The Politics of

Language and Race:

Latinx Youth's Racial Identity Development

In

Community-Based Educational Spaces

By

Juan Carlos Medina

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

(Educational Policy Studies)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

2020

Date of Final Oral Examination: April 29, 2020

The dissertation is approved by the following members of the Final Oral Committee:
    Bianca J. Baldridge, Assistant Professor, Educational Policy Studies
    Stacey J. Lee, Professor, Educational Policy Studies
    William J. Reese, Professor, Educational Policy Studies
    Mary Louise Gomez, Professor, Curriculum and Instruction
    Mariana Pacheco, Associate Professor, Curriculum and Instruction

Abstract

Within the U.S., minoritized populations are made "other" through a system of constantly shifting racial categories that maintain power, and social control, within a select dominant group (Bourdieu, 1984; Omi & Winant, 2014; Said, 2003). For Latinxs, their experience within the U.S. has been a lengthy process of "racialization" within public institutions that is informed by presumed deficits and nativist fears that frame Latinxs as a "threat" to the nation (Chavez, 2013; Menchaca, 1997; Noguera, 2008; Valencia, 1997).

With the re-emergence of the "Latino threat" narrative across the Trump administration and its' presence within both social media and mainstream news, Latinx youth face a perpetual onslaught of racism and xenophobia they must navigate as they develop a racial identity and view of the world. Concurrently, youth receive affirming messages from their families and guardians via home pedagogies (Delgado-Bernal, 2001) that encourage them to be self-confident, love themselves, and hold high college and career aspirations. Considering this contradictory context, this dissertation examines the experience of Spanish-speaking Latinx youth in a community-based educational space and the central role language plays in their exploration and development of a racial identity.

Drawing on coloniality of power and LatCrit theories, and employing a critical qualitative approach, this study powerfully reveals the importance of considering the intersections between language, race, and citizenship when theorizing Latinx racialization. This study shows Latinx youth have a deep understanding that others' assumptions about their language abilities are rooted in racism and anti-immigrant sentiments, which leads to questions about their citizenship status that further their racialization and marginalization in educational spaces. This study also demonstrates youth participation within a community-based space offers

the opportunity to build authentic care-based relationships with adults and provides a "counter-space" where they can be their authentic selves, engage in conversation about race, racism, and current events, and foster strong cultural identities. This study offers an important contribution to research on Latinx racialization by providing a deeper understanding of how Latinx youth define race and maintain their humanity in the face of a xenophobic political and educational context, while illuminating the central role language plays in their exploration and development of a racial identity.

Dedication

I dedicate my dissertation work to my parents, my wife, my siblings, nephews, nieces, grandparents, extended family, and friends. Throughout this process, you've all shown undying support and provided everlasting inspiration to a kid from East LA with a dream to disprove assumptions about Latinx capabilities.

A special feeling of gratitude to my loving parents, Dina and Mario Medina, whose apoyo, consejos, scarificio, y fe illuminaron hasta las mas oscuras de noches. My beautiful wife, Rosario Medina, who never left my side and whose enthusiastic positivity inspired me. My brothers and sisters, Mario, Liz, Rafael (Ralfi), and Isabelle, whose individual strengths and passions have motivated me. It would not have been possible without all of you.

I also dedicate this dissertation to my nephews, nieces, and cousins, may it demonstrate, as the Notorious B.I.G. told us, that we can and should always "live far from timid/only make moves when your heart's in it/and live the phrase 'sky's the limit.'" Y para mis abuelitos, por su sacrificio de venir a los Estados Unidos, y por su apoyo y amor, gracias.

I also dedicate this work to my closest friends for their support, the laughs, and necessary distractions throughout the entire doctoral program, I appreciate each one of you.

Lastly, this dissertation is dedicated in service of the holistic development of young people of color. May it provide insight and inspire those dedicated to youth of color to continue to, as Nipsey Hussle stated, "*Hustle and Motivate*."

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I wish to thank my parents, for whom this dissertation is partly dedicated. Without my parent's challenge to "quit talking about applying to graduate school, and do it already," I would not be in the position I am now in. Without them, I would not be. Without their support, I would not achieve. Thank you for your encouragement, support, and your collective sacrifice, along with my grandparents, in striving to give us a better life. You've shown me that sacrificing and taking risks is a necessary part of growing as an individual. I am forever indebted to you and hope to be as fearless in my career as you have been.

I also wish to thank my advisor, Bianca J. Baldridge, and my committee members who over the past seven years have been gracious with their time, generous with their expertise, and critical to my development as a scholar. A very special thank you to Bianca, for your patience, your belief in my capacities, your encouragement, and the countless hours of informal discussions, reflection, reading, and feedback throughout this entire process. Thinking back to our first meeting during my visit as a prospective student, I clearly recall our discussion regarding our mutual expectations of a student/advisor, and I truly could not have asked for a better advocate, advisor, mentor, and friend.

A special thank you to Stacey Lee and William Reese, for not only being instrumental in my development as a grounded, critical, and nuanced scholar, but for your kind words and support during our many individual meetings. Your faith in my capacities as a scholar have motivated me over the last seven years. Thank you to Mary Louise Gomez and Mariana Pacheco, for agreeing to serve on my committee and for your wonderful feedback. This dissertation improved tremendously due to your insight and suggestions. Thank you all.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the Educational Policy Studies department, in particular the Chair Nancy Kendall and Mary Jo Gessler, for their guidance and support, and for providing any assistance when necessary. As a student in EPS I have been challenged intellectually, I have grown as a scholar, and have received assistance from countless individuals, all while equally being trusted to serve as mentor and representative of the department on committees and student panels. A special thanks to Mary Jo for your patience and assistance that has helped ensure I continued to progress through the program.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank my wife, Rosario Medina, who moved to Wisconsin with me so that I could pursue the Ph.D, and has been a consistent pillar of support and positivity in my life. Throughout the past seven years, being able to spend time with you and our dogs, Willie, Lillie, Mango, and Bucky, not only helped me unwind and clear my mind, it allowed me to reflect and think through critical ideas as I wrote the dissertation. The sacrifices you made to be by myside and support my education are not lost on me. I am forever grateful for your unconditional love and unwavering belief in me. This accomplishment is as much yours, as it is mine.

A special acknowledgement and thank you goes out to my dear friends from UW and California, whom I have shared many hours of honest and intimate discussion with. You all have helped me make sense of the program, provided important outlets to destress, and served as a community of support while away from home. In particular, I would like to acknowledge Doug Adams, Mercy Agyepong, Larry Brown, Danny Cruz, Amado Guzman, Hannah Kang, Leo Magallon, Linda Pheng, Jesus Renteria, Vincent Ricco, Cesar Serrano, Derek Taira, Maria Velazquez, Kathy Viallon, and my Advisee sisters and brothers. Your continued friendships have uplifted me, while our deep conversations have grounded me, and I must thank you for that.

I also wish to say thank you and provide a special acknowledgement for the Latinx youth who participated in the study, as well as the administrators and youth leaders at Ranch Mountain educational organization. Without the participation of the Latinx youth, I would never have been able to complete the dissertation or finish this program. Thank you for your willingness to share, your candid honesty, and for your extensive time, it is much appreciated. Similarly, thank you to the administrators at RMEO who were both gracious with their time and information, and provided me with unlimited access to not only the ENGAGE program but the organization itself. And, thank you to the youth leader for your time, honesty, and efforts. Collectively, your assistance have allowed me to complete this dissertation, which I hope will in turn help you better serve and holistically develop Latinx youth.

I would also like to show my gratitude and appreciation to my former professors and advisors at Occidental College, including Ron Solórzano, Adelina Alegria, and LaMont Terry. Thank you for introducing me to the field of Education, for your classes that sparked a love of the field, and for your dedication and support. The guidance you provided to me as a young student helped support my development and success, while your advice post-graduation helped lead me to pursue the Ph.D. at Wisconsin. I am forever grateful.

Lastly, I would like thank Javier at the Starbucks in South Gate, and the staff at the Starbucks in Glendora, for providing a welcoming environment in which to write. The unlimited refills they provided, occasional free samples, and near daily informal conversations about my work, made the writing of my dissertation an enjoyable experience.

To everyone mentioned here, and those I have forgotten to mention by name, your support and encouragement have meant the world to me, thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Juan Carlos Medina

Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations

CBES   Community-Based Educational Space

CEO   Chief Executive Officer

COO   Chief Operations Officer

COP   Coloniality of Power

ELL   English Language Learner

LatCRT   Latino Critical Race Theory

RCHS   Rose City High School

RMEO   Ranch Mountain Educational Organization

Chapter 1

Introduction: Language and Racialization

The United States represents itself as a country open to the immigration of various ethnic, religious, and political groups (U.S. Bill of Rights, 1801) but, there is a long history of discrimination, oppression, colonialism, and racial "othering" that immigrant populations have endured (Griswold Del Castillo, 1992; Lassonde, 2005; Haney Lopez, 1994). According to Edward Said (2003), Western nations have built the modern capitalist economy through the explicit "othering" of non-western populations, which has contributed to their colonization and exploitation. Within the United States, the "othering" that occurs stems from the constantly shifting system of racial categories and values that are used to maintain power within a select group (Bourdieu, 1984; Omi & Winant, 2014). Omi and Winant (2014) name this process of becoming other, "racialization,"[1] defined as "the sociohistorical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed, and destroyed" (p. 55). Their definition implies that the meaning of racial categories is not fixed. Rather, our understanding of race is constantly shifting as individuals/groups are compared to the dominant White population, affixed meaning, and (re)positioned within the socio-racial hierarchy of the U.S. This process of racialization occurs through various means including interaction with the state or state actors via institutions, through policy and law, popular representations in mass media, etc. Aligned with the concept of racialization, this study is interested in understanding the history of the racialization process of Latinxs[2] in the U.S. and, in particular, their continued racialization through federally funded

---

[1] "Racialization" refers to the process through which groups are incorporated, via assignment of racial meaning and values, into the existing racial hierarchy that structures the United States (Omi & Winant, 2014).

[2] Throughout this dissertation, Latinx is spelled using an "X" in place of an "A," "O," or the more inclusive "@," because it is gender-neutral and is a means of disrupting the gendered Spanish language. There is a growing movement within academia to de-gender the Spanish language, as it is seen to perpetuate heteronormative masculinity. In a conscious effort to be inclusive of all, to think intersectionally, and, to de-colonize my own thought process, writing, and scholarship, I chose to utilize the "X" where appropriate (Sharron-Del Rio & Aja, 2015).

community-based educational spaces (CBES). To be clear, Latinx is a gender-neutral categorical label used in place of Latina/o or Hispanic throughout this dissertation. Latinxs, as a population, are highly diverse and include multiple racial, ethnic, and indigenous groups who trace their origins to the various Latin American countries across the Americas. Though the label "Latinx" was coined in the U.S. to de-gender language and resist heteronormative masculinity, the label is still limited and complicated by the racial and ethnic diversity of people from Latin American descent. In other words, the term Latinx masks the diversity of individuals, however I consciously utilize Latinx in an effort to be inclusive of all and de-colonize my own thinking and writing.

This dissertation is informed by the idea that "racialization" is a means of incorporating non-white populations into the hierarchy of the country and is most easily observed during times of rapid social-political change, including population shifts tied to immigration (Halpern, 2002; Heidenreich, 2006; Ralph & Rubinson, 1980). During such periods, discrimination and "racialization" increase as a result of social fears stemming from differences with the immigrant group (i.e. culture, language, religion, etc.) and the potential impact they may have on national institutions, i.e. education, economy, or social programs (Gandara, 2010; Ralph & Rubinson, 1980). As it relates to Latinxs in the US, there is no shortage of examples one can point to that demonstrates the relationship between rising population numbers, nativist fears, and their "racialization" (Aleman & Aleman, 2010; Cammarota, 2014; Daniels, 2005; Del Castillo, 1992; Duncan-Andrade, 2005; Ralph & Rubinson, 1980). Therefore, I argue that Latinx's experience within the U.S. has been a lengthy process of "racialization" within public institutions, informed by nativist fears and deficit framing of their intellectual and linguistic abilities. Of particular interest for this dissertation is the role that community-based educational spaces (CBESs), specifically Ranch Mountain Educational Organization's (RMEO) ENGAGE program, play in the

"racialization" process through their increasingly limited programming focused on academic/linguistic development in response to external pressure from the economic context they exist in.

Throughout this dissertation, I argue that, on one hand, Latinx youth's participation in RMEO's ENGAGE program exposes them to deficit-based messages that racialize them, in part because of neoliberal aligned federal funding policies that ignore their agency and voice. On the other hand, their participation within ENGAGE allows them to actively resist deficit-frames while empowering them to develop an affirming racial identity, due in large part to the authentic commitment of youth workers to support students and "create a culture of learning." To this end, the literature shows that including Latinx youth voice, lived experiences, and recognizing their agency is important for their educational achievement as it allows them to feel respected, build better relationships and gain confidence in their abilities to succeed (Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Jones & Deustch, 2013; Lerner, Dowling, Anderson, 2003; Mahoney, Lord, & Carryl, 2005; Schmidt, 2011; Valenzuela, 1999). Similarly, the literature provides examples that demonstrate how Latinx racialization occurs through educational institutions by looking at how the language of federal funding frames Latinx youth and informs the work of CBESs targeted at them.

Aligned with current scholarship, and addressing a gap in the literature related to Latinx racialization, this study reveals Latinx youth's understandings of race/racialization and how it intersects with ethnicity, language, and citizenship status to inform their racialization across society and within educational institutions. This study also explores how Latinx youth make sense of their experiences within a community-based educational space and the role that their participation has on their exploration and development of a racial identity. In so doing, this study demonstrates the importance of providing a flexible, informal space; incorporating youth voice,

culture, and language within programs; and forming care-based relationships and engaging in conversation, for youth's racial identity development.

Context and Rationale

In the United States, the 1980's were a period of immense social and political change where xenophobia, media representations, and dominant language combined to create a context of fear that "racialized" and subjugated Latinxs. During this period, the release of *A Nation at Risk* (1983), along with increased immigration from Latin America, and anxiety resulting from the Cold War drove the xenophobia of the dominant White population towards "outsiders" (read as Latinxs) in the country. In addition, media representations of drug use and poverty within inner-city communities through deficit-based, racially-coded rhetoric directly tied these issues to communities of color (Alexander, 2010; Said, 2003). According to Said (2003), such labeling and framing of subjugated populations through dominant representations constructs them as "other." Thus, the use of labels such as "inner-city," "urban," "ghetto," etc., positioned Black and Latinx populations as "other" and "outsiders" respectively that caused and/or exacerbated poverty, school failure, and drug related crime (Alexander, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2006; Valencia, 1997). In response, the federal government took aggressive, colonizing action towards communities of color including mass incarceration, zero tolerance policies, and containment programs, leading to their collective subjugation (Apple, 2006; Alexander, 2010; Baldridge, 2014; Ginwright, 2007; Gorski, 2013; Hosang, 2006; Martinez & Rury, 2012, Valencia, 1997).

Of the various federal responses to the social milieu of the 1980's, this dissertation is most concerned with the proliferation of federally funded youth programs and the way they have been falsely positioned to address a perceived "Latino threat" (Chavez, 2013). The concept of a

"Latino threat"[3] refers to a racist narrative throughout U.S. media and culture that represents Latinxs in two ways: as dangerous threats and constant foreigners, because of their cultural, linguistic, and racial differences with mainstream America (Chavez, 2013). The "threat" narrative perpetuates a characterization of all Latinxs as Spanish-speaking, drug and violence prone, culturally and intellectually lacking people who live in a "culture of poverty"[4] and must be saved from themselves through assimilation (Lesko, 1996; Lewis, 1966; Stewart et al., 2015; Valencia, 1997). This rhetoric informs institutional practices by perpetuating the erroneous belief that English primacy is necessary for their academic achievement, and the equally false assumption that Latinxs are culturally prone to deviant behavior. Studies on Latinx youth experiences within U.S. schools supports this position (Noguera, 2008; Sanchez, 1932; Valenzuela, 1999).

Literature on Latinxs within U.S. schools shows their experiences are largely negative because of dominant beliefs about their intellectual, linguistic and cultural inferiority (Cammarrota & Aguilera, 2012; Gandara, 2010; Heidenreich, 2006; San Miguel, 2004; Valenzuela, 1999). These deficit views have resulted in a limited focus on academic/language development or behavioral containment within schools, leading to low achievement, a limited focus on basic math and English skills, English primacy, academic tracking, etc. Yet, according

---

[3] "Latino Threat Narrative" refers to Dr. Leo Chavez's conceptualization of a narrative throughout US popular culture around Latino's as an invading immigrant group that is "not like previous immigrant groups, who ultimately became part of the nation" (Chavez, 2013, 3). Rather, they are perceived to be "unwilling or incapable of integrating," (p.3) and, "are bent on reconquering land that was formerly theirs (the U.S. Southwest) and destroying the American way of life" (pg. 3). Thus, within this view, Latinxs are dually framed as "outsiders" who are not a part of the U.S. culturally or politically, and are simultaneously dangerous because they pose an internal threat to the United States populace and their institutions.

[4] Lewis's theory of a "culture of poverty" arose out of his studies of Puerto Rican communities throughout the U.S. and Puerto Rico. This idea argues that poverty is not a state that one can move in and out of, rather, it positions poverty as a culture inherent to communities of color. Specifically, a culture of poverty is characterized as a single parent house hold led by mothers, absent fathers, low motivation, limited perceptions of mobility, poor nutrition, etc. This concept frames Latinx and Black populations as culturally deficient and has been used to argue against programs to address poverty since it is believed to be inherent to them.

to Vygotsky (1983), education is a socially collaborative process that requires youth be treated as knowledge holders and active participants in learning (Banks, 2008; Elenes, Gonzalez, Delgado Bernal, & Villenas, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 2006; Strobel et al., 2008; Terzian, Geisen, & Mbwana, 2009; Valenzuela, 1999; Vygotsky, 1983; Yosso et al., 2001). From this point of view, educational institutions should focus on developing youth holistically while viewing them as active agents who possess a voice, knowledge, and experiences, a position that is supported by research on community-based learning (Aleman, Delgado Bernal, & Cortez, 2015; Elenes, Gonzalez, Delgado Bernal, & Villenas, 2001; Ginwright & Cammarota, 2007; Ginwright, Cammarota, & Noguera, 2005).

Scholars who study community-based educational spaces found these sites have been effective in developing youth holistically, supporting academic success, and promoting college/ career preparation. CBESs have been successful in these areas largely because they are not rigidly controlled or tied to academic standards, allowing them greater flexibility to: offer program that reflects youth interests, promote relationship-building practices, and incorporate youth voices/experiences (Banks, 2008; Elenes, Gonzalez, Delgado Bernal, & Villenas, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 2006; Valenzuela, 1999; Yosso et al., 2001). However, contextual factors, including neoliberal policies and changes to funding, are influencing CBESs to become more like schools by mirroring their focus on academics (Anderson & Larson, 2009; Baldridge, 2014; Kwon, 2013; Smith, 2003). For Latinx youth, these changes have severe implications.

The combination of the deficit-oriented "Latinx threat" narrative, influence of funding trends, and paternalism[5] of programming, have created a context whereby CBESs are limiting

---

[5] Based upon Soss, Fording, and Schram's (2011) definition of Neoliberal Paternalism, I am defining "paternalism" as increased direct supervision of populations on behalf of the state. This direct supervision is meant to manage populations through increased monitoring while providing incentives and penalties to emphasize behavioral expectations (p. 2).

programs to concentrate on academic/linguistic development and/or behavioral intervention (Apple, 2013; Baldridge, 2014). This narrowed focus leads CBESs to lose the flexible structure and holistic education that better supports the development of Latinx youth and makes them feel welcomed, respected, and valued within programs (Halpern, 2002; Valenzuela, 1999). Yet, within this changing context, Spanish-speaking Latinx youth participation within community-based educational spaces remain little studied (Haneda & Wells, 2012; Riggs, et al., 2010). Currently, research on this population within CBES investigates either their academic achievement or linguistic development, resulting in a failure to consider Spanish-speaking youth as individuals with agency, a voice, and knowledge to share. Though these studies provide important insight and demonstrate CBESs can improve Spanish-speaking Latinx youth's academic performance and/or their language acquisition (Nelson, 2010; Park, Lin, Liu, & Tabb, 2015; Riggs et al., 2010), a narrow focus on these outcomes can lead community-based educational spaces to perpetuate deficit-based perspectives and neglect alternative methods of support. Therefore, this dissertation study centers the voices of Latinx youth to better understand their experience and meaning-making within the changing context of ENGAGE, a community-based educational program, and to address a gap in the literature.

Considering the above, I believe the literature has yet to fully understand how Latinx youth make sense of the changes CBESs experience due to funding pressure, and how these changes might inform their experiences that shape their racial development within the context of a program. In light of the yearly proposed budget cuts to community-based programs that would surely exacerbate the constrained context describe above, it is important to have a deeper understanding of how Latinx students make sense of their experience within changing CBESs in order to help us be more intentional in supporting their development. Thus, this dissertation is

concentrated on understanding how Spanish-speaking Latinx youth are framed within federally

funded community-based education programs; how they make sense of their involvement; and,

the ways in which these understandings inform their racial identity development and their

college and career aspirations.

Given the election of Trump in 2016, and the confirmation of Betsy DeVos as Secretary

of Education in 2017, both of whom have advocated and implemented neoliberal policies that are

harmful to Latinx students, the educational success of Latinxs should be of central concern. As

has been discussed, the individualizing policies aligned with neoliberalism contribute to the

negative experience and poor educational outcomes of Latinx youth, which I argue is a

purposeful colonial outcome intended to maintain exploitation and subjugation of this population

(Soss, Fording, & Schram, 2011). Having said this, if our national concern is increasing Latinx

youth's academic development or language acquisition (for those who need it), failure to

consider the student as a whole prevents success in these areas. Further, a narrow focus on these

outcomes perpetuates the false assumption that mastery of the English language is necessary, and

primary, for success, while also labeling Latinx youth as deficient, both of which further their

racialization (Callahan, 2005; Gandara, 2000; Sanchez, 1995). Thus, a singular focus on

academic development or language acquisition fails to comprehend the ways Latinx youth

develop and understand their "racialized" identity, as well as the role that language plays in

shaping the racialization process.

Based on the above understandings, we must recognize that identities are not static, but

are constructed and shaped through interaction and experience. Such an understanding

necessitates that institutions incorporate student voice and treat them as active agents in their

learning. Failure to do so perpetuates subtractive environments that frame Latinx youth in deficit

and paternalistic ways (Soss, Fording, and Schram, 2011; Valenzuela, 1999). In contrast, centering marginalized voices of students within educational institutions recognizes their agency, connects them more deeply to the learning process, and facilitates opportunities to develop positive, racial identities (Friere, 1970; Gorsfoguel, 2006; Quijano, 2006; Vygotsky as cited in Freeman & Freeman, 2011). Therefore, in line with a critical-social view of education, the following dissertation centers youth voice and lived experiences as a means of not only decolonizing knowledge about this group, but to gain a better understanding of how they develop their racial identity within changing community-based educational spaces. The various functions of language (Spanish), and its intersection with race, are of central importance as they play a key role in shaping Latinx youth's experience, understanding, and development of a racial identity.

This study is driven by a desire better understand Spanish-speaking Latinx youth's experience within a community-based educational space and, more importantly, the role that their participation in a CBES and language has on their exploration and development of a racial identity. Until now, research on Latinx participation in CBES has investigated how these spaces can increase/maintain participation; specific practices that engage youth; academic, linguistic and behavioral outcomes of participation; and the benefits of political engagement/organizing (Brugere & Salazar, 2010; Dawes et al., 2015; Fuller et al., 2013; Fredricks and Simpkins, 2012; Mitra, 2009; Park, Lin, Liu, & Tabb, 2015; Skogrand, Riggs, & Hufftaker, 2008; Strobel et al., 2008). A few studies have looked at Latinx youth's racial identity development within CBES alone (Erbstein & Fabionar, 2019; Pacheco, 2018; Pacheco & Nao, 2009), this study demonstrates the potential of CBES to help Latinx youth explore and develop their racial identity. It also reveals Latinx youth's complex and nuanced understanding of race and

racialization that are informed by their daily experiences with racist stereotypes, overt racism, and assumptions about their language abilities.

Even with the breadth of scholarship, there remains a gap in the literature because we have yet to study or fully understand how Latinx youth make sense of their experience within CBES and how this informs their exploration and development of a racial identity or their college and career aspirations. As such, this study centers Spanish-speaking Latinx youth's voice, and their meaning-making of experiences within the context of a CBES, to understand how youth explore and develop a racial identity and the important role that language plays in shaping their experience. To address this gap, and center youth voice, this study was guided by two research questions, including: 1) How do Spanish Speaking Latinx youth within funded community-based educational spaces understand and negotiate their racial identities? How do they imagine their future college and career possibilities? And 2) What is the historical context within which federally funded community-based programs and organizations have proliferated over the last 30 years in Southern California? How does funding shape practices, relations, and context of the CBES?

In addressing these questions, this study powerfully reveals the importance of considering the intersections of language, race, ethnicity and citizenship when theorizing Latinx racialization and illuminates the central role language plays in shaping their experience and development of a racial identity. For instance, this research demonstrates Latinx youth participation within a CBES offers them the opportunity to develop authentic caring relationships with adults and provides the chance to create "counter-space" where they can be their "authentic" selves, engage in conversation around race, racism, and current events, and foster strong racial-ethnic identities. This study also shows Latinx youth have a deep understanding that other's assumptions about

their language abilities are rooted in racism and anti-immigrant sentiments, which they believe leads to questions about their citizenship status and furthers their racialization in educational spaces. These findings represent an important contribution to research on Latinx racialization by providing a deeper understanding of how Latinx youth define race, experience racialization, and maintain their humanity in the face of a xenophobic political and educational context.

Overview of Dissertation

The following chapter provides a deeper historical background on the experiences, treatment, and racialization of Latinxs in the U.S southwest, an explanation of the joint coloniality of power and Latino Critical Race Theory theoretical framework that informs this study, as well as a review of the literature related to Latinx education, racialization, and community-based educational spaces. Chapter Three provides an explanation of the methodology utilized throughout data collection, the research design and a rich description of the CBES site. Chapters four through six details three important findings of this study. Chapter Four explores Latinx youth's understandings and experiences with race, racism, and racialization across society and within school. This chapter also exposes the racist-stereotypes and deficit-based framing Latinx youth are exposed to and their responses to it.

In contrast, Chapter Five reveals the affirming messages of support Latinx youth receive via home pedagogies from their families, guardians, and other caring adults. Of particular importance are the *consejos* (advice), *apoyo* (support), and family models of financial and academic success that encourage, motivate, and inspire youth to believe in themselves and embrace their cultural/linguistic differences, while also preparing them to confront and resist racist stereotypes and racism. Chapter Six demonstrates how Latinx youth navigate the changing context of ENGAGE, a CBES, to build authentic caring relationships with adults and identify

counter-spaces where they can be themselves as they explore and develop their racial identity. Through these three chapters, language is revealed to have various functions in the lives of youth, including as a signifier of difference, a subtle form of resistance, a bridge to forming relationships, and a resource to support others. Lastly, Chapter Seven offers a discussion of the findings and provides recommendations for future research, to support Latinx youth within community-based educational spaces, and for CBES themselves.

This study shows that in the face of a hostile, xenophobic national context, and a subtractive educational environment— which attempts to strip Latinx youth of their linguistic and cultural identities—demonizes and constructs them as "no one." This study reveals that it is the authentic caring relationships within a CBES, along with the teachings received via home pedagogies, that encourages Latinx youth to embrace their cultural and linguistic differences to support their exploration and development of a racial identity while preparing them to maintain their agency, humanity, and resistance that makes them "somebody" (Hill, 2017).

Chapter 2

Historical Context, Theoretical Framework, and Literature Review

Historical Context

The American Southwest has a history of violent relations between Spanish speaking populations and White U.S. citizens arising from close contact and conflict over land ownership, or more simply stated: conflict over colonization (Camarillo, 1979; Heidenreich, 2006). These colonial relations, along with the purposeful denial of Spanish-speaking Latinxs political-educational rights and their framing as intellectually inferior because of language abilities, has contributed to their continued racialization, subjugation, and exploitation in the southwest (Bender, 2003; Griswold Del Castillo, 1992; Heidenreich, 2006;). Yet, the racialization of Latinxs, through the framing of their assumed language abilities and within institutions/policy, is not specific to the U.S. Southwest as similar practices have been reproduced across the country over the last 150 years. In the following section, a historical review of how Latinxs have been constructed and marginalized as a racial minority through colonization is provided. Particular attention is given to the role of the Spanish language, colonial institutions, and policy. History is necessary to demonstrate the long racialization of Spanish speakers and to discuss the influence that federal funding has on the experience of Spanish speaking Latinx youth within CBES.

Early Colonization and Denial of Rights

Following the end of the Mexican-American War, the social status of the Mexican(American)[6] population changed from landowners with full rights and protections to "outsiders" who were discriminated against, exploited, and subjugated despite having "guaranteed rights" within the U.S (Griswold Del Castillo, 1992; Heidenreich, 2006). The

---

[6] The word (American) is purposefully placed in parenthesis to allude to the non-citizen status of ethnic Mexicans.

change in status of Mexican(Americans) was tied to the signing of the *Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo* which ended the Mexican-American War, gave ownership over the Southwest territories to the United States, and opened the "new" land to White settling (Griswold Del Castillo, 1992; Sakai, 1983). The treaty also provided ethnic Mexicans with guaranteed rights, including the right to maintain ownership over property and a right to receive Spanish accommodations within official institutions, including schools (Camarillo, 1979; Griswold Del Castillo, 1992). Despite these guarantees, Mexican(Americans) experienced oppression through social and political marginalization culminating in a denial of their rights to land, Spanish accommodations, and all privileges associated with citizenship (Del Castillo, 1992; Heidenreich, 2006).

The early marginalization of Mexican(Americans) in the Southwest is seen in their negative representation within policy, exclusion from public institutions, and denial of privileges afforded to White citizens (Del Castillo, 1992). For instance, Spanish language accommodations were removed from public schools at the same time that ethnic Mexicans (Latinxs) were framed as dangerous, sexual threats and targeted for interrogatory stops by the "Greaser Act" of 1855 (Bender, 2003; Heidenreich, 2006). Similarly, immigration and labor legislation in the 1880's targeted Latinxs by framing them as criminals and deviants who posed a threat to the economy and needed to be controlled (Daniels, 2004). Underlying each of these representations was a dominant belief in the innate cultural, racial, and intellectual inferiority of ethnic Mexicans. In particular, Mexican(Americans) were constructed as racially mixed and therefore inferior to White U.S. citizens, with their Spanish language abilities serving as proof of said inferiority (Pascoe, 2009; Wilson, 2003b). The racialized image of ethnic Mexicans as inferior due to their language justified their control through policies and programs including the poor and English-dominant education they received within public schools (Callahan, 2005; Gandara, 2010). The

oppression Spanish-speaking Mexican(Americans) faced in the U.S. was a part of "a larger trend that created a definition of American citizen that necessarily excluded ethnic Mexicans from the curriculum and the republic" (Heidenreich, 2006, p. 106).

The racialization of Latinxs through policy and within institutions not only perpetuated an image of them as dangerous, inferior deviants, it also served to exclude them from the imagined community of citizens and contributed to their economic exploitation (Anderson, 2006; Menchaca & Valencia, 1990). In other words, the practices that constructed Latinxs as "other" simultaneously extended the dominant understanding of true "imagined" citizen by contrasting it to them, the racialized "other" (Feagin, 2013; Haney Lopez, 2006). In so doing, Spanish-speaking Latinxs were positioned as un-American, racialized outsiders who posed a threat to the country, which justified their control, exploitation and subordinate second-class status (Daniels, 2004; Gandara 2010, Heidereich, 20001). Their position in the country is clearly seen within their confinement to lower socio-economic positions, as well as their targeting within oppressive policies (i.e. 1920's eugenics laws), revealing the coloniality of Latinx racialization (Grosfoguel, 2007; Stern, 2005). In short, the racialized image of Spanish speakers as culturally and intellectually inferior made them un-American and contributed to their economic exploitation, social control, and denial of citizenship rights, all of which demonstrate unequal colonial power relations that have ultimately economically benefitted the White population (Quijano, 2000).

Superficial Accommodation of Spanish

The brief history detailed above provides context to understand the way institutions and policy function as colonial extensions of the state[7], a function that continues to inform institutional practices and social relations today (Quijano, 2000; Grosfoguel, 2007). For example,

---

[7] Colonial extension of the state refers to the use of institutions and policy to maintain dominance over colonized and racialized populations which reproduces dominant power relations.

a string of federal policies, whose internal rhetoric seems positive and well intentioned, have more recently been implemented with severe consequences for Latinx communities (Apple, 2013; Lipman, 2011a). More specifically, policies directly related to the education of emergent multi-linguals ("English language learners"), along with neoliberal inspired education reforms, have narrowed the meaning of academic achievement. With the colonization of the Southwest territories, and the official exclusion of Spanish within social institutions, an image of the imagined "American citizen" was created that fundamentally excluded Spanish speakers (Daniels, 2004; Gandara, 2010; Heidenreich, 2006). Since that time, Spanish was kept out of schools and speaking it was perceived as an intellectual deficit and framed as a disability (Callahan, 2005; Pascoe, 2009). It was not until the passage of the 1968 Bilingual Education Act (BEA) that Spanish instruction was allowed in U.S. schools as a means of teaching the growing Spanish-speaking population.

On the surface, the BEA appears to be a recognition of the need to offer equal access to educational services for all youth in the U.S, especially since it was intended to provide support for, and access to, first language instruction for emergent bi- and multi- lingual students (Gandara, 2000). However, the enactment of this seemingly progressive federal policy does not necessarily equate to positive outcomes or imply wide-spread support for the core ideas it proposed. Rather, from a CRT and LatCrit perspective, one could understand the federal government's decision to enact BEA as an instance of "interest convergence" and appeasement (Bell, 1980; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Yosso et al., 2001). Meaning, the bilingual education act, similar to the *Brown v. Board* decision, was a symbolic concession that appeased racially minoritized groups, eased racial tensions in the country, and resulted in economic gains for the dominant group (Ladson-Billings, 2006). In other words, it served as a means to maintain

colonial forms of relations (Grosfoguel, 2007; Quijano, 2000). Yet the symbolic gains made by Latinxs was short lived as state laws, including CA Prop. 227, were enacted to roll back BEA which further perpetuated the myth of English primacy and marginalized Spanish-speaking populations by framing them in deficit-based terms (i.e. illegals, a burden on resources, etc.).

Language within Prop. 227 very clearly perpetuated a "racialized" image by framing Spanish-speaking populations as immigrants who were: taking advantage of resources, negatively affecting the economy, and who needed to be forcibly assimilated by learning English in full immersion classrooms, leading to the elimination of most Bilingual education (Gandara, 2000; Martis, 1994; Suarez-Orozco, 1996). This proposition positioned Spanish-speaking populations as a problem, or "threat" to the country, due to their language and, therefore, called for the specific practice of English primacy in their education- the belief that the development of English is necessary and primary to the teaching of academic content. It also set an un-realistic expectation for the rate of English development by expecting all students to become fully proficient in English, according to standardized tests, by their 5th year in full immersion classes (Gandara, 2000). With such strict benchmarks, Prop. 227 limited the instruction emergent bi- and multi- lingual youth received to English language development and very basic academic skills. Beyond the direct effect of proposition 227 on the education emergent bi- and multi-lingual students received, the implementation of this proposition further racialized Spanish-speaking youth by framing them in negative terms and perpetuating a collective image of them as illegal immigrants who were a burden on public resources. Altogether, the framing of this population as a problem for society, as social deviants, and as intellectually and linguistically deficient "outsiders" narrowly redefined the academic achievement of Spanish-speaking Latinx youth in

terms of English development and performance on standardized tests (Apple, 2006; Apple, 2013; Lipman, 2011a).

