with immigrant populations, the asset-based perspectives illustrated in this dissertation may work as an example of building supportive communities with culturally and linguistically responsive educators at the core.

Appendix A. Interview Protocols for Papers 1, 2, and 3

Introduction

"Thank you for taking time from your busy schedule to talk with me today. I am here to learn about your work, with a focus on how you and your colleagues are serving immigrant-origin students. You are in a unique position to help us understand this and we greatly appreciate your participation in this study.

I want to let you know that throughout the course of this study, we will work to preserve confidentiality. We will not use your name or reveal other identifying information in study publications. At any time during this interview, you may choose not to answer a question or stop the interview. Before we begin, I would like to ask you to read this consent form and sign it, if you agree. Please feel free to ask me any questions about the study. For the purposes of accuracy, I'd like to audio record this conversation. This also helps to make sure I pay attention to you. The recording won't be shared with anyone outside of my team. Is that okay?"

Signing of Consent Form

Questions and Possible Prompts

1. I'd like to start by learning a little about your work and how you came to this role. Can you tell me a bit about that?

    a.   Can you describe your responsibilities in the district?

b.	In what ways do you work with immigrant-origin students and/or their families? By immigrant-origin, we mean any students who either themselves immigrated from another country or whose parents or guardians are immigrants.

2.	We are trying to understand how educators are supporting immigrant-origin students during challenging times. In particular, we are trying to learn about a few key practices. The practices are: support for undocumented students/families (such as postsecondary planning), engaging immigrant-origin families, welcoming newcomers, and staffing.

I'd like to hear about [practice] from you, but feel free to comment on the other practices as well.

1.	Can you tell me a little about this practice? What has your involvement been?

2.	How long have you participated?

3.	Is anyone else involved?

4.	Why did you (or the district) decide to use this approach to your work with immigrant students?

5.	What do you think the impact of [practice] has been? Can you think of an example to illustrate that?

6.	What have been some challenges with implementing this practice?

7.	What do you think would improve [practice] to make it more effective?

3.	Are there any ways in which you support bilingual students in the district? What motivated you to do this work?

4. Are there other ways you support immigrant-origin students that don't relate to the practices we've asked about?

5. How, from your point of view, has the pandemic impacted immigrant-origin students and families in your [district/school/department/program]? How has the pandemic affected your work with them?

6. One of our goals is to identify additional resources or support for you in your work with immigrant-origin students. What would be most helpful to you to better serve these students?

    1. How might the district provide that for you?

    2. What external support do you wish you had?

7. Taking a broader view, how do immigration policies shape your role, the work of educators in your district?

a. How do you learn about these policies and make sense of them?

b. Are there ways that these policies impact your work inside or outside of schools?

c. How state and district language policies shape how educators in your district support bilingual students?

8. Is there anything else that you would like to tell me about immigrant-origin students in the district?

9. Is there anything else that I should know?

10. Do you have any questions for me?

Thank you for your time and participation in this study.

Appendix B. Follow-Up Interview Protocol for Paper 1

Introduction

"Thank you for taking time from your busy schedule to talk with me today. I am here to learn about your work on the dual language program, with a focus on how the district and you deal with the separation of English and Spanish in the dual language classrooms. You are in a unique position to help me understand this and I greatly appreciate your participation in this study.

I want to let you know that throughout the course of this study, I will work to preserve confidentiality. I will not use your name or reveal other identifying information in study publications. At any time during this interview, you may choose not to answer a question or stop the interview.

Before we begin, I would like to ask you to read the consent form I put in the chat and sign it, if you agree. Please feel free to ask me any questions about the study. For the purposes of accuracy, I'd like to audio and video record this conversation, although I will only keep the audio portion. This also helps to make sure I pay attention to you. The recording won't be shared with anyone outside of my team. Is that okay?"

Signing of Consent Form

Questions and Possible Prompts

1. What is your role in the district and for how long have you been in this role?

2. What is the district policy in relation to the separation of English and Spanish in the dual language program?

    a. What level of flexibility exists to admit students speaking in the language that is not the focus on that day?

    b. How does the district reinforce this policy?

    c. Has there been changes in the way of separating the languages since you started working in the district?

3. What is your perspective on the strict language separation in the dual language program? Considering that the reality in the community is fluid bilingual practices?