As seen above, the exclusion of Spanish from social institutions and the very conception of the image of a citizen along racial lines not only severely limited the type of education provided to Latinx youth, all of whom were assumed to speak Spanish regardless of actual abilities, but contributed to their racialization as well. The racialization of Latinxs, based on their assumed Spanish-speaking abilities, and the exclusion of Spanish from social institutions, holds implications for the state and Latinx youth. Based on the concept of coloniality, the exclusion of Spanish has no immediate cost for the White, Western, colonial power that is the United States, rather, I argue the opposite is true as the subjugation of assumed Spanish-speakers (Latinxs) has allowed for their exploitation which has economically benefitted the country (Quijano, 2000; Grosfoguel, 2003).

In contrast to the benefits provided to the state, the brief history detailed above has resulted in the construction of a racialized image of Latinxs as non-citizens who are intellectually and culturally deficient, with Spanish serving as proof of their inferiority. This image has produced social and ideological consequences, including: the exclusion of Latinxs from social and political life, lower educational achievement and attainment, institutional discrimination, perpetuation of poverty, and a belief in their intellectual inferiority as compared to their White counter-parts which leads to English primacy and lower academic expectations (Callahan, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 2006; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Noguera, 2008; Riggs et al., 2010; Yosso et al., 2001). These consequences are detailed within the literature review, however a bit of elaboration on lower academic expectations is necessary.

According to Callahan (2005), the belief that Spanish speaking youth are intellectually inferior results in lower academic expectations, weak relationships with teachers, and a narrow focus on basic, remedial skills. As a result, Latinx students are not challenged to develop critical thinking skills, or engage in higher order tasks that develop academic abilities (Booher-Jennings, 2005; Callahan, 2005). Similarly, the deficit framing of the Spanish language as inferior to English based on the erroneous belief that it requires less mental capacity perpetuates the image of Spanish-speaking Latinxs as not only mentally deficient but culturally inferior as well (Grosfoguel, 2007; Menchaca, 1997; Pascoe, 2009). The idea that Latinx youth are intellectually and culturally deficient, due to their association with the Spanish language, has informed, and continues to inform, institutional practices towards them and educational policy targeted at them, thus shaping their experience within educational institutions and contributing to their underachievement and subjugation (Callahan, 2005; Kwon, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2006; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Noguera, 2008; Valenzuela, 1999; Yosso et al., 2001).

This dissertation demonstrates deficit-views of Latinxs persist today and can be found within the policies and funding streams community-based educational spaces pursue. As a result, this study investigated the changes CBES are experiencing due to the economic-funding context, as well as the deficit-based believes and stereotypes they unintentionally reflect and the way Latinx navigate the program as they develop their racial identity. The following section elaborates upon the theories that comprise the Critical Coloniality framework that informed my analysis of the research. This is followed by a review of literature related to the educational experience of Latinxs within schools, the development and use of community based educational spaces, and funding for these spaces.

Theoretical Framework: Critical Coloniality

This dissertation utilizes a "Critical Coloniality" theoretical framework to understand how Latinx youth make sense of their experiences within federally-funded CBES and how their participation shapes their racialization, informs the complexity of their raced and ethnic identities, and encourages high college and career aspirations. From a critical coloniality lens, Latinx experiences within CBES are considered deeply rooted within colonial constructions, discourses, and power relations which stem from a long history of racial subjugation and its' intersection with other hierarchal constructs of separation (Quijano, 2007; Grosfoguel, 2007; Valenzuela, 1999). This framework also views modernity as an extension of coloniality, meaning colonialism and colonial power relations continue within modern institutions with race central to structuring society, daily relations, and individual experience.

Coloniality of power (COP) and *Latino critical race theory* (LatCrit) inform the critical coloniality framework. These frameworks both stem from similar, but largely distinct, schools of thought, where COP is a branch of Post-Colonial theory (Cesair, 2000; Hall, 1997; Memmi, 1965; Said, 2003) and LatCrit originates from Critical Race Theory (CRT) in education and law (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002; Stefancic and Delgado, 2013; Tate, 1997; Yosso et al., 2001). On their own, each theory offers a rich framework to study the experience of Latinxs within educational organizations, however, given the multiple different factors one must consider in relation to Latinx education, including history, racialization, language, policies, intersection of social constructs, forms of relations, etc., I argue their combination is necessary (Stefancic, 1997; Yosso et al., 2001). The joint application of COP and LatCrit strengthens each theory and facilitates the study of Latinxs by centralizing race, taking a long term view of coloniality, and linking the ideological, international, and local layers of

modernity/coloniality. Within this section, COP and LatCrit are briefly defined with special attention to their contributions to the joint critical coloniality framework.

Coloniality of Power and Its Origins

Coloniality of power stems from "post-colonial" theory which is defined as "a critique of developmentalism, to Eurocentric forms of knowledge, gender inequalities, to racial hierarchies, and to the cultural/ideological processes that foster the subordination of the periphery in the capitalist world-system" (Grosfoguel, 2013, p. 17). Post-colonial theory challenges: the dominant interpretation of the development of the modern world; of how and by whom knowledge is produced; and the underlying ideologies of innate cultural superiority/inferiority that inform relations between groups (Grosfoguel, 2013; Mignolo, 2007; Quijano, 2000). Further, scholars within the theoretical tradition of post-colonialism use the concepts of othering, discourse, representation, and de-colonization to help reveal the effects of colonialism on both the former colonizer (western nations) and the colonized by highlighting the ways in which language, knowledge, and power are used to maintain dominance over subaltern populations (Cesaire, 2000; Hall, 1997; Memmi, 1965; Said, 2003). In short, post-colonial theory rests on the idea that western nations' (colonizer) belief in their own cultural and intellectual superiority empowered them to "know," name, represent and control the colonized "other" through force, all of which constructed and perpetuated a deficit-based image that was used to dehumanize, subjugate, and exploit colonized people (Cesaire, 2000; Hall, 1997; Memmi, 1965; Said, 2003).

Much like post-colonial thought, coloniality of power criticizes Western dominance through the analysis of knowledge and knowledge production, colonialism, the development of the modern world system, and social hierarchies of separation as a means of de-colonizing knowledge and power. Yet, despite these similarities, scholars who branched off and theorized

coloniality of power felt post-colonial theory failed to sufficiently consider the history of Latin American colonialism, race, the contribution of Latin American de-colonial scholars, and knowledge from subaltern, marginalized populations in their critiques of modernity. As a result, Quijano (2000) and other Latin American subaltern studies scholars established a theoretical field that made Latin America the focus of their study, utilized subaltern scholars as opposed to dominant western thinkers, and positioned race in the center of their analysis of the social, economic and political development of the modern world (Ribiero, 2011). In so doing, COP moved away from the class or culture-based analysis employed by post-colonial scholars towards an analysis of modernity/coloniality that is based upon race (Quijano, 2000).

Coloniality of power views the modern/colonial world system as intimately tied to the emergence of the Americas and specifically the imposition of race as a demarcation of difference with inherent hierarchal social values (Quijano, 2000). More specifically, COP scholars argue that work distribution according to geocultural-racial identities in the Americas limited power over and control of resources/institutions to white Europeans, demonstrating the importance of race in the development of the Americas and capitalism (Mignolo, 2012; Quijano, 2007). As a result, COP re-conceptualizes the development of capitalism as a social relation informed by racial hierarchies, and finds Western world power is intimately tied to the racial subjugation of geocultural identities – people from geographic areas that are considered racially and culturally inferior (Mignolo, 2007; Quijano, 2000/2007). Important to this framework are the ideas of coloniality and intersectionality. More specifically, COP rests on the belief that colonial forms of relations informed by the intersection of multiple social constructs have persisted beyond the end of obvert colonialism (Lugones, 2007; Quijano, 2000). Thus, COP requires one to question modernity including power, forms of relations, and normalized Eurocentric epistemologies of

development through a reinterpretation of history from the racialized subaltern perspective to produce "pluralistic knowledges," or multiple understandings of history that exist simultaneously, as a means of exposing modernity/coloniality (Al Hardan, 2014; Grosfoguel, 2003/2013; Mignolo, 2012; Quijano, 2000/2007).

COP and the Study of Educational Spaces

COP as a framework is necessary for this dissertation study because it not only centers Latin America and race, while critiquing dominant epistemologies of Latinxs, it also offers concepts beneficial for the study of Latinx racialization within modern institutions. For instance, COP offers the concepts of representation and language (discourse) similar to post-colonial theory while adding the concept of coloniality and a reinterpreted history of modern development that is dependent upon race, racialization, and associated hierarchal values (Al Hardan, 2014; Grosfoguel, 2007/2013; Lugones, 2007; Mignolo, 2007; Quijano, 2000). Though one can make an argument for the use of post-colonial theory alone as it utilizes similar concepts, COP is a much better fit for the dissertation because it de-centralizes European thinkers and advocates for the production of knowledge from and with subaltern perspectives (Quijano, 2000).

Though some may point out that COP has few examples of how the theoretical framework has been applied to the field of education, I believe the concepts listed above facilitate the analysis of race and the practices of educational institutions, both of which are important for understanding Latinx youth racial identity development. For instance, the use of COP in the study of Latinx youth experiences necessitates taking a historical approach from a subaltern perspective to analyze the development of relations within a CBES. It also requires that we view normalized hierarchies of difference that justify subjugation, i.e. tracking and

differential outcomes within schools, as purposeful and inherent to modernity. Through this approach, we move away from dominant, naturalized understandings of the modern world towards a critical view of modernity where the world has been developed through the subjugation and exploitation of racialized groups within colonial institutions and administrations. This important shift helped me re-conceptualize Latinx youth experiences within educational institutions as examples of colonial processes that are intended to (re)produce the subjugation of minority groups and modern power structures (Grosfoguel, 2007; Moreno Sandoval, 2013).

Latino Critical Race Theory and Its Origins

Much like coloniality of power stems from an established field of thought, Latino critical race theory (LatCrit) emerged from the well-established critical race theory (CRT). In the field of education, CRT is defined as an "attempt to theorize race and use it as an analytic tool for understanding school inequity" that rests on five central propositions about race, property, and their intersections (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). These propositions include ideological and analytical concepts, such as: the assumption that race is endemic to society and is deeply engrained; the belief that race functions as property with associated differential values; that race in the U.S. is intersectional and requires an interdisciplinary approach to study; counter-storytelling as a means to critique naturalized understandings of neutrality; and a critical analysis of laws in the U.S (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Similarly, CRT incorporates the production of counter-spaces as sites where youth can resistance deficit-notions and develop the positive racial identity (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). These propositions compose the tenets of the CRT framework which makes race, and its associated ideological and material property values, central to an analysis of educational inequalities as a means of ultimately transforming society. LatCrit similarly centers race and aims to change society, but differs in their focus on Latinxs.

LatCrit does not exist in opposition to CRT, rather it is a branch that was created to call attention to the fact that Latinxs, and the problems they face in society and schools, are often ignored within studies of race and education (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002; Stefancic, 1997). In fact, these two theoretical traditions share the same foundations and goals as they both study the role of race, and racialization, within the educational experiences of minoritized youth including a desire to "examine how educational theory and practice are used to subordinate and marginalize" (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 312). In addition, both theories advocate for or believe in "the *intercentricity* of race and racism; the challenge to dominant ideology; the commitment to social justice; the centrality of experiential knowledge, and the interdisciplinary perspective" (Yosso et al., 2001, p. 90-91). Yet, LatCrit was a necessary extension because it "helps to analyze issues that CRT cannot or does not, like language, immigration, ethnicity, culture, identity, phenotype, and sexuality" (Villalpando, 2004, pp. 42-43) as they relate to Latinx education and experiences. As such, LatCrit focuses on the pan-ethnic Latinx population, their racialization, language, immigration, culture, etc., that inform their educational experiences and success, making it an ideal fit for this dissertation and my focus on Latinx youth and their experiences in CBESs.

LatCrit and the Study of Educational Spaces

LatCrit is a very useful theory for the study of Latinx educational experiences because of the approach it takes to understanding and challenging the inequitable education and hierarchal social relations they experience. LatCrit requires an interdisciplinary, inter-connected approach to understanding Latinx educational outcomes, and views narratives and practices within educational institutions as non-neutral and directly implicated in the reproduction of hierarchal, colonial power relations (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002; Villalpando, 2004; Yosso et al., 2001).

Therefore, the use of LatCrit helps us understand how educational institutions contribute to the the subjugation of Latinxs. However, a LatCrit framework alone tends to focus on Latinxs within the U.S. context, thus, I argue a joint application with coloniality of power is necessary to gain a broader understanding of Latinx youth's educational experience within a community-based educational program and their racial identity development.

Of course, an argument can be made for the sole use of a LatCrit framework within this dissertation because it allows me to analyze the experience of Latinxs within U.S. educational institutions, the way race intersects with other social constructs to shapes said experience, and the role of language in their education and racialization (Flores, 2016; Rosa, 2016; Rosa & Flores, 2017). More specifically, with the important theoretical concepts of counter-storytelling (Yosso, et al., 2001), counter-spaces (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000), and pedagogies of the home (Delgado-Bernal, 2001), one can begin to investigate Latinx youth experiences, resistance to, and development within dominant, deficit-based educational spaces. However, the LatCrit framework, as mentioned previously, is confined to the U.S. context, which can limit the analysis of Latinx racialization by overlooking the connections between international relations and their everyday experiences within educational institutions. As a result, I jointly applied LatCrit and COP in order to strengthen both individual theories and produce a framework that considers the local and national context, history of global development, (international) relations, and race and language hierarchies as important factors in the study of Latinx youth's educational experiences and racial identity development within a CBES.

Defining Critical Coloniality

Critical coloniality combines concepts from both coloniality of power and LatCrit to construct a framework that emphasizes analyzing the history of development of the modern

world system, race, language, immigration, culture, gender, etc., all of which should be considered within a study of Latinx educational experiences and racial identity development (Villalpando, 2004). Having already described both COP and LatCrit one can see the multiple similarities they share, as well as the differences that allow them to work well together. Similarities include a primary focus on race and its intersections with other hierarchal social constructs, illuminating marginalized voices to empower and motivate others (counter-stories), viewing and critiquing policy/institutions as non-neutral agents of the state, a concern with de-colonizing knowledge from subaltern perspectives, and highlighting agency within spaces of resistance (i.e. counter-spaces). These shared interests are studied through conceptual tools common to both COP and LatCrit, including race, racism, and racialization; intersectionality; discourse; representation; resistance; and power analysis. With an end goal of disrupting dominant, colonizing epistemology while empowering marginalized populations to critique and challenge dominant narratives (i.e. counter-stories) and deficit-framing (Briggs, 2002; Grosfoguel, 2003, 2013; Memmi, 1965; Said, 2003; Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002; Yosso et al., 2001). The similarities between LatCrit and COP facilitate their joint use within critical coloniality, while their differences, specifically the level of analysis and geographic area of study, strengthen each other.

The two major differences between LatCrit and COP are their geographic area of interest/study and their level of analysis. Geographic area of interest/study refers to the physical context that studies informed by a COP or LatCrit framework investigate. More specifically, COP concentrates on studying the international/national with an interest on race, colonialism, and forms of (power) relations between countries, while LatCrit is U.S. specific and studies race and education within the country and in schools, specifically. Combined, these differences

strengthen a study on Latinx educational experience and racial identity development by allowing

the researcher to maintain a focus on the local while adding a history-based international lens

that helps us better understand the local context. For example, COP studies the coloniality of

modern nation states and their respective institutions leading to an analysis of the continued

unequal power relations between countries (Quijano, 2000; Mignolo, 2007), while LatCrit

studies policy, schooling, and race in the country to understand unequal outcomes and

experiences of Latinxs. Combined, we are provided with a framework that links the international

with the national and local, since schools are tied to the nation-state whose power is tied to the

former system of colonialism according to COP (Grosfoguel, 2003; Memmi, 1965; Yosso et al.,

2001). This framework allows me to connect practices (policy, engagement) and forms of

relations abroad to national policy and practices that are directly tied to said international actions

(i.e. U.S. backing of coup in Honduras and its' ties to migrant caravan, refugee policy).

A second major difference between LatCrit and COP is their level of analysis. Whereas

COP situates their studies in the political-economic-cultural level, LatCrit concentrates their

analysis on institutions (policy), education, and culture, specifically the connections between

U.S. society, race, language and education. When combined, the resulting framework requires an

interdisciplinary analysis that engages the cultural, political, economic, and educational levels of

society to understand the influence that race has on the educational experiences of racialized,

nondominant youth. The differences between LatCrit and COP serve to strengthen both theories

when utilized as a joint framework. As standalone theoretical frameworks they offer multiple

concepts and tools that would make them a good choice for this dissertation, but considering the

historical and raciolinguistic lens, I incorporated to understand the contemporary educational

experiences of Latinxs within U.S. institutions, along with the belief in race and coloniality as

central to shaping the modern world system, their joint application through critical coloniality was beneficial and necessary for this study.

The joint framework of critical coloniality is necessary for this dissertation because related theories concentrate on understanding the emergence of race within the U.S. and the racialization of subaltern populations through schooling upon arriving to this hierarchal society (Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Feagin, 2013, Haney Lopez, 1994; Omi & Winant, 2014). In contrast, a critical coloniality framework extends our lens beyond the U.S. context while providing tools to critically analyze the educational experience of Latinxs within CBESs and the role of race in shaping said experience and development. As mentioned previously, concepts such as racialization, intersectionality, discourse, representation, and resistance assisted in the study of the economic-funding context, organizational discourse, social relations at the site, and the policies/practices that contribute to the racialization and colonization of individuals. Similarly, the concepts of counter-storytelling, counter-spaces of resistance, reinterpretation of developmentalism, and coloniality assisted me in illuminating the ongoing, historical, and systemic subjugation of nondominant groups and how they respond to and resist deficit-informed dominant spaces. Combined, these concepts serve as useful tools in decolonizing epistemologies, knowledge, institutions, and practices by emphasizing the voice of marginalized populations (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Quijano, 2000/2007; Yosso et al., 2001). Throughout this dissertation, centering the voice of Latinx youth provided unique perspectives on CBESs, and how they made sense of their experiences, participation, and development within them.

With the above description in mind, I argue a combined critical coloniality framework reveals the connection between the political-economic-cultural conceptions of modernity and educational institutions, both of which are understood as extensions of the colonial state with

race being central to the structure/functioning of social institutions and relations. This framework allows me to study the ways in which language within education and federal policy, such as the Muslim ban, attacks on sanctuary cities or English primacy laws in the southwest, function as a part of the colonial state to reproduce hierarchal colonial relations and internalized, racialized conceptions of self. As it relates to community-based educational spaces, critical coloniality helps reveal the dual roles CBESs play as sites where counter-spaces can be created to resist the colonial practices of traditional schools and as an extension of the colonial state itself. The following section reviews the literature related to Latinx educational experience in the United States as well as the field of community-based educational spaces.

<div align="center">**Literature Review**</div>

Latinxs and Education in the U.S.

Latinx populations in the United States have historically had a complicated, largely oppressive, educational experience within public school systems. Scholars who study Latinx education have found these negative experiences often stem from their racialization and deficit framing within policies (Haney Lopez, 2006; Menchaca, 1997; Sanchez, 1932; Sanchez, 1995; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002; Valencia, 1997; Valenzuela, 1999). To better understand the relationship between Latinx youth educational experiences and their racialization, the following literature review addresses the racialization of Latinxs, their experiences within schools/CBESs, and the way language is used to racialize them. The following review demonstrates how public/educational policies, stereotypes, and deficit views have informed school practice and public perception to construct a racialized image of Latinxs as Spanish-Speaking, intellectually deficient, racially-mixed outsiders in need of saving and/or control (Haney Lopez, 2006; Menchaca, 1997). To this day, Latinxs continue to be framed as racially inferior due to assumed

intellectual and linguistic deficits, which informs educational practices and relations towards them, i.e. tracking, English primacy, ESL, etc., resulting in limited achievement and opportunities both in and out of schools. From a critical coloniality perspective these outcomes are understood as a result of the purposeful use of educational institutions to subjugate minority populations for the economic benefit of the dominant White group, or more simply the coloniality of schools (Grosfoguel, 2007; Quijano, 2000, 2007).

Race and Racialization

Race is a fluid social construct that functions as a hierarchal "folk classification, a product of popular beliefs about human differences" (Feagin, 2013, p. 49). Scholars understand race to be the categorization of observable, supposedly real, biological differences that correlate to internal abilities (Yudell, 2009) which can be "measured, determined, gotten to the truth of" (Pascoe, 2009, p. 8). As such, race is a classification tool that supports the creation of a social hierarchy based on assumed internal differences between individuals. While the categories or reasoning used to differentiate between human groups have changed overtime (i.e. language, religion, biology, culture, etc.), race remains a means to categorize differences along a firm hierarchy that *always* leaves White people concentrated at the top with the power to control perceived "inferior" groups (Valencia, 1997). As a categorization tool, race is not merely a label or presumed natural reality, race is a fluid social construct designed to maintain dominance within the hands of select few (Byrd & Hughey, 2015).

In *Racial Formation* (2014), Omi and Winant theorize the existence of race and they ways in which it operates in the United States. According to these authors, the process by which observed differences are categorized into racial classifications is known as "racialization," defined as "the sociohistorical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited,

transformed, and destroyed" (Omi & Winant, 2008, p. 55). Their definition implies that race, and

how groups gain racial meanings, is not fixed but is ever-changing. In Lee's (2005) study of the

racialization of Hmong youth within schools, she defines the racialization of non-white

populations as the lengthy, interactive process of becoming a racial minority in U.S. society.

Further, as it relates to immigrant populations, Lee (2005) argues "race informs immigrant

encounters with social institutions and shapes immigrant identities" (p. 10). Combined, these

definitions point to a historical process through which a given individual or population becomes

a "racial minority" and is inserted within the U.S. White-to-Black hierarchy (Lee, 2005; Omi &

Winant, 2014). In short, racialization is a process that occurs over time, in relation to others and

institutions (i.e. schools), and can be interrupted or changed through racial-political projects

(Omi & Winant, 2008) and/or self-identification (Scott & Hebrard, 2012).

Historically, racialization has been most clearly seen when new groups are incorporated

into the pre-existing U.S. socio-racial hierarchy. Though not a "race," the process by which

Latinxs' cultural and linguistic differences were given meaning and incorporated into U.S.

society demonstrates the fluid, unstable, and contested process of racialization (Omi & Winant,

2008). More specifically, Latinx experiences show that race is a context dependent tool for

classification, while racialization is the process by which that tool is applied. Schools, in

particular, are the most common place for the racialization process to occur, which the following

section of the literature review briefly reviews.

Latinx Experience in U.S. Schools

The Latinx experience in the U.S. has been informed by public perception, policy, and deficit-

assumptions about their religion, origin, biology, and culture (Menchaca & Valencia, 1990).

These deficit-based beliefs have not only informed public thought and discourse about Latinxs,

but practices towards and interactions with them, all of which have contributed to their racialization within institutions. For instance, scholars who have studied Latinx educational experiences have found that deficit views of Spanish inherent to schools have made these institutions the primary vehicle through which racial "othering" has occurred (Haney Lopez, 2006; Menchaca, 1997; Monroy, 1999; Sanchez, 1932; Sanchez, 1995; Solorzano & Yosso, 2001; Valencia, 1997; Valenzuela, 1999; Wilson, 2003a). Within schools, deficit views of presumed Spanish-speakers have constructed Latinxs as perpetual outsiders and "second-class citizens" (Haney Lopez, 2006; Menchaca & Valencia, 1990; Wilson, 2003a), while contributing to a narrow understanding of their educational needs as limited to language acquisition, i.e. English primacy, or low-level, basic academic skills (Gandara, 2000; Monroy, 1999; Sanchez, 1995). The literature demonstrates that the framing of Latinxs as intellectually deficient perpetual outsiders contributes to the subtractive environment they face within schools that divests them of cultural characteristics, including Spanish, illuminating their role as an extension of the colonial state (Grosfoguel, 2007; Haney Lopez, 2006; Valencia, 1997; Valenzuela, 1999). The following section reviews literature related to Latinx educational experience. However, prior to doing so, it is important to note that the term Latinx is purposely used in place of nationality-specific, intra-Latinx categories (i.e. Mexican-American, Central-American, etc.) because this dissertation is interested in understanding the collective identity imposed upon these various groups through the process of racialization.

In the 1930's, George I. Sanchez (1932) noticed that institutional practices towards Latinxs were producing inequitable educational outcomes by not considering the influence of linguistic and cultural differences on student performance within the classroom. In his study of New Mexican Latinxs, he found the schools they attended suppressed the use of the Spanish

language by forcing Latinx students to learn within English-only classrooms, while measuring intellectual capacity using English-only tests. In so doing, he argued, schools created a negative environment and a stereotype of Latinxs as a culturally deprived, intellectually deficient population by not properly accounting for the impact of linguistic suppression and cultural differences. Through the lens of critical coloniality, Sanchez's (1932) findings are considered an example of the extension of colonial power relations to Latinxs, since the schools, which are controlled by the dominant group, were utilized to colonize (assimilate) Latinx youth into very specific, lower tier roles within U.S. society (Grosfoguel, 2007; Valenzuela, 1999). Since Sanchez's groundbreaking work, multiple scholars have written about the role of schools in producing and reproducing inequitable outcomes for Latinx youth.

In *Subtractive Schooling*, a study of Mexican(American) student's educational experience in an overcrowded Texas school, Valenzuela (1999) finds Mexican(America) youth are divested of important socio-cultural resources, leaving them progressively vulnerable to academic failure. She argues that differential outcomes observed between Mexican and Mexican(American) youth are purposeful and arise from "the structural aspects of school, such as academic tracking; a curricular bias against Mexican culture, the Spanish language, and things Mexican; and a legacy of (at best) ambiguous relations between the school and the community it serves" (p. 16). As such, U.S. schooling (re)produces the low achievement of Latinxs, in large part by subjugating their cultural and linguistic differences, and forcing them to assimilate by adopting a dominant orientation to schooling. From a critical coloniality lens, the devaluing of Latinx culture and the deficit framing of the Spanish language not only stripped Latinx youth of their cultural identity and contributed to their poor academic performance, it reveals schools to be extensions of the

colonial state that are purposely structured to produce "citizens" through "Americanization" efforts (Labaree, 1997; Valenzuela, 1999).

Much like Valenzuela (1999) revealed schools to be "subtractive" spaces for Latinx youth, George J. Sanchez (1995, 1997) found that U.S. schools in the southwest, where Latinx populations have historically been largest, were sites of "Americanization" efforts to rid minority populations of unwanted characteristics (culture/language) in order to assimilate them into the hierarchal U.S. society. More specifically, the Americanization of Latinx youth, which primarily included suppressing the Spanish language and the divestment of similar cultural characteristics through English-only low-tier instruction, not only framed them as culturally and intellectually deficient, but was ultimately intended to produce a subjugated (colonized), compliant, and culturally devoid work force that could be exploited for the economic benefit of White Americans (Grosfoguel, 2007; Menchaca & Valencia, 1990; Sanchez, 1995). Thus, the Americanization of Latinx youth, and their deficit framing, reveals the vested interest of White Americans because "the economic needs of those in power are often rationalized as common sense practices" (Menchaca & Valencia, 1990, p. 15). It also deepens our understanding of Latinx educational experiences as being largely negative, driven by economic interests, and shaped by racialized deficit-based stereotypes of their culture, intellectual abilities, and language, which continues to this day.

Contemporary critical scholars, who study Latinx education have found that their educational experience in the U.S. continues to be shaped by deficit-views of their race and abilities, and has produced inequitable outcomes (Delgado-Bernal, 2002; Gandara, 2010; Noguera, 2008; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). These inequitable outcomes reproduce and seemingly "confirm" the "master narrative" of Latinxs as being intellectually deficient, which

supports the false naturalized belief that their academic achievement directly correlates with their racial or cultural identity (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). According to Noguera (2008), in the public imagination race is believed to hold "innate human properties" (p. 90), that shape the practices of schools and largely determine student achievement and outcomes. In other words, with race assumed to be a biological reality that carries inherent deficiencies, "educators and others accept low performance as the by-product of something they cannot control" (Noguera, 2008, p. 101) which justifies and normalizes the low achievement of racialized youth. Along these same lines, Solorzano and Yosso (2002) found that school practices "draw on majoritarian stories to explain educational inequality through a cultural deficit model…[and] pass on beliefs that students of color are culturally deprived" (p. 31). As such, the very structure and practices of schools not only perpetuate the racialized idea that the low performance of Latinx youth is naturalized as it is linked to their innate abilities, they also reveal how schools have been and are central to the reproduction of deficit-views about, and the negative experiences of, Latinx youth.

From a critical coloniality lens, the above literature on Latinx youth educational experiences has shown that schools continue to be colonial agents as they have been used to Americanize, racialize, and divest cultural and linguistic traits deemed "un-American" from students (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Gandara, 2000; Monroy, 1999). In other words, deficit views of Spanish contributed to the racialization and colonization of Latinxs that has led to their subordinate social positions (Rosa & Flores, 2017). This history of deficit-framing and subtractive schooling practices have constructed a racialized image of Latinxs that limits our understanding of them not as whole humans or citizens of the U.S., but as "outsiders" who pose a threat and "language learners" whose academic and social needs are limited to English instruction and Americanization (Chavez, 2013; Rosa, 2016). Such a limited representation of

Latinx youth facilitates their continued colonization within social institutions. The following section elaborates how language is used in the racialization of Latinxs and how it justifies their inequitable outcomes within schools.

       Racialization of Spanish in the United States & Effects on Education. Within the larger collection of literature on race and racialization, scholars who study Latinx racial formation in the U.S. find language is a primary factor used in framing them as "other" (Cowan, 2012; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Gandara, 2000, 2010; Gross, 2006; Pascoe, 2009; Rosa & Flores, 2017; Wilson, 2003a). In fact, the very term Latino/a/@/x implies a group identity based on language, i.e. Latin, exemplifying how language is connected to the dominant construction of Latinxs in the U.S. Spanish has also been used as a signifier of difference that carries implications for Latinxs social identity, their "race," and majoritarian conceptions of the imagined U.S. citizen. The following literature review briefly explores the ways Spanish itself has been racialized and the role it plays in the racialization of Latinxs (Rosa & Flores, 2017).

       From the incorporation of Mexican (Americans) to the U.S. with the *Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo* to the present time, Latinxs have faced a social environment that has denied them the legal privileges of citizens due to dominant perceptions of Spanish, and its speakers, as deficient and un-American (Cowan, 2012; Pascoe, 2009). The imagined proximity of Latinxs to the "inferior" Spanish language framed them as second class, non-citizens within public/academic discourse while justifying their social, economic, and political subjugation (Anderson, 2006; Cowan, 2012; Gross, 2006; Rosa, 2016; Wilson, 2003a). According to Gandara (2010) the racialization of Spanish occurs because the language an individual speaks is a marker of their socioracial and political position in the country. In other words, language is seen as being intimately linked to citizenship status and race. For instance, in the U.S. the

"citizen (and by extension, student) has been defined in terms of having a primary allegiance to speaking only in English" (Gandara, 2010, p. 31), with non-English speakers positioned as "outsiders" who are subordinate to the White, English-speaking population. Similarly, within educational institutions, Spanish-speakers have been positioned as an emergent population with future significance, who must first lose their language to become a part of the state, which legitimizes their marginalization and the continual deferment of social inclusion they experience (Rosa, 2016).

As seen above, Latinxs proximity to Spanish, regardless of actual language ability, constrains their educational, social, and economic upward mobility while framing them as racialized non-citizens (Gandara, 2010). These deficit-based views of Spanish speakers inform language policy in education, and practices towards them, resulting in a narrow focus on English primacy as a means of Americanization (Flores & Rosa, 2015). In short, the framing of Latinxs as intellectually deficient outsiders due to their (assumed) language abilities is directly linked to perceptions of their citizenship status and race.

Similar to the intersection between citizenship and language in "othering" Latinxs, Pascoe (2009), Wilson (2003b), and Flores and Rosa (2017) argued that dominant perceptions of Latinxs racial identity were informed by their presumed language ability. For instance, Pascoe (2009) found Latinxs were considered such "an irredeemably mixed-race population that they [the state] never produced a racial term" for them (p. 122). Instead, Latinxs were legally categorized as a White subgroup who spoke Spanish, demonstrating that their status as a citizen was informed and limited by their proximity to the Spanish language. According to Wilson (2003b), Latinxs were officially categorized as "other white" because they were legally considered descendants of Spanish conquerors and, therefore, were of the White race. Yet,

despite their legal "white" status, Latinxs[8] have continued to face discrimination socially and within institutions in large part due to their assumed language ability because race and language have been co-naturalized and are intimately linked in the public imagination of the U.S (Flores & Rosa, 2017). A critical coloniality framework helps us understand that the contradiction between the legal "white" status of Latinxs and their framing as intellectually-challenged, non-English speaking "outsiders" exemplifies the coloniality Latinxs face in the United States (Flores & Rosa, 2017; Gandara, 2010; Haney Lopez, 1994; Quijano, 2000; Wilson, 2003b).

This brief review of the literature has shown that language, like any other categorizing tool, is inscribed with racial meaning and value in comparison to White dominant norms. Historically, Spanish was framed as being inferior to English, the language of the new majority population following the conquest and colonization of the Northern Mexican (U.S. Southwest) territories (Del Castillo, 1992). Consequently, the cultural subordination of Spanish extended not only to the language, but to its (assumed) speakers as well, resulting in limited educational, social, and economic opportunities due to the threat they posed (Chavez, 2013). In short, this review has shown that with the co-naturalization of race and language (Flores & Rosa, 2017), Spanish has become racialized, meaning it is a marker of difference and outsider status, which contributes to the racialization of Latinxs themselves and their framing as second-class, subordinate citizens.

The subjugation of Spanish, and it's presumed speakers, have contributed to the negative experiences of Latinx youth within institutions. It is within this reality that community-

---

[8] It should be noted the term Latina/o/@/x is a large umbrella label used to refer to a population that obscures the diversity of people within it. In this case, "Latino" refers to an ethnic group that historically has been considered legally "White." However, those who are grouped and labeled as "Latino" are highly diverse and include White, Black, Indigenous, and racially-mixed individuals. This diversity, and the limitation of the Latino label, is most evident in the legal vs. social status of Latinxs in the southwest, and their differential treatment according to phenotype, surname, language, and culture (Donato & Hanson, 2012; Gross, 2006; Haney Lopez, 2006).

based educational spaces emerged as sites that supported the educational achievement of Latinxs, and in some cases, as counter-spaces "where deficit-notions of people of color can be challenged and where a positive [collegiate] racial climate can be established and maintained" (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000, p. 70). However, overtime, with the infusion of federal, state, and philanthropic dollars to be used for neoliberal ends, CBES committed to de-colonial work have been pressured to change and align themselves with the colonial state (Lipman, 2011a). To better understand the role of funding in community-based educational spaces, the following section reviews literature related to federal and state funding in CBES, the changes organizations have undergone, and the need to further study the experiences of Spanish-speaking Latinx youth.

Community Based Educational Programs and the Role of Federal Funding

In a critical analysis of the normalized assumptions of adolescence in the U.S., Lesko (1996) found that youth constantly encounter social institutions such as schools, laws, and policy., that frame them in paternalistic and colonial ways to justify their control and surveillance as they move towards a culturally accepted raced, gendered, and classed norm. Given the extended history of negative experience with schooling, and the continued representation of their culture and Spanish as a deficit, it should come as no surprise that Latinx youth continue to feel disconnected from traditional school sites. Educational researchers, including Valenzuela (1999), Gandara (2010), Sanchez (1995), and San Miguel (2004) have shown that when Latinx students do not feel they, or their cultural background, are welcomed, appreciated, valued, or supported they become resistant to an educational system that has historically attempted to Americanize, or assimilate, them through "cultural subtraction" (Valenzuela, 1999). Within this context, Latinx communities have attempted to provide self-controlled educational services at times creating "cultural schools" such as in the early 20th century (Haney Lopez, 2006; San Miguel, 2004), or

programs and organizations to provide services that they were often excluded from, i.e. recreation, education, arts, etc. (Halpern, 2002, 2003). The following literature review delves more deeply into the historical use of community-based educational spaces in relation to Latinxs, the role they have played in the lives of minoritized youth, and lastly, the changes they are experiencing as a result of the pressure from the large amounts of federal and state funding that has become available over the last 30 years.

At this point, it is important to provide a brief definition, and justification, for the use of the term Community-Based Educational Spaces. Community-based educational spaces (CBES), more commonly known as After School Programs (ASP) or Out of School Time (OST) programs, is a term used to refer to programs and organizations that provide educational services (academic, recreational, and enrichment) to youth of all ages outside of traditional, formal school settings. CBES is used in place of ASP or OST because "it provides a broader understanding of the full range of pedagogical practices employed within such settings…[it] elucidates the strength and agency of community. [And] By decentering schools, community-based spaces (operated by non-school entities) exemplify the capacity of these programs to complement and supplement student learning and development" (Baldridge, 2018, p. 4). With the understanding that the language and labels we choose to use are powerful (Apple, 2013; Bernstein, 1975), I utilize CBE spaces and CBES interchangeably as needed (Baldridge, 2014; Halpern, 2002). Lastly, Halpern (2002) believes CBES are varied and not easily defined but, as is shown below, they have historically shared characteristics that construct the field of study.

Perspectives on the History of the Use of CBES

CBES, many of which are non-profit organizations under federal tax codes 501(c)3 or 501(c)4, exist today because "they serve a function the government does not provide" (DiMaggio

& Anheier, 1990). In their historical analysis and studies of contemporary community-based educational spaces, Halpern (2002, 2003) and Halpern, Baker, and Mollard (2000) argue these sites have historically formed when communities and/or small groups of individuals organize around an issue of shared interest. As a result, according to Halper (2002), the field of after-school programs "is itself a complete mix: identifiable yet extraordinarily heterogeneous; vibrant yet fragile; a protected space for play and enriching experiences" (p. 186). Within communities of color, CBES often share a focus on empowering youth to resist and respond to their lived realities, while providing them with holistic support to increase their achievement. In general, these sites have a shared interest in working with youth (Baldridge et al., 2017; Riggs et al., 2010), yet how one chooses to identify these spaces can vary according to the use or purpose CBES are meant to serve.

Scholarship on the wide field of community-based education can be condensed into two groups according to the intended purpose and use of the CBES studied. On one hand is the "containment use" (Kwon, 2013) of community-based educational spaces, where programs studied were used for one of two purposes: containment or to provide space for increased safe play (Halpern, 2003). Scholarship in this group finds the development of CBE programs have been driven by the white dominant group with a core interest in confining children, usually minority youth, in response to social or contextual changes (Halpern, 2003; Mahoney, Lord & Carryl, 2005; Silloway, 2010; Zhang & Byrd, 2006). On the other hand, scholarship that studies "critical, de-colonial use" CBES have found these programs are driven by the purpose of disrupting inequalities that marginalized communities face (Baldridge, 2014; Ginwright & Cammarota, 2007; Halpern, Baker & Mollard, 2002, Kwon, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2006). The scholarship in this latter group expands our understanding of the role of CBES. CBES are not

narrowly limited to containing and controlling youth, rather CBES can be used to holistically develop youth, engage youth in activism, community organizing, to provide enrichment, and foster critical thinking, among others. "Critical, de-colonial" CBES were created for multiple purposes, but have remained committed to challenging the colonial structures that make subjugation an expected outcome of traditional schooling (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2007; Menchaca, 1997; Nygreen, Kwon, & Sanchez, 2006; North, 2009; Valenzuela, 1999).

Prior to elaborating upon the differences between each group of scholarship and its perspectives on the history of uses for CBES, it is important to note that the "containment" and "de-colonial" labels used to describe scholarship around CBES refer to the purpose or use of the CBES being studied. In addition, these groupings are of my own construction and interpretation of the scholarly field. Though I argue the distinctions exists in the literature, they may not be as easily identifiable in the real world to the general public or youth participants. In other words, the current context does not allow for such an easy distinction as some CBES may operate from a "critical, de-colonial use" perspective, but reinforce "containment use" frames, or vice-versa. Regardless, I believe understanding these different perspectives on "uses" matters because it may help us understand the outcomes produced by CBES today (Baldridge, 2019; Fusco, Lawrence, Matloff-Nieves, & Ramos, 2013).

The "containment use" scholarship is so titled because the spaces, programs, and organizations they studied tend to share a similar view about the role of community-based educational spaces and have a similar approach to the work they do (Halpern, 2002; Kwon, 2013). According to Halpern's (2002) history of after school programs, one can trace the origin of CBES to the industrial revolution (1880-1910) and the social changes that resulted particularly around child labor. For instance, as the industrial revolution grew, anti-child labor and

compulsory education laws were passed that limited the time youth could work, while increasing both the amount of time youth spent in school and unsupervised time after school. Halpern (2002) argued adults viewed the increased unsupervised time as a problem because they believed it would either increase youth deviance or endanger children, in particular within overcrowded urban centers. As a result, "containment use" scholarship finds the first of these programs were started in response to contextual factors created by the industrial revolution and were meant to contain youth (Lassonde, 2005; Silloway, 2010).

Though "containment use" CBES may have been started with the best of intentions, such as to provide resources and support for underserved youth, when studied they were found to contribute to either the containment of youth believed to be at risk of engaging in deviant behavior and/or the containment of youth through structured play to keep them away from negative urban social influences including crime, vices, immigrant groups, and free time (Halpern, 2002; Lassonde, 2005). The primary objective of such "containment use" CBES was to keep children off of the street and contained under the supervision of an adult while engaging in enriching activities (Zhang & Byrd, 2006). This included programs and organizations like "boy's clubs" that were started for affluent white boys and then extended to all inner-city white youth through recreation centers. Ethnic and minoritized youth including Eastern European, Black, and Latinx youth, did not have access to CBE spaces because they were often framed as intellectually and culturally inferior (Menchaca, 1997). Much like the development of traditional schools, it was not until the 1950's following integration efforts that racially minoritized youth were allowed to participate in historically White community-based educational spaces.

The "containment use" literature on community-based educational spaces is limited in scope because it does not consider informal, non-white spaces that emerged for more radical

purposes. In contrast, "critical, de-colonial use" scholarship shows CBES have been sites of informal education and teaching where radical acts of resistance occur, such as underground reading schools on plantations (Fultz, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 2006), self-started cultural schools in the southwest (San Miguel, 2004; Wilson, 2003), and any other counter-space that attempted to provide a service not extended to or inclusive of traditionally marginalized populations (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2007; Nygreen, Kwon, & Sanchez, 2008; Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). As such, scholarship grouped under the label of "critical, de-colonial use" collectively show that CBES have a much deeper history, and more varied purposes/uses, than the origin and purposes seen in the "containment use" scholarship. Further distinguishing this scholarship is the fact that it is inclusive of, and tend to focus on, racially minoritized populations while viewing CBES as spaces that can challenge inequalities by holistically developing youth, engaging them in activism and community organizing, providing enrichment activities, fostering critical thinking, and so forth.

"Critical, de-colonial use" scholarship tends to have a broader view of CBES and views them as having a history of being used for critical and de-colonial purposes as a means of educating children to overcome inequalities they may face and challenge the colonial structures that make their subjugation an expected outcome of traditional schooling (Menchaca, 1997; North, 2009; Valenzuela, 1999). Thus, from a "de-colonial use" perspective, community-based educational spaces are not limited to containment, but are meant to open opportunities for marginalized and racialized children through flexible programming, strong mentoring relationships, political activism, and critical teaching. Yet, their potential to holistically develop Latinx and other racialized youth is quickly changing due to the modern neoliberal, paternalistic economic context they exist within.

As stated previously, these groupings are of my own construction and interpretation of the scholarly field. Though I argue the distinctions between scholarship groups exists in the literature, they may not be as easily identifiable in the real world to the general public or youth participants. However, it should still be noted that these two perspectives on "uses" to an extent explain and help us understand the work of CBES today. With this in mind, this dissertation is aligned with "critical, de-colonial use" scholarship due to my interpretation of CBES as sites where radical resistance can and does occur. As such, a review of the characteristics that facilitate this de-colonial work within CBES is provided below.

De-colonial Processes within CBESs. CBES that operate from a "containment use" orientation serve as an extension of the colonial state because they are intended to control groups based on dominant narratives of racial minority populations. Images constructed by these narratives perpetuate an idea of racially minoritized youth as simultaneously vulnerable and dangerous which lead to increased racialization and negative experiences within CBESs. Contrastingly, CBES that follow a "critical, de-colonial use" orientation can serve as sites of resistance and empowerment by creating increased opportunities for youth and preparing them to challenge or resist colonial structures such as schools. My interest with this study is to better understand the de-colonial practices, relations, and processes within community-based educational spaces that facilitate the racial identity development and high college/career aspirations of Latinx youth. Therefore, within this section a brief overview of three de-colonial characteristics of CBESs along with the differences between deficit and asset orientations to their work with youth are provided.

The literature reveals there are three primary characteristics that distinguish CBES from traditional academic environments and facilitate critical, de-colonial outcomes. The first

characteristic is the fact that they exist outside of the formally structured, impersonal system of schools and are not rigidly controlled by standards which allows for greater experimentation within them (Halpern, 2002; Pacheco, 2018). This rigid system of schooling in the U.S. has produced subtractive experiences for Latinx youth due to the tracking and poor relationships with teachers they experience, while contributing to their racialization via Americanization efforts and labeling as intellectually and linguistically deficient (Gandara, 2010; Valenzuela, 1999). In contrast, CBES have the potential to make youth feel welcomed, accepted, and engaged through authentic relationship building, recognizing youth voice, and respecting their cultural differences by including them in the space (Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Jones & Deustch, 2013; Lerner, Dowling, & Anderson, 2003; Mahoney, Lord, & Carryl, 2005; Pacheco, 2018; Schmidt, 2011). As a result, CBES are more likely to meet youths' holistic developmental needs and foster positive self-images (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Jones & Deustch, 2013; Pacheco & Nao, 2009).

The loose-coupling of CBES to state academic standards makes the second de-colonial characteristic possible, resulting in more flexibility in programming which increases their potential to meet youths' holistic needs and foster positive self-images (Jones & Deustch, 2013; Gamoran, Secada, & Marrett, 2000). Their inherent flexibility allows CBES to increase youth engagement though developmentally appropriate and culturally-relevant programs that match their cognitive, psycho-social level, help them acquire applicable skills, and allow them to direct their own learning, fostering a positive self-image and confidence (Baldridge, Hill, & Davis, 2011; Bulanda & McCrea, 2012; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Jones & Deustch, 2013; Pacheco, 2018). Thus, the potential to offer culturally relevant, developmentally appropriate programs that engage youth in holistic ways is part of what distinguishes CBES from rigidly controlled

schools, along with the opportunity they provide youth to build authentic relationships with adults and peers, all of which contribute to their well-rounded development.

The third de-colonial characteristic of community-based educational spaces is the increased potential they offer for youth to build authentic caring relationships with peers and adults within a low-stake environment. According to Valenzuela (1999), the educational success of Latinx youth is highly dependent upon authentic relationship building as their orientation towards education is shaped by the relationships they form within them. More simply, the opportunity provided to engage in non-academic interpersonal interactions within a low-stakes environment help Latinx youth feel appreciated and respected, which contributes to their positive experiences and strong connections with adults/peers (Durlak, Mahoney, Bohnert, & Parente, 2010; Eccles & Gootman, 2002). When these opportunities to develop authentic interpersonal relationships are unavailable or limited, as is the case in schools, youth resist attending programs, while a connection with adults who treat them with respect ensures greater participation (Terzian, Giesen, & Mbwana, 2009). Thus, the ability to form authentic relationships with adults/peers within CBES is a de-colonial characteristic because they foster Latinx youth engagement and supports their development.

Combined, the three characteristics described above make community-based educational spaces relatable to youth, foster engagement and growth through authentic relationship building, make youth feel welcomed and respected by recognizing and incorporating their voice, interests and cultural differences, along with other affirmative responses (Baldridge et al., 2017; Bulanda & McCrea, 2012; Jones & Deustch, 2013; Lerner, Dowling, Anderson, 2003; Mahoney, Lord, & Carryl, 2005; Schmidt, 2011; Terzian, Giesen, & Mbwana, 2009). The existence of these three characteristics also helps youth develop a critical de-colonial lens that is useful in navigating,

understanding, and critiquing their lived experiences across multiple contexts. Yet, these youth

outcomes are not guaranteed as CBES <u>must</u> have a matching critical orientation, as well.

Community-based educational spaces engaging Latinx youth are positioned, by their self-

narrative within funding applications, as either deficit-oriented or asset-rich sites (Nelson, 2010).

Both deficit- and asset- sites are similar in their focus on increasing or maintaining youth

participation, improving academic/behavioral outcomes, parental/community engagement, or

interrupting the school-to-prison pipeline (Brugere & Salazar, 2010; Dawes et al., 2015; Fuller et

al., 2013; Fredricks & Simpkins, 2012; Mitra, 2009; Park, Lin, Liu, & Tabb, 2015; Skogrand,

Riggs, & Hufftaker, 2008; Strobel et al., 2008). However, asset and deficit-oriented sites contrast

in how they frame Latinx youth, as either asset-rich individuals or people who need to be saved.

CBES that operate from a deficit-orientation frame Latinx youth as either lacking innate

characteristics, values, or experiences to succeed academically and socially (i.e. culture,

language, intellect) or as in need of saving from their families, communities, peers, or themselves

(Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Nelson, 2010; San Miguel, 1996; Valencia, 1997). Further, CBES

operating from a deficit-lens tend to measure their success along the narrow lines stipulated by

funders, namely academic achievement as evidenced by grades, standardized tests, and

graduation rates. As a result, programming within deficit-oriented CBES is limited to focus on

academic-linguistic development and/or behavioral containment largely because Latinx youth

are framed as innately intellectually inferior due to their assumed language abilities, and thus in

need of English primacy instruction, or as needing saving, and thus in need of behavioral

containment. From a critical coloniality perspective, the deficit orientation that measures success

as limited to academic-linguistic achievement or behavioral containment, is a modern form of

coloniality through forced assimilation because it reproduces dominant forms of relations that keep Latinxs subjugated (Apple, 2013; Quijano, 2000).

In contrast, CBES that operate from an asset-orientation frame Latinx youth as individuals with a voice, valid experiences, and rich forms of knowledge (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). As a result, they strive to, and do, produce different outcomes, including: providing holistic education; fostering youth agency; valuing and promoting the inclusion of youth voice, cultural, linguistic, and racial differences; increasing parental and community engagement; and help youth develop a critical lens to navigate and challenge persistent inequalities (Acosta et al., 2004; Borden et al., 2006; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Ginwright, Noguera, & Cammarota, 2006; Kwon, 2013; Nelson, 2010; Noguera & Cammarota, 2007; Riggs et al., 2010; Rodriguez & Condes, 2009). Further, asset-oriented CBES are informed by a critical, systemic understanding of the world and, as a result, seek to support youth by teaching them to both navigate and challenge the systems they live within (Banks, 2008; North, 2008). In other words, CBES that have an asset-orientation make holistic youth development and the development of a critical lens central to their work because they are believed to assist Latinx and minoritized youth in building critical thinking skills, gaining confidence, imagining a successful future, and developing an affirming racial identity. From a critical coloniality lens, this type of orientation reflects attempts to decolonize institutions by including youth voices and experiences which lead to the development of new perspectives and forms of knowledge (Quijano, 2000; Mignolo, 2007). Yet, across the various studies on asset and deficit-oriented programs, few studies have centered Latinx youth voice and their experiences to understand how their participation in a CBES shapes their development of a racial identity and comprehension of race.

In general, research on Latinxs in CBES tends to focus on increasing/maintaining their participation within the space; specific practices that engage youth; academic, linguistic or behavioral outcomes of participation; effects of parental/community engagement; interrupting the school to prison-pipeline; or the benefits of political engagement/organizing (Brugere & Salazar, 2010; Dawes et al., 2015; Fuller et al., 2013; Fredricks and Simpkins, 2012; Mitra, 2009; Park, Lin, Liu, & Tabb, 2015; Skogrand, Riggs, & Hufftaker, 2008; Strobel et al., 2008). Throughout these studies on Latinx youth participation in CBES, there remain gaps around youth experiences and their meaning-making. For example, Nelson (2010) argues there is growing research on the specific experiences of Latinxs within CBES and the practices that most benefit them. Similarly, Park, Lin, Liu, & Tabb (2015) have found that limited research exists that measures the effectiveness of CBES in improving academic and psycho-social outcomes for Latinx youth. This dissertation study was designed with the intention of beginning to address this gap by looking at how Latinx youth make sense of experiences in a CBES and how their participation informs their exploration and development of a racial identity, and future college and career aspirations.

To date, few studies have looked at Latinx racial identity development within CBES specifically (Pacheco, 2018; Pacheco & Nao, 2009). Many that do have studied Black and Latinx youth together (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2007; Noguera, 2008; Pacheco, 2018). But, studies do exist that look at the racial identity development of other minoritized groups and successfully demonstrate the potential for CBES to help youth develop positive racial identities and a healthy imagination of future possibilities (Ginwright, Cammarota, & Noguera, 2005; Kwon, 2013; Nelson, 2010; Pacheco, 2018; Riggs et al., 2010; Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). There are also studies that demonstrate that the current political-economic context is changing the

landscape CBES exist within which is constraining their potential for de-colonial work, specifically through the various restrictions and requirements inherent to funding streams (Apple, 2013; Baldridge, 2014, 2017; Lipman, 2011a; Kwon, 2013). This dissertation is situated between these studies and attempts to investigate how youth identity development within CBES is related to changes in funding and economic constraints. As such, literature on federal funding is reviewed next.

      Federal Funding in Community-based Educational Spaces. Smith (2003) argues that non-profit CBES have historically been privately funded, via private donation (philanthropic businesses) or parent fees, but have increasingly turned towards federal grants for long-term funding. This situation describes funding trends for community-based educational spaces over the last 30 years as the federal government has taken on a more prominent role in supporting CBES via increased funding (Halpern, 2002; Meyka, 2013). During this time, several factors have combined to create an economic-funding context that is changing CBES. More specifically, the increased availability of funds, the influence of neoliberal academic ideology, and the wording of the reauthorization of federal grants, have produced funding trends that are pressuring organizations to limit programmatic offerings while effectively reinforcing the colonial achievement ideology (Baldridge, 2014; Dryfoos, 1999; Halpern, 2002; Heath & McLaughlin, 1994; MacLeod, 1995; Nelson, 2010; Zhang & Byrd, 2006). Within this neoliberal context, de-colonial CBESs are forced to move away from their intended mission of holistic education towards a narrow focus on academics and behavioral containment (Apple, 2013; Grosfoguel, 2013; McNeil, 2004; Lipman, 2011a). I believe it is important to understand the language of federal funding streams and how changes to the language contribute to organizational transformations.

In a study of racial minority youth experiences and social/cultural capital growth within a GEAR UP program, Meyka (2013) argues federal acts, such as the *Higher Education Act* (1965), were passed in order to close the racial achievement gap by providing funding for targeted academic equity initiatives (McElroy & Arnesto, 1998; Meyka, 2013; Halpern, 2002). Though well intentioned, these federal acts and the multiple programs they created were and continue to be informed by deficit views of low income, racial minority youth and have set a precedent for how funding is used and distributed (Ladson-Billings, 2006; Menchaca, 1997; Rodriguez, Rhode, & Aguirre, 2015). For instance, federal funding is typically provided to programs that frame youth in deficit ways by highlighting their "needs" and whose programming focuses on academics. In few cases, such as GEAR UP (1998) and 21st CCLC (1994), the federal government provides funding for holistic, community-inclusive programs, but reauthorizations and seemingly innocuous changes to their wording redefine how youth are framed within them (Meyka, 2013). Thus, I believe paying close attention to shifts within the language of federal funding can reveal the true intentions of the federal government's involvement with CBES (Apple, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2006).

During the 30-year period from 1980 to 2010, critical, de-colonial oriented CBES have been established in what funding agencies describe as "areas of need" to provide developmental programming and holistic education that address systemic inequalities (Anderson & Larson, 2009; Zhang & Bird, 2006). To this end, 21st CCLC and GEAR UP have significantly increased funds for CBES to provide holistic, development services including, "opportunities to test interests, nurture talents, and express oneself through art and sports; and exposure to both one's own and the larger culture" (Halpern, 2002, p. 203). However, following No Child Left Behind (NCLB, 2001), GEAR UP and 21st CCLC were restructured and reauthorized to directly focus on

academic development and less on community or holistic development (Jacobson, 2005; Meyka, 2013). The passage of Race to the Top (RTTP, 2009), which created a competition for states to willingly change policy to promote individualized education and increased use of standardized tests, further entrenched the focus on academic development to promote student achievement (Howell, 2014). According to Apple (2013), this small change is a neoliberal tactic that redefines our understanding of academic preparation as measurable gains on standardized tests, while Lipman (2011b) adds these small changes are intentional and tied to the larger neoliberal project to transform the surrounding city.

Along these lines, Baldridge (2014, 2019) argues the aforementioned changes are directly tied to neoliberal ideals and have the added effect of increasing pressure on organizations by restricting programmatic possibilities through funding requirements and limitations. Such limitations have led critical, de-colonial CBES to change from sites that engage communities and provides holistic programming as a means of challenging systemic inequalities to one that furthers neoliberal, colonial ideas of individuality and makes systemic inequalities youth face invisible (Ladson-Billings, 2006; McNeil, 2004). More specifically, changes in the language of federal funding streams have the colonizing effect of reinforcing the dominant understanding of success as being individual and measurable on standardized tests, while masking the importance of social-emotional growth, cultural knowledge, interpersonal relationships, identity development, etc. As a result, funding provided by the federal government for CBES is constrained to promote knowledge/values preferred by the dominant group including consumerism, individuality, and a "bootstrap" mentality.

Private grants for CBES, given under the guise of philanthropic donations, have similarly undergone a transformation that increasingly earmarks funding to address academic

performance, the teaching of a "useful" skill(set) for a trade, or social intervention (Ginwright, 2007; Lipman, 2011b; Smith, 2003; Rodriguez, Rhodes, & Aguirre, 2015). Organizations such as the Bill Gates Foundation and the Kellogg foundation seek immediate, measurable outcomes for their investments which are always focused on a specific academic goal or behavioral changes (Jacobson, 2005; KYIP, 1997; Smith, 2003). Such requirements constrain the programming efforts of CBES and push "critical, de-colonial use" organizations away from their intended mission towards an internal culture and forms of relations that are reflective of traditional academic spaces (Baldridge, 2019; Medina, Baldridge, & Wiggins, 2020). These changes to the context have implications for the education and experience of Latinx youth within CBES.

Considering that CBESs are experiencing pressure to reflect the practices and goals of traditional schools, and traditional schools themselves face an environment that defines success according to standardized test scores, Latinx youth who participate in CBES suffer because the characteristics that made these sites effective in supporting them are being lost (Harris & Kiyama, 2015; Nelson, 2010; Rodriguez, Rhodes, & Aguirre, 2015). In this environment, Latinx youth experiences are changing due to the fact that federally-funded CBES are pressured to reproduce colonial forms of relations that subjugate Latinxs based on their presumed language ability and racial identity. In other words, due to the constraints they face, federally funded CBES no longer have the potential to be critical, de-colonial spaces where Latinx youth can develop a strong racial identity through holistic programming that allows them to challenge or overcome inequalities (Harris & Kiyama, 2015; Rodriguez, Rhodes, & Aguirre, 2015). Rather, CBES are becoming an extension of the colonial state as a result of their focus on academics and language development, producing an individualized meritocratic education, weak interpersonal

relations, and a subtractive learning environment (Anderson & Larson, 2009; Harris & Kiyama, 2015; Valenzuela, 1999).

The aforementioned changes CBES have undergone, along with the precedent to fund deficit-lensed programs, as well as the context created by federal education acts (i.e. NCLB, RTTP) have limited the programming Latinxs receive within CBESs to either academic/language support or social intervention (Nelson, 2010; Rodriguez, Rhodes, & Aguirre, 2015). These programs function as containment for Latinx youth who are framed, stereotyped, and represented within popular culture, literature, and television as Spanish speaking, racialized youth "at-risk" of perpetuating or being a victim of deviancy due to their cultural, linguistic, or class background (Garey, 2002). Further, with the narrow focus on either academics or social intervention Latinx youth encounter a space that no longer makes them feel welcome, reflects their interests, or values their cultural/linguistic differences. Rather, CBESs have reproduced the subtractive outcomes and experiences they have historically had within schools (Anderson & Larson, 2009; Valenzuela, 1999). As described above, de-colonial asset oriented CBES have had the potential to critically engage and support Latinx youth as they learn about themselves and develop strong racial identities (Brugere & Salazar, 2010; Dawes et al., 2015; Fuller et al., 2013; Fredricks & Simpkins, 2012; Mitra, 2009; Park, Lin, Liu, & Tabb, 2015; Skogrand, Riggs, & Hufftaker, 2008; Strobel et al., 2008; Rodriguez, Rhodes, & Aguirre, 2015). These spaces are becoming harder to find as the context in which CBES exist becomes further aligned with neoliberal, paternalistic policies that promote individualism, competition, and increased accountability (Anderson & Larson, 2009; Labaree, 1997).

The growth in federal funding that has been made available to community-based educational spaces, combined with the increased competition for private funding, has created an

environment where CBES are dually dependent upon federal funding and are more susceptible to the pressure to make programmatic changes as they compete for funds (Baldridge, 2014; Battilana, 2004; Kwon, 2013, Smith, 2013). I argue this situation has arisen from multiple sources that include: 1) the precedent to fund academic and social intervention programs, 2) the context created by recent neoliberal and paternalistic policies/acts (NCLB, RTTP) that promote competition, 3) deficit framing of racial minority populations, and importantly, 4) the changes in the language of funding within federal funding grants and programs, such as the reauthorized versions of GEAR UP and 21st CCLC. The changes to language in federal education policy have had the effect of limiting programmatic flexibility, and by extension the potential outcomes of student involvement in CBESs, while promoting a narrow focus on basic academic competencies measured by standardized tests as well as re-inscribing traditional power relations along racial lines that leave Latinx youth in subjugated positions (Anderson & Larson, 2009; Nelson, 2010; Riggs et al., 2010). Additionally, the few private funding streams available, have followed the trend in supporting academic preparation programs and have become increasingly concerned with seeing measurable outcomes for their funding efforts (Jacobson, 2005; Smith, 2003). The context created by these changes has had the consequence of either pushing Latinx youth away from CBES, or producing increasingly negative experiences, leaving youth with little to no resources to support their success. Utilizing a critical coloniality lens helps us understand these outcomes as tied to the colonial state.

From a critical coloniality perspective, the previous literature review can be understood as an example of how coloniality functions within society to change space, epistemology, and practice in order to maintain subjugation. From this lens, funding sources are understood as colonial agents that severely impact the work of CBESs by pressuring them to become

reproductions of dominant norms (Baldridge, 2014; Lipman, 2011a; Nelson, 2010; Smith, 2003; Valenzuela, 1999). As it relates to Latinxs, the changes CBES undergo constrains programming to focus on teaching basic skills or developing language within a hyper-segregated context, effectively reproducing negative experiences and poor outcomes (Anderson & Larson, 2009; Harris & Kiyama, 2015; McNeil, 2004). Thus, with Latinx experiences within CBES becoming reflective of their experience within schools, we can argue that these youths may begin developing growing feelings of animosity as the features that once made them feel welcomed, valued, and respected are removed (Bruyere & Salazar, 2010; Strobel, O'Donoghue, Mclaughlin, & Kirshner, 2008). Within this context, programs not only lose the characteristics that promoted Latinx success (i.e. flexibility, including youth voice, strong relationships, etc.), but we as scholars may lose sight of youth voices within the program as these changes occur. Having said this, I argue there remains a gap in the literature that exists because we have yet to study or fully understand how Latinx youth make sense of their experience within CBES and how this informs their racial identity development and their college and career aspirations. Given the current political climate, including the yearly threat of proposed budget cuts to important federal community-based education grants, I believe it is important to understand Latinx youth experiences to better meet their needs within an increasingly hostile and competitive environment.

Lastly, it is important to remember that a "critical coloniality" lens is utilized to understand the context of ENGAGE, the community-based educational program I studied, and Latinx youth understandings of their involvement within this space. Such a framework helps me better understand the relationship between the changes described above and the long historical process of attacks against specific subaltern populations, i.e. Latinxs. Additionally, a "critical

coloniality" framework reveals that such changes are a result of: the ways in which the structures and system within which CBES exist require their complicity in preparing Latinx children to enter into a hierarchal world system (i.e. external pressure); the funding they pursue (including how they frame themselves and the intention of their work); and colonial difference (Latinx youth receiving their education through a system that does not allow for upward mobility). The use of a critical coloniality lens allows me to argue that the changes CBES are undergoing are tied to an extended history of subjugation within the larger world system and ideology, often referred to as neoliberalism today, and that resistance towards these changes begins with a reimagining of what we consider education and academic achievement. Considering the theoretical framework described earlier, along with the literature review provided within this section, the following details the methodology and methods that were employed throughout the dissertation study.

Chapter 3

Methodology, Research Plan, and Site Description

Positionality

A description of my orientation to research is necessary as it informed my approach to this study of Latinx youth involvement within state-funded community-based spaces. I am a first-generation, U.S. born Chicanx male of two immigrant parents; a father who immigrated from Mexico at 14 in the late-1970's, and a mother who immigrated from Honduras at 19 in the mid-1980's. Like many other immigrant' stories, my parents came to the country with very little to no resources in search of a better life, driven by an underlying belief in the "American dream." More specifically, they believed that hard work and effort would lead to increased opportunities and, over time, upward mobility or success for themselves and their family. Growing up, I was greatly influenced by my parent's belief in the idea of individual success based upon effort/hard work, their commitment to family, their willingness to take risks in life, and their ability to provide for a family in light of economic constraints. As a result, I developed characteristics that reflected their model including a strong work ethic, ambition, and creativity along with valuing family support, community/cultural connections, and an initial belief in self-determined success. In some regards, my outlook continues to be informed by my experiences as a child, which is why I begin my positionality by describing the influence of my parents on my experiences and development. Without my parents, I would not be. Without their support, I would not achieve. Therefore, acknowledging their influence is necessary to understand who I am. However, equally important in developing my current critical positionality was my connections with an authentic adult mentor who exposed me to the idea of Chicanismo in 8th grade.

With my early success in school and having tested into "gifted" classes, my parents' belief that individual effort would lead to my success were seemingly confirmed. However, in my 8th grade year three changes occurred that continue to influence my research interests today: 1) I was exposed to a politicized, positive ethnic identity around being Chicanx; 2) I was introduced to the idea of systemic inequalities, specifically what is now known as the Latinx educational pipeline; and 3) I joined a community-based education program at my school. The first change that occurred was meeting my 8th grade teacher who was unlike any other adult in the school. Mrs. J was someone who was fresh out of college, was a self-identified Chicana that grew up in my neighborhood, had a critical view of the world, and wanted to see us overcome inequalities we faced. She introduced us to the idea of being Chicanx which she described to as a self-identified politicized individual that took pride in themselves, their culture and abilities and was characterized by historical resistance to oppression through community engaged action. Aligned with this identity was the active resistance of systemic inequalities and injustices, which is the second concept I was introduced to in eighth grade that continues to inform my outlook.

In addition to introducing us to the concept of Chicanismo, Mrs. J also taught us how to critically read the inequalities we lived within and amongst, including poverty, systemic injustices, racism, structural barriers, and their intersections with our education, all of which she argued contributed to the low achievement of Latinxs. Being introduced to these concepts, in particular learning about the low achievement of Latinxs, enraged and motivated me to try to disprove deficit-based stereotypes about Latinxs that arose from these inequalities. With this in mind, as well as the pressure from my parents to get involved in school, I began to participate in a STEM focused program that was housed on campus where I was provided with opportunities not available to me during the school day, including taking college tours, engaging in community

service efforts throughout the city, conducting hands on experimentation, and learning about

robotics. Combined, my experience within this program along with my exposure to the idea of

systemic inequalities and a developing politicized Chicanx identity, laid the foundation for the

formation of the critical lens that continues to inform my work today and drives my interest in

CBESs and racial identity development.

As a self-identified, Spanish-speaking Chicanx from Los Angeles, I am a member of the

Latinx population that I studied for this dissertation. As a result, I shared a "common language,"

linguistically and culturally, with participants which could have complicated the analysis by

obscuring my view of different interpretations of the data (Kohler Reissman, 2008). However, I

strongly believe that my proximity to the Latinx population allowed me greater access to, as well

as a deeper understanding of the participants and the complexity of their lived experiences within

schools and community-based educational spaces (Clandinin, 2013). As a member of the Latinx

community, I had insight into youth's experiences and could understand the nuances of their

meaning-making more readily. My positionality not only facilitated relationship building with

youth participants, it afforded me a lens into their world that helped me see and better understand

youth's messages in their responses. It allowed me to center and represent youth voices

authentically, without minimizing their value and validity, something "outsiders" may not have

had access to or the ability to do.

According to Creswell (2007), all researchers approach their studies with biases but may

seek to limit the influence of such bias through explicit statement, reflection, and analysis of the

values we bring. This positionality statement has attempted to do just that. As a researcher, I am

conscious of the values I bring and the implicit bias that is present, however, I attempted to limit

their influence on the collection/interpretation of the data throughout this study by constantly self-reflecting. How this was specifically accomplished is outlined in the following sections.

One final word on my positionality. Given that I, as the researcher, was embedded within the data collection process, my findings are of my own interpretation and reflect my values, regardless of my attempts to limit bias. But, through the process of member checking, triangulation, and saturation, I have actively attempted to validate my findings as well as capture diverse experiences. The above positionality statement serves to expose my value-laden orientation to the study of Spanish-speaking Latinxs within community-based educational spaces as a means of informing the reader about my position within and towards the research conducted.