4. How do you apply this policy in your own classroom/practice/role? Are you strict or more flexible? Why?

    a. Can you share with me an episode of when your perspective on this issue has been useful to support the language development of your students?

5. Is there anything you would change about the district's view on language separation in dual language classrooms?

6. Is there anything else you would like to share with me?

Thank you for your time and participation in this study.

Appendix C. Coding Manual for Paper 1

Code	Definition	Example
Bilingual languaging practices		
Educators' languaging practices	References to educators as bilingual individuals and their languaging practices as such.	I think, even as adults, I think anyone that's bilingual, I think we all translanguage. I mean, it's part of the culture, it's part of our understanding. So there's really not as you know, we don't we don't teach it right. It's just something that naturally happens when you talk about second language acquisition. I mean, that's just part of the process. And even as proficient as you are in both languages, like I personally translanguage a lot because sometimes, you know, you just don't find the word and it doesn't exist. So you have to kind of, like throw it in. And so there's really not, you know, nothing that we teach. I mean, I think it's just part of your identity. And, that has been also part of the identity of the teacher. (Jennifer, 2023)
Students' languaging practices	References to the languaging practices of students in the dual language program, as a group or as individual students.	De hecho, tengo un chiquito que no quería tomar el examen en español porque se sentía avergonzado de que otros de su grupo iban a tomar el examen en inglés. Entonces, es ahí donde les explicas el hecho del poder que tiene el bilingüalismo, no nada más ahorita, sino a futuro y cómo lo puedes usar a tu beneficio cuando muchos no lo tienen. Entonces, es difícil, es difícil. Sobre todo a esta edad. (Edith, 2022) [In fact, I have a boy who didn't want to take the exam in Spanish because he felt ashamed that others in his group were taking the exam in English. So, there is where you explain to them the power of bilingualism, not only now but in the

future, and how you can use it to your benefit when many people don't have it. So, it is hard, it is hard, especially at this age.]

| Translanguaging | References to students' or educators' flexible use of their linguistic repertoire, not necessarily limited by the division between named languages. | Like before, for example, when I started teaching I was teaching in San Antonio. And a lot of times I had, like, I not a problem, but a kid would say like, well, "vamos a parquear el carro" o "está lockeada la puerta". And I'm like, oh, no, no, no, that's not how you say the word. But I didn't know about this, you know, like translanguaging at the time, that it helps them, you know, where their language acquisition. So like now, if they say something that sounds like, you know, Spanglish, that's okay. Because it does help to acquire, you know, from one to the next. So she living in a border town, you know, there's a lot of Spanish speakers out here, so it helps. And we got to do it. (Eduardo, 2023) |
| Contextual factors that affect languaging practices | References to contextual factors that affect the languaging practices of individuals in the community and the school district. | Pero lo que he notado que los nuevos inmigrantes quieren que sus niños aprendan inglés. ¿Verdad? Y cuando los ponemos en un programa, es que ellos ya saben español. "No, no queremos que aprendan español", ya saben. "Yo quiero que aprendan inglés". Con esos niños batallamos más. Porque los papás no quieren nada de español y no entienden, no entienden el proceso de aprender un nuevo lenguaje. ¿Verdad? Ellos vinieron a este país, aprender inglés y punto. Se acabó, ¿verdad? "Entonces para eso se lo mando maestra, para que usted le enseñe inglés y sabe muy poquito inglés". (Lilly, 2023) [What I've noticed is that the new immigrants want their children to learn English, right? And when we |

put them in a program, they already know Spanish. "No, we don't want them to learn Spanish," you know. "I want them to learn English." With those children we battle the most. Because the parents don't want anything with Spanish and don't understand, they don't understand the process of learning a new language, right? They came to this country to learn English, and that's it. That's it, right? "So, that is why I am sending them to you, teacher, for you to teach them English, and they know very little English."]