Epistemology Towards Research

Methodology, according to Carspecken (1996), refers to the principles that inform the design of research projects, selection of field techniques (methods) for data collection, and the interpretation/analysis of data collected, and is itself embedded in our epistemology towards research (Creswell, 2007). Informed by my positionality as a researcher described above, this dissertation aims to "confront social oppression" (Creswell, 2014, p. 9) through a critical analysis of Latinx youth experiences within a state (federally)-funded community based educational program and the role that their participation plays in their racial identity development. Based upon this understanding of methodology, my aforementioned positionality, and the critical coloniality framework, this study utilized a critical qualitative approach to understand Latinx youth experiences within CBESs. To better understand the necessity of critical qualitative methods, a brief description of qualitative methods is provided.

Denzin & Lincoln (2000), define qualitative research methods as "a set of interpretive, material practices through which qualitative researchers study things in a natural setting

attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomenon in terms of the meaning people bring to them" (p. 382). This approach to research can utilize a number of methodologies or paradigms, including a combination of compatible methodologies, to understand how people make meaning of their experiences (Creswell, 2007). A critical approach towards qualitative research adds an interest in socio-political contextual factors such as power, history, the economy, etc., as a means of understanding how individuals make meaning of their experiences to ultimately disrupt social inequalities they may face. Carspecken (1996) further states that a critical qualitative methodology must "understand holistic modes of human experience" (p. 19) pointing to the need to include an analysis of the context within which individuals exist to better understand their "holistic" experience and challenge persistent inequalities. Therefore, critical qualitative research utilizes methods to study a phenomenon that is embedded within historical/modern contexts in order to expose and interrupt inequitable power within society (Creswell, 2007; Pasque & Perez, 2015).

Critical qualitative research actively challenges pre-existing power relations by humanizing the research process (Yosso et al., 2001). More specifically, critical qualitative research is informed by methodologies that address oppression across various hierarchies of separation (race, class, gender, sexuality, etc.) in order to "link social phenomena to wider sociohistorical events to expose prevailing systems of domination, hidden assumptions, ideologies, and discourses" (Hardcastle, Usher, & Holmes, 2006, p. 151; Lugones, 2007). In so doing, critical qualitative research has the goal of liberating marginalized and colonized people through empowerment and the transformation of unjust social and political realities (Carspecken, 1996; Pasque & Perez, 2015, Yosso et al., 2001). In short, critical qualitative methodologies, such as those inherent to LatCrit and coloniality of power, center the voice of marginalized

populations (counter-stories), seek to eradicate naturalized social inequalities and stereotypes, and are intended to enact social and individual change (Yosso et al., 2001). Considering the theoretical framework that informs this dissertation, critical qualitative research methods were ideal for the data collection process due to their orientation towards decolonization through challenges to social and structural power inequalities.

This dissertation is informed by a critical coloniality theoretical framework which seeks to disrupt power inequalities resulting from colonial forms of relations while challenging historically embedded hierarchal concepts of modernity (i.e. the economy, race, gender, class, etc.) by speaking from and with a subaltern perspective (Quijano, 2000; Grosfoguel, 2007). As a result, this study utilized critical qualitative research methods as they are not only aligned with a critical coloniality framework, but allowed me to center the marginalized voices of racialized Spanish-speaking Latinx youth who participated within a CBES in order to better understand how they make sense of their participation and its relation to their racial identity development.

With the above in mind, this critical qualitative study utilized ethnographic methods, including participant interviews, participant observations, collection of documents, review and analysis of contemporary evidence to collect data (Creswell, 2007; Menchaca, 1997) and was driven by the goal of helping to dismantle structural inequalities faced by marginalized populations while empowering them to enact change towards emancipation/de-colonization, much like critical ethnographers (Creswell, 2007; Madison, 2005). As such, a critical qualitative approach was utilized because it allowed me to center the marginalized voices of racialized Spanish speaking Latinx youth within state-funded CBESs while illuminating the ways they make meaning of their experience within these spaces.

Research Questions

1) How do Spanish speaking Latinx youth within federally funded community-based educational spaces understand and negotiate their racial and ethnic identities? How do they imagine their future college and career possibilities?
   a. How, and in what ways, does the organization imagine it's work with Latinx youth? How do they foster racial/ethnic identity development and positive future aspirations?

2) What is the historical context within which federally funded community-based programs and organizations have proliferated over the last 30 years in southern California?
   a. How and in what ways do youth leaders and administrators navigate funding?
   b. How does funding shape practices, relations, and context of the CBES?

Research Context and Design

A Changing City and the Economic Context

Historically, the east and south side neighborhood of Los Angeles have always been home to working class, lower-income, and nondominant populations (Monroy, 1999; Nicolaides, 2004, 2019). Of particular interest to this dissertation, the east side of Los Angeles has primarily been known as a Mexican(American) and Latinx community. A community that emerged and developed from a mix of social factors including housing discrimination (redlining) throughout the city, limited economic opportunities and low income, concerted efforts by Mexican(Americans) to establish a community where they could thrive, and circular (im)migration to Los Angeles from Mexico and Latin America (Daniels, 2005; Monroy, 1999; Nicolaides, 2004, 2019; Soja, 2014). In addition to being known as a Mexican(America) and Latinx community, the east side was once well industrialized and offered seemingly endless (comparably) low paid, blue-collar positions within the rubber (tire) and auto industry, in clothes workshops, steel manufacturing, and commerce transportation (Soja, 2014). Positions that paid just enough to make a living, but were at times highly unstable and offered minimal upward mobility. As such, the neighborhoods that make up what is collectively called East L.A., have

been known as low-income Mexican(American) and Latinx communities full of hardworking native and (im)migrant families. However, given the larger neoliberal project across the U.S., the communities of East L.A. are being gentrified and restructured, leading to changes in the demographics and cost of living on the East side.

Over the past 40 years, from 1980 to the present, the majority of the entry level, working class positions that were a source of somewhat steady income for the Mexican(American) and Latinx families of East L.A., have been stripped away as industries and corporations moved out of state. In addition to the loss of jobs that have forced residents to find work that is further from home, the cost of living, in particular housing, utilities, and transportation, has steadily increased further constraining the wallet of families and pushing some to look for housing and work further east. At the same time, capitalists and city officials have pushed the neoliberal restructuring of Los Angeles by, at first divesting in and then later, investing in "redeveloping" Downtown and the surrounding communities leading to their overt gentrification, demographic changes, and the spatial restricting of the physical and imagined city of Los Angeles, effectively exacerbating the effects of the high cost of living (Nicolaides, 2019). More specifically, "redevelopment" and gentrification has contributed to the increased cost of rent/homes, and the increased cost of food, utilities, and transportation, while wages have slowly gone up but not at the rate of cost of living.

Since 1980, the above elements combined have largely driven the working-class Mexican(American) and Latinx population out of East L.A. towards suburban communities further east in the San Gabriel Valley and Inland Empire, where they were once restricted from living in (Nicolaides, 2004, 2019). Underlying and driving the transformation of the physical and imaginary landscape of the East side, are neoliberal aligned reforms to education policy, evaluation, housing, and economic development all of which promote individualization,

meritocracy, competition, and consumerism (Lipman, 2011a/b). Within this larger socio-economic environment, community-based educational spaces, like Ranch Mountain, have similarly been constrained and changed by the neoliberal economic and paternalistic funding context they exist within (Baldridge, 2014; Medina, Baldridge, & Wiggins, 2020).

During data collection, Ranch Mountain administrators were observed multiple times discussing the changing economic-funding context and the way it was constraining the work of the organization. They often mentioned how the rising cost of operations that emerged from increases in the cost of living in Los Angeles, the increased cost of supplies, and the rising minimum wage, along with stagnant funding from grants, constrained Ranch Mountain's capacities to offer the holistic programming aligned with their mission statement and contributed to high staff turnover. More specifically, the neoliberal aligned funding precedents set by federal, state, and private granting agencies, along with stagnant funding and risings costs, pressured RMEO to narrowly focus their programming on academic support and development, while making it harder for them to remain competitive and recruit and maintain staff. As such, the economic-funding context that the organization existed within is tied to larger neoliberal logics of privatization and competition, as well as neoliberal driven transformations of Los Angeles. Within this environment we can understand the changes the organization is experiencing as directly tied to the gentrification, demographic shifts, increased cost of living, and rising wages throughout the city, all of which constraint the work of the organization.

Site Selection

The U.S. southwest has historically contained the largest concentration of Mexican (Americans), Chicanx and Latinxs in the United States and continues to hold the largest population of Latinxs in the country by state (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016). As of 2015, there were

a total of 56.6 million Latinxs living in the United States making them the largest minority group in the nation with 72.9 % (40 million) of them having the ability to speak a language other than English (Pew Hispanic Research Center, 2015; U.S. Census Bureau, 2016).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2016), both California and Los Angeles county have the largest Latinx population of any state and county in the nation respectively. California holds the largest population of Latinxs with 15.2 million individuals (27% of total Latinx pop.), of which 3.4 million (22%) are school-aged making them 54% of the entire K-12 population in the state, while 11.2 million (74%) of the population in CA speak Spanish (Pew Hispanic Research Center, 2015; U.S. Census Bureau, 2016). Los Angeles county is home to 4.9 million (32%) of the Latinx population making it the largest concentration in California, while 65% of the total K-12 population in the county is Latinx (Kids data, 2015; Pew Hispanic Research Center, 2015). Not only are Latinxs in California and Los Angeles the largest minority group, they are also likely to live in poverty as the median household income for Latinxs in 2014 was $47,180, with 20% of adults living in poverty while 31% of youth 17 or younger experiencing poverty (California Senate Office of Research, 2014). Considering the large concentration of Latinxs in California, Los Angeles was an ideal location for a study that is concentrated on Spanish speaking Latinx youth.

Beyond the number of Latinxs in the state, Los Angeles was an ideal location for a study of community-based educational spaces because it is home to the largest infrastructure and funding support for "expanded learning programs" in the country (California Afterschool Network, 2016). Across the nation, of the 10.2 million (18% of total population) students who attend community-based educational spaces, Latinx youth are the largest single population at 29 % or 2.958 million youth, 5.2% of the total school-aged population in the U.S. (American

After 3pm, 2014; NCES, 2019). In total specifically, California has nearly 4,500 programs and/or organizations that offer services to over 500,000 of the "most underserved students" on a daily basis, with the county of Los Angeles alone hosting over 600 locations and partnerships (Beyond the Bell, 2017; California Afterschool Network, 2016). These programs are funded by federal, state, and sometimes private funds, with the state of California providing $541 million through their "After School Education and Safety" (ASES) grants, while the federal "21st century community learning center" (21st CCLC) grants provides an additional $127 million for CBESs (California Afterschool Network, 2016). State and federal grants provide the largest amount of funding for CBESs within low-income communities, which largely target racial minority youth who are two times more likely to attend CBES than their white and middle/upper class peers (Afterschool Alliance, 2014). Thus, across the U.S. and in the county of Los Angeles specifically, low income, Latinx youth are most likely to attend CBES.

Within this context, Ranch Mountain Educational Organization (RMEO) and their ENGAGE program were selected for data collection because they matched the above demographic and funding description. More specifically, RMEO offered programs in the county of Los Angeles, was funded by federal, state, and private agencies, and served multiple communities that were majority Latinx whose populace could speak various languages.

Site Description: Organization History and Site Characteristics

As stated previously in the historical background section, over the last 30 years CBESs have proliferated throughout the country due to an increase in funding made available to them through federal, state, and private grants in order to support student learning by providing developmental programming and holistic education in communities seen as "areas of need" (Zhang & Byrd, 2006). It is within this context of increased funding for CBE programs that

Ranch Mountain Educational Organization (RMEO) was established and began providing

community-focused educational services through multiple programs. But, with neoliberal

inspired changes to the intentions of funding streams, along with economic constraints,

organizations like RMEO that were originally started to provide holistic support for underserved

youth are being pressured to narrowly focus on academic development alone.

Before providing a more complete history of the organization and a description of the

ENGAGE program site itself, it is important to remember that organizations as a whole, and

individual actors within them, have agency to determine the type of programs offered, how they

are implemented, and the extent to which they conform to the limits and constraints of policies

and grant requirements. Funding precedents and external forces continue to pressure

organizations to conform to, reflect, and reproduce neoliberal goals (Halpern, 2002; Gamoran,

Secada, & Marrett, 2006; Lipman, 2011a; Silloway, Connors-Tadros, and Marchand, 2009).

Organization History: A Desire to Support Underserved Communities. Ranch

Mountain Educational Organization (RMEO) was established in 2005 by four individuals who

had a history of working with underserved youth. These four individuals, all of whom were life-

long resistance of Los Angeles county or Southern California and resided in the city of

Whitwood where RMEO was established, included: Ben, a Latinx male in his 30's who grew up

in East Los Angeles and became the chief executive officer; Denise, a Latinx womxn in her early

20's, who came from a small Latinx community in the desert and became the chief operations

officer; Nick, a White male who grew up in the far East Side of LA county and became the chief

financial officer; and their colleague Del, a black Male originally from south-east Los Angeles

who helped them write the grant but did not join the organization. Having worked together for a

number of years at a non-profit educational organization that was based out of a local university,

Ben, Denise, Nick, and Del often had dinners together and discussed their unhappiness with the restrictions and bureaucracy they faced in the university. In particular, they were dissatisfied with what they perceived to be the mismanagement of funds at the university level, the limitation in types of programs they were allowed to run, and felt they could "better serve the kids…east of East LA" if they ran an organization themselves. As a result, during one such informal dinner together, Ben brought up the idea of writing their own grant which he said had come to him while consulting for local organizations and agencies.

According to Ben, his consultation work to advise and/or establish programs in the East side of Los Angeles not only showed him there was a demand for programs to serve youth, but it also revealed that most of the available programs were concentrated in this east side area while neglecting surrounding neighborhoods that "had a greater need." This realization, along with the financial, programming, and grant writing expertise of his three colleagues led Ben to propose the idea that they should act as their own consulting agency, write for a grant, and if received "just give it to somebody, like the two candidates we worked with, Whitwood College or Deep River Community College." In response to his suggestion, Denise, Nick, and Del all agreed to take part in and support the grant writing effort, which started with data collection to complete a "needs analysis for the community."

As they started organizing themselves and preparing to write the grant, Ben explained that at first, "it was largely Denise and I that connected [organized] all of those focus group, and I lead them. We got all the information, what the needs were, we did a needs analysis for the community [Whitwood and Montbleu]." Once they completed the focus groups and analyzed their data along with publicly available information such as demographics, attendance rates, graduation rates, etc., they proceeded to "determine the areas that were in the highest need,

which **actually** (his emphasis) were, the numbers showed, in higher need then one of the communities we were working with right in East L.A. [Whitwood and Mont Bleu] had higher free and reduced lunch numbers, all of those things." As a result of the outcomes of their community assessment, Ben and Denise, along with their two colleagues, decided to concentrate their grant application on the Mont Bleu, Whitwood, and Riviera communities east of East L.A.

Once the decision had made around which communities to write the grant application for, they proceeded to apply for the federally-funded Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) grant, and were selected as award recipients. The GEAR UP grant awards recipients six or seven years of funding to provide college access and preparation services to low-income youth and communities, which RMEO intended to give to one of their higher education partners (Whitwood College or Deep River Community College). However, according to Ben, "When it came time to give somebody the grant in its entirety, nobody wanted it (chuckles briefly). They were a little overwhelmed about the size of the grant, and so we went to Nate, the superintendent for Mont Bleu City School District, who was a good 'outside the box' thinker and he said 'let's do this.'"

Upon forming the partnership with Nate and Mont Bleu City School District, who were going to act as the fiscal agent, things moved and developed quickly for Ben, Denise, and their colleagues, leading them to officially establish Ranch Mountain Educational Organizational as a non-profit who would act as a provider of services if they received the grant. A few months later, they were all working for other agencies, when Ben stated we found out that we had gotten the grant and we thought, 'oh gosh! We…We… should quit our jobs.' Because there was nobody to run the grant, which was for about 5 million, and we went from there. In the following four months Ben, Denise, and Nick leave their positions to work full time for RMEO, select and

establish a main office in the old town Whitwood neighborhood, hire staff, and beginning offering programming in the Whitwood, Mont Bleu and Riviera communities.

Given the success of their first grant writing venture as an organization, the positive reception to their GEAR UP program in its first year, and the high demand the community demonstrated for these extracurricular programs, RMEO administrators made the decision to apply for the federal 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CLLC) grant and California's After School Education and Safety grant, to extend their services across the K-12 spectrum. With these grant applications, RMEO was once again successful and two years after receiving the GEAR UP grant, they began providing free after-school academic, enrichment, and recreational services in the form of INSPIRE at the elementary and middle school level and ENGAGE at the high school level within the same Mont Bleu, Whitwood, and Riviera communities.

To this day, after 15 years in existence, Ranch Mountain Educational Organization continues to provide holistic educational support and college access/preparation programs across the K-12 levels with the mission of "creating a culture of learning" within the Mont Blue, Whitwood, and Riviera communities. RMEO programs continue to be funded by federal and state grants largely, with few small private grants for specialized projects mixed in. Over the past 15 years, the organization has experienced periods of rapid growth with the reception of new grants and rapid down-sizing as grants "sun-setted" (funding cycles ended and/or were not renewed), yet, according to Denise, through it all they have remained committed to finding resources to continue to serve nondominant students and support not only their holistic development but their future achievement as well. However, more recently, Ranch Mountain's administrators have found it increasingly difficult to provide holistic programming across their

INSPIRE and ENGAGE sites (described below), which they attribute to changes across the County of Los Angeles and to the economic context.

      Program Site Characteristics. Ranch Mountain Educational Organization is a small non-profit that offers INSPIRE at the elementary-middle school level and ENGAGE at the high school level. Their programs are run by youth workers hired by RMEO, and operate out of 16 different local school partner sites across the cities of Mont Bleu, Whitwood, and Riviera. They offer free academic, enrichment, and recreation services. At the time of data collection, RMEO had one ENGAGE program left, operating out of Rose City high school, that was on the very last year of its funding cycle. This program ran 5 days out of the week, immediately after school until 6 pm every day, during which student participants were provided with a variety of academic support, tutoring, and interest-based labs/clubs. Prior to providing a bit more detail about the program site itself, a quick profile of the city is necessary.

      Located roughly 10 miles directly east of downtown Los Angeles, Rose City was once populated by indigenous people prior to Spanish colonization and was slowly developed alongside the local Spanish Mission. It is now a mid-sized suburb of Los Angeles that has slowly developed and seen a growth in population over the past 40 years from 42,000 people in 1980 to an estimated 54,000 in 2018 (U.S. Census, 2016). During this time, the demographics of the population has changes as its gone from a majority people of Latinx descent to a majority people of Asian descent (Chinese, Vietnamese, and Southeast Asian). The city is largely middle to working class, but has small pockets internally of upper-middle class neighborhoods and homes. In much the same way as the city, Rose City high school, one of six schools that comprise the multi-city Mont Bleu Union High School District, has a student population that is racially, ethnically, economically, and linguistically diverse. For instance, in the 2017-2018 academic

year, the student population was evenly split between youth of Latinx descent (48%) and youth

of Asian descent (48%), 47% of this total population are students who identified as female and

53% are students who identified as male, with at least seven different languages spoken on

campus (Ed-data.org, accessed 3/11/2020). In terms of academics, Rose City high is known

within the district to be a fairly high performing school on standardized tests, yet was

surprisingly seeing decreased college application, acceptance, retention rates. It is unknown why

funders selected to grant Rose City funding, but amongst faculty members I overheard chatting

they held the deficit-based belief that the Latinx students "needed more academic support" than

their peers of Asian descent (Field notes, 10/12/17).

Considering the on-campus context, the ENGAGE program offered at Rose City high

school was equally as diverse as the school day. For instance, on any given day, participants

were usually 50-50 students of Latinxs and students of Asian descent. Similarly, labs on campus

were evenly mixed between students who identified as female and those who identified as male,

with the exception of the cosmetology lab whose participants were 100% female.

In regards to labs on campus, in the 2017-2018 academic year, the ENGAGE program at

Rose City high school offered nine different labs during programming hours. Of the nine labs,

five of them were aimed at supporting students academically through subject-specific labs

(English, History, Math, Science) run by school day teachers and a general tutoring/computer lab

staffed by youth leaders. The remaining four labs were interest-based clubs that could either lead

to a trade-based career (cosmetology, cooking) or supported healthy living habits (weight room

and gardening). Across all labs, ENGAGE was required to average 125 students per day to

maintain funding, with an actual average of 130-145 students daily. Each of these

aforementioned labs was led by either a school day teacher or adult youth leaders, with a total of

5 teachers, 2 consultants, 10 youth leaders, one parent promoter, and one site coordinator responsible for leading the various programs. Within this context, Latinx youth participants appeared to form connections most easily with youth leaders, with two youth leaders in particular (Tito and Ms. Marquez) standing out for their ability to form authentic-caring relationships with them (Cordell, 2017; Gay, 2010; Howard, 2010).

The ENGAGE program at Rose City high school was for the most part fairly similar in structure and operation to CBESs in the surrounding communities, especially considering that the majority of them pursued and were funded by the same federal and state grants (21st CCLC and ASES). Yet, they were unique in that the demographic make-up of their participants were not only highly diverse in comparison to other sites RMEO ran, but were evenly split between students of Latinx and Asian descent. Further, they were very unique and fortunate in that the ENGAGE program benefitted from and received full support from Rose City high school's administrative team and the fact that they had a parent promoter who's primary focus was on planning, organizing, and leading parent educational workshops, a feature often lacking in programs funded by ASES and 21st CCLC. As such, this site was chosen because of the unique context it offered as the population shifted from majority Latinx to majority people of Asian descent, the large population of Latinxs that attended, and because it matched the structure and operation of similar programs across the city. With this said, it should be made clear that despite the unique features, and the similarities it may share with other CBES, I do not claim that this study is generalizable nor is the site representative of all community-based educational spaces.

Participant Selection

According to Hickson (2016), when conducting qualitative research, it is "essential to select an appropriate sample to meet the overall aim" or goal of the study (p. 382). Since this

study seeks to understand how Spanish-speaking Latinx youth make meaning of their participation within state-funded CBESs and the role it has on their racial identity development, I utilized purposive and snowball sampling to select participants that could best contribute. To be clear, purposive sampling is the practice of recruiting participants based on pre-selected core criteria, while snowball sampling refers to the practice of having participants recommend and recruit others to participate in the study (Creswell, 2007). By utilizing a combination of these sampling techniques, I identified a group of 12 Latinx youth participants, and 9 adults youth workers, who provided a diverse range of voices and experiences to this study. Below, Table 1 on page 81 provides a summary of relevant participant demographic information.

To recruit youth participants, language ability, ethnicity, number of years of participation, enrollment within ENGAGE, gender, and age were all utilized as primary selection criteria. Considering the focus of the study, I specifically sought youth participants who self-identified as Latinx (Latina/o/@ or Hispanic was okay as well), had the ability to speak Spanish, were of high school age, and were actively participating or had a history of participating within the ENGAGE program. The gender of youth participants was also considered with an effort made to provide an equal voice to each gender group. In addition to the above purposive sampling, I used snowball sampling to find participants by asking willing youth to help me identify and recruit their friends who met the criteria previously described, ensuring that I receive a range of diverse responses with varied experiences while directly addressing the goals and driving questions of this study.

In regards to adult participants within ENGAGE, the literature review demonstrated that culture, practices, personnel and relationships with adults are all important factors that shape the experience of Latinx youth within educational organizations (Kwon, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2006; Noguera, 2008; Valenzuela, 1999). Therefore, I recruited Ranch Mountain administrative

leaders (CEO, COO, Program manager), site coordinators, and frontline college-aged young people to participate in the study, with special efforts made to recruit youth workers that had direct engagement with youth participants and were identified by Latinx youth as authentic caring individuals and mentors. Once they verbally confirmed their interest, they were provided with an asset form (if under 17) and/or a consent form (for parents and those over 18).

Beyond self-identifying as Latinx and Spanish speakers, youth participants in this study shared a common community background as they all lived in the small urban communities of Rose City or Mont Bleu that surrounded Rose City high school. Mont Bleu and Rose City are neighboring cities, 10 miles east of downtown Los Angeles, that are slightly overcrowded, busy, urban, working class communities. Demographically, Rose City, where the ENGAGE program were located, was composed of first and second generation (im)migrant families from Latin America (Mexico and Central America) and South East Asia (Vietnam, China). Youth loved their community and spoke highly of it, describing Rose City as a beautiful, peaceful, diverse, and quiet place where "not much happens" and everyone gets along. In contrast, youth admitted people who are not from the community believe Rose City and Mont Bleu appear "scary" and have a "bad reputation," which they argued was unjustified as they always felt safe at home.

Rose City high school itself, according to youth, had a reputation in the school district for being strong academically, yet the majority of participants were "average" students who took classes at various academic levels. During data collection, most participants were enrolled in mainstream "college-prep" classes, two were in sheltered and/or migrant education classes, and two others were enrolled in advanced placement classes. Regardless of the classes they were enrolled in, youth stated during interviews that they were dedicated to doing well in school as they planned to go to college and had high career aspiration, including wanting to become

medical doctors, nurses, business owners, psychologists, recording artists, and teachers. In terms of academic interests, youth gravitated towards and thought highly of history and ethnic studies classes, because they were the only spaces where they could have in-depth, open conversations about current events such as racism, ICE raids, school shootings, and gun control. In contrast, youth described the rest of their classes as spaces that were strict, boring, and too serious, where they "don't have good communication with teachers" (Jasmin), and can't socialize with their peers. Thus, although youth were dedicated to doing well in school, and hoped to use their education as a means of achieving their future goals, they did not have favorable views of the schooling process itself. However, it should be noted youth believed their participation in ENGAGE benefitted them socially and academically because the youth workers always made them feel welcomed, supported their development, and motivated them.

Socially, youth participants in the study were outgoing, personable, and talkative, with the exception of Sergio, a participant in the 12th grade, who was a bit more reserved and claimed he was as "closed-off" and had "trust issues." Of the 12 youth participants, six of them (Mark, Kimberly, Charles, Sienna, Sergio, and William) were involved in a school sport, yet they continued to attend ENGAGE as time permitted. Similarly, though ENGAGE was well known for offering tutoring assistance, which initially drew participants to the program, youth all claimed they started regularly attending and participating in ENGAGE once they realized it offered interest-based labs such as the weight room, cosmetology, cooking, gardening, and "culture" club. Labs not only aligned with youth interests, it provided them with a shared basis from which to build relationships and develop their skills, which Mark argued helped everyone develop, "people come because they want to, they make an effort to, they want to better themselves…they're of the same mentality. [And are] motivated to do something with their life."

Table 1. Summary of relevant participant demographic information.

Youth Participants	Age	Grade	Self-Id Race	Gender Identity	ENGAGE Site	Length of time participating
Angela	15	10th	Mexican, Latina	Female	Rose City	1 year
Charles	17	11th	Mexican-American	Male	Rose City	3 years
Jasmin	15	10th	Mexican-American	Female	Rose City	1 year
Joaquin	17	12th	Legally White, Mex. Am.	Male	Rose City	4 years
Kelvin	18	12th	Asian-Latino	Male	Rose City	2 years
Kimberly	16	11th	Latina, Indigenous	Female	Rose City	3 years
Mark	17	12th	Latino	Male	Rose City	4 years
Riley	16	11th	Latina, Mexican	Female	Rose City	2 years
Sergio	17	12th	Mexican, Indigenous	Male	Rose City	3 years
Sienna	18	12th	Chinese-Mexican	Female	Rose City	3 years
Veronica	16	11th	Mex-Am., Latina	Female	Rose City	2 years
William (Will)	17	12th	Mex-Am., Latino	Male	Rose City	4 years
College-Aged Adult Participant	**Age**	**Position**	**Self-ID Race**	**Gender Identity**	**Site**	**Length of time w/RMEO**
Tom	24	Former YW	Asian	Male	Rose City	4 years
Kevin	23	Music lab YW	Latino, Legally White	Male	Rose City/ Whitwood	Former participant, 6 years as YW
Tito	25	Weight room YW	Latino	Male	Rose City	5 years
Olivia Mae	23	Site Coordinator	Latina	Female	Rose City	Former Participant, 6 years as YW and Site Coord.
Emilia (Marquez)-Observed	28	Cosmetology Consult	Latina	Female	Rose City/Whitwood	9 months
Adults- Admin.	**Age**	**Position**	**Self-ID Race**	**Gender ID**	**Site**	**Length of time w/RMEO**
Ben	52	CEO	Latino	Male	Main Office	Co-founder, 15 yrs
Denise	40	COO	Hispanic	Female	Main Office	Co-founder, 15 yrs
Michelle	32	Prog.Manager	White	Female	Main Office	14 years
Maverick	38	Former S.C.	Mexican	Male	Rose City	9 years

Research Methods

The epistemology of methodology that informs this project is aligned with critical qualitative research, and thus utilized critical ethnographic methods. More specifically, throughout this study I utilized ethnographic methods to collect data, including interviews (informal and semi-structured), participant observations, document analysis, a short questionnaire (pre-interview), and an optional photography task (Clandinin, 2013; Creswell, 2007). Through these methods, I studied and observed the day-to-day lives of Latinx youth, while documenting and interpreting their "shared and learned pattern of values" within the ENGAGE program (Creswell, 2007). The use of critical ethnographic methods provided me with the ability to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences of Spanish-speaking Latinxs, along with the immediate (CBES) and extended (coloniality) context in which they are embedded. These methods were employed throughout the 2017-2018 academic year from July 2017 to June 2018, during which time I visited Ranch Mountain's main office and Rose City high school where ENGAGE was hosted, 3 times a week for 4 hours (minimum) each day.

Recruitment

Based upon the participant selection section above, youth and adult participants were recruited via purposive and snowball sampling. Because purposive sampling allowed me to target a specific population of youth, the process of recruitment began with general announcements, flyer distribution, and program-wide invitations to participate. General announcements and invitations were made at the weekly and monthly administrative meetings and at Rose City high school's youth leader meetings/trainings to recruit willing adult participants, while announcements were also made throughout the ENGAGE program at Rose City high school and within specific ENGAGE "labs" to recruit Latinx youth. In addition, flyers

were posted and distributed throughout the program, and at special events, to aid in the

recruitment of youth participants. Once Spanish-speaking Latinx youth had agreed to participate

they were asked to assist in recruiting their friends (snowball sampling), and were asked to

remind those they recruit that participation is voluntary and offers no incentive/compensation for

their participation. Lastly, due to their age, all youth were provided with an asset form for

themselves as well as a consent form for their parents to sign, with optional phone conversations

if necessary. Once 12 youth participants had been recruited, I stopped actively recruiting unless a

student dropped out, then I began the process of snowball sampling again.

In the recruitment of adults, I began by making general announcements to Ranch

Mountain leaders and ENGAGE site coordinators during weekly/monthly administrative

meetings. In addition, I sent them recruitment emails, placed flyers within their individual

mailboxes at the main office, and spoke to them directly to answer questions as necessary.

Similarly, to recruit frontline youth workers, which RMEO refers to as "youth leaders," I started

by asking Latinx youth participants to identify adult youth workers they had strong relationships

with, as well as the youth workers in charge of the labs they attended most frequently. These

youth leaders were then recruited via in-person conversations where I explained the study to

them and answered any clarifying question they may have had. With the goal of recruiting adults

across all employment levels to ensure I had diverse voices and experiences represented, I

stopped adult recruitment once I seven adult participants with at least one administrator, site

coordinator, and youth leader represented.

As a result of the above recruitment plan, the data collected throughout this study

centered youth voices and included multiple levels of experience (administrative, site

coordinator, youth leaders, and Spanish-speaking Latinx youth). With these diverse voices and

experiences represented, I was able to gain a better understanding of not only the context of

RMEO and the ENGAGE site, but of Latinx youth's experiences as well, which were developed

through participant observations, interviews, and document/data analysis.

Participant Observations

Participant observations allowed me to gain an understanding of how Latinx youth make

meaning of their experience through "extended observation" of their day-to-day interactions and

behaviors within the spaces where they live, study, and gather (Creswell, 2007). Observations

were conducted as concurrent sessions for youth and adult participants throughout the 2017-2018

academic year within the main office and, primarily, at the ENGAGE site during program hours

(See Timeline Appendix). Youth were observed during programming at the ENGAGE site

hosted on Rose City high school's campus, during lab show cases, and within informal,

unstructured spaces such as during snack time, in the hallways, and before/after programming. In

addition, I observed one-on-one tutoring sessions within the larger labs, youth interactions, the

practices youth leaders engaged in when working with Latinx youth, and peer interactions

between youth. For the most part, adult participant observations occurred simultaneous to youth

observations, particularly during times of interaction (formal and/or informal) between adults

and youth. During their interactions I paid closed attention to the type of interaction, their forms

of communication, and their level of relationship. In addition, adults were observed during

administrative, planning, and program meetings at RMEO's main office with special attention

given to how they spoke about and navigated funding, the issues they discussed, and the

language they utilized when problem solving.

Through these observations, and the detailed field notes I took over the 32 weeks and

roughly 288 hours (3 days and 9 hours per week) I was on campus, I was able to examine the

relationship between youth participants, their peers, and adults within the ENGAGE program, all of which construct the context of the program and shape Latinx youth's experiences within it. Since this research was interested in the experience of Spanish-speaking Latinx youth within the program, and how their meaning making of these experiences inform their racial identity development, participant observations were necessary and important to view the context, interactions, and the relationships built that shape youth experiences. In addition to the roughly 288 hours spent on campus, I also observed RMEO's administrators at the main office for 96 hours (32 weeks, 3 hours per week) over the course of the academic year to get a better understanding of the organizational context, their culture, and central concerns.

Interviews

The second major tool utilized for data collection were interviews. Throughout this study, both informal and semi-structured, open-ended interviews were conducted with adult and youth participants. Informal interviews refer to spur of the moment interactions and conversations that occurred between myself and participants while in the middle of observations (Anderson & Larson, 2009). These informal interviews did not utilize a research protocol and were utilized to gain insight and to ask for either an explanation or clarification of observations made. Participant responses during informal interviews (conversations) were documents within detailed field notes.

In contrast, the one-on-one semi-structured interviews I conducted utilized a research protocol composed of open-ended questions that allowed for a wider range of responses. Semi-structured, open-ended individual interviews with Spanish-speaking Latinx youth helped me gain insight into how they made meaning of their participation within the ENGAGE program and how their experiences, and the relationships they built, informed their racial identity development. Similar to Latinx youth, adult participants were interviewed using a semi-structures, open-ended

research protocol with the intention of understanding the values they bring, their motivations for working at ENGAGE, as well as their beliefs about and interactions with Latinx youth. Each interview conducted was, on average, one hour long, was recorded with a digital audio recorder, and documented through detailed, written field notes.

Data and Document Analysis

One of the first forms of data that was collected were documents from both Ranch Mountain and the ENGAGE program, including mission/purpose statements, promotional material, grant applications, employee training presentations, and annual reports produced by RMEO and ENGAGE. Analysis of these documents revealed how the ENGAGE program was framed as well as how Ranch Mountain imagines itself through the stories it tells, the ideals it hopes to meet, and the way it constructs (describes, frames) the population they work with (Andrews, 2014; Linde, 2001). Analysis of these documents, much like the raw data collected through the aforementioned means, followed the plan described below.

Data collected throughout the study was transcribed (interviews), coded, and analyzed as the study itself was being conducted. This process took an inductive approach to analysis where initial analyses established themes/categories that allowed findings to emerge from frequent and significant themes (Thomas, 2006). The analysis of data was also informed by Carspecken's (1996) reconstructive analysis, which is intended to "'reconstruct,' into explicit discourse, cultural and subjective factors that are largely tacit" (Carspecken, 1996, p. 93) through cyclical and multi-level coding. To reach reconstruction, Carspecken (1996) argues for multiple levels of coding and reconstruction, including: initial meaning reconstruction which involves low-level, low-inference coding through the use of participant responses (verbal and physical); the formation of meaning fields and interpretation of data from multiple value perspectives; and

finally high level, high inference codes that demonstrate higher levels of abstraction and analysis of low-level codes to arrive at significant themes (Carspecken, 1996). This dissertation study followed this very process as data collected went through cycles of reading and analysis that informed one another and, ultimately, were used to code data, establish meaning fields, and arrive at summative findings tied to frequent and significant themes that emerged from the multiple readings. To this end, NVIVO was used as the transcription, coding, and analysis tool.

Limitations

Though care was taken to formulate a research plan that centers the voice of Spanish-speaking Latinx youth, allows for triangulation of data, and attempts to limit the influence of biases through reflexivity/critical self-reflection, this dissertation study remains limited in a few ways. To begin, this research utilizes the term Latinx to refer to the youth participants of the study in an effort to be gender inclusive and disrupt the power of the heteronormative Spanish language. Yet, the term itself is a limitation as it remains an umbrella, collectivizing label that erases intra-group differences and perpetuates the colonial idea that Latinxs are all the same. Despite the limitation, the use of this problematic term is purposely done as the study is interested in the collective identity imposed upon various nationality groups as this is part of their racialization within the U.S. and informs their racial identity formation.

A related limitation is the fact that the study does not differentiate between Latinx nationality groups or between regions in the U.S. One could assume that differentiating between Latin American nationality groups would reveal important intra-group differences in experience within community-based educational spaces or differences in the racialization process. Yet, since these various groups are collectively labeled Latinx as part of their racialization within the U.S., the study is limited to their collective experience. Similarly, the study is located within the highly

diverse county of Los Angeles, which means that the experiences and racialization of Latinxs

located outside this region in the U.S. southwest may be vastly different. The final limitation

arises because the research is focused on self-identified Latinxs with the ability to speak Spanish,

whether limited or fluent, within a state-funded program. Despite the inherent limitation in

focusing on Spanish-speaking Latinxs, they remain central because they are seldom studied

within CBES and are most vulnerable to colonization and racialization due to assumptions about

their language ability. As a result, this study is not generalizable or transferable to all Latinxs or

all community-based educational spaces, nor does it claim to be.

Trustworthiness: Establishing Validity and Reliability

Qualitative research, particularly critical studies, face a context within academia that

questions the value of our work due to a belief that it is inherently biased, less rigorous, and thus

not trustworthy, valid, or reliable (Carspecken, 1996, 2001). This study addresses trustworthiness

by operating from Carspecken's (1996) conception of critical epistemology which "does not use

perception" to ground certainty or validation in research. Rather, a critical epistemology, which

is aligned with a critical coloniality framework, views the validity and trustworthiness of

research as embedded within "holistic modes of human experience and their relationship to

communication structure" (Carspecken, 1996, p. 19). In other words, validity and trustworthiness

is not reached through observation and assumed to be certain, it stems from experience,

interaction, and agreement with/consent from with participants – from confirmability where

findings are based on and confirmed by participant responses and triangulation (Hardcastle,

Usher, & Holmes, 2006). From a critical epistemology lens, validity and trustworthiness is

reached through a more holistic approach by using multiple data collection methods to come to

an understanding that requires interaction with, recognition of, and consent from participants

(Carspecken, 2001; Hardcastle, Usher, & Holmes, 2006). This view of trustworthiness requires that we acknowledge power differences between researchers and participants, as well as actively work towards equalizing power by recognizing the value of silenced voices (Yosso et al., 2001). Based on this understanding, the study employed the above methods in addition to member checking with participants, as described below, to confirm emergent themes and increase credibility by reporting data as accurately as possible (Carspecken, 1996).

Data collected was triangulated to increase trustworthiness and credibility through verification and validation, specifically in the use of multiple qualitative field methods, member checking with participants, and historical research as necessary (Creswell, 2007). Throughout this study data was collected through informal and semi-structured interviews, participant observations and field notes, and the collection/analysis of documents, all of which were conducted until saturation was reached (Creswell, 2007). I also participated in and observed academic and enrichment programming, youth group meetings, administrative planning meetings, and special lab showcases. In an effort to reduce potential power differences with participants, and check potential biases, I purposely conducted member checks with participants where I repeated statements to ensure my understanding, presented and asked for their feedback on my analysis of data after transcription and coding, and confirmed my understanding of the meaning of observations or responses (Carspecken, 1996).

As a Chicanx-Latinx, who can speak Spanish, and is familiar with the Mont Bleu community as I previously worked in Mont Bleu, I shared a cultural and linguistic background with the youth in this study. My proximity to Latinx youth's cultural and community background allowed me greater access to, as well as a deeper understanding of, the complexity of their lived experiences within schools and community-based educational spaces, all of which helped me

build trust with them (Clandinin, 2013). In addition, with this shared cultural background and my knowledge of their community as a basis, I was able to build relationships with youth prior to asking them to participate in the study by introducing myself as a Latinx researcher, with no formal ties to the program, who was interested in getting to know and support them as individuals. Gaining their trust and building relationships with youth facilitated data collection as it allowed me to ask more pointed and insightful questions during one-on-one interviews, and frequent check understandings with them during observations and informal conversations. Thus, through the process of member checking, triangulation, and saturation, I actively tried to validate my findings as well as capture diverse experiences.

Through the methods of triangulation described above I cross-checked, verified, and validated data and emergent findings, all while centering the marginalized voices of Spanish-speaking Latinx youth, in an effort to ensure trustworthiness (Carspecken, 2001; Hardcastle, Usher, & Holmes, 2006; Yosso et al., 2001). It is my hope the findings that arose from this dissertation will benefit Latinx youth by improving site practice to better meet their unique needs and support their exploration and development of a positive racial identity.

Chapter 4

Racist Messages and The Racialization of Latinx Youth

This is the biggest issue for me, like, on a global scale because (slight pause) when it came to DACA, the Dreamers' Act was taken away. And so, that took away very m-, a lot of opportunities for, for people who were born in Mexico, but like raised in America. And so, that kind of defeats its purpose and its sort of defeats, like, a lot of the purposes people came here for. And we're a, we're a "promised land" called opportunity. And so, whenever you take opportunity away it's just (slight pause) it's just an empty promise. So, when it comes to the Dreamers' Act [sic], dreamers are people who are defined as people who have hope. And, like, if you take hope away from someone, they are, they're literally nothing. And so, it's hard to become someone, when you're no one. (Joaquin)

What can be simpler or more accurately stated? The Mexican government is forcing their most unwanted people into the United States. They are in many cases, criminals, drug dealers, rapists, etc.   (Donald J. Trump, as cited in Neate, 2015)

In the United States, Latinx youth are constantly navigating racist images and deficit-based messages about who they are, what they can accomplish, and where they belong in society. In the above quote, Joaquin, a 12th grade ENGAGE participant at Rose City High School, with aspirations of becoming a medical doctor one day, describes the effect that national immigration policies have on individuals and Latinxs, at large. He describes a "dreamer" who is provided messages of "hope" in the form of "opportunity" in the U.S, yet who also faces deficit-based stereotypes about their capacities and policy that constructs Latinx populations as "literally

nothing." Much like the dreamers Joaquin described above, the Latinx youth in this study continually navigate deficit-based[9] messages, which are considered acts of racism, about their capacities, abilities, and potential across the institutions they encounter through their daily lives.

Given the xenophobic socio-political context Latinx youth live within, and the centrality of the "Latino threat" narrative (Chavez, 2013) that frames them as an internal danger to the nation, it is of little surprise that Latinx youth had a shared visceral awareness of racism toward Latinxs in the United States. For instance, Latinx youth described seeing deficit-based stereotypes about Latinxs inherent to the national rhetoric and perpetuated across (social)media as exemplified by Donald Trump's categorization of Latinxs as "criminals, drug dealers, and rapists" (Neate, 2015), in addition to the framing of Spanish as a deficit and its purposeful exclusion from their school. Across these sources, Latinx youth received racist messages that perpetuated the misconception that they are: intellectually and linguistically deficient in comparison to White peers; are outsiders, immigrants, or non-citizens that can be identified by their surname and proximity to Spanish; and have limited capacities for the future due to their race and (assumed) language abilities, making them a burden to society (Donato & Hanson, 2012). In the midst of receiving the above racist messages, Latinx youth developed a unique perspective of race that was informed by their own experiences with racialization and its intersection with ethnicity, (assumed) language ability, and citizenship status. For some, the deficit-based messages they received served as a motivation to resist and disprove racist

---

[9] "Deficit" throughout this dissertation refers to the theory of "deficit-thinking" introduced by Valencia (1997). The concept of deficit-thinking is defined as the belief "that the student who fails in school does so because of internal deficits or deficiencies" (Valencia, 1997, p. 2). This metaphorical student refers particularly to low income, minority youth whose "deficits manifest, it is alleged, in limited intellectual abilities, linguistic shortcomings, lack of motivation to learn, and immoral behavior" (Valencia, 1997, p. 2). This racist view of low income, minoritized youth as having inherent deficiencies excuses systemic failures, "oppressive macropolicies and practices" and inequalities in resources (Valencia, 1997, p. 2) by laying blame for school failure on the individua. It should also be noted that deficit beliefs are based on racism, making deficit thinking a racist act.

stereotypes via the construction of counternarratives and, as will be seen in Chapter 6, the

formation of counter-spaces within the ENGAGE program (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995;

Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002)

This chapter delves deep into Latinx youth's understandings of race and racialization, the

sources from which they receive deficit-based messages that inform their views of race/racism,

and the meaning they make of race and their experiences with racialization. To this end, the

chapter begins with a section that describes how Latinx youth understand race, racism, and

deficit-based imaginations of Latinxs in the country. In this section, particular attention is given

to the connections Latinx youth see between race, ethnicity, language, and citizenship, and the

way language functions as a racializing signifier of difference in their lives. The second section

explores Latinx youth's lived experiences with racism and racialization by identifying three

major sources of deficit-based messages, namely the Trump administration, National

(social)media, and within school, and reveals the meaning they make of the racist messages they

are exposed to. A final section summarizes Latinx youth understandings of race and the way they

navigate deficit-based public imaginations that construct them as "no one" in the eyes of the

country, while they embrace and maintain their agency, humanity, and resistance that makes

them "somebody" (Hill, 2017).

Latinx Youth Understandings of Race and Racialization

In the United States, Latinx youth are situated at an intersection of social constructions,

or hierarchies of separation, that shapes their lived context, experiences within institutions, and

their college and career outlook (Crenshaw, 1989; Donato & Hanson, 2012; Quijano, 2000).

Their experiences are especially shaped by others' assumptions about Latinxs language abilities,

their race, and citizenship status, which intersect to construct them as racialized subjects at the

margins of U.S. life. At the same time, the racialized assumptions about Latinxs, most clearly

seen in the form of stereotypes, maintains and perpetuates deficit-based images and beliefs about

them that then inform practices towards Latinxs within social institutions (Chavez, 2013;

Gandara, 2010). For Latinx youth in this study, lived experiences with overt racism

(discrimination, profiling, name-calling), deficit-based stereotypes (subtractive schooling,

tracking), and across national media, sent them messages about race which made them acutely

aware of the on-going xenophobia and racism in the country, positioning it as a major social

problem in their eyes (Valenzuela, 1999). In addition, it contributed to Latinx youth articulating

an intersectional lens as they described seeing links between their assumed language abilities,

citizenship status, and how their race was perceived. These understandings align with the

historical process of Latinx racialization, as described in the historical context section in Chapter

2, that is briefly reviewed below (Crenshaw, 1989; Donato & Hanson, 2012; Gross, 2007; Haney

Lopez, 2006; Menchaca, 2001; Wilson, 2003).

Historical Racialization of Latinxs

Historically, the racialization of Latinxs, much like the concept of race itself, has been a

messy, convoluted, complicated classification process, one that is political in nature and has

included multiple changes in definition over time (Donato & Hanson, 2012; Menchaca, 2001;

Wilson, 2013). This process has seen Latinxs classification in the U.S change from legally white

following the signing of the *Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo* in 1848 (Del Castillo, 1992), to

racially-mixed nonwhite "mongrel" race a few years afterwards (Gomez, 2007), back to an

"other white race" category in the early 20th century (Wilson, 2003), and more recently, an

"identifiable minority group" that exists outside of the white race, where surname, nationality,

and language serve as identifiers (Donato & Hanson, 2012; Gross, 2007; Haney Lopez, 2006;

Menchaca, 2001; Wilson, 2013). Throughout these changes to Latinxs legal race, and in spite of the categorization as white citizen, they remained socially racialized, excluded, and subjugated.

Whereas Latinxs were legally categorized as white, scholars have argued they were never afforded the full protections and benefits of white citizenship, indicating their social status as a racialized group (Donato & Hanson, 2012; Gross, 2007; Haney Lopez, 1994, 2006; Menchaca, 2001; Wilson, 2013). For instance, Mexican(Americans)/Latinxs were allowed to own land. Since naturalized citizens were the only group allowed to legally own land, and people of color were not eligible for citizenship in the mid-1800's, Latinxs were legally White citizens (Donato & Hanson, 2012; Gross 2007). However, socially and within institutions, Latinxs were racialized and treated as a "mongrel" mixed-race group that existed outside the dominant American culture (Gomez, 2007; Menchaca, 2001); a status that was largely informed by their skin color (phenotype), class, surname, language, and culture. For example, given the co-naturalization of language and race, language was central in the racialization of Latinxs, in particular within schools, as their assumed language abilities, and the deficiencies falsely associated with it, became the means by which Mexican(Americans)/Latinxs were segregated (Donato & Hanson, 2012; Flores & Rosa, 2017). This was especially true for Latinxs with darker complexions, and from low-income backgrounds, who were made "other" and treated as if they were noncitizens (Haney Lopez, 2006; Gross, 2007). Thus, when theorizing Latinx racialization, race, language, ethnicity, and citizenship are in a sense, inextricable.

Given the convoluted, messy historical racialization of Latinxs, and the way this process has been informed by racist perceptions of their (assumed) language abilities, class, phenotype, surnames, and citizenship, it should come as no surprise that Latinx youth themselves have a similar intersecting understanding of race. More specifically, throughout this study, Latinx youth

indicated they understood race to be the same as ethnicity and connected to their language, nationality, and citizenship status, as these factors also informed how others' viewed and treated them. In the following section, a closer look at how Latinx youth's understand race and its intersections with ethnicity, language, and citizenship, is provided.

"Your Race is Your Ethnicity", Language, and Nationality: Youth Understandings of Race

"Your race is your ethnicity. So, I'm Mexican-American, race-wise, so my ethnicity would be Mexican-American. But, if you're trying to categorize it [officially], race would be just your race and ethnicity would be, like, what comes along with your race, like the traditions and stuff like that."   -Charles, 11th grade

Historically, and in the eyes of Latinx youth, race has been inextricable from Latinxs ethnicity, language, and conceptions of citizenship. Throughout this study, when asked to define the concept of race and self-identify their own race, Latinx youth responses indicated they understood race to be the same as ethnicity, and believed their race was tied to their language and nationality. For example, in the opening quote, the 11th grade ENGAGE participant named Charles, who self-identified as Mexican-American, stated Latinx's culture, traditions, language, and nationality informed his understanding of race, leading him to self-identify his race as his ethnicity. Much like the erroneous ideas used to historically racialize Latinx populations, youth participants like Charles believed race was the same as their ethnicity, including culture and language, and all of which intersected and contributed to their experiences with racialization within modern institutions (Donato & Hanson, 2012; Haney Lopez, 2006; Menchaca, 2001). However, according to Charles, ethnicity is not only the same thing as race, it is "what comes along with race," meaning language, culture, and nationality informed how they understood race.

Responding to the same question posed to Charles, "how do you define race," Kimberly, an 11th grade ENGAGE participant and star wrestler at Rose City high school, added that race can simply be defined "by language." When asked to clarify, Kimberly went on to express that she identifies herself as Latina, but when other's look at her they identify her as "Mexican... because of my [skin] color and how I speak fluent Spanish, sometimes." In this short response, Kimberly echoes the historical racialization process in which Latinxs were racially categorized, and segregated, according to phenotype and their assumed language abilities. By explicitly identifying skin color and her use of Spanish as factors that informed how others racialized her, Kimberly reveals that Latinx youth understand race, as a category, to be tied to other factors including ethnicity, language, and culture (Donato & Hanson, 2012; Gross, 2007).

Riley, an 11th grade ENGAGE participant who regularly attended the cosmetology lab, expanded upon Kimberly's conception of race as determined by language in saying "so, race is kind of, like, your language…if you're Hispanic, you like obviously speak Spanish. Like, Latino, same thing right?" When asked to clarify how she saw race and language being connected, Riley responded by automatically pointing to the root word and stating "You know, Latin. Latino." Along these same lines, Mark, a 12th grade student who was a regular ENGAGE participant throughout his 4 years in high school and self-identified as Latino, further explained "the word Latino comes from the root 'Latin,' which is, you know, from Europe, which is kind of weird, OR [his emphasis] not weird, 'cause Spain colonized the Americas so, you know, that's where the word [Latino] came from." Combined, the responses from Kimberly, Riley, and Mark, clearly demonstrate Latinx youth understand race and language to be intimately connected with one another, especially for Latinxs in the U.S., whose categorizing labels on state documents, "Hispanic" and "Latino," both come from root words tied to language, i.e. "Spanish" and

"Latin." Beyond defining race according to ethnicity and language, youth's conception of race was also informed by culture and their family's nationality/citizenship status.

The belief that Latinxs' race is informed by (assumed) language ability is so entrenched in society, and within Latinx youth's understandings of race, that those with a loose grasp of the Spanish language felt they were less "Latinx" that those who were fluent in the language. For instance, Sienna, a 12th grade student who I interviewed in April of 2018 and was of Chinese and Mexican descent, stated that her limited ability to speak Spanish and her limited exposure to Latinx cultural traditions made her "feel like I'm … I don't know, like a 'fake Mexican … [because] I can't relate or I can't, you know, have conversations with my grandmother or grandfather." Thus, for Sienna, who understood Spanish and was taking classes to become fluent, the inability to community with her family and contribute to conversations around traditional dishes made her feel like she was a "fake Mexican." Here it is important to note that in describing her race, Sienna doesn't state Latina/x, rather, she uses the nationality specific label "Mexican," once again indicating understandings of race intersect with ethnicity, nationality, and language. Despite Sienna's reservations and her feeling like an imposter due to her limited Spanish abilities, later in the interview she explained "I still consider myself Latina" because her father was Mexican(American) and the fact that she "didn't look like other Chinese people" due to her physical features (i.e. phenotype). Other Latinx youth participants, like Riley and Kimberly above, similarly argued that although language and race were connected, Spanish language ability was not the sole determinant of racial identity because, as Mark argued, "you're Latino, it doesn't matter if you speak Spanish or not." Such a view of race reveals its socially constructed nature and demonstrates that, for Latinx youth, language, culture, and ethnicity inform their understanding of race and how others' perceive their racial identity (racialization).

Combining Sienna's experience as a mixed-race self-identified Chinese-Latina, with the previous responses from youth, shows us that Latinx youth in this study understood race as being informed by not only their proximity to Spanish, but by their ethnicity and culture as well. Mark, the aforementioned 12th grade ENGAGE participant, summarized this idea nicely when he said "I see race as like all 'Latinos,' which is, you know, Central Americans, Brazilian, and all that." Here, Mark clearly states his understanding of race is tied to ethnicity and then proceeds to specifically refer to different nationality groups that are lumped into the collective "Latino" label, including Brazilians and Central Americans. Thus, Mark links his understanding of race to nationality and citizenship, while introducing another factor that shapes understandings of race.

Adding to the idea that nationality and citizenship are tied to perceptions of race, Jasmin, a 10th grade ENGAGE participant who aspired to be a singer, stated "race, I mean, well, people say different skin tones. But, I feel like [race] is different … [being] from different places, like Mexico, New Mexico, like from different countries and everything." Considering that historically, only "full blooded Mexicans" and "Spaniards" could be granted citizenship following the *Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo*, one's nation of origin, along with language, phenotype, class, and surname, were important factors that informed how they were racialized and subsequently treated within social institutions. Thus, Jasmin's response highlights the belief that race is not only tied to ethnicity (culture and language), but that it is tied to their family's nationality, leading many of them to self-identify their race using nationality-specific labels, including "Mexican," "Mexican-American," and "Haitian and Mexican" to name a few. Youth responses that identify family nationality as a factor in their understanding of race reflect the limitations of racial categories and speak to the factors that have been used to racialize Latinxs.

Throughout this section, I have shown that Latinx youth understand race not to be a static category that is narrowly defined according to biology, as has been debunked by numerous scholars (Byrd & Hughey; 2015; Grosfoguel, 2003; Haney-Lopez, 1994, 2006; Omi & Winant; 2014; Pascoe, 2009; Sanchez, 1995; Wilson, 2003). Rather, it is understood to be a social construct that is informed by multiple factors, including ethnicity (culture and language), phenotype, and nationality; factors that shape how Latinxs are racialized and influence perceptions of their citizenship status and intellectual capacities. Based upon the above responses, it is evident that Latinx youth equate race and ethnicity. However, it is important to recall that this understanding does not stem from the fact that Latinx youth do not understand the differences between race, ethnicity, or citizenship. Rather, their understanding of race is based off of their lived experiences with racialization, one in which race, ethnicity, language, and citizenship are inextricable and have been used as identifiers of their perceived racial identity. Particularly true within schools and state institutions, where language has historically been used to categorize them as outsider "others" socially, and a racial subgroup that could be segregated due to inherent deficiencies (Donato & Hanson, 2012; Flores & Rosa, 2017; Gross, 2007; Lopez, 2006).

Latinx youth responses also indicated they understood race to function as a classification tool, as seen within the opening quote from Charles, who stated "if you're trying to categorize it, race would be...". His use of the term "categorize" shows he understands race is used to classify individuals, an idea echoed by Joaquin, the 12th grade ENGAGE participant, who stated "race is what you classify as." It is important to notice Joaquin did not say "what you classify yourself as," rather he implies that the classification is being done by others unto the individual. Their responses indicate Latinx youth participants are aware that race is a social construct used to

classify individuals, as opposed to a biological reality. One in which ethnicity, language, phenotype, surname, and others play a role in how they are categorized. Despite race not being biologically "real," Latinx youth recounted numerous experiences that made the effects of racism, racialization, and race as a system "real" in their daily lives, often in the form of racist stereotypes and deficit-based messages perpetuated by the Trump administration, national and social media, and within their school. The following section will look at youth's experiences of racialization, in particular the way their (assumed) Spanish language abilities have been used as a signifier of difference to mark them as unintelligent and unamerican "others".

Youth Experiences of Racialization: Language as a Signifier of Difference

> Because of the way they [Latinxs] speak. Some people are like 'Oh, only Americans could speak, uh, English and only Mexican speak this language, only Filipinos speak this language,' and, then, like the assumptions of someone not being born here, they're just so many[misconceptions] that people like don't really understand them [Latinxs]. (Jasmin)

The language that one speaks or, as is the case with Latinx youth, their proximity to a language other than English marks them as "other" and as outsiders, while simultaneously linking the individual to deficit-based perceptions and assumptions of that raciolinguistic group (Gandara, 2010; Gross, 2007; Haney Lopez, 2006; Pascoe, 2009; Wilson, 2003, Rosa & Flores, 2017). In the modern world system, language itself is racialized (Flores & Rosa, 2015) and, as a result, language racializes populations and carries deficit-based assumptions about individuals who speak said language. When it comes to the Latinx youth in the study, their language ability, or more specifically their proximity to Spanish, marked them as "other" and shaped the way they were treated in public and at school. The treatment they experienced sent the youth message that (a) they do not belong in the U.S. and (b) are less intelligent than their peers, simply because of

the language they were assumed to speak. This is seen within Latinx youth' responses where they directly connect language with intellectual ability or conceptions of citizenship and race. By making these connections, Latinx youth illuminate how language, race, and the imagined U.S. citizen (citizenship) are all connected within U.S. society, making each of them necessary to consider when attempting to understand Latinx youth's racial identity development.

The idea that language is racialized, or intimately connected to race, and serves as a means of racializing populations is not new. There is a growing body of scholarship that investigates the concept of raciolinguistics, or racialized language (Flores, 2016; Flores & Rosa, 2015, 2017; Rosa, 2015, Rosa & Flores, 2017, 2017b), and a long history of scholars who have studied the role of language in shaping Latinx racialization, educational experiences, and their treatment in society (Anzaldua, 2012; Cummins, 2007; Donato & Hanson, 2012; Fernandez, 2015; Gandara, 2000; Gross, 2007; Haney Lopez, 2006; Heath, 1983; Menchaca, 2001; Pacheco & Nao, 2009; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002; Wilson, 2003). Within these two scholarly fields, language stands in concert with race as co-naturalized markers of difference, or "otherness," that position individuals assumed to speak Spanish as inferior, deficient, and subjugated populations (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Gross, 2007; Rosa & Flores, 2017). Further, race and language not only coexist as hierarchies of separation that racialize populations, they also carry inherent ideologies about the abilities and possibilities of (assumed) Spanish-speaking populations (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Gandara, 2000, 2010, Rosa & Flores, 2017). According to Rosa and Flores (2017), the naturalization of language and race, as systems of oppression, occurred concurrently as part of the larger process of colonization of the Americas, and remains a tool of colonization in the U.S. Thus, much like Jasmin implies the quote above, language and race in the post-colonial era of

modernity are so intimately connected that "people came to look like a language, and sound like a race" (Rosa, 2018), both of which racialize and position individuals in the hierarchy of the U.S.

Assumed Language Abilities and Experiences of Racialization

Latinx youth identified their proximity to Spanish, regardless of their actual language ability, as being a primary cause, and target for, the vitriolic racism they experience in their daily lives. More specifically, they stated that their use of Spanish identified them as an outsider, a non-citizen to the imagined community of the U.S., making them targets of racism and deficit-based stereotypes about their intellectual abilities. To this end, when I asked Joaquin, the aforementioned 12th grade ENGAGE participant who aspired to be a medical doctor, to describe "any misconceptions about Spanish-speakers he had experienced," he recalled an instance where he faced overt racism at work due to his use of Spanish. Joaquin stated, "I work at a… at a Spanish [Mexican] restaurant, someone actually came in one day and didn't even want to order anything, all they wanted to do was just call me a 'wetback' and then walked out." In this example, Joaquin states he was the target of a racist verbal attack, and was called a "wetback," simply because he works at a Mexican restaurant. The term "wetback" is a racist epithet of Latinxs which implies they "crossed the border" and are illegal (im)migrants and not-citizens of the U.S. By using the term "wetback" to refer to Joaquin, while knowing nothing about him, the individual was implying that Joaquin, due to his proximity to Spanish, was an illegal immigrant and did not belong in the U.S.

Joaquin's example demonstrates how Spanish, or the assumed ability to speak Spanish, marks Latinxs as noncitizens in the eyes of the majoritarian public. His framing as an outsider due to his Spanish language abilities was not limited to him as multiple participants, including Sergio, Kimberly, and Charles, articulated experiences where they were the targets of racial

slurs, racial profiling, and racism simply because of their (assumed) language abilities. However, Joaquin's experience reveals that Latinxs are constantly stereotypes as being immigrants, in spite of their actual citizenship status, because they do not fit the imagined conception of a citizen. In other words, Joaquin's example shows us that Latinx youth are not only racialized but are identified as un-American and noncitizens due to their proximity to Spanish. Thus, just by using Spanish you are automatically assumed to be an outsider, an illegal immigrant and, thus, a criminal, especially if you are of a darker complexion (Donato & Hanson, 2012; Fernandez, 2015). His brief recollection also reveals that Latinx youth are aware that Spanish is used by others to identify and racialize them as noncitizen outsiders and carries misconceptions about their citizenship status, intellectual abilities, and potential.

Beyond the framing of Latinxs as un-American due to their proximity to Spanish, their (assumed) language abilities are also met with outright fear and informs the treatment they receive across society. Take Angela's experience for example. Angela is a quiet, determined, and personable 10th grade ENGAGE participant whom I interviewed early in the Spring semester of 2018. When I asked her if she had "ever felt any misconceptions about Spanish-speakers held against her," she recalled a time when her use of Spanish sparked, what she perceived as, "fear" in others. She stated, "they notice we're different, that we're not the same race. And, like that, they're scared of like, how different we are. Like, um, they give us a look of like 'what are you guys doing her?'" In this example, Angela states that others' were "scared" of the differences between themselves and those they noticed, or assumed, about Angela; leading them to look at her as if she didn't belong in the space. Much like Joaquin above, the way others perceived Angela's race, due to her skin color and language abilities, shaped the way others viewed and

treated her. Here, the assumption once again was that Angela was an outsider to the community, one that did not belong in the same space as White citizens.

Along these same lines, Mark, the athletic 12th grade ENGAGE participant, shared an example of how his use of Spanish as a child in elementary school informed the way his peers treated him. He recalled, "when I was a kid, uh (slight pause), uh man, there'd been instances where I'd be speaking Spanish to my brother, and you know, like an Asian family would like take their kids [and move them] away from me. Like, you now, not looking at me directly, but I know they- it'd be about me." In this brief narrative, we are provided with yet another clear example of how Latinx youths' proximity to Spanish shapes the way they are treated, often leading to them being met with apprehension, fear, and suspicion due to the stereotype that Latinxs are deviants, trouble makers, and a general danger to society (Chavez, 2013). The way Latinx youth participants describe being treated after their use of Spanish shows the reach and influence that deficit-based stereotypes and images of Latinxs perpetuated by media has on the general public. More specifically, with Trump perpetuating the "Latino threat" narrative (Chavez, 2013) by framing Latinxs in the U.S. as "criminals, drug dealers, and rapists" (Neate, 2015), it helps to normalize the fear and discrimination of Latinxs in the country. These ideas are not new, but the above responses from youth provide a good understanding of how these deficit-based ideas shape youth experiences and interactions within social institutions.

Throughout this study, multiple Latinx youth shared experiences where their use of Spanish informed how they were perceived, and subsequently, how they were treated within public spaces. They recalled assumptions being made about their citizenship status and encountering deficit-based racist stereotypes about their abilities and potential. In their eyes, these experiences perpetuate deficit-messages to Latinxs about their belonging in the U.S. and

the acceptance of Spanish, all while contributing to their developing knowledge of race and racism in the country. In the following section, Latinx youth's understanding of the framing of Spanish as un-American is explored in more detail.

Spanish Use as Un-American

According to Jasmin, the 10th grade ENGAGE participant who regularly attended cosmetology and wanted to be a singer in the future, Latinxs' proximity to Spanish leads others to view them as recent immigrants who more than likely entered the country illegally. When asked to describe misconceptions of Spanish-speakers in the country, Jasmin stated that the greater public "be like, 'oh, they weren't born here (slight pause) and they're probably, like, their family just brought them in.'" Echoing other Latinx youth responses, Jasmin states that a common misconception of Spanish-speakers is that they are foreigners, "not born here," and that they likely entered the U.S. illegally, "their family just brought them in." Within her response, it is evident that Jasmin believes (assumed) language ability, race, and citizenship are interconnected and together racialize Latinxs while positioning them as "other." As such, Latinx youth understand that in the greater public imagination, Latinxs are constructed as existing outside of the imagined community of the U.S., do not fit the image of a U.S. citizen, and are believed to be illegal, due to their proximity to Spanish (Donato & Hanson, 2012; Rosa & Flores, 2017). The framing of Latinxs as "illegal aliens," according to Latinx youth, contributes to their treatment as unintelligent students within school and as criminals in the U.S.

In Latinx youth's eyes, the misconception that Latinxs are illegal contributes to their criminalization across the U.S., a reality that was made painfully aware to them in February 2018, when ICE raided local markets and businesses in the surrounding Mont Bleu community. According to informal conversations with both youth and adult participants documented in field

observations, the ICE raids created a panic in the community leading many families to hide in their homes and avoid going out in public. These raids also reminded youth of the assumed criminality of Latinxs and the profiling that many of them experienced simply due to their (assumed) language abilities and perceived looks (skin color). Jasmin's response, and the above responses from Latinx youth, shows that they understand and experience first-hand how their proximity to Spanish marks Latinxs populations as "others" who exist outside of the imagined community of the U.S., and thus do not fit the image of the U.S. citizen. As a result of the racialization, youth come to see their language, race, and citizenship are intimately connected.

Latinx youth experience racialization and differential treatment not only because of their race but their (assumed) language ability as well. For instance, though the majority of youth participants considered themselves "Spanish-speakers" with varying levels of fluency, a couple of them said they were not "strong" speakers but could fully understand it. Despite their limited fluency in Spanish, these same youth participants were often assumed to be and treated as if they were outsiders. For instance, the 12th grade ENGAGE participant, Sienna, who identified as Chinese-Latinx, stated she was not a strong Spanish speaker and was taking classes to learn it, but recalled being approached by an elderly Latinx woman who assumed she could speak Spanish because she "looked Mexican." Similarly, Charles, the 11th grade ENGAGE participant who said he was not fluent in Spanish, stated that people often assumed he could speak Spanish because he "looks Latino" and is of Mexican descent. In this example, the assumption was made that the Latinx youth could speak Spanish, despite their actual ability, because they "looked" like they could since they looked Latinx. The question then becomes, what does a Latinx look like? As shown in the brief history of Latinx racialization, Latinxs were racialized based on language, skin color, hair color, and class. As a result, according to Rosa (2018) they are framed as people

that "look like a language, and sound like a race" (p. 2), where those who are furthest way from the White, blond haired, blue eyed imagination of a citizen, i.e. dark skinned, dark haired, brown eyed Latinxs, are assumed to be "outsiders" and speak Spanish. This is evident in Sienna's use of the word "Mexican" to describe why people thought she spoke Spanish, implying that Spanish is associated with Mexico/Latin American and those who look Mexican must speak Spanish, or conversely, those who speak Spanish *must* not be from the U.S.

From a Critical Coloniality lens, these responses reveal two things. First, Latinx youth's actual language ability does not matter in terms of _how_ they are perceived, what matters most is their proximity to Spanish. In other words, the assumed ability to speak Spanish, and *not* their actual ability, informs how they are perceived and links them to deficit-based misconceptions. Secondly, when Sienna and Charles' responses are combined with the deficit-based assumption that Spanish speakers are (im)migrants and criminals, it becomes clear that simply being assumed to be a Spanish speaker is enough to construct an image of Latinx youth as "other," a non-citizen outsider with limited academic abilities. Thus, (assumed) language ability not only labels youth as immigrants who *should* be able to speak Spanish, but as un-American as well. In this way, Spanish serves as a marker of not only race, but their citizenship as well.

Latinx youth's proximity to Spanish, and the multiple factors that inform the racialization they experience, allows them to see connections between race, (assumed) language ability, and race. Take Jasmin, the 10th grade ENGAGE participant mentioned previous, as an example again. When asked to self-identify her race, Jasmin's response made explicit connections between citizenship, language ability and race, when she stated,

> Well, my mom always told me to put 'American,' 'cause [sic] like I was born here. But, like, I don't really [consider] myself as American, because, like, I like speaking more in

Spanish, and I feel more relaxed speaking in Spanish. So, I choose, like, I would always put Mexican (smiling).