Language ideologies according to roles

State/District/school policy	References to the language policies related to language separation in the dual language programs at state, district, or school level.	Pero tenemos un calendario y, por ejemplo, si está en verde el día, es día de español. Si está en rojo, es día de inglés. Y nos ha funcionado muy bien y nos ha funcionado en la manera de que si yo voy a la escuela, a veces veo el cartelón, el póster, lo veo en el salón, a veces lo veo en la entrada de la escuela, a veces lo veo en el salón de los maestros en el teachers' lounge, está muy visible. Incluso ahorita estamos trabajando con el de relaciones públicas, que no lo haga porque vamos a imprimir uno para todos los salones del programa dual en primaria. Entonces, eso nos ha ayudado mucho hasta para evaluar o cuando hacemos visitas a las escuelas. Asegura saber que ellos sepan y que nosotros sabemos que hoy es día de inglés o que hoy es día en español. (Nina, 2023) [But we have a calendar and, for example, if the day is in green, it's Spanish day. If it is in red, it's English day. And that has worked out very well for us and has worked in the way

Educators' perspectives	References to language ideologies held by educators.	that if I go to the school, sometimes I see the poster, I see it in the classroom, sometimes I see it in the school entrance, sometimes I see it in the teachers' lounge, it is very visible. Even now, we are working with public relations to get one done for every classroom in dual language in elementary school. So, this has helped us a lot even to assess or when we make school visits. It ensures that they know and we know that today is English day, or today is Spanish day.] Through being bilingual, growing up bilingual, I see how many advantages there are. I feel like it just opens up your world because you can communicate. You can relate to other people. Now, with my own children, I wanted to give them the same thing. In my work, I feel like it translates into continuing to advocate for dual language education, and not just transitioning or blending into the dominant culture and stuff because it's important that we need to teach more people about the importance of being bilingual. (Margarita, 2022)
Students/families perspectives	References to language ideologies held by students or families.	Yeah. A lot of kids don't want to— they're refusing to learn the Spanish language or continue with the Spanish language. We have a lot of students that are more—yes, they're coded as English learners, but they're forgetting their Spanish, and they're rising in their English 'cause they're valuing more English than Spanish. I think that's very interesting, too. (Inés, 2022)
Perspectives on language separation in dual language classrooms		
Perspectives on flexible language	References to being flexible in	Yeah, like I stated, I do allow them to, if it's an English day and I know that

separation in DL classrooms	the language separation in DL classrooms and the reasons behind that choice.	they're having a hard time with it, I'll allow them to speak or to respond in Spanish. However, let's say it's a writing that I don't have any mercy. If it's English day that you're writing in English, whether you're gonna have to use Google, Google Translate, or do you want to use your partner, or you want to ask me how to use, say, this particular part, I'm not going to tell you the whole thing. I'll help you in parts, but you need to push them. These newcomers from Mexico, if I don't push them to speak English, they're not going to learn it. And I need them to feel that I need to empower them, I need to make them feel that they can do it. And we need to give them that growth mindset for them to actually be able to do it. Um, so yeah, I think that, yes, some leeway because, like I said, they're not robots, they can't just turn it on and off. But we do need to push it otherwise, we're never going to get there. (Paz, 2023)
Perspectives on strict language separation in DL classrooms	References to being strict in the language separation in DL classrooms and the reasons behind that choice.	Sí, como te mencionaba, tenemos muy marcado la diferenciación de idiomas. Nosotros implementamos un día inglés y un día español. Entonces, el día de inglés, la expectativa es que toda la instrucción, todo el trabajo del salón, toda la tarea que se pueda mandar a casa ese día o hasta alguna evaluación, sí tiene que llevar en el idioma del día. Entonces, sí tenemos muy marcado la división de los dos. (Nina, 2023) [Yes, as I mentioned, we have a very sharp language separation. We implement one day of English and one day of Spanish. So, on English day, the expectation is that all instruction, all classroom work, all the

		homework we send home that day, and even an assessment must be in the language of the day. So, yes, we have a very sharp division of the two.]
Expectations for students related to language separation in DL classrooms	References to the language practices expected of students in the DL classrooms.	Like before, for example, when I started teaching I was teaching in San Antonio. And a lot of times I had, like, I not a problem, but a kid would say like, well, "vamos a parquear el carro" o "está lockeada la puerta". And I'm like, oh, no, no, no, that's not how you say the word. But I didn't know about this, you know, like translanguaging at the time, that it helps them, you know, where their language acquisition. So, like now, if they say something that sounds like, you know, Spanglish, that's okay. Because it does help to acquire, you know, from one to the next. So, living in a border town, you know, there's a lot of Spanish speakers out here, so it helps. And we got to do it. (Eduardo, 2023)
Expectations for teachers related to language separation in DL classrooms	References to the language practices expected of teachers in the DL classrooms.	But of course, one of the main pieces that I tell the teachers is that we got to stay true, you know, truthful to the language, without embarrassing or, or, you know, turning the situation in something uncomfortable for kids, you know, so we always separate the language, mainly because we have a calendar that we follow. (Jennifer, 2023)

Appendix D. Interview Protocol for Paper 2

Introduction

"Thank you for taking time from your busy schedule to talk with me today. I am here to learn about the district redesign of the ESL program, with a focus on the district's decision to get all teachers to be ESL/bilingual endorsed. You are in a unique position to help us understand this and we greatly appreciate your participation in this study.