Clearly, for Jasmin, and in the minds of Latinx youth participants, language is directly related to race and citizenship, as is evident in the fact that Jasmin mentioned both in the process of self-identifying her race, and that fact that her language preference informs how she identifies. Despite being a natural-born citizen, Jasmin chooses to not identify as American because she likes "speaking more in Spanish." From a critical coloniality lens, Jasmin's response tells us that Latinx youth, much like the majoritarian public, associate languages with "separate and bounded" nation-states (Rosa & Flores, 2017) and by extension citizenship to a given nation-state. It also tells us that Latinx youth are aware that there is an image of a U.S. citizen, as a White, English speaker, that Latinx youth themselves do not fit as the imagined U.S. citizen does not speak Spanish (Rosa, 2018; Rosa & Flores, 2017).

Combining the above Latinx youth's response with their definition of a citizen as "a person born in the U.S" (Kimberly, 3/2018) who "has papers and can travel the world" (Jasmin, 3/2018), and previous description of deficit-based perceptions of Spanish, we get the sense that Latinx youth understand Spanish is framed as un-American and is bounded to "nation-states" outside the U.S. (Rosa & Flores, 2017). Thus, the imagined U.S. citizen is not only someone born in the U.S., it is specifically a white person, with papers, who speaks English and has all opportunities open to, as Jasmin argued, "do anything they want." Despite their historical categorization as a legal White citizen, the image of a U.S. citizen fundamentally excludes Latinxs not only because of their skin tone and assumed race, but because of their (assumed) language abilities. Yet, even in times when Latinxs are approximate the image of a U.S. citizen

because they are light-skinned, speak fluent English, etc., they are made "other" once their proximity to Spanish is revealed.

Rosa and Flores (2017) argue race and language function in tandem to construct "otherness" and structure the system of relations that reproduce the hierarchal and inequitable society in the U.S. They believe the raciolinguistic ideologies "that organized these colonial relations continue to shape the world order in the post-colonial era" (p. 627), such that "even when colonized subjects complied with the imposition of European languages [English, Spanish, etc.], they continued to be positioned as racial others who would never be fully European" (p. 625). Therefore, Latinxs may come close to the idealized image of a U.S. citizen, i.e. light-skinned and speak English, but they could never fully be a U.S. citizen in the social sense due to their race and proximity to Spanish (Donato & Hanson, 2012; Wilson, 2003a).

The experiences with racism articulated by Latinx youth participants, and the misconceptions of Spanish-speakers they identified, demonstrate they are seen as "people that look like a language, and sound like a race," (Rosa, 2018). In fact, their observations around the connections between language, race, and citizenship, as well as their experiences with discrimination and awareness of misconceptions of Spanish-speakers, reveal that Latinx youth are experiencing racialization and can see how language functions as a part of it. Through this racialization, Latinx youth are being constructed as "deviant and inferior" outsiders of U.S. society, which is "stereotyped as white and English speaking," because their "language practices are unfit for legitimate participation in a modern world" (Rosa & Flores, 2017). As will be seen, these are the very same deficit-based messages, and stereotypes, Latinx youth identified as existing about Spanish-speakers they articulated seeing perpetuated by Trump's administration across the U.S. by multiple forms of media, and inherent to their own school.

Youth Awareness of Racism Across the United States

"Ever since… um, Donald Trump had became [sic] our new president. And… it's just like, how he tweets his stuff on Twitter, and it just, like, let's White people speak for their rights and stuff like that. And just how, um… how the KKK started happening in Virginia and stuff like that. It's just, it's sooo bad, and it just- I guess, it just kind of separated in its own way."   Kimberly, 11th grade

Despite Donald Trump's initial presidential announcement speech having occurred roughly 3 years prior to conducting interviews with youth participants, the sentiments he expressed and deficit-based beliefs he perpetuated by categorizing Latinx immigrants as "criminals, drug dealers, and rapists" (Neate, 2015) were still very relevant to youth participants. Frequently, Latinx youth referenced this speech as exemplifying the racism inherent to the nation and helping to make pre-existing stereotypes of Latinxs more visible as they are pushed into the forefront of mainstream media and consciousness, much like Kimberly articulates above. Throughout our interviews, Donald Trump's frequent attacks on immigrants in general, and Latinxs specifically, along with his continued calls for a border wall, immigration raids in their local communities, and personal experiences with racism, stood out to youth participants as evidence of racism. Thus, when youth were provided the opportunity to identify the biggest issue in the country, a majority of participants identified "racism" as the most pressing problem.

Youth participants described the biggest problem in the country as "there's no unity" amongst races (Sergio), "racial and cultural tensions" (Mark), "an inability to see other points of views" (Sienna), "discrimination" along race and gender (Angela), and quite simply "racism" towards other people (William). Some students also identified immigration and the persecution of Latinxs (Joaquin interview, 4/2018), along with increased violence across the country as

problems (Veronica Interview, 3/2018), all of which can be tied back to racism. For instance, Sienna, the 12th grade ENGAGE participant mentioned above, stated that "an inability to see other people's point of views," and accept them, "leads to smaller problems, like, political division, racism, gender inequality" (Interviewed, 5/2018). The failure to see across difference, according to youth participants, leads to "smaller problems" that are not necessarily small and can lead to bigger incidents, such as a fear of said differences in others that emerges as discrimination, profiling, persecution, etc., which can result in the loss of life (Hill, 2017). According to Charles, the 11th grade ENGAGE participant, "negativity towards other races" is "a really big problem" that leads to "profiling someone based off how they look." When youth were asked where the lack of understanding of cultures and racial tensions might stem from, they pointed to the ignorance of individuals that emerges from exposure to Trump, media, and school.

To be sure, Latinx youth are not only aware of racism, and the issues that stem from it, but they have a shared visceral understanding of racism in the country because of how frequently they see issues related to race in their daily lives. Youth see and learn about issues of race and racism across multiple sources, including: Donald Trump and his rhetoric around Latinxs; within (social)media which frequently spotlights Trump's opinions and exposes youth to other instances of racial violence (i.e. police shootings, protests); and within their schools, where they learn about race as a thing of the past. Throughout these multiple sources youth are continually bombarded with deficit-based images and misconceptions of Latinxs, which perpetuate stereotypes and deficit-based messages about the potential and capacities of Latinx youth.

Trump Rhetoric and Perpetuation of Racism

According to Latinx youth, Trump's rhetoric and framing of Latinx populations, as well as his administrations' actions against Latinx populations via the elimination of DACA, the

militarization of the border, and ICE raids, perpetuated racist stereotypes about Latinxs throughout the country. In their eyes, Trump's rhetoric and actions have led to the increased visibility of racist stereotypes of Latinxs and increased discrimination against people of color. For instance, when youth were asked to clarify how they knew racism was still an issue in the country, they frequently identified Trump and his rhetoric as evidence. Take William for example, a 12th grade ENGAGE participant who attended the program almost daily throughout his 4 years at Rose City high, who stated he believed racism was still a problem "mainly, 'cause [sic] of how the whole Presidential campaign started with Trump. And he was gonna [sic] say, like, how he was gonna [sic] put a wall between us and Mexico, and like prevent all the immigrants from coming in." Here, William points to Trump's on-going rhetoric about a wall, and categorization of Latinxs as criminals, as proof of racism in the country. In so doing, he expresses a common sentiment among Latinx youth, namely that Trump's narrative and framing of Latinx populations as deviant, and in need of control, is evidence of on-going racism against Latinxs in the U.S. Such a response by Latinx youth makes sense as their daily lives at home, in the community, and at school appeared to be touched by Trump's narrative and actions.

Trump's racist statements about Latinxs, and characterization of them as "bad hombres," stood out to multiple students as symptomatic of the long-history of racism in the U.S and its normalization in the country. For example, Charles the 11th grade ENGAGE participant, immediately identified Trump's narrative as a source of racist ideology that perpetuated stereotypes about Latinxs that encouraged others to hold similar deficit-based beliefs. He stated, "I've heard people make 'crossing the border' jokes, and, you know, the President saying that they're trying to build a wall on the border, and saying like, you know, you've heard what he said about Mexican-Americans, and how, like, it seems like he was profiling all of us as like drug

dealers." In Charles' opinion, Trump's rhetoric perpetuates racist stereotypes and promotes racism towards Latinxs, which in a sense, encourages others to adopt and act upon these views.

William and Charles both hint at the idea that the increased targeting of Latinxs in the U.S, via racist attacks and profiling, can be attributed to Donald Trump and his administrations practices. Along these same lines, Jasmin, the 10th grade ENGAGE participant who aspired to be a singer, argued that racism was still prevalent "'cause [sic] Donald Trump sees everything as difference. He's deporting immigrants because he thinks that they're all rapists and other things, when he doesn't really understand that they help our community. That it's not them coming over [here] and messing up everything. They're making the community something better." Again, like her peers, Jasmin point to Trump as an overt example of racism in the country, one that perpetuates racist stereotypes and deficit-based beliefs about Latinxs. However, as individuals with agency, youth did not receive these messages idly, rather his words served as motivation.

During our conversations, whenever youth brought up Donald Trump's rhetoric, I would ask them to explain their reaction to it and found they we're both angered and motivated by it. More specifically, Latinx youth resisted Trump's racist rhetoric and stereotypes by attempting to highlight examples that disproved his characterization of Latinx populations. For instance, Charles was particularly upset by the belief that Latinxs do not contribute to society and immediately identified a counter-narrative that disproved this stereotype, when he stated,

> It made me angry, but at the same time I didn't really care because I knew that wasn't true. But, at the same time I wanted- like, not that I have- that we have something to prove, but I just wanted …, I want people to know that, like, not all Mexican men, Mexican-Americans are like that. Like a lot of us are hard workers. Like I've seen, I have aunts, uncles, that like came here from Mexico and like, they're contributing to society.

Here, Charles points to numerous counter-narrative examples within his very family that contradict the deficit-based idea that Latinxs are lazy and do not contribute anything positive to society. His use of the phrase "hard working," is particularly important as it directly contradicts Trump's rhetoric while reframing Latinxs as productive citizens. Though in this instance Charles ties their worth in the colonial-capitalist society of the U.S to their production via labor, his response actively challenges the characterization of Latinxs as lazy, unemployed, and a burden on society by positioning them in familiar terms as "hard working" Americans.

Similarly, in Jasmin's quote above, she attempted to challenge racist stereotypes and characterizations of Latinxs perpetuated by trump by highlighting the contributions of Latinxs, and immigrants in general, to the country. However, in so doing, both Charles and Jasmin frame Latinxs' value in capitalist terms and perpetuate the idea that individuals are only valuable as "contributing" members of society. The use of the term "hard-working" by Charles and Jasmin's example of immigrants making the "community something better" begin to reveal the internal colonization youth experience within schools that tells them they are only valuable to society if they produce within their assigned roles. These examples also stand as counter-stories, an example of double-consciousness, that shows their appropriation of and resistance to neoliberal views (Du Bois, 1903). Sienna expands upon how youth are motivated by colonial ideologies.

The 12th grade ENGAGE participant Sienna shows us how Latinx youth themselves are motivated by Trump's rhetoric as motivation. In response to the racist stereotypes of Latinxs that Trump perpetuates, Sienna's reaction shifted from "a firm, like disbelief, that like 'that's not true,'" to feeling "a bit of anger" that Latinxs are perceived in that way. For many youth participants, the feeling of anger she described served as motivation to challenge and prove deficit-based stereotypes wrong, or as Sienna states, "It makes me want to break them. And, then

I [can] go 'Hey, look, I'm breaking them' (stated proudly)." The internal desire to "break" deficit-based stereotypes was a common sentiment expressed by Latinx youth, especially as it concerned misconceptions about their intellectual abilities and capacities for the future. Her response is also reflective of the positive imaginations youth have of themselves, their futures, and their culture, all of which arise from the *apoyo* (support), *consejos* (advice), and family role models youth receive from pedagogies of the home (Delgado-Bernal, 2001).

To be clear, Latinx youth participants often pointed to Donald Trump as an example of racism, but as the above responses indicate, they do not necessarily believe he is the "source" of racism. Rather, Latinx youth participants believe he has normalized overt racism by making deficit-based ideologies and stereotypes more visible, and thus, empowering white supremacists and other racists across the country to no longer hide their hatred and racist views. However, according to youth participants, Donald Trump is not the sole "source" of information about racism in the country. A majority of them identified (social)media as another source of information that perpetuated racist ideas and stereotypes about Latinxs across the country.

Forms of Media and Deficit-Messages

A second source that exposes Latinx youth to racism in the country were national/local television news and social forms of media. According to Latinx youth, the availability of both national/local television news and social forms of media, in addition to access to recording devices on phones, has made it easier to learn about, see, document, and share information about or experiences with racism. In other words, youth participants identified (social)media as a primary source of information on issue of race across the country. For youth, traditional forms of media served to expose them to current events or issues, which then led many of them to conduct further research on, or learn about, the issues on their own using their phones.

Riley, an 11th grade ENGAGE participant who was very personable and talkative within program labs, discussed a common process youth participants followed in regards to learning about race and racism. When asked "where do you get information about this sort of issue [race]," Riley responded by simply stating, "the news." While she sat there, looking down at the recorder, I proceeded to ask a clarifying follow-up question about what form of media, or news, she accesses, "so you watch the news or do you read newspapers? What do you mean by 'news,'" to which she replied, "like I go on my phone. I can't watch it, I get bored (laughs). But, sometimes I'll watch it with my mom … [usually] on an app. I go on Snapchat, and they have like Buzzfeed, and then I click there, and they have like… interesting news. Also, up on Instagram, like people just screenshot pictures and they just post them, and it's like "Oh, this is crazy!" Or they have, like, random videos put up." Throughout our one-on-one conversation, Riley expressed a common process youth followed with media and to learn more about an issue. She stated that she is initially exposed to current events or issues related to race/racism across mainstream media, either by watching the local broadcast news or short reports on her social media accounts. Following this initial exposure, Riley would have conversations with her parents or would look into the issues she was most concerned with more deeply by reading related "interesting news" or by watching videos her social media friends post. Much like Riley, Latinx youth identified mainstream and social media as sources of information about racial issues, which contributed to their awareness of racism in the country.

Veronica, an 11th grade ENGAGE participant, stated she knows racism is still an issue in "because of what I see in the news" (Interview, 4/2018), while Angela, a 10th grade ENGAGE participant, stated she knows about racial issues because "I watch the news. A lot." For Latinx youth, local news reports served as both an introduction to current events and a confirmation of

their experience that racism is still a problem in the country. Beyond the news, youth participants also identified social media as a source that exposed them to instances of racism across the country. For example, Kimberly, an 11th grade ENGAGE participant, states she sees racism all over the country but receives a lot of information about it on social media, "I see it [racism] on social media and stuff like that. It's either that [racism] or discrimination. Like, I'm usually on my social media, Facebook, and stuff like that. And, like, I keep contact- I keep in touch with my family from Mexico and they, like, they repost stuff about Caucasian people treating Black people wrong." Similarly, Charles states he sees videos related to racism on "Twitter. And, like, on social media," that his friends post which serve as sources of information for him. Within these responses, Latinx youth clearly articulate that mainstream and social media are sources of information for youth participants which exposes them to instances of racism and other racial issues. For some, this exposure to racism on social media sparks their interest and leads them to conduct their own research to learn more about them, as was the case with Mark.

The 12th grade ENGAGE participant, Mark, stated he learns about racism and issues of race "through the media, basically," but in addition, conducts his own form of research by reading through articles on google or scrolling through the news sections of Reddit. During his research, he tries to educate him "about things that are happening in the world, that are happening in my country, in my backyard, you know. I research these things to, like, know more about it to get an edge. Like, if things that ever come up, I can know what to do in a certain situation and all that." Thus, for Mark, conducting research on issues he is passionate about, including race and racism, by reading news articles and search Reddit increases his knowledge base and prepares him to confront problems he may one day face as a Latinx male. Considering the current context and existence of "fake news," conducting their own research is almost a

necessity as it helps Latinx youth make sense of the information they may come across on

traditional and social media while preparing them to identify and respond to racism and racist

stereotypes. In fact, Latinx youth indicated they believed media played a role in maintaining

deficit-based stereotypes and upholding racism, which made their staying informed necessary.

Much like with Trump's rhetoric, Latinx youth saw (social)media playing an integral role

in perpetuating deficit-based views of Latinx populations, while simultaneously exposing the

racism inherent to the country. To this end, Mark provides a good example:

> I feel like they've [racist actions] … always been there, but most people didn't see them.
>
> Because, you know, with advancing technology, you know, the media gets everything.
>
> Everybody has like a camera in their pocket, basically, with their phone, you know, they
>
> record everything. So now that everything is kind of televised, everything goes out to the
>
> public, everybody knows about these things now, you know, it gets out and now it's a big
>
> problem in our nation, which is- which- it was a problem before, they just didn't know.

According to Mark, the "advanced technology" available to us, in conjunction with media, allow

us, as a society, to more readily document and observe racism and other social issues around us

that have "always been there" (Chavez, 2013; Hill, 2017). As a result, he attributes the visibility

of overt racism to the increased awareness of and spotlight on racial issues. However, this

increased visibility and awareness of racism can have both positive and negative outcomes. For

instance, in response to a question about the role media plays in society, Charles told me:

> it [media] could have a positive and negative effect. 'Cause [sic], like … well, no matter
>
> what it is, everything has a positive and a negative effect. So, the positive effect would be
>
> getting the awareness out there and, you know, having people see it, react to it, maybe
>
> changing their mindset. And then, you also have people who, like, are ignorant and

they're like, 'Nah, that's not true! Blah, blah, blah.' And, just trying to make a big deal

out of it. Trying to make it seem, like, posting that stuff is bad.

In this response, Charles captures a common sentiment amongst youth participants, namely the

belief that media, both main stream and social forms, could help expose racism and make others

more aware of it. In addition, Latinx youth believed forms of media helped perpetuate racist

stereotypes of nondominant groups, especially the constant coverage of Donald Trump, his

administration, and their collective actions targeting racialized populations. Based on the above

youth responses, it is clear they believed main stream and social forms of media were a large part

of the reason why racist beliefs and deficit-based stereotypes persisted in the country, false

beliefs that shaped their experiences within school.

Schools as Sources of Information About Race and Racism

A third source that exposes Latinx youth to information about race and racism in the U.S.

are their experiences within school, as according to the 16-year-old ENGAGE participant

Angela, youth learn about race and racism "during school [when] it would be part of a lesson."

More specifically, Charles an ENGAGE participant in the 11th grade, stated "the only messages

that I will get about race is in my history class." Here, the information Angela and Charles

provide tell us that schools do teach about race and racism through direct instruction in the

classroom as either a unit, lesson, or special case study typically tied to the "Civil Rights

Movement." However, through their approach to instruction, schools also perpetuate limited

understandings of race and deficit-based messages to Latinx youth.

In his quote above, Charles, who was heavily involved in school sports and viewed

himself as a mentally strong student, stated that the only place he learns about race is within his

history class. In so doing, he implies that schools rarely provide the opportunity to discuss race

or racism outside of select classes, including history and ethnic studies. Though schools may teach youth about race and racism in the class room, by limiting their learning and discussions to history/ethnic studies classes, or confining it to an ethnic history month, schools perpetuate the message that issues of race and racism are a thing of the past. For instance, immediately after his quote above, Charles alludes to the belief that issues related to race have gotten better by stating:

And like, you know, like they'll say, 'Well, it's not really about right now, it was more like back then, how certain races felt about each other.' And then I compare it to now, and see that a lot of that [racial segregation, public lynching, etc.] has gone away, because, you know, people have become more informed.

In his responses, Charles argues that the only message he gets from school about racism is that "it was more like back then," revealing that schools frame race and racism as "a thing of the past." This idea aligns with Gloria Ladson-Billings' (2006) AERA presidential address where she argues that by limiting the study of race, racism, and the contribution of people of color to the United States solely on ethnic holidays or within particular classes, schools effectively keep issues of race, and people of color, on the margins of society. At the same time, limiting the study of race or the contributions of people of color to select days, months, or classes, not only perpetuates the colonial lie that the U.S. is a "post-racial" society, it eliminates most opportunities for youth to engage in meaningful conversations that are relevant to their everyday lives. Mark, the 12th grade ENGAGE participant who was a regular participant in the weight room, expands upon youth's desires to engage in discussions relevant to their own lives.

During our one-on-one interview, I asked Mark if he ever engaged in conversation around sensitive topics, like race or racism, and if so who he held those discussions with. In his response, he indicated that he most often engages in deep conversations about race and other

social issues with his close friends either during breaks between classes or after school during the

ENGAGE program. In other words, he holds informal conversations on his own time when he is

with his friends. According to Mark, the informal conversations he has with his peers arise

spontaneously when someone "brings something up" that they experienced or heard about,

demonstrating how relevant racial issues are to Latinx youth. Similarly, he shows us that

conversations about current events related to race/racism rarely come up as discussions in class,

and when they do arise it is usually because a student made the effort to spark that particular

conversation. For instance, while explaining how discussions about race come up in class, Mark

stated,

> I've had [the] classroom, just like the entire classroom just talking about discussions that I
>
> brought up. I'll bring up a discussion and the entire class will be like, 'oh, this and that'
>
> and then the other class- the other part of the class will agree with me or disagree with
>
> me. Like, I love to do that. I don't like to cause problems to add to that, I say I like to
>
> cause, you know, debates [his emphasis]. As in (slight pause), make people think.

According to Mark, conversations around race, racism, or other social issues, arise when youth

themselves bring them up in their classrooms. Together with the above responses from Angela

and Charles, we can assume that the conversations Mark described are likely held within history

and ethnic studies classes, during lessons or units related to racial issues. Conversations that,

according to Mark, are in high demand by youth, as evidence by his description of "the whole

class" diving "headfirst into it, you know, giving their opinions" on issues related to race

whenever the opportunity arises. The problem is, within traditional classrooms, opportunities to

engage in honest, open discussions about controversial issues relevant to Latinx youth are few

and far between despite the immense benefits it offers to youth development and engagement (Hess, 2002; Hess & McAvoy, 2015; Reisman, et al. 2018).

Based upon the previous responses, it is clear that youth participants believe students jump at the opportunity to engage in conversations around race and racism, and in particular, the opportunity to share their own experiences and opinions about current racial issues. From a critical coloniality lens, the responses indicate that issues related to race and racism are a very real thing in the lives of youth participants, yet young people are not often afforded the space to discuss and engage with these ideas in school. When the opportunity did present itself in the classroom, youth directed the learning towards what was most relevant to their everyday lives. Thus, schools do attempt to teach youth about race and racism, but do so in narrow ways that hinder discussions and limit learning of controversial issues to particular classes (i.e. history, ethnic studies). In so doing, race and racial issues are framed as something that we, as a society, have moved beyond, leading schools to push the colonial lie that race is no longer a problem in society. However, Latinx youth's lived experience in and out of schools contradicts this narrative and reveals that racism remains an issue in the nation.

Beyond the direct study of race and racism within history or ethnic studies classes, and limited opportunities to engage in youth-led discussions, Latinx youth participants also described receiving deficit-based messages about Latinxs from the practices at their school, including: informal student tracking based upon perceived academic abilities; the practice of removing emergent bilingual youth from classes as part of the ELL program; and the limited representation of Latinx youth during award ceremonies. These practices stand out to Latinx youth as subtractive and perpetuate deficit-based messages about their intellectual abilities, future potential (low achieving), and belonging in the physical space of the school and metaphorically

in the imagined community of the U.S. (ELL pull out). Throughout these experiences Latinx youth have had or witnessed, it is made obvious to them that they are believed to be intellectually and linguistically deficient due to their language, culture, or race and, thus, need additional support, basic instruction, and cannot succeed in higher academic courses (Chavez, 2013; Menchaca, 2001; Valencia, 1997). Further, through the above interactions and negative experiences within schooling, Latinx youth are exposed to the idea that "we speak English at school" and "you speak Spanish at home" (Maverick, 11/2017), leading many of them to become consciously selective about when they actually use Spanish. The ENGAGE program is one such space wherein Latinx youth felt they could engage in open, honest conversations, form authentic caring relationships, be themselves, and freely use Spanish.

Conclusion: Race, Racism, and Deficit-Messaging

Latinx youth are currently navigating a sea of deficit-based messages and experiences with racism across their daily lives. This chapter presented youth understandings of race and the connections they see between race, ethnicity, language, and citizenship; their experiences with racialization and the role language plays in the process; and described various sources that expose them to racist messages including Donald Trump, mainstream news media outlets, social media platforms, and their own schools. Youth voices articulated the racist stereotypes and deficit-based messages that frame Latinx populations as un-American "others" who do not belong in the imagined U.S. community. "Outsiders" whose assumed language abilities and perceived race construct them as immigrants, criminals, and "inferior" to the imagined U.S. citizen. Youth also revealed the importance of considering the intersections of language, race, and citizenship when theorizing Latinx racialization, which collectively inform treatment and experiences in society.

Throughout this chapter, imbedded within youth voices, we have seen glimpses of the counternarratives constructed in response to racist stereotypes. The following chapter, presents home pedagogies that families provide Latinx youth with particular attention given to affirming messages that scaffold positive imaginations of self, their abilities, and the future, and prepare them to confront and resist the deficit-messages and racism they may experience in society.

Chapter 5

Pedagogies of the Home and Affirming Messages:
Families, Support, and Resisting Racist Stereotypes

[My mom taught me] mostly to, like, depend on myself and, um, be proud of myself.
And, like, focus in school. That, basic stuff… Like, my mom tells me to, like, "love
myself and I only need myself and no one else". - Angela

Latinx youth in the United States, in particular in the Southwest, exist in the borderlands
between cultures, languages, nationalities, races, etc., contributing to their unique experiences as
legal citizens, but social non-citizens (Anzaldua, 2012; Donato & Hanson, 2012). As was
demonstrated in the previous chapter, youth's perceived race and assumed language abilities
inform their framing as "perpetual foreigners" (Fernandez, 2015) who pose an internal threat to
the U.S (Chavez, 2013). Their race and assumed language abilities also carry inherent racist
stereotypes that position them as less intelligent and capable than their peers, structuring their
experiences within educational contexts and limiting opportunities available to them. In light of
this, youth in this study continued to maintain high college and career aspirations, embraced their
cultural differences, and saw themselves as full citizens of the U.S. Their self-confidence,
embrace of differences, and identification as a U.S. citizen, despite the racialization they
experience, were upheld and maintained by the supportive messages they receive from their
families and other caring adults via pedagogies of the home (Delgado-Bernal, 2001).

Pedagogies of the home (home pedagogies), are teachings that families, in particular
mothers, provide to Latinx youth that serve the dual purpose of (a) transferring cultural
knowledge and family/social expectations, while (b) preparing them to engage with and enter a
hostile social context. Delgado-Bernal (2001) states, "the communication, practices, and learning

that occur in the home and community – pedagogies of the home – often serve as a cultural knowledge base that helps students survive and succeed within an educational system that often excludes and silences them" (p. 623). In the context of the study, these teachings provided Latinx youth with affirmations that scaffold positive views of their capacities, high college and career aspirations, and lead them to value and embrace their culture, all of which contribute to their racial identity development and prepares them to enter hostile, racist contexts. In short, home pedagogies provide Latinx youth with support and "counternarratives," or counter-stories, that allow them to resist and challenge racism by encouraging them to believe in themselves and embrace their difference (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solorzano & Yosso, 2001).

As this chapter illuminates, much like Angela's example above demonstrates, the home pedagogies youth participants described were delivered via *consejos*[10], *apoyo,* and family models, which encourage youth to love themselves and take pride in their culture/language; motivate them to believe in their own abilities and hold high aspirations; and warns them of the dangers and experiences they may face as Latinxs. Considering the current socio-political moment, the continued attacks on Latinx populations at large, and the targeting of "foreign looking Latinx" citizens, home pedagogies and the resistance they teach take on a higher importance. Pedagogies of the home not only remind youth that being Latinx is powerful, they also prepare them to actively respond to, confront, and resist the anti-Latinx context by providing a source of motivation, inspiration, self-confidence, and pride in their cultural differences. In response, youth demonstrate a desire to help others and give back to their community, maintain

---

[10] *Consejos* translates to "advice," however, the Spanish word *consejos* is purposely used interchangeably with its' English equivalent because *consejos* carries multiple meanings and, at times, refers not only to advice but teachings, morals, suggestions, and information. Thus, "advice" alone is insufficient to capture the nuance of *consejos*.

high college and career aspirations, and embrace their culture/ language as resistance to racist stereotypes.

This chapter describes the supportive messages that Latinx youth receive within the home, and in the ENGAGE program, by defining the various forms of home pedagogies youth responses identified, the teachings inherent to them, and how participants make sense of and internalize these messages of support. To this end, the chapter begins with a section describing the forms of home pedagogies Latinx youth were exposed to, including: *consejos* (advice) family's provide youth related to life, school, and future plans; the forms of *apoyo* (support) Latinx youth receive from their family; and family models of academic and financial success that serve as counter-stories to racist-stereotypes. This chapter also documents the sensemaking Latinx youth make of home pedagogies and the ways they (1) internalize home teachings as motivation to resist or challenge racist stereotypes, (2) engage in transformational resistance through the embrace of their language and cultural differences; and (3) arrive at a community orientation that drives them to give back and help others in their community.

This chapter demonstrates how youth come to embrace their cultural differences, and take pride in them, due to the support provided by their families and authentic caring adults in the form of home pedagogies. Care, support, advice, and models that makes youth's resistance of racist stereotypes possible through the embrace of their cultural and linguistic differences. In addition, this chapter contributes to our understanding of home pedagogies by revealing the relationship between home pedagogies and transformational resistance, as well as how youth practice resistance on a day to day basis through seemingly mundane actions (i.e. navigation of space, passive resistance in selective use of Spanish, and using Spanish to support community).

Forms of Home Pedagogies: *Consejos*, *Apoyo* and (Role)Models of Success

Within one-on-one interviews with Latinx youth participants, they were asked about various aspects of their daily participation and experience in the ENGAGE program, in addition to questions related to their understandings of race, ethnicity and racism in the U.S. In the process of responding to questions about their own racial identity, how they define it, and where they learn about it, Latinx youth identified their family, specifically their parents or other caring adults, as a source of knowledge about and pride in their culture, language, and understandings of race. The knowledge Latinx youth receive from their families through home pedagogies not only provide them with cultural knowledge and traditions, but offer advice and prepare youth to face hostile environments by teaching them to embrace their culture (language) as a form of resistance. To be clear, Latinx youth did not refer to these teachings and the advice they receive from their family as "home pedagogies," or as forms of "resistance." However, the way that youth described home teachings, and the role they appear to play in their motivation, reveals the teachings to be pedagogies of the home that offer advice, encouragement, and resistance.

Home pedagogies, which Delgado-Bernal (2001) stated includes "communication, practices, and learning that occur in the home and community," are taught in various ways. Throughout this study, youth participants referred to home pedagogies that fall into three broad "forms." The three overarching categories include: *consejos* (advice) about life, the future, their culture, and direct warnings of what to expect within hostile contexts; *apoyo* (support) in for form of encouragement and motivation to dream big, hold high expectations, and be self-confident; and family models that serve as counter-narrative examples of academic and financial success, as well as the possibilities available to them. Each "form" of home pedagogies are defined in the next section, with examples to show how youth are provided affirming messages.

Consejos: Advice, Encouragement, and Strategies for Survival

Directly translated, *consejos* is advice. Yet, the *consejos*[11] Latinx youth described receiving from their families was not simply advice tied to a singular issue (i.e. school, work, racism, etc), they provided advice about life and their future plans, taught morals or cultural knowledge, and relayed personal experiences to youth in an attempt to prepare them to navigate racially hostile and subtractive social institutions. Throughout this study, Latinx youth articulated receiving advice, morals, suggestions, and information related to school, their future college and career plans, and life in general during conversations with trusted, adults who exhibited authentic care[12], including their parents, family members, and ENGAGE youth leaders. These *consejos* often showed up as advice, encouragement, and messages of support that motivated youth to hold high college and career aspirations, while providing insight on racism and discrimination they may experience in their daily lives.

Jasmin, the 10th grade ENGAGE participant who aspired to be a singer, provides a good example of the *consejos* Latinx youth receive related to schooling and the role they have on youth outlook and motivation. While discussing school and why she attends ENGAGE, Jasmin shared that she recently made the decision to "focus more in school" because of her mother. She stated, "my Mom tells me, 'oh, you know what? I want you to- I want the best for you.' She talks to me; she gives me advice. So, I come to the program [ENGAGE]." In her response, Jasmin mentions that during the frequent conversations she has with her mother about high school and

---

[11] See footnote 9, consejos refers to more than advice, includes morals, cultural knowledge, & personal experiences.

[12] Authentic care refers to an action driven concept that scholars (Cordell, 2017; Gay. 2010a, 2010b; Valenzuela, 1999) describe as being concerned with youth welfare and their holistic development by "cultivating the social, cultural, moral, and political development of students, along with the academic" (Gay, 2010b, p. 50). Authentic care aims to "encourage another to grow in their own right… and to feel the other's growth as integrally bound to one's own sense of well-being," where care is "a moral imperative, value and ethic to act in the best interest of others" (Cordell, 2017, p. 40).

her future plans, her mom offers advice, inspires her to hold high career aspirations, and encourages her to attend ENGAGE.

With her mother's advice in mind, Jasmin ultimately began attending the program regularly because, as she stated, "I'm actually trying to do good in school, and I'm not trying to fail anymore. 'Cause [sic], like, my mom says she wants the best for me, and if my mom wants me to do good, I'm gonna [sic] do it for her." Here, it is evident that the encouragement her mother provided not only resulted in Jasmin beginning to attend the ENGAGE program, it empowered her to believe in her abilities and hold high aspirations for the future. Surely, one can argue Jasmin was just attending the program because her mother made her, however, it should be noted that Jasmin continued to attend the program well after her grades had improved. Not to mention, her responses are full of optimism and reflect a belief that she can, and will, do better in school, and that she is capable of achieving her goals. As such, the advice and suggestions Jasmin received provided the message that dedication to a goal, belief in self, and focusing on school work are central to reaching one's goals.

Much like Jasmin's mother made it clear that she "wanted the best" for her daughter and provided advice about school, life, and the future accordingly, youth I interviewed similarly understood that their parents wanted the best for them and often provided advice to support them along their schooling and career path. More specifically, the majority of youth participants mentioned that their parents and other authentically caring adults wanted them to do well in high school, go to college, have a successful career, and ultimately "just being happy" (Kimberly, personal communication, March, 2018). For instance, Joaquin, the 12th grade ENGAGE participant who aspired to become a medical doctor, recalled how supportive his mother had been and the advice she provided him to make school a priority, when he stated:

she's always shown me a lot of support, she always told me that my first option would

always be going to college, and it would never be my second or third option. Mainly

because she only wanted us to get a better education, and better ourselves, and end up

showing to society that, that we're a minority, but we're always going to make the best of

it. And, so, she wants me to go to college, and yes, she's always pushed me towards it.

In Joaquin's response, it is clear that he believes his mother is supportive of his education and

understands that she wants him to make school, and going to college, a top priority, as evidenced

when he states "she always told me that my first option would always be going to college, and it

would never be my second or third option." According to Joaquin, his mother's support, in the

form of advice about the future and encouragement to pursue his goals, motivated him to want to

attend college in order to "get a better education and better" himself so that he could reach his

goals. Additionally, his response also importantly reveals that *consejos* do not simply provide

advice about the future, but offer insight for youth to build awareness of and learn ways to resist

racist stereotypes. For instance, Joaquin implies his mother's advice taught him that Latinxs are

viewed as "a minority" and are framed in deficit-ways within society; yet she also reminds him

to take pride in who he is and strive to better himself in order to disprove racist stereotypes and

"end up showing society" that Latinxs can be successful and high achieving. As such, her home

pedagogy taught Joaquin about the racist context he would enter, while reinforcing the

importance of embracing his culture/language as he develops his abilities and works towards his

goals. Other youth in the study similarly expressed their parents taught, and warned them, about

the racism, prejudice, and profiling they might encounter in school and within their community.

Considering Latinx populations have historically been racialized according to an

intersection of race, ethnicity, culture, language, phenotype, and surname, it is not surprising that

youth participants shared experiences in which their parents provided warnings about how their skin color (phenotype) might inform how they perceived. For instance, in our interview, Mark the 12th grader, recalled how his parents directly warned him of the danger he faced in society as a dark-skinned, Latinx male, yet at the same time reminded him to love and take pride in his cultural differences:

> Well, growing up, I knew what racism was because my parents told me that it was out there. That, you know, someone's going to judge you or prevent you from doing something because of your race, because the color of your skin. They told me 'oh, don't stay out at night late because you're a little Mexican kid. So, the police might think you're doing something bad. And I was like 'why would they think that?' and it's like 'well, because our culture is *perceived* [his emphasis] as that way [by others].

Here, Mark clearly recounts how his parents taught him about prejudice and systemic racism in addition to developing his understanding of racial profiling by warning him of the ways he might be perceived as a dark skinned, Latinx male. Historically, dark-skinned Latinxs and those who could speak Spanish were made "other" because they were furthest removed from the imagined U.S citizen. Additionally, his parents advice not only built his awareness of racism, they provided Mark with specific strategies to navigate hostile, racist contexts and avoid getting "caught up" with the police, i.e. "don't stay out at night late."

Beyond his parent's warnings, Mark also revealed his dad reinforced an appreciation for his culture that stood in direct contrast to the way society might frame him. This is seen later in our interview when Mark states, "my father's taught it [appreciation for culture] to me, you know, where we come from, how we talk [Spanish]" which "makes me feel pride that I'm Latino. You know, I've learned the history of our culture [from him]." As a result, Mark states

he feels proud to be Latinx and embraces his culture and ability to speak Spanish due to his dad's teachings and modeling. Given the white supremacist society of the U.S, Mark's embrace of his cultural and linguistic differences can be understood as "individual acts of resistance" against racist stereotypes of Latinxs that frame them as intellectually and linguistic deficient and the pressure to assimilate to Anglo norms (Ochoa, 1999, as cited in Delgado-Bernal, 2001). For Mark, and other participants I interviewed, *consejos* served as teachings from their families that prepared them to confront and overcome racism; as well as a reminder to love themselves and take pride in their culture/language, all of which contribute to their racial identity development.

Across the above examples, we can see how Latinx youth are: provided with advice about the future, encouraged to believe in themselves and their abilities, and taught about the world around them. This includes being provided with advice about how to navigate hostile, racist contexts by loving themselves and embracing their differences. Considering the deficit-based stereotypes about Latinxs' abilities and contributions to society, and the experiences youth participants have had with overt racism, the advice families provide to Latinx youth are clearly intended to offer strategies for navigating the racist context within school and society at large. Based upon Latinx youth responses, when advice is offered by a trusted adult who authentically cares about them, whether family or otherwise (Gay, 2000), youth appear to internalize the advice, teachings, warnings, and strategies that are provided. When these messages are taken to heart, youth embrace their cultural differences and feel encouraged to hold high college/career aspirations and accomplish their goals, while developing a commitment to give back to their family and community, revealing their developing transformational resistance orientation.

***Apoyo* as Encouragement and Motivation: Supporting Youth Achievement**

A second form of home pedagogies that Latinx youth are provided is *apoyo,* which translates as support, in the form of encouragement and motivation from parents, family members, and other caring adults. According to Nava (2012), Latinx (im)migrant parents' engagement in their children's education is "much broader than normative school centric understandings and are best captured by the concept of *apoyo*" (p. iii). He defines *apoyo* as "broad based (critical) support in the form of social, economic, moral, familial, historical, and cultural resources learned from life-experiences" (p. 104) that parents provide their children in order to nurture their education, well-being, and development. Further, this form of support encompasses the "invisible acts of engagement" (p. 102) that "are a byproduct of parental sacrifices to position their children to have the privilege to study and therefore gain educational access" (p. 102). Thus, the concept of *apoyo* presented by Nava (2012) helps us understand the support and encouragement youth participants articulate receiving from their family, while their responses importantly reveal how their sensemaking cultivated agency, served as motivation to achieve their college and career goals, and contributed to their commitment to family and community that supported their development.

Throughout the study, Latinx youth participants described the *apoyo* they received from their family as: words of encouragement that expressed a belief in their ability to achieve and pushed them to hold high college and career aspirations; economic or financial support; and personal sacrifices made to provide youth with educational opportunities. Kimberly, an 11th grade ENGAGE participant who was driven to be the "first in her family to go far in education" (March, 2018), provides a great example of the first form of support, specifically the ways family members encourage Latinx youth to believe in themselves and their ability to achieve.

During our one-on-one interview, I asked Kimberly if her parents were supportive of her goals for the future, which prompted her to describe how supportive her father has been of all her endeavors. She explains:

They support me *a lot* [her emphasis]. My dad, he's a huge fan of me [sic], like, with everything. He support me in everything. Like, basically, I'm his biggest thing. He looks up to me *a lot* [her emphasis]. Um, when I wrestle, he always comes to my games and everything, softball, either soccer, any sport I'm doing.

In this response, Kimberly identifies her father as her biggest fan who supports her in all that she does, usually by showing up to her wrestling matches, softball games, or any school events. His presence, and constant encouragement, demonstrate to Kimberly that he deeply believes in her abilities, as is evident when she says "he looks up to me, a lot." In this case, her description of her dad as "looking up to her" is understood as both admiration for her accomplishments and belief in her capacities to achieve her goals, both are evident in the encouragement he provides.

Kimberly's example above was not an outlier. It is representative of the majority of participants I interviewed who recalled being encouraged to be self-confident in their capacities to achieve their goals by their family members or other trust, caring adults. For instance, Angela, at 10th grade participant, stated "[my parents] taught me to depend on myself and be proud of myself. And, like, focus in school." Along these same lines, Mark believed the encouragement he received from his father and Tito, the ENGAGE youth worker he had formed an authentic connection with, supported his personal development and taught him to "radiate confidence…if you radiate confidence, you're going places…[so] I exude confidence and positivity. That's what I love to live." As a result, Mark grew more self-confident in his own capacities and was motivated to achieve his goals by trusted, caring adults in his life, including his parents and Tito,

a youth worker he viewed and described as a mentor. The words and acts of support seen these responses encourage youth to believe in their abilities to achieve their goals and take pride in their cultural and linguistic differences, forms of support that effectively promoted their racial identity development and empowered them to be self-confident.

In contrast to the words of encouragement and moral support she received from her father, Kimberly also introduced the idea of economic and financial support while describing how her mother supported her education. This is seen when Kimberly says, "my mom, she (slight pause) supports me money wise. She says that she supports me a lot through, like, in spirit and everything. She's a hard worker. She works *a lot* [her emphasis]." Though in this example, Kimberly's mother was unable to be involved and show up to her games in person, Kimberly still believed her mother was involved in her academic development and career goals by providing financial support. Joaquin, who aspired to become a medical doctor and provide for his mother in the future, echoed this idea when he described how his mother had offered moral and economic support throughout his life. He shared "my mother and I live together and she's supporting me throughout my high school career. She's paid for my gear for sports and for all my academic purposes, she's paid for all that. She's always shown me a lot of support."

Across the examples given by Kimberly and Joaquin, the economic support that family members provide, and their involvement in youth participant's education, stands in sharp relief to the culturally deficit-based myth that Latinx families do not care about or participate in the education of their children (Nava, 2012; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002; Valencia, 1997). In the eyes of the participants I interviewed, their family's economic support contributed to their academic and personal development and was understood as necessary for their continued success. As such,

youth participants viewed the economic support their parents and/or family offered as a sacrifice made to provide them with the opportunity to focus on their education and holistic development.

Beyond words of encouragement and economic support, youth participants identified family "sacrifices" as a form of support that afforded them the opportunity to focus on academics and increase their access to various opportunities not typically available to them. More specifically, participant responses revealed that by placing the education of youth within the context of family struggles and sacrifices, parents and other trusted, caring adults encouraged them to concentrate on their education and self-development (skills and knowledge). For instance, while reflecting on the past sacrifices his mother made, and her encouragement to make education a priority, Joaquin stated his mother often placed his education within context of the larger family unit. He recalled, "my mother [always] told us was, the only reason she came here [the U.S.] was to better our lives because she wanted her children to have the best [opportunity]." According to Joaquin, his mother believed education was a pathway towards achieving a better life and receiving the best opportunities possible, often using herself and her experiences as an example of family sacrifice and the importance of education, as seen when he states,

> [My mom] never validated herself [by the status of her job], she always valued herself
> much more, as if education was the only thing stopping her. And, so, she pushed us. She
> would, like, get mad at us because we were gifted- we were *given* [his emphasis] – a new,
> a new hope. And, whenever she felt like we were squandering [that opportunity], she
> would tell us again why she came here, and why she did all this, and then why we
> shouldn't just think about ourselves. We should think about the entire family, as a whole.

Within Joaquin's extended response, we are given a prime example of the way parental sacrifices are used to place Latinx youth's educational opportunities, and achievement, within context of

the family unit. By placing their educational success within the context of family, Latinx youth are not only reminded of the sacrifices made to support them, but in contrast to neoliberal individualism, are provided with the message that their education, and success, is a family and community effort. In other words, Latinx youth see their education not as an individual act, but as tied to "the entire family, as a whole," which can serve as a stimulus for school success. Such framing led some of the participants I interviewed to begin to develop a community orientation wherein they are motivated to complete their education and reach their career goals in order to give back to their families and communities (Delgado-Bernal, 2001).

Due in large part to the *apoyo* received from their families, Latinx youth participants stated they felt proud to embrace their cultural and linguistic differences, which contributed to their racial identity development. Similarly, support from family made Latinx youth confident in their abilities to reach their college and career goals and motivated them to support their parents in their old age and/or give back to their community. These goals demonstrate how a commitment to their families and communities can be a source of inspiration and motivation for youth. Beyond the sacrifices, and moral and economic support youth described above, families also provided participants with models that both served as counternarrative examples to racist stereotypes of Latinx and a guide to navigate education and imagine new future possibilities.

Family (Role)Models: Counternarrative Examples of Academic and Financial Success

Much like parents, family, and other caring adults were sources of *consejos* and *apoyo*, they also served as counter-narrative models of academic and financial success for Latinx youth. According to Solorzano (2001), counterstorytelling[13] "is both a technique of telling the story of those experiences that are not often told (i.e., those on the margins of society) and a tool for

---

[13] "Counterstorytelling" and counternarrative are used interchangeably in the following section.

analyzing and challenging the stories of those in power and whose story is a natural part of the dominant discourse" (p. 327). Within this study, youth participants revealed family models served as counternarratives that helped them challenge racist stereotypes and deficit-based beliefs about Latinx's intellectual abilities and future potential. In addition, family models of academic and financial success showed Latinx youth how they could navigate educational structures and revealed opportunities available to them they may have been unaware of (Solorzano, 2001). Thus, although they were not always presented as an explicit teaching, family models of academic and financial success are understood as home pedagogies that offer living examples of counternarratives. Models empower youth to challenge stereotypes by providing examples of academic and financial success that encourage them to believe in their potential, and demonstrate how to effectively navigate social systems (i.e. high school, applying to and funding college), which contribute to their transformational resistance mentality (Solorzano, 2001).

While speaking about his reaction to Donald Trump's characterization of Latinxs as criminals, drug dealers, and rapists, Charles, who identified as Mexican-American, provides a good example of the ways student's utilize family models as counternarrative examples to resist racist stereotypes. As mentioned in Chapter 4, Charles admitted the racist profiling initially made him angry, but claimed he didn't really care because he knew that wasn't true and was motivated to disprove these stereotypes by using his family as an example. This is seen when he shares:

> I just wanted, like, I want people to know that (3 second pause) not all Mexican men, Mexican-Americans are like that. Like a lot of us are hard workers. Like I've seen, (slight pause), I have aunts, uncles, that came here from Mexico and like, you know, they're contributing to society. Like, one of them, one of my uncle's started and owns a business.

Like, we try to come out here [to the U.S] to make a better life … And so, to put that

stereotype, like, on the broad [sic] of us, like, all of us Mexican-Americans, its wrong.

By looking at his family and using them as examples, Charles constructed a counterstory that

challenged the racist stereotype of Latinxs as "drug dealers, rapists, and criminals" that positions

them as non-citizen outsiders who pose an internal threat to the well-being of the United States.

At the same time, Charles' counternarrative demonstrates the pride he has in his racial identity

by highlighting the positive characteristics, achievements, and contributions of Latinxs to U.S

society. Thus, for Charles, using his family as an example not only disproves racist stereotypes in

his eyes, it serves as a model of financial success and evidence of what he can accomplish.

The process of looking within their family, identifying counterstories, and using them as

examples to challenge racist majoritarian narratives of Latinx populations was common amongst

the youth I interviewed whenever stereotypes or misconceptions of Latinxs were discussed. For

instance, Joaquin (12th grade) and Kimberly (11th grade) both, as previously mentioned,

highlighted their mothers as hard-workers who have been successful in supporting their

education and providing for their families. Similarly, Angela, the 10th grade ENGAGE

participant who aspired to be a forensic nurse, identified her mother as a counternarrative

example of Latinx financial success that disproves racist stereotypes. While discussing what she

thought it would take to reach her goal of becoming a forensic nurse, Angela pointed to the

advice and model her mother provided, and stated,

Dedication. I have to focus in school. My mom tells me that that should be my

only priority, so I'm gonna [sic] go with that … [and] my mom always told me

that if I wanted to be successful, I have to be dedicated and focused to complete

my goal. I would say from like people I look up to [mom, family, and Tom, a

youth worker], it took them a lot of work, a lot of focus to get what they wanted,

to get where they're at now.

Angela's response provides a summary of characteristics she believes are needed to be successful by explicitly referencing the advice her mother provided, including being dedicated, staying focus, doing well in school, and working hard to accomplish your goal. In addition, Angela admits that by observing the models provided by people she looks up to, like her mother and Tom, an authentic caring youth leader, she not only learned how she could reach her goals, but was given counternarrative models she could emulate to challenge stereotypes about Latinxs.

Beyond providing counternarrative examples, family models revealed to youth participants the possibilities available to them and potential paths they can follow when navigating high school and applying for college. For instance, Sergio, a 12th grade ENGAGE participant who aspired to start his own clothing line and earn a Ph.D. in Psychology, identified his uncles and grandfather as examples of entrepreneurial and financial success that provided a model he could follow when starting a business. When asked if he ever talked about his future plans with anyone to get advice on reaching his goal of starting a clothing line, Sergio shared:

Just my uncles. 'Cause [sic] my uncles know how to-, they work for printing

companies, and my grandpa used to have his own business with, like, making

shirts and all that. So, I just talked to them about like the clothing line and

everything like that. They said it was a good idea. I told them that I wanted them

to help me with it, since I don't really know much about like (slight pause)… I

used to help my grandpa make the shirts and everything like that, but, I don't

really know everything about it [the business].

In this case, Sergio's family not only served as a model of Latinx entrepreneurial success that encouraged him to believe in his capacity to start a business, they also provided a model he could look up to when navigating the process of starting a business. For Latinx youth in this study, like Sergio and Jasmin, exposure to such examples of Latinx entrepreneurs and financial success, despite the racist stereotypes of Latinxs as lazy, unintelligent, and a burden on society, provides important representation for them to challenge stereotypes and imagine a future with unlimited possibilities. As such, family models can be understood to function as a type of guide for youth in navigating unknown social structures (i.e. school, business, banks); and as models that counter racist tropes of Latinxs by revealing their potential for financial (Sergio) and academic (Angela) success, while illuminating their contributions to U.S. society and culture.

Much like Sergio utilized family models as a guide for laying out his plans to start a business, youth participants understood family models could help them navigate the education system and prepare to apply for college. More specifically, Latinx youth looked to older siblings, family members, or caring ENGAGE youth leaders, who had attended or graduated college in the United Stated, as a model for which classes or teachers they should take in high school to prepare for higher education, how to apply to college, how to fund their education, or staying on track in college. Similarly, participants frequently mentioned that role models in their family opened their eyes to new career paths they had never considered, such as Sienna, who explains she began considering a career in teaching "because of [my cousin], he was a teacher, and I was like 'oh, that's an option.' (Laughs)." She paused slightly, then continued, "And so, it interested me… [looking back] I liked the feeling that I got when teachers, you know, really inspired me. And I was like, 'wow, if I can create that same feeling in other people, then I'm good.'" For participants in this study, like Sienna, family models helped guide them in navigating school and

exposed them to new college and career possibilities they may have never considered. An idea echoed by Mark, Riley, Joaquin, Angela, and Veronica, who collectively identified older siblings, cousins, parents, or caring youth leaders as role models they looked to for advice related to high school, their future plans, and higher education. They show family models serve as examples of financial and academic success that empower youth to believe in themselves and their capacity to complete college, get a good paying job, and achieve their goals. In short, they serve as evidence of what is possible for their future.

Family models also play an important role in preparing Latinx youth to confront racist, deficit-based stereotypes by providing counternarrative examples of Latinx success and models of how to navigate hostile social contexts. More specifically, family models offer Latinx youth living counternarrative examples that demonstrate their achievement, and future possibilities, are not limited by their cultural background, language abilities, or assumed citizenship status as racist stereotypes imply. Rather, the success Latinx youth see within their families empowers them to be self-confident, take pride in their unique cultural identity as Latinxs, and view their ability to speak Spanish as a benefit to their future, all while providing a constant reminder of what they can achieve in the midst of hostile social contexts. Further, in the process of looking within their families and identifying counternarrative examples of success, Latinx youth engage in transformative resistance as they actively challenge racist stereotypes. Additionally, these same family models also serve as a point of inspiration that fortify Latinx youth's motivation to achieve their goals and disprove racist stereotypes themselves. Thus, home pedagogies reveal to Latinx youth what is possible, and how they can get there, while empowering them to be self-confident and embrace their cultural identity as resistance to racist stereotypes.

Across the home pedagogies discussed above, demonstrate the teachings Latinx youth receive within the home that remind them to love themselves while preparing them to navigate and confront hostile social contexts and stereotypes. As has been shown, *consejos* from families provide Latinx youth with advice, knowledge, and strategies for confronting and resisting the racist stereotypes and hostile world they may encounter, including reminders to always love themselves, be self-reliant, and self-confident in their capacities. The various forms of *apoyo* from families send youth affirming messages that serve as motivation through constant encouragement to hold high college and career aspirations and continued support for their individual development. Additionally, the *apoyo* received from families show participants their educational success is a community effort and is only possible as a result of familial sacrifice, which motivates them to one day give back to their community and those who supported them. Lastly, family models were shown to be implicit home pedagogies that give youth living counternarrative examples of success that challenge racist stereotypes and serve as guides they can follow when navigating social contexts or a new career path.

The combined teachings Latinx youth receive from the home pedagogies of *consejos*, *apoyo*, and family (role) models are internalized as pride in their cultural differences and, ultimately, inspire and motivate them to achieve their college and career goals in order to disprove racist stereotypes. They also become motivated to give back to their family and community with the intention of transforming opportunities for youth from similar backgrounds. The following section explores how youth internalize home pedagogies and its contribution to their developing community orientation and transformational resistance mentality.

Internalizing Home Pedagogies: Motivation and Giving Back as Resistance

Until now, I have argued parents, families, and other trusted caring adults provide home pedagogies in the form of *consejos*, *apoyo*, and models in an attempt to: prepare Latinx youth to confront hostile social contexts by exposing them to racist stereotypes they may face; teaching them strategies for navigating a hostile school and society; and reminding them to be self-confident and to embrace, value, and take pride in their cultural differences and linguistic abilities as a means of resisting racist stereotypes. In a sense, home pedagogies develop agency in Latinx youth to confront, resist, and challenge racism in its' various forms by encouraging them to hold high college and career aspirations, embrace their cultural/linguistic differences, and believe in themselves. As individuals with agency, however, Latinx youth do not blindly accept the teachings of home pedagogies, rather they receive the combined teachings, internalize, and make meaning of them in multiple ways.

From a critical coloniality lens, Latinx youth participants appear to make meaning of home pedagogies as motivation. Motivation to achieve their goals in order to both give back to their families/communities and intentionally disprove racist stereotypes, and motivation to help transform, or change, opportunities available to youth in their communities. The motivation to achieve their goals, support their families, give back to their communities, and disprove deficit-based frames of Latinxs reveals youth's development of a community orientation and resistance. The following section analyzes the motivations that arise from home pedagogies, by first looking at youths' motivation to achieve their goals in order disprove racist stereotypes. Next, I review the ways their motivation is tied to what I believe to be their developing transformational resistance. Lastly, I present their motivation to give back to their families to "repay" them for their on-going support, as evidence of their developing transformational resistance.

Motivation to Disprove Stereotypes: Achievement as Counternarrative

In the previous chapter, I argued Latinx youth's lived experiences within a hostile national context and subtractive educational environments expose them to racist stereotypes and deficit-based messages about their intellectual abilities and future possibilities. I also briefly reviewed the ways Latinx youth respond to these racist misconceptions which include a refusal to accept or believe in their validity and attempts to disprove them through counternarratives. I believe these responses by Latinx youth in resistance to racist stereotypes have their origins within the strategies provided by families' home pedagogies presented within this chapter.

Through the lessons provided via *consejos*, *apoyo*, and models of academic and financial success, Latinx youth are taught strategies, given models they can refer to, and prepared to disprove racist frames and overcome hostile educational contexts, all of which help develop their agency. As a result, whenever stereotypes of Latinxs were discussed, participants I interviewed would attempt to disprove them. First, by constructing a counternarrative example from family models as described above, and secondly, by describing how these stereotypes motivated them to do well in school and set/achieve high college and career goals to challenge misconceptions. In other words, racist stereotypes that framed Latinxs as intellectually deficient and less capable than their peers served as motivation for youth to disprove them. At the core of this motivation is a belief in their own potential that emerged from their family's advice, support, and models.

Sienna, the 12th grade ENGAGE participant of Chinese and Latinx descent, provides a good example of the ways Latinx youth use racist stereotypes as motivation that pushes them to succeed. For instance, when asked about Trump's racist characterization of Latinxs and similar stereotypes she has heard, Sienna explained,

> I mean, [at first] upset. But, like, not any more than I would feel upset about any other
>
> race being attacked. Like, I don't think I [took] it very personally, because I know it's not

true. Like, just a firm, like, disbelief that like "that's not true." Like, it just doesn't- it

prevents me from getting angry … Yeah, and it makes me want to break them. And, then

I go "Hey, look! I'm breaking them" (Slight giggle, stated proudly).

Sienna admits that, much like Charles above, she initially felt angry that Latinxs were perceived

in such stereotypical, deficit ways, and as a result refused to validate the racist stereotypes of

Latinxs as intellectually inferior because she viewed herself as highly capable and believed she

could disprove them. In her response, it is evident that hearing racist stereotypes makes youth

want to break them, revealing the way stereotypes serve as motivation for youth to succeed in

reaching their goals. In addition, Sienna's response reflects how youth participants internalize

home pedagogies as self-confidence and pride in their Latinx identity, which provides a solid

foundation from which to resist and overcome racist stereotypes. In short, Sienna's refusal to

believe deficit-based misconceptions, her self-confidence and pride in her Latinx identity, and

her positive imagination of her college and career opportunities, reflect the teachings and

strategies Latinx youth are provided with through home pedagogies.

The motivation to achieve as a means of resisting racist stereotypes that was observed

within Sienna's response is emblematic of the motivation a majority of participants I interviewed

expressed. Throughout this study, youth described being similarly motivated to do well in school

and achieve their goals in order to disprove racist misconceptions about the intellectual and

linguistic abilities of Latinxs and/or their future potential. The previous response from Charles

and the counter-story he provided about his uncles and aunts who have started businesses serves

as an example of this motivation youth feel to disprove racist stereotypes. Adding to our

understanding by reflecting an intersection of the encouragement provided by family models and

the motivation to disprove deficit-based misconceptions, Kimberly, the 11th grade participant

who wanted to be a forensic pathologist, explained that when her grades start to slip, her older brother pushes and encourages her by telling her "you have to go far. Farther than me. Farther than the whole family." His encouragement, combined with the racist-stereotypes she's heard of Latinxs, motivates her to "go far with education" so she can make her family proud, and resist deficit-based stereotypes by disproving them Latinxs.

At the core of youth participant's self-confidence and ability to resist racist stereotypes/contexts were the home pedagogies provided by families, more specifically the support and messages to believe in themselves and take pride in their cultural differences. In short, Latinx youth's motivation to achieve their goals can be understood as emerging from a combination of the home pedagogies provided by families and motivation to challenge racist stereotypes. Further, the active resistance to deficit-based stereotypes and racist contexts on behalf of Latinx youth reflects the resistance portion of a developing transformational resistance.

Latinx Youth's Developing Transformational Resistance Mentality

"I know people who are going through it [DACA], like, I know a few of my friends are, and I would hate for them to not succeed in life, to [not] get a better education, and mainly because the matter of a green card, a piece of paper, says they're not allowed to. *It's just very unfair. It's what I-, it's literally what I fight for* [His emphasis]." (Joaquin)

Often, when Latinx youth were asked what do you think is the biggest issue in the country, they readily identified racism and issues Latinxs face, including immigration, DACA, discrimination, poverty, and unemployment, as major problems in the U.S. The awareness Latinx youth had of these social issues emerged from their own lived experience with these social issues and the home pedagogies participants received from their families that introduced and prepared them to face said issues. However, as quote above reiterates, youth's awareness actively

motivated them to resist, challenge, or disprove the racist stereotypes of Latinxs. As such, youth participants' awareness of, and motivation to, address racism and disprove stereotypes can be understood as examples of transformational resistance; examples that importantly reveal subtle, daily acts of resistance and the connection between home pedagogies and a transformational resistance mentality.

Solorzano and Delgado-Bernal (2001) argue transformational resistance refers to student behavior wherein "the student holds some level of awareness and critique of her or his oppressive conditions and structures of domination and must be at least somewhat motivated by a sense of social justice" (p. 319). In other words, transformational resistance, which "can take on many forms – individual and subtle to collective and visible" (Delgado-Bernal, 2001, p. 625), implies not only active resistance to racist stereotypes and inequitable, social contexts such as schools, but a motivation or desire to change said beliefs and conditions. However, transformational resistance also occurs in more subtle, nuanced ways and this study importantly adds to our understanding of the purposeful, small daily acts of resistance Latinx youth engage in across their daily lives. In addition, youth's responses paint a richer picture of the connections between home pedagogies and the development of a transformational resistance mentality. With this in mind, youth participants subtle acts of transformational resistance are best observed in their expressed motivation to prove racist stereotypes wrong.

This chapter presents multiple examples of subtle transformational resistance that Latinx youth participate in, namely their refusal to believe in the validity of deficit-based stereotypes, their motivation to disprove said stereotypes, and their desire to complete schooling to "give back" and set an example for others. Importantly, given the racist subtractive schooling environment that frames Latinxs in deficit-ways, forces them to assimilate, and perpetuates an

"English-only" environment, youth participants' transformational resistance also includes their embrace of their culture, specifically their language, as a means of resisting "ideas and ways of being that are disempowering to self" (Delgado-Bernal, 2001, p.625). In other words, youth participants' subtle forms of transformational resistance include embracing, valuing, and taking pride in their cultural differences and ability to speak Spanish, despite facing deficit-based practices within a subtractive schooling environment dedicated to assimilating them and a racist majoritarian narrative that frames Latinxs as non-citizen outsiders.

To be clear, participants never directly stated they used Spanish "to resist racist stereotypes" or "challenge hostile contexts." Rather, their responses to questions such as how has the ability to speak Spanish shaped your life, indicated that participants resisted racist stereotypes and deficit-framing by embracing and taking pride in their Spanish abilities. In so doing, they effectively revealed the way language use can function as a form of resistance. For instance, in response to the above question, Riley, the 11th grade participant who aspired to be a nurse, stated she loved the fact that she could speak Spanish and believed being bilingual held immense benefits for her both socially and economically. She explained, "If you're bilingual, well, for us [bilingual people], it's a lot easier for job things, like applications or whatever. And…I'm actually able to help people [translate], you know?" Similarly, Sergio, the 12th grade participant mentioned earlier, added that being able to speak Spanish held social benefits, as seen when he says "you get to communicate with, like, more people who don't, like, speak English... it's a good thing." These examples make it evident that youth take pride in their ability to speak Spanish, and view it positively, because being multilingual allows them to communicate and support others in their community, while also offering them a benefit for their future career.

It is clear youth take pride in their ability to speak Spanish, and view it as a benefit to their lives because, as Joaquin, the 12th grade ENGAGE participant, explained:

> If I speak two languages, like Spanish… it opens up doors for me… It makes me more desirable. I'm more valuable to people that that need me [socially and economically]. So… it shapes me just to have more confidence into my life.

As such, being able to speak Spanish, specifically, was embraced, seen in positive terms, and utilized by youth to give back to their communities and help others, in addition the self-confidence they demonstrated related to their Spanish use and their belief in their abilities to achieve their goals to disprove racist stereotypes, stand as evidence of the subtle forms transformational resistance can take. According to Ochoa (1999), "claiming an identity, maintaining one's language, and affirming one's culture are [also] individual acts of resistance" (As cited in Delgado-Bernal, 2001, p. 625). So, when Latinx youth embrace their cultural differences, and take pride in their Spanish language abilities, they are engaging in subtle forms of active resistance, and attempting to change, or *transform*, dominant racist characterizations of Latinx Spanish speakers. In addition to these subtle acts of resistance, youth engaged in more overt forms of transformational resistance as evidenced by their desire to reach their college and career goals in order to set an example for and give back to their family and communities.

Motivation to "Give Back": Supporting Family and Community

Throughout this study, whenever Latinx youth participants were asked about their aspirations for the future, they would state their various goals, which included attending and graduating from college, becoming a doctor, a forensic pathologist, a teacher, or starting their own business. Immediately afterwards, often without my prompting them for clarification, they would proceed to state that they were motivated to reach their goals in order to position

themselves to one day give back to their family and support youth from their communities. Youth were motivated to give back to their family as a means of reciprocating the support they received, and were motivated to return to their community to work with the ENGAGE program to support and inspire other youth. These goals reveal youth's community orientation and transformational resistance, which stem from how youth understand home pedagogies.

Latinx youth, as described earlier in the chapter, continually stated they were motivated to achieve their goals so that they could eventually give back to, and help support, their family. In a sense, Latinx youth's motivations to "give back" can be understood as a desire to reciprocate the support they were provided throughout their education and development. For instance, Mark, the 12th grade ENGAGE participant who attributed his love for his Mexican and Dominican culture and self-confidence to his father's teachings, provides a good example of the ways youth are motivated to "give back" by their family's on-going support. He states, "my family, they've always been supportive, so I- I owe a lot to them. So, that's the main thing, you know? Like, being able to provide for them [now], and in the future as well." Within this response, Mark identified his family as a source of motivation and feels he owes a lot to them, because "they've always been supportive." In his eyes, his academic and athletic success, as well as the knowledge and pride he has in his Latinx identity, were possible because of his family's ongoing support.

The desire Latinx youth expressed to give back to their parents and/or family reveals a community orientation that can be understood as arising from the framing of their educational opportunity/success within context of the family unit and sacrifice. In other words, the framing of their opportunity to focus on education within context of the family unit, and sacrifices made to afford them said opportunity, taught youth that education and success were not individualized activities. Rather, in direct contrast to neoliberal individualism, familial sacrifice and Latinx

youth participation in the ENGAGE program, showed them that their success, achievement, and opportunities were a result of community effort. Thus, in viewing the opportunities they are afforded, and their educational success as tied to their families' sacrifice and community support, Latinx youth develop a community orientation that motivates them to both give back to those who supported them and help support youth in their community via the ENGAGE program.

Latinx youth were also motivated by a desire to inspire and support other youth in the same way they had been supported and inspired by authentic adults within the ENGAGE program. Thus, Latinx youth participants directly stated they were motivated to go to college, and achieve their goals, so that they could one day return and help support youth from their community by either working with the ENGAGE program or something similar. For instance, while describing his experience in the ENGAGE program, Sergio, the 12th grade ENGAGE participant who aspired to become a psychologist, recalled how adult youth leaders in ENGAGE supported him through tough personal times and inspired him to help others, "The people, like Tito and Mr. David, they reached out to me and they tried to help me. So, I guess, whenever I see someone down, I want to do the same thing, as they do." As he continued, Sergio told me he planned to return to ENGAGE to help inspire others:

> It's a good way to help kids. And, I just think it's better for me, since I'll be
>
> around kids. Well, not kids, but I'll be around teenagers. And then I'll be able to
>
> help assist them do, you know, work or weight room, or do their [math] problems,
>
> or anything that they have. I feel like it just makes you a better person.

Within Sergio's honest response, we can see how Latinx youth's motivation to "give back" to their community, and specifically to work with and inspire other youth, emerges from not only their experience in the program, but, from their understanding that Latinx youth success is a

community effort. As can be seen, Latinx youth believe they have benefitted academically and personally from their family's support/sacrifice, as well as their participation in the ENGAGE program, as evidenced by Sergio's statement that his involvement with ENGAGE, now and in the future, contributes to his identity development and "makes you a better person." These experiences and personal benefits from family support and participation in ENGAGE promote a community orientation, motivating many to return as a youth leader to support and inspire others.

Olivia Mae, who is a former ENGAGE student and the current ENGAGE site coordinator at Rose City High, offers a good example of the reasons Latinx youth return to work for ENGAGE as adults. While explaining her own reasons for returning to work for ENGAGE, Olivia Mae pointed to her desire to reciprocate the support she received, and stated "I've been here for so long because…I'm *passionate* [her emphasis] about what their mission statement is, and what they've done, because I'm a positive result of that. I'm a positive result of their after school program working and succeeding." As she went on to elaborate her reasons for returning, Olivia Mae specifically stated that her personal benefit from the program, and authentic relationships with adult youth leaders, showed her ENGAGE was "consistently investing in us as people, and not just as a number. As a result, I feel like those that have *gone* [her emphasis] through the program are driven to come back and invest themselves into the program to give back that way." As Olivia Mae demonstrates, the personal benefits Latinx youth gain from ENGAGE drive their motivation to return and support others.

Considering Latinx youth's visceral awareness of deficit-views about Latinxs, and their lived experiences with racism, their motivation to return to their community to support other youth further reveals their transformational resistance. In other words, Latinx youth's commitment to supporting youth from their community, and desire to inspire them, can be

understood as active attempts to change beliefs about Latinx's abilities and potential by helping

them be successful in school and beyond. Further, Latinx youth's motivation to achieve their

goals, and commitment to return to ENGAGE, also shows their attempts to transform

opportunities for youth by establishing themselves as an example that youth can look up, to

while revealing pathways they can follow. The experiences that foster youth's motivation to give

back to their community, and other youth, are of central focus in the following chapter.