I want to let you know that throughout the course of this study, we will work to preserve confidentiality. We will not use your name or reveal other identifying information in study publications. At any time during this interview, you may choose not to answer a question or stop the interview. Before we begin, I would like to ask you to read the consent form I shared with you and sign it, if you agree. Please feel free to ask me any questions about the study. For the purposes of accuracy, I'd like to audio and video record this conversation, although I will only keep the audio portion. This also helps to make sure I pay attention to you. The recording won't be shared with anyone outside of my team. Is that okay?"

Signing of Consent Form

Questions and Possible Prompts

1.   What can you tell me about the district's decision to get all teachers to be ESL/bilingual endorsed?

2.   What has been your participation in the design of this new policy?

3.   What has been your participation in the implementation of this new policy?

4.   Have your professional responsibilities changed since the implementation of this policy? How?

5.   How, in your perspective, does the implementation of the ESL endorsement district-wide help to support the development of EL students in the district?

6.   What, in your opinion, can be improved about the design and implementation of the ESL endorsement district-wide?

7.   Is there anything else you want to share with me?

Thank you for your time and participation in this study.

Appendix E. Documentation Data for Paper 2

Learning Team Materials

Session Number	Nature of the Document	Content of the Document	Number of Pages
Session 1, April 2017 - Discover	Administrative document	Introductory letter for session 1	1
	Administrative document	Session 1 agenda	1
	Administrative document	Workflow of the EL program review Learning Team sessions	2
	Supporting literature	Federal legislation related to ELs	4
	Supporting literature	Judicial precedent related to ELs	4
	Supporting literature	Illinois administrative code part 228, Instruction for specific student populations	30
	Administrative document	Four "A"s protocol for discussing readings in a professional learning community	2
	Administrative document	Presentation of EL program review learning team session 1	20
	Learning Team product	Document the compiles the team's resonating aspects of the legal parameters	2
	Learning Team product	Document that compiles the team's review of legal parameters from multiple perspectives	10
Session 2, May 2017 - Discover	Administrative document	Introductory letter for session 2	1
	Administrative document	Session 2 agenda	1
	Supporting literature	Summary of recent major studies in the field	2
	Supporting literature	Reading: Unlocking the Research on ELs	10
	Supporting literature	Reading: How Long Does it Take for an ELL to Become Proficient	4
	Supporting literature	Reading: What Factors Influence ELLs Success at School	2
	Supporting literature	Reading: How Do ELs Learn Content-area Concepts Through Their L2	2

	Supporting literature	Reading: What is the Role of Culture in Language Learning	1
	Supporting literature	Reading: What Role Does the L1 Play in an ELs Life and Schooling	1
	Supporting literature	Reading: How Do ELs Acquire a L2 at School	4
	Supporting literature	Reading: Educating English Language Learners for a Transformed World (excerpts)	6
	Supporting literature	Reading: Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders (excerpts)	21
	Administrative document	Affinity mapping activity	1
	Administrative document	Presentation of EL program review learning team session 2	26
	Learning Team product	Document that compiles the teamwork reviewing Exemplary Practice in ESL Instruction	2
	Learning Team product	Document that compiles the teamwork compiling Essential Considerations for EL Program Design via the 4Cs	4
Session 3, October 2017 - Discover	Administrative document	Introductory letter for session 3	1
	Administrative document	Revised Workflow of the EL program review Learning Team sessions	2
	Supporting literature	Explanation of Wagner 4Cs Framework	3
	Supporting literature	Reading: Essential Components of Instructional Programs for ELs	29
	Supporting literature	Reading: Creating a Sense of Shared Responsibility	28
	Supporting literature	EL and Teacher Configurations - Cheat Sheet (taken from Wagner & Meyer, 2009)	3
	Supporting literature	Relationship of Program Categories to ELD Levels	2
	Learning Team product	Team Work. Guiding Questions for EL Program Observations	2
Session 4, October	Administrative document	Schedule for each EL program visit	4

2017, EL Program Observations	Administrative document	Description of the program structure of each site visited	10
	Administrative document	Sign-up sheet for EL program observations	1
Session 5, November 2017, Design	Administrative document	Introductory letter for session 5	1
	Administrative document	Session 5 agenda	1
	Administrative document	Presentation of EL program review learning team session 5	13
	Administrative document	Table Talk Cards to Discuss EL Site Visits	1
	Learning Team product	Team Work. Compiled 4Cs TO BE Scenario	1
	Learning Team product	Team Work. Compiled Leave Behind-Keep-Add EL Program Elements	1
	Learning Team product	S5-G. Team Work. Take-Aways to Share with Colleagues	1
Session 6, November 2017 - Design	Administrative document	Introductory letter for session 6	1
	Administrative document	Session 6 agenda	1
	Supporting literature	Reading: Restructuring Schools for Linguistic Diversity (excerpts)	37
	Supporting literature	Reading: Transforming School for English Learners (excerpts)	62
	Learning Team product	Prototype of four models of EL instruction	4
	Learning Team product	Team Work. Compiled Leave Behind-Keep-Add Worksheet	1
	Learning Team product	Team Work. Compiled TO BE 4Cs Scenario Worksheet	1
	Learning Team product	Team Work. FINAL General Recommendations TO BE 4Cs	1
	Learning Team product	Team Work. Planning and Reference Doc for Numbers	1
	Learning Team product	Team Work. DRAFT Notes Action Plan for General Recommendations TO BE 4Cs	4
	Learning Team product	FINAL PPT 12.4.2017 OOJH and ECC Faculty Meeting Presentation	14
	Learning Team product	FINAL PPT 12.18.17 K-5 Faculty Meeting Presentation	19

Appendix F. Coding Manual for Paper 2

Code	Definition	Example
Policy goals:		
Equity	Descriptions of the policy that focuses on the goal of fair distribution.	So we have been getting a lot of, you know, newcomers immigrants, you know, people from within different like states, and we see that there is a huge need for, like, you know, our teachers to be endorsed in ESL, so they can meet the all these students needs. And it started with the way like the program design was like, first, you know, implemented, and then we realized that the students like, even when they move from level to level, they still need that support and scaffolding. So like, we don't want to limit the support to only the ESL teachers that they see these kids, like for reading or writing, then they will go for science, social studies, even like the other encore classes, like we call them like art, drama, like, you know, so we'll be better if we have teachers who have like, you know, that this additional ESL endorsement that will help, you know, the ESL and even, you know, the monolingual speakers, so it came from the need that our student population is very diverse. And we wanted to give this support not only in like literacy, and reading and writing with other content areas, so now more teachers, you know, we require, highly recommended that they start working on their ESL endorsement to support the students needs. (Farah)
Efficiency	Descriptions of the policy that focuses on the goal of achieving an objective with a lower cost.	So I got an idea to look in personnel records, to see if we had people that were employed in the district already, who had their ESL endorsement, but we're not using it were placed as classroom teachers, but weren't called upon to use their ESL endorsement. And apparently, there had been maybe seven or eight, maybe 10 years

before I came to the district in 2016. There had been a grant in, and I think it was a federal grant in the township through Loyola University that gave folks the opportunity to get their ESL endorsement at discounted prices, and many teachers availed themselves of the opportunity, because it meant they could move up on the salary schedule, but then kind of kept quiet that they had this extra endorsement. So then, when I looked at how many people we actually had in the district, with the ESL endorsement, that's when I started thinking that we might be able to move in the direction of having all of our teachers meet their goal of obtaining an ESL endorsement. And when I saw that that was possible. That's when I started thinking about how might we kind of leverage that expertise to a different program mode. (Angela)

| Welfare | Descriptions of the policy that focuses on the goal of meeting the needs of any policy actor. | Sí, y poder cumplir y ayudarlos a todos los estudiantes con tantas necesidades distintas que tienen. Porque no solamente en el idioma, todos ellos están en un nivel de inglés distinto, pero las necesidades socioemocionales también son distintas. Tengo estudiantes que estaban en the refugee camps. Estudiantes que hacían años y años que no... Dos o tres años que no estaban en una sala de clases o para ellos no sabían. Que nunca habían pintado, por ejemplo, cosas así. Cosas que a veces uno da por alto, porque uno está tan acostumbrado, lo da por alto, pero cosas bien sencillas como tomarse un helado. Se supone que la clase esté basada en cosas así, en esas experiencias. [Yes, and to be able to meet and help all students with so many different needs that they have. Because not only in the language, all of them are at a different level of English, but the socio-emotional needs are also different. I have students who were |

		in the refugee camps. Students who hadn't been in a classroom for years and years... Two or three years since they were in a classroom, or they didn't know. They had never painted, for example, things like that. Things that sometimes one overlooks, because one is so used to it, one overlooks it, but very simple things like having an ice cream. The class is supposed to be based on things like that, on those experiences.] (Alyssa)
Liberty	Descriptions of the policy that focuses on the goal of assuring different actors and groups' liberty (of action, of choice).	What can be improved? To be more, more teacher voice. Like I know, like, when that that committee was formed to, you know, redesign the ESL program that many people on that committee felt like they weren't given a voice, I guess, that it was already pre-chosen, predetermined. And administrators were just kind of like, pushing them to make that decision when that's not the decision that they wanted to make. Which is, yeah, and so I feel like a lot of those committee members are like, well, that the, all of us we did not agree on, on this decision. And it was more like, the administrators were the ones that wanted this to happen. And so they kind of really didn't give us a choice. (Katie)
Security	Descriptions of the policy that focuses on the goal of assuring different actors' security.	So you know, so if you got the ESL endorsement, it's kind of gives you some extra job protection. So that was also a motivator for people, particularly people who either didn't have the endorsement, or who didn't have many years of experience. This was a way to provide job security, because we basically signaled if we have to reduce teachers in the future, it will be from the pool of teachers who are not EL endorsed. So that was a little bit of an extra motivator to get them there. (John)
Policy actors:		
Administrators	References to the role of administrators in the	So, initially, like their first year, I was very involved with the principals to make sure that they were, you know, putting in

	policy design and implementation.	infrastructure in place, that they understood the rationale that they could message, the rationale out to the teachers. But I also feel very strongly, and not all EL directors feel this way that the program is theirs, not mine, that that whatever program is in your building as a principal, it's your program. So I saw myself as a resource and support for the principals not as, okay, this is my giant, you know, bilingual ESL program. And then my goal was to, you know, be there for handholding in the very beginning, but then practice a gradual release, so that they would feel comfortable making decisions on their own. (Angela)
Learning Team	References of the role of the learning team in the policy design and implementation.	So the learning team met for two years, six sessions spread out over two years. And it was we started in 2016 17. And then we continued in 2017 18. But we wrapped up in like February and presented our recommendations to the Board in February or March, with the intention to begin implementation the following year in 2018 19. (Angela)
Teachers	References of the role of the teachers in the policy design and implementation.	Paulette Andrade 22:42 What in your opinion can be improved about this require the ESL endorsement requirement?
		Ferial 22:52 Um, like, I would say, like maybe more professional development for teachers, because right now it's on a, like, a need base thing, like the teacher, for example, I told you, the science teacher came and asked me, you know, I need help with this and this, and then I was able to connect them together. So maybe if we can have just like how we do, like a professional development for literacy, for science, for social studies, we can have like, like on certain days, like the last the first, you know, first week of school, we will have like a kind of, you know, like a committee

where they can just like, all these teachers will go, can we, you know, like a PLC for the ESL across sixth, seventh and eighth grade where they meet together. Because only, like, right now we have ESL, A and B, that the two teachers work together as a PLC, and I joined them, but it will be nice when like the other content area, these are only the literacy teachers, because when they see the connection, like, Oh, we're working on this in literacy, what are you working on in science or social studies, in terms of the language support in terms of the strategy for that? So I feel like, you know, if we have these things, like implemented in place, so teachers will feel like, oh, there is there is this PD, like, even if I don't need anything I know, like, you know, it's gonna be hosted in our district in the after school, you know, maybe I should go and just listen and see what would know, best practices are they discussing, so I feel like this is something we can, you know, make it more structured right now. It's, it's on a need basis. (Farah)

| EL resource teacher | References of the role of EL resource teacher in the policy design and implementation. | Yeah, I thought I, I thought we were, you know, going, you know, because I had asked so much for more support, you know, they had listed a position for an ESL resource teacher, so that this person could take on students, and so that I could focus more on teachers. But that listing has been absent since October, you know, my caseload has only increased. And, you know, I'm not really given an answer, why, why they won't hire someone. They said, that's that, even though they've listed it, it's just the numbers aren't there yet, or I don't know. I don't know what, what the reasoning is for why they. And we've there, there have been, you know, I know there have been applicants for that position, but they're just keeping it in reserve and not |

		hiring anyone. So they're doing that. (Katie)
Students/Families	References of the role of students and families in the policy design and implementation.	Yeah, so definitely, I think more teachers now see themselves as responsible for all kids. Were in for the whole child, though. Because before when they were being pulled out, you know, if you were the classroom teacher, and the kids were being pulled out for EL services, I think there was a tendency for teachers to see themselves as not responsible for the English acquisition portion of that child. Somebody else is going to take care of it. It's like when we pull Special Ed children out of the classroom, the classroom teacher feels like, oh, somebody else has got that, you know, I don't have to worry about that, or I don't have to take care of it. So I think it's increased ownership of all of our children, amongst all of our teachers, because there's not somebody else are being sent to you are, you are also in charge of supporting their English acquisition. So I think that's definitely been one shift. I, you know, I believe we're seeing evidence that our kids are achieving at higher levels. Recently, we were able to look at data in a new way, and found that our exited ELL students, on average, we're performing higher than their monolingual English peers, which is what research says, you know, when you go through the second language acquisition research, that's what they tell you. (John)
Policy Stages:		
Policy motivations	Description of motives that lead the district to change the policy	Yep. So when I first started here, nine years ago, our ELL program was a pullout program. So no services were delivered in the classroom. So you know, particularly those elementary grades, kindergarten, first, second grade, it can be 40 50% of our kids receive services. So that percentage of kids was being pulled out of the classroom, to receive, you know, EL support. And what they've done historically, is they were

		pulling kids out of science. So our EL students weren't getting science instruction, which was a little bit alarming. In my first year, I did a visit at the high school to their STEM lab. And I was talking to the teacher and he said, Yeah, we get so few EL students from your district in our program. And I kind of put two and two together, that's because we weren't providing them with a whole lot of science instruction. And my background, I was an EL teacher, I was a bilingual teacher. And that's what you know, my master's was in bilingual instruction and curriculum and instruction. So I was kind of aware of painfully aware that that program model did not feel like it was really serving children very well. (John)
Policy creation	Description of the policy creation process	Well, I led the learning team. And of course, I selected many of the resources that were reviewed, and we watched videos while we were eating dinner, we called it dinner theater. But I also, you know, told the members of the team, hey, if you have something that you want me to include in this, you know, giant binder of things, we're taking a look at, you know, just shoot it my way. But for the most part, you know, I kind of established the parameters of for the learning team. And, you know, I did steer the committee's understanding and thinking about certain things. For example, I knew that co teaching would not be a recommendation that would fly. So I explained to them why that would not be implemented, why the board would reject that, namely, because it's too expensive. (Angela)
Policy implementation	Description of the process of implementing the policy	I think that we are starting to see the fruits of the labor, we are starting to see that students who are with us, beginning in kindergarten, that have moved through the grade levels and are exiting the program are outperforming their monolingual peers in

		terms of our our district level data and our state testing data. So kids that have been in the program and receive, you know, receiving the support from their homeroom teachers in this way, really are doing very well. So that is what the research says. And we're finding that to be true in our district. (Patricia)
Sensemaking:		
Prior knowledge and expertise	Reference to knowledge and expertise that existed in the district before the policy creation process.	So our EL students weren't getting science instruction, which was a little bit alarming. In my first year, I did a visit at the high school to their STEM lab. And I was talking to the teacher and he said, Yeah, we get so few EL students from your district in our program. And I kind of put two and two together, that's because we weren't providing them with a whole lot of science instruction. And my background, I was an EL teacher, I was a bilingual teacher. And that's what you know, my master's was in bilingual instruction and curriculum and instruction. So I was kind of aware of painfully aware that that program model did not feel like it was really serving children very well. (John)
Relationships	Reference to how relationships between policy actors influenced the sensemaking process.	And, you know, we're not expecting perfection, but we're expecting people to be comfortable and just to take a risk and give it a try. And, you know, yeah, like I still have like teachers who are not on my like caseload for evaluation. They say, Oh, Miss Atto, we need we need your, you know, perspective, your expertise, like we want to do this lesson, you know, to meet the needs of this group of ESL, can you come and just give us feedback? And now, like, Absolutely, so I'll go there, and we'll talk about whatever the practice that they're using, and this is Social Studies, you know, and how the teacher wanted them to have a voice. And they did a lot of I said, like, a lot of presentation, a lot of like, you know, overall discussion, turn and talk and all that

stuff. So once they they see that support coming from a colleague from the admin from each other, you know, things become I feel like we're, we move like, a long way with addressing these needs in our district. They did a great job, the teachers as students, and their family, were amazing with the support. (Farah)

Appendix G. Information about Participants from Paper 3

District	Pseudonym	Role	Years working in the district	Race/Ethnicity
IL	Ahmed	EL resource teacher	Four years in the district	South Asian
IL	Angela	District level administrator	Six years in the district	White
IL	Carol	School Principal	Six years in the district	White
IL	Farah	School administrator	Five years in the district	Middle Eastern
IL	Fatima	District level administrator	One year in the role	South Asian
IL	Helena	District level administrator	Nine years in the district	Latina
IL	John	District level administrator	Eight years in the district	White
IL	Maddie	EL resource teacher	Ten years in the district	East Asian
IL	Patricia	District level administrator	Four years in the district	White
IL	Sandra	EL resource teacher	Two years in the district	Latina
IL	Tim	School principal	Eight years in the district	White
TX	Cassandra	Dual Language Teacher	11 years in the district	Latina
TX	Edith	Dual Language Teacher	Ten years in the district	Latina
TX	Eduardo	Dual Language Teacher	Seven years teaching; two in the district	Latino
TX	Inés	Dual Language Teacher	27 years teaching	Latina
TX	Jennifer	School principal	18 years in the district; 4 as principal	Latina
TX	Lilly	School principal	27 years in the district; nine	Latina

			years as principal	
TX	Margarita	Dual Language Teacher	12 years in the district	Latina
TX	Marisol	Dual Language Teacher	Unknown	Latina
TX	Nina	District Level Administrator	Seven years in the role	Latina
TX	Paz	Dual Language Teacher	Five years in the district	Latina
TX	Pilar	School Assistant Principal	20 years in the district	Latina
TX	Rosa	School principal	20 years in the district; 15 as principal	Latina

Appendix H. Case Comparison Table for Paper 3

	Illinois District	Texas District
Context of Reception		
Social Features of the Community	• High language diversity • Not a dominant group • Historically immigrant • Sanctuary state	• Location in the border with Mexico • Transit between countries • Primarily Spanish-speaking • Immigration is the norm
District and School Characteristics		
Programs to support immigrant-origin students and families	• Redesigned EL program • Bilingual program for Urdu and Spanish • Newcomer program • Coordinator of Family Services and Engagement • ELL Parent Center	• English/Spanish dual language education • Coding for immigrant students • LPAC Aides
Identities of students' vs educators'	• Students are very diverse, while educators are mostly white, non-immigrant	• Educators share the same cultural and linguistic background with students
Educators' Attitudes		
Who are Considered Immigrant-origin Students and Families?	• More recognizable group • Association with: newcomers, English learners, refugees, undocumented people, Hispanics/Latines, Muslims, second and third-generation, and low-income families	• Not a shared conception of who is considered as immigrant origin • Association with: English Learners, undocumented individuals, low-income families, and second and third-generation immigrants, coming from Mexico, migrants, bilingual, and US-born children living

		apart from their parents.
Immigrant-origin Families' Orientations Toward School	• Immigrant-origin families do not engage in schools as much as US schools expect from them. • Factors that affect families' involvement in schools	• Immigrant-origin families do not engage in schools as much as US schools expect from them. • Factors that affect families' involvement in schools
Immigrant-origin Students and Families' Assets	• Language skills • Dispositions	• Language skills • Dispositions
Immigrant-origin Students and Families' Needs		
Language Related	• Redesign of the EL program • Translation for families	• Dual language program • Educators speak Spanish with families
Basic Needs	• Coordinator of Family Services and Engagement • Medical care	• Connecting families with access to basic needs • Medical care
Socio-emotional	• Challenges of immigration • Keeping one's culture and traditions – connecting with families of one's culture • Immigrant-origin students' need to feel welcome and safe in school	• Challenges of immigration • Keeping one's culture and traditions – connecting with families of one's culture • Immigrant-origin students' need to feel welcome and safe in school