Conclusion

This chapter described the home pedagogies of *consejos, apoyo*, and family models that

youth receive from their families that provide them with encouragement, advice, strategies, and

examples of academic and financial success in order to prepare them to confront racist

stereotypes and navigate hostile social contexts. These home pedagogies also provide youth with

affirming messages and reminders to love themselves, be self-confident, hold high college and

career aspirations, and embrace their linguistic abilities, all of which help them resist, develop

identity, and engage agency. These teachings also contribute to youths' transformational

resistance, or their commitment to disproving racist stereotypes/beliefs about Latinxs, as well as

the commitment to "give back" to their families and community — a community orientation.

The aforementioned home pedagogies, and their supportive messages, described in this

chapter stand in stark contrast to the racist social contexts and stereotypes, and their deficit-based

messages, described in the previous chapter. Combined, these contrasting messages inform the

various context that youth navigate on a daily basis, shape their experiences, and informs their

meaning making and identity development. With this in mind, the following chapter explores

how youth participate, navigate, and create their own counter-spaces in ENGAGE, along with

the role of authentic caring relationships and conversations on their racial identity development.

Chapter 6

**"Who I Am:" Exploring Racial Identity in a CBES
and the Role of Language, Authentic Care, and Counter-Spaces**

When it comes to the program [ENGAGE] and the two youth leaders [Tito &

Cruz], we don't always talk about it [current issues], but whenever we do, we sort

of refresh ourselves and ask ourselves, 'is this okay with us?' and 'is it okay for

you to be who you are?' (slight pause). Those two youth leaders have always

encouraged me to be who I am (his-emphasis). They have always wanted to see

me succeed, and have always encouraged the fact of me opening up. - Joaquin

The world Latinx youth exist within is shaped by contrasting messages of hope and the

racism they encounter and must navigate on a daily basis. The previous chapters have shown

that, on one hand, Latinx youth are exposed to racist messages within media, at school, and from

the U.S. presidential administration which frame them in deficit-ways and perpetuates racist

stereotypes. On the other hand, youth are provided messages of support via home pedagogies

that encourage and motivate them, while building their confidence to face and resist racism

through a developing transformational resistance mentality. These contradictory messages shape

the experiences of participants at school and in the ENGAGE program. At the same time, they

prepare youth to navigate said contexts, resist racist stereotypes, and utilize their agency, all of

which contribute to their racial identity development.

Throughout this study, I was told by the youth I interviewed that their participation in the

ENGAGE program supported their development, and much like home pedagogies, motivated

them to dream big, disprove stereotypes, and pursue their college and career goals. What was

less clear was *how* this occurred and *what* factors or characteristics contributed to their

development and exploration of a racialized ethnic identity. Through observations and interviews with youth, I came to understand the flexible informal structure of ENGAGE and the presence of youth workers who authentically cared for youth were of particular importance.

Valenzuela (1999) argues developing relationships based upon authentic care is critical for the educational success of Mexican-American, and by extension Latinx students as their orientation towards education is shaped by the relationships and trust they form with adults in schools. Authentic or radical care, is defined as an action-driven concept that is concerned with youth's academic, social, and emotional well-being, as well as their social, cultural, moral, academic, and political development (Cordell, 2017; Gay, 2010a, 2010b; Mayeroff, 1971; Valenzuela, 1999). It is also understood as a "moral imperative, value and ethic to act in the best interest of others" (Cordell, 2017, p. 40), one that binds us to one another and seeks to promote the resiliency, strength, and academic achievement of youth, particularly those historically underserved (Gay, 2010a). With this in mind, youth workers in this study who authentically cared for participants, in particular Tito and Emilia (Ms. Marquez), were described as mentors who shared common characteristics, including: a commitment to and exhibiting concern for the well-being of youth; having a "down to earth," easy going personality that made them approachable in the eyes of participants; a willingness and persistent availability to engage in conversations and actively listen to youth; and lastly, providing a model of self-love and academic success that encourage youth to be true to themselves, embrace their culture, and value their language. Central to authentic caring relationships was the role of language as a bridge.

As Joaquin's opening quote alludes to, the characteristics of the ENGAGE program and those of caring adults, helped foster a welcoming and judgement-free environment wherein youth could build relationships based on authentic care with adults, engage in conversation

around sensitive topics such as race, racism, or immigration, and create counter-spaces of resistance where they could be themselves. The concept of counter-spaces in this study is informed by Solorzano, Ceja, and Yosso's (2000) definition of these spaces as "sites where deficit-notions of people of color can be challenged and where a positive [collegiate] racial climate can be established and maintained" (p. 70). Counter-spaces allow nondominant populations to foster their own learning, vent their frustrations, and get to know others who share similar experiences, within a space outside the confines of a formal classroom where their experiences and contributions are validated and viewed as important forms of knowledge (Hernandez, 2015; Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). Across youth responses, counter-spaces in this study emerge as sites of resistance they actively constructed, alongside trusted caring adults, that offered a supportive racial environment in which they could be themselves, freely utilize Spanish, and explore their identity in conversation with others. Importantly, the counter-spaces observed within ENGAGE revealed the use of Spanish by caring adults functioned as both a sign for participants that they could claim the space as their own, and as a bridge to forming caring relationships with adults and peers. Similarly, the selective use of Spanish by participants was a subtle act of resistance against deficit-based frames of Latinxs and a sign that youth were being who they "really" are; functions of language that will be detailed throughout this chapter.

Given the documented potential of community-based educational spaces to support the holistic development of youth of color as described above (Baldridge et al., 2017; Ginwright & James, 2002), the following chapter explores the role that youth's participation within ENGAGE has on their exploration and development of a racial identity. However, it should be noted that the features that made ENGAGE unique, and allowed participants to establish authentic relationships with adults, were slowly being lost as it increasingly focused on academics in

response to the pressure imposed by the neoliberal and paternalistic funding context they exist within (Baldridge, 2014, 2019; Medina, Baldridge, & Wiggins, 2020).

As such, the chapter begins with a section that describes the internal context of the ENGAGE program, the external pressure it is experiencing that contributes to self-described strategic changes to programming, and how youth make sense of these changes. The second section details the characteristics of the ENGAGE program that facilitate youth's exploration of their racial identity, namely it's informal flexible structure and the commitment of caring adults to youth. In the process, I present the role language plays in how participants form authentic care-based relationships with adults, navigate the changing program, and create counter-spaces of resistance wherein they can explore their identity. This chapter helps us better understand how youth participation in a CBES supports their racial identity development, and the central role language and it's various functions plays in said development. To this end, the final section reveals that, within ENGAGE, language no longer serves as a signifier of difference and perceived deficits as it does in school. Rather, language functions as a subtle act of resistance to racist stereotypes, as a resource to help others, as a bridge to building authentic caring relationships, and as a sign of the potential to form counter-spaces of resistance, all of which facilitated youth's exploration and development of a racialized ethnic identity.

The Changing Context of ENGAGE: Funding, Program Changes, and Youth Experience

Research has shown community-based educational spaces, much like schools, are shaped by the neoliberal sociopolitical and economic contexts they exist in, leading many to reproduce the harm and inequalities youth of color experience within schools and society (Baldridge, et al., 2017; Medina, et al., 2020). Within this context, community-based educational spaces (CBESs) that depend on federal and state funding, such as Ranch Mountain Educational Organization

(RMEO) the parent organization of ENGAGE, are especially susceptible to reproducing harm as they face an environment that prioritizes funding programs that frame youth in paternalistic, deficit-ways and narrowly focus on academics and behavioral containment (Baldridge, 2014, 2019; Baldridge, et al., 2017; Kantor & Lowe, 2006; Kwon, 2013; Medina, Baldridge, et al., 2020). Under the expectation to conform to these funding trends, CBESs are pressured to function more like rigidly controlled schools by limiting their programmatic offerings to focus on academics, effectively reducing their flexibility and capacity to holistically support youth (Baldridge, 2019; Kwon, 2013). During data collection, Ranch Mountain faced pressure from the local economic context that essentially forced them to limit the programs they offered to focus their programs on academic support. In stark contrast to said neoliberal pressure, RMEO leaders were driven to meet the organizational mission of "creating a culture of learning" in the community and holistically supporting youth by offering flexible, informal programs and hiring individuals whose personal goals aligned with the mission.

The contradiction between adult youth workers' commitment to the organizations' mission of providing support for the holistic development of youth, and the neoliberal, paternalistic funding context they worked in that constrained the services Ranch Mountain could offer in their programs, created an environment of contrasting messages that participants navigated and experienced in various ways. A description of RMEO and the ENGAGE program, as well as the elements that fostered holistic development, including adult youth workers' commitment to the organizational mission and their hiring practices, provide a rich picture of the context prior to undergoing changes tied to neoliberal and economic pressure.

"Not Deviating from Why We Do It": Organizational Mission and Messages of Support

Oh! The good ol' elevator speech (both laugh)…Um, when I speak to folks and let them know what the work is, like what we do, I generally say… we provide educational services for low income youth and families to help them achieve their highest potential. And, beyond that, if they're asking for details I talk about some of the services that we offer in terms of increasing college access, increasing college-career readiness, post-secondary readiness and awareness. But, in summary it's just that, it's helping them dream big [her emphasis]. And, dream so [her emphasis] big that it's scary because (slight pause) it should be scary, otherwise you're not dreaming big enough. And, to be able to support them in any way we possibly can.   (Denise, March, 2018).

Despite pressure to conform to the neoliberal, paternalistic economic context, administrators and site coordinators at Ranch Mountain were not passive figures being acted upon by their environment. They were active agents, who in the face of pressure, remained committed to working towards the organizational mission of "creating a culture of learning" in the community by providing "educational services to help [youth] achieve their highest potential." As a result, Ranch Mountain administrators and ENGAGE site coordinator(s) focused on recruiting, hiring, and retaining adults whose personal motivations aligned with the mission of the organization, and establishing an informal, welcoming environment across ENGAGE for youth. These efforts collectively sent affirming messages to youth that motivated and encouraged them to "dream big" and made them feel like they could take ownership of labs to create their own counter-spaces where they could be themselves and explore their racial identity.

Throughout the year I conducted observations at Ranch Mountain and ENGAGE, administrators and site coordinators met at RMEO's main office on a weekly basis to provide updates on individual programs, as well as discuss and problem-solve issues the

organization/program was facing. During these meetings, the topic that came up most often was the toll the economic context was having on the organization and how they would navigate the various issues that arose from it, including limits placed on programming and front-line staff instability. According to Ben, the CEO of Ranch Mountain, concerns about immediate and future funding were a reality that forced the organization to make strategic decisions about the use of funds and the focus of programming, however, these decisions were always guided by their commitment to youth and the organizational mission. He argued that changes may occur, but, "in it, we are *not* deviating from *why* we do it [his emphasis]. Our whole focus has been to try to develop this 'culture of learning' to have them think [about] and to at least be prepared" for the future. As will be seen, this mission not only guided the work of the organization, it was something all adults I interviewed believed in, and served as a litmus test for finding future employees who were equally interested in supporting underserved youth and communities.

The personal motivation of administrators and ENGAGE youth workers, namely their desire to give back to the community and help young people achieve their goals, were directly aligned to the organizational mission of Ranch Mountain. As a result, many of the adults I interviewed expressed that they were drawn to work for the organization due to its commitment to support youth and the community. For example, while responding to the question how did you come to be involved with the organization, adult participants I interviewed shared a range of responses that identified a deep personal commitment to giving back, including: "I was inclined to do what I love" (Denise), "I *really* love this work, I *really* believe in what we're doing [her emphasis]" (Michelle), "This is what I wanted to do…I love helping them" (Kevin), and "this organization invested in me as a young adult…[so] those that have gone through the program are willing to come back and invest themselves" (Olivia Mae). These responses make it clear that a

love of helping others and giving back to their community and/or those that supported them, are important factors that motivated adults to work for ENGAGE and guided the organizations work.

With the commitment of youth workers to the mission of the organization, Ranch Mountain was able to maintain their internal culture and navigate funding issues via strategic decision making, despite the pressure from the economic context they existed within. More specifically, with adults such as Michelle, Denise, Ben, and Olivia Mae leading the organization and ENGAGE, all of whom shared a love for and genuine commitment to supporting underserved youth, Ranch Mountain never deviated from, and was guided by, their mission of "creating a culture of learning." As a result, they laid a foundation for an organizational culture that fully believed in the abilities of underserved youth "to achieve their highest potential" (Denise) and sought to support their achievement by securing and providing resources, all of which sent youth participants messages of support that encouraged them to dream big and pursue their goals. Considering the importance of a love for the work, or more simply a passion and desire for helping youth reach their goals, RMEO administrators looked for this quality in all of their current and future youth workers in order to maintain their organizational culture, as evidenced by their description of their hiring practices.

RMEO's Hiring Practices and the Characteristics of Caring Youth Workers

While describing what RMEO looked for in potential employees, CEO Ben stated that one of the biggest considerations for administrators was looking at the fit of the applicant with the core values of the organization. He explained, "I want to know who they are, what they did, and why they think they're a fit...why do you want to do this?" When reviewing applications administrators would try to get an understanding of the personal goals and motives of the individual and consider how well they aligned to the overall mission and core values of Ranch

Mountain itself. In so doing, RMEO leaders tried to weed out applicants who were "just looking for a paycheck" and identify driven individuals who expressed an interest in working with youth, giving back to the community, or pursuing a career in education, all of which were directly aligned with and helped maintain the organizational culture.

Expanding upon the importance of a fit between application's personal goals and RMEO's mission, Olivia Mae, a former ENGAGE participant and the site coordinator at Rose City, believed individuals motives were highly important to maintaining the quality and culture of ENGAGE. She argued, "if you don't have the people that follow the same mission statement or the people that embody those same qualities that you're looking for and you want this organization to portray, I think that's gonna [sic] change it." In her eyes, who RMEO hired to work within their programs informed their organizational culture and shaped the narrative they presented to youth, the schools, and communities because youth leaders were living representations of the values and goals of the organization itself (Clandinin, 2013; Czarniawska, 1997). As a result, RMEO leaders looked for applicants who either shared a cultural or socio-economic background with Latinx youth, came from the same community, or were former youth participants within RMEO programs themselves. Thus, Ranch Mountain leaders brought in staff who were genuinely interested in working with youth and/or giving back to their community, who could relate to youth on multiple levels, and who believed in the mission of the organization, contributing to the creation of a welcoming and supportive environment for youth.

The above descriptions provide insight into how RMEO leaders not only attempted to maintain their organizational culture, but how they tried to ensure their programs were staffed by youth workers who could: relate to Latinx youth on multiple levels; had an authentic interest in working with, supporting, and encouraging students from underserved communities; and were

dedicated to motivating students in any way possible. Yet, despite administrators best efforts, and youth worker's stated interest in working with and supporting the development of youth, they were not all successful as frontline staff or effective in building relationships with participants. Rather, high quality youth workers that stood out to Latinx participants due to the care they demonstrated, their ability to form connections, and serve as mentors that participants looked to for advice, were very difficult to come by and retain long-term. When they were brought into the organization, youth workers who were successful at building authentic caring relationships with youth, such as Emilia and Tito, often shared common characteristics.

Tito and Emilia, whom participants trusted and described as mentors, shared a few common characteristics, including: a commitment to and concern for the well-being of youth; an approachable, "down to earth" and easy-going personality; a willingness to engage in conversation and actively listen to youth; and providing a model self-love and academic success that encourage youth to be true to themselves, embrace their culture, and value their language. Due to these shared characteristics, Latinx youth looked up to Tito and Emilia, and often described them as trustworthy individuals who truly cared for youth (Sergio), as genuine people who were "down to earth" and "kept it real" with students (Joaquin), and as supportive and helpful individuals that were available to assist participants when necessary (Kimberly). Both adults also shared a cultural and linguistic background with participants, and came from the same communities, allowing them to better understand student and community strengths, the school environment, and the concerns youth brought with them, while giving them a solid foundation from which to build authentic caring relationships. Although this is a brief overview of the characteristics Emilia and Tito shared that helped them build authentic caring relationships with youth, it provides insight into how participants viewed and interacted with adults they had strong

connections with. A deeper exploration of these characteristics is provided a bit later, for now, it should be noted that with youth leaders like Tito and Emilia working at ENGAGE, youth were provided affirming messages that helped them feel capable of achieving their goals.

     With Ranch Mountain leaders consciously recruiting, hiring, and retaining staff that authentically cared for working with and supporting youth, participants were provided messages of support from staff that encouraged them to believe in themselves and pursue their dreams. Thus, students like Sergio, Kimberly, and Joaquin, explicitly stated the program and staff made them feel supported, encouraged, and motivated to "dream big" and believe in themselves. For instance, while reflecting upon the ways in which ENGAGE youth workers had supported her, Kimberly, an 11th grade student who was a star wrestler in the district, explained "the program [and Tito] kind of helped me open (slight pause), not kind of, but it *really* [her emphasis] did help me open my eyes and see what I really wanted [for my future]." Similarly, Sergio, an ENGAGE participant in the 12th grade, told me he believed he could achieve his goals because of "the people supporting me. The program leaders telling me I 'can do it' and everything like that. Encouraging me, basically." Joaquin, the 12th grade participant who attributed his confidence in his ability to one day become a doctor to the ENGAGE staff, elaborated upon the sentiments expressed by Kimberly and Sergio when he explained:

     what they've done is that they've encouraged me, (slight pause), to step out of my

     comfort zone. And that encouraged me to come out and not be so negative and be like, "I

     can do this, and this. But it's only a matter of time before I can do this [other] thing" …

     the leaders tell you "you can do everything that you want, it's just a matter of time".

As a whole, these participant responses demonstrate the messages of support Latinx youth were receiving from youth leaders within ENGAGE; messages that both encouraged them to get

involved in the program, and helped them develop their confidence in their capacities to achieve their future goals. Similar to way youth responded to home pedagogies, youth leaders who authentically cared for youth helped motivate them to feel like they could achieve anything they wanted in life and encouraged them to embrace their differences and love themselves. These messages contributed to Latinx youth's creation of counter-spaces within select interest-based labs in which they could explore and develop their racial identity.

Creating a Welcoming Environment: Flexible and Informal Structure of ENGAGE

Beyond the messages of support Latinx youth received directly from the youth workers leading ENGAGE, the flexible, informal and welcoming environment they intentionally provided sent additional messages of support that allowed participants to take ownership of spaces and made them feel like they belonged. According to Denise, the COO of Ranch Mountain, ENGAGE was purposely structured as an open-door program without minimum attendance requirements in order to be flexible and accommodating to high school student's busy schedules, lives, and interests (Field Notes, 11/17). As a result, participants could come and go as necessary, stay as long as they wanted, and take part in any lab that was of interest to them each day of the week. A stark contrast to the rigidity and formality of their traditional school day.

Along with the flexibility afforded to students, ENGAGE staff provided Latinx youth with an "informal" welcoming environment that was "open to **anybody** of all races, colors, languages" and offered a "comfortable setting where they [students] could feel like 'oh, hey, we can communicate. We can ask questions…[and] have fun and be happy" (Maverick). Unlike traditional classrooms, within ENGAGE's interest-based labs such as the cosmetology, gardening, and weight room labs, Latinx youth were given the opportunity to take control of the space, communicate openly with each other, build relationships, and be themselves. According to

Sergio, who was mentioned earlier, the structure of ENGAGE, along with the fact that "they're

accepting [of] everybody…brings people closer because we're in the same environment, doing

the same thing…trying to accomplish the same goal basically" (Interview, 3/18). As a result, the

flexibility to move about the program freely; it's informal structure; and the opportunity to create

counter-spaces within interest-based labs where they could engage in open dialogue and form

relationships, not only made ENGAGE welcoming for Latinx youth, but made them feel as if

they belonged in the space and could make it their own "because nothing is really forced upon

you" (Veronica interview, 3/18). In other words, the flexibility of ENGAGE and it's informal

structure provided Latinx youth with the opportunity to make the program their own.

As has been shown, the focus on providing a flexible, informal environment, as well as

RMEO's efforts to recruit, hire, and retain employees who shared a background with Latinx

youth and had an "authentic" commitment to supporting them, provided Latinx participants with

messages of hope and support. As a result of their participation in ENGAGE, much like the

messages from home pedagogies, Latinx youth were motivated to dream big, encouraged to love

themselves and believe in their capacities to achieve their future goals, and provided with adult

role models who were not only genuinely committed to their achievement but served as counter-

stories of success they could follow. In addition, Latinx youth participants were afforded the

opportunity to build relationships, engage in conversation, and create their own "counter-spaces"

wherein they could "be themselves" without fear of repercussion. However, these features were

being lost as Ranch Mountain was pressured to focus on offering formal academic labs that more

closely resembled traditional school environments in response to the economic context in L.A.

Navigating Pressure From the Funding Context: Changes Within ENGAGE

At the time of data collection, Ranch Mountain Educational Organization was experiencing pressure from, and in the midst of changes in response to, the economic context in greater Los Angeles County and the competitive national funding market for community-based organizations. Since 1980, as mentioned in the site description provided in Chapter 3, the redevelopment and gentrification of greater Los Angeles county has contributed to the increased cost of living, driving up the price of rent, homes, food, utilities, and transportation, while wages have remained low in comparison (Nicolaides, 2019). Combined, these neoliberal changes have largely driven the working-class Mexican(American) and Latinx population out of the East Side of L.A. towards suburban communities further east in the San Gabriel Valley and Inland Empire, where they were once restricted from living in (Nicolaides, 2004, 2019). Underlying the transformation of the physical and imaginary landscape of the East Side are neoliberal aligned reforms to education policy, housing, and economic development all of which promote individualization, meritocracy, competition, and consumerism (Lipman, 2011a, 2011b; Soja, 2014). Within this larger socio-economic environment, community-based educational spaces have similarly been constrained and changed by the neoliberal and paternalistic economic context they exist within as costs of operation including wages and supplies have risen alongside the cost of living; changes we can understand as directly tied to the gentrification, demographic shifts, increased cost of living, and rising wages throughout the city (Baldridge, 2014, 2019; Medina, Baldridge, & Wiggins, 2020; Lipman, 2011a).

According to Michelle, the program manager for Ranch Mountain, the rising operational costs (i.e. cost of supplies, increases in minimum wage) and stagnant funding amounts, along with grant requirements to "demonstrate impact" through the narrow measures of academic

outcomes (USDOE, 2014), constrained Ranch Mountain's flexibility and forced administrators to be more strategic in their decision-making and use of funds. She shared:

> soooo, the grant funds that we go after are at a fixed amount, and that fixed amount, especially for federal grants, has not (her emphasis) changed. But, the minimum wage has gone up exponentially in the last few years and currently our frontline staff are at 12 dollars an hour. And, the pot of money we have to work with is the pot of money we have to work with (her emphasis). So, as the funding [grants] has remained stagnant and our costs of operation go up, we're having to do more with less because we're continuously trying to improve the quality [of programming]. We don't want to do…less, but we're having to be more strategic with staffing costs and other rising costs.

As a result of the economic context, throughout the year I conducted observations at ENGAGE, Ranch Mountain administrators and site coordinators would meet at their main office on a weekly basis. At these meetings they would provide updates on individual programs, as well as discuss and problem-solve issues the organization and individual programs were facing. Topics discussed ranged from upcoming events for each site, staffing needs, and professional development planning, yet, the topic that came up most frequently was how they might navigate the various issues that arose from the funding context, including the rising cost of operations due to increases in minimum wage and supplies, the stagnant funding amount of their grants, and the constraints these factors placed on their capacity to offer holistic programming. The strategic decisions made to navigate the economic context contributed to a narrow focus on academic support within ENGAGE, making it appear "more like regular school" in the eyes of youth.

Due to the issues I heard RMEO leaders talk about regarding funding and the economic context, I made sure to ask them if and how they believed the funding context was shaping the

work of the organization broadly, and their own work specifically. In response to this question,

Denise, the chief operations officer (COO) of Ranch Mountain pointed to the rising cost of living

and increases in minimum wage as factors she "theorized" were making it harder to recruit, and

retain, high quality youth workers. She explained:

> looking at the minimum wage increase[s] that are gonna [sic] happen (*slight*
>
> *pause, nervous laugh)*, they're scheduled to happen statewide every January. And
>
> then, Los Angeles is coming into 15 dollars [minimum wage]. So, the city is
>
> doing it first, then it's the county, then it's the state, **but** [*her emphasis*] we **have**
>
> to keep up with the city because otherwise, we will run into staff recruitment
>
> issues. We will not be able to hold onto our staff because they'll drive out a little
>
> more for higher wages.

In the above example, Denise clearly articulates how the rising costs of operation (wages,

supplies, health care, and transportation), places pressure on RMEO and creates various

problems they must address, including staff retention issues, that constrain the work of the

organization. She explained that without increasing their wages to match the minimum wage of

gentrified L.A. County, youth leaders "may drive out a little more for higher wages…even

though their personal mission may be aligned with our [organizational] mission [because]…

we've all got bills to pay." Here, Denise's response shows the ties between the rising cost of

living and the larger neoliberal project that drive spatial changes across Los Angeles to the rising

costs of operations and changes the organization was undergoing. Denise believed this context

not only pressured RMEO to increase their wages to address staff instability, but considering the

stagnant amount of funding received from grants, compounded the pressure and further

constrained RMEOs ability to provide holistic programs (Baldridge, 2018; Fusco, 2012; Fusco, Lawrence, Matloss-Nieves, & Ramos, 2013).

RMEO administrators argued the issues and pressure they faced due to the rising costs of operation, that were tied to the rising cost of living and gentrification in the surrounding county, were magnified by the stagnant amount of funding they received from their grants (Baldridge, 2018; Fusco, 2012; Fusco, Lawrence, Matloss-Nieves, & Ramos, 2013; Lipman, 2011a). On this issue, Denise expressed that the stagnant funds constrained what RMEO was able to do largely because granting agencies expected them to continue serving students at the same rate, year after year, without increases to the grants despite the aforementioned rising costs of living and operation. As a result, Denise admitted Ranch Mountain leaders regularly discussed how they could best navigate the limited funding they had, as she told me:

> that's a question we increasingly, and more frequently, asked ourselves when
>
> [our] funding remained stagnant for seven years. Actually, for ten years. Ten
>
> years ago, we were receiving the same dollar amount that we were receiving last
>
> year, to serve the same number of students for the same number of hours, same
>
> number of days per year, at the same high level of quality. So, having to do all of
>
> that while (slight pause) health benefit costs were increasing, minimum wage is
>
> increasing, and just in general everything is right? …. So, it's been tough.

Given the constraints Denise described above, RMEO administrators were forced to do more with less and be more strategic in their use of funds in order to ensure programs like ENGAGE continued to operate and support students as best as possible. However, their strategic decision-making led to increasingly narrow programming provided to students within ENGAGE as funds were redistributed to cover rising costs. Maverick, the former site coordinator at Rose City high

school, recalled that RMEO administrators had reduced his yearly programming budget for ENGAGE by nearly 1/3 over the past few years in order to "…move funds to different areas that needed the money," including staff pay, sick and disability leave, and cost of supplies. Chief Executive Officer Ben explained the rising costs "really kind of squeezed" the organization and forced them to shift money around to "pay individuals to be out there" and work with youth. Though these decisions to shift funds were made to off-set increased costs and stagnant funds, they reduced the budget for ENGAGE forcing coordinators to close the majority of holistic, interest-based labs that made them popular with youth to focus on offering the core components required by grants, namely academic support, that would give them the best chance of getting re-funded. With these changes, ENGAGE not only lost many of the features that made them unique, and supported youth's exploration of a racial identity, it became more like school in their eyes.

"More Like School": Youth Understanding of ENGAGE Changes and Deficit Messages

Considering the external pressure from the economic context Ranch Mountain was experiencing, and the strategic changes made to focus on academic labs in ENGAGE, youth came to perceive the program as becoming more like their regular school day. During interviews, participants like William mentioned they believed the program was becoming more "stiff and strict" in nature, and "not as much of a social environment as it used to be," due to the elimination of interest-based labs and a narrow focus on academic development (Baldridge, 2019; Kwon, 2013). Adding to participants' perception of ENGAGE as reflective of the subtractive school environment, and it's inherent deficit-based stereotypes of Latinxs, was the intentional alignment between the program and Rose City high school.

Olivia Mae, a former youth participant and the ENGAGE coordinator for Rose City, believed the fact that the program was "very intertwined with the school day, the way it ran"

contributed to youth's perception of the program as becoming more academic. When asked to clarify, Olivia Mae told me students believed ENGAGE and the school were one and the same because the program was hosted on Rose City's campus, school day teachers were hired to run academic labs, and the rules/expectations they followed were the same across both sites. Ben the CEO, added that the very design and structure of ENGAGE was aligned to the yearly goals and initiatives Rose City HS had for students due to the belief that "our strongest programs are when we are collaborating with them…they know their school best, they're the leadership, we want to know what they're doing and how we can support it." To this end, at the start of the 2017-2018 academic year (AY), ENGAGE was entering the last year of a 5-year grant which weighed heavily on their design of ENGAGE for the year.

Facing an unknown funding future after the 2017-2018AY, Ranch Mountain leaders including Maverick (former site coordinator), Michelle (program manager), and later Olivia Mae (site coordinator), along with Rose City HS's administration, were most concerned with offering labs that could be both sustainable once funding ended and help the school meet their goals of increasing graduation rates and post-secondary preparation. As a result, while collecting data five of the nine labs ENGAGE offered were aimed at supporting students academically through subject-specific labs that were run by school day teachers and general tutoring/computer labs staffed by youth leaders. In addition, four interest-based labs were offered that either lead to a trade-based career (cosmetology, cooking) or supported healthy living habits (weight room and gardening). Though lab numbers were nearly even, youth said it was very different to past years.

When participants were asked about labs they attended most frequently, the majority made it a point to tell me ENGAGE used to offer a wider array of "fun" labs, i.e. gaming or culture clubs, that they once regularly attended because it gave them the opportunity "to be more

social" and build relationships with others. However, participants like William noticed that a majority of the social labs had been canceled and believed it occurred because they had "nothing to do with education." William explained, "I guess, in their way of thinking, um, it would draw students away from doing school [work] and finishing up their homework." Here, William demonstrates that participants were well aware of the changes ENGAGE had undergone and importantly reveals they attributed these programmatic changes to a purposeful decision to narrowly focus on academics since labs that were not explicitly educational were being canceled. Participants, thus, understood ENGAGE was becoming a strict, academic space; one that reflected and reproduced the subtractive environment and deficit-based stereotypes they faced during the school day. In their eyes, the type of labs offered and the intentional alignment with the school day, made ENGAGE feel and look "more like school" (Sergio) in the sense that it was "less comfortable" (Kimberly) and "all about education" (William).

From a critical coloniality lens, the above responses are understood as evidence that youth perceived academic labs, and by extension ENGAGE, as becoming "stiff and strict" spaces that reflected the same subtractive environment and deficit-based stereotypes of Latinxs they confronted during the school day. Scholars who have studied Latinx educational experiences remind us that schools have historically striped youth of their cultural and linguistic identities in order to Americanize, or assimilate them, into U.S society which leaves them vulnerable to academic failure (Gandara, 2010; Sanchez, 1932; Sanchez, 1995; San Miguel, 2004; Valenzuela, 1999). Similarly, they have found that when Latinx students do not feel they or their cultural background are welcomed, appreciated, valued or supported, they fail to build caring relationships and become resistance to the system of schooling as a whole (Valenzuela, 1999). Along these lines, youth's participation patterns and selective use of Spanish within

ENGAGE reveal they understood the strict academic labs to be reflective of subtractive schooling environments wherein Spanish was unwelcomed, used as a signifier of intellectual and linguistic deficiency, and functioned as a tool of control that made them "other" (Gandara, 2010; Donato & Hanson, 2012; Haney Lopez, 2006). As a result, youth interacted with academic labs similar to how they engaged during the school day; subtly resisting perceived subtractive spaces by avoiding and/or limiting their participation in them and selectively using Spanish in labs.

While conducting on-site observations during this study, I noticed participants would attend academic labs only when absolutely necessary to get help on assignments, gain access to computers, and/or to wait for their parents since the tutoring lab stayed open the latest. When they did attend, participants often limited their level of engagement by self-isolating (not talking, socializing), engaging superficially with teachers, and/or working quietly, due to the belief that it was the same as school. In contrast, these same participants regularly attended the more social interest-based labs (i.e. cosmetology or weight room labs) that were run by youth workers they had built authentic caring connections with because they felt comfortable being themselves and could engage in open conversation, speak their home language, and socialize with others. Youth's participation patterns show they were purposefully navigating the program to avoid labs that most closely reflected the subtractive school environment and framed them as in need of support. As such, their intentional navigation of ENGAGE is understood as a purposeful political[14] act of embodied resistance to a space where Spanish appeared to be unwelcomed and in which they felt they could not build authentic caring relationships because of the strict focus on academics. Thus, Latinx youth's decision to avoid or limit their engagement within academic

---

[14] "Political action" is informed by critical geographers' definition of "politics" as "a particular 'moment' of interaction that leads either to the establishment, change, or destruction of social order" (Lehmkuhl, 2016, p. 11).

labs that were run by school day teachers, hosted in their classroom, and in which Spanish use was avoided, were intentional choices[15] made to protect themselves from and resist spaces they believed framed them as in need of academic support due to inherent deficiencies.

Beyond their intentional navigation of ENGAGE described above, youth also embodied their resistance of deficit-messages by selectively using Spanish within ENGAGE. Their selective use of Spanish within the program demonstrates Latinx youth believed that, similar to its framing during the school day where it served as a signifier of difference and intellectual deficit, Spanish did not "belong" within "official" institutions and, thus, was "unwelcomed" or prohibited from being used in academic spaces. As a result, they avoided using or revealing their ability to speak Spanish within academic labs as much as possible, the same way they hid their abilities or limited their use of Spanish within the school day classroom. In so doing, Latinx youth approached the use of Spanish within academic labs as if it were still a signifier of difference that did not belong. The only exception to the limited use of Spanish within academic labs that I observed was when Latinx youth spoke Spanish to offer assistance to non-English speakers and/or recently (im)migrated students. As such, Spanish served as a resource to help others, which occurred infrequently in academic labs, but was regularly seen in the counter-spaces youth constructed within the weight room and cosmetology lab. In addition to its function as a resource, Spanish would play an integral part in identifying and creating counter-spaces and be used as a bridge to forming authentic connections with peers and adults.

Given the external pressure Ranch Mountain experienced from the economic context, and the strategic decisions made that led to a narrow focus on academic development within

---

[15] To be clear, this does not constitute an oppositional culture as theorized by Fordham and Ogbu (1986), for Latinx youth's decisions were not negatively impacted by fictive kinship groups and they continued to attend these labs when they needed the support or wanted direct help from their teachers.

ENGAGE, participants were exposed to deficit-based messages that framed them as in need of academic support due to inherent deficiencies and as outsiders whose language/culture did not belong. Within this environment, youth's awareness of the changes ENGAGE had undergone, and perception of the deficit-messages it reflected, informed how they navigated the program and embodied resistance. Yet, ENGAGE was experienced in multiple ways and simultaneously sent Latinx youth affirming messages across various avenues, as seen in the next section.

Components of ENGAGE that Facilitate Exploration of Racial Identity

During the year that I conducted data collection, I would spend 3 days per week on campus during ENGAGE hours to conduct observations and check-in with my study participants. Whenever I was on campus, I knew it was almost guaranteed that I would find the majority of my study participants within one of two locations, the cosmetology lab or the weight room. Curious to understand why they spent the majority of their time in these spaces, I asked participants about this during our one-on-one interviews. Based on their responses, it appeared youth's participation patterns were informed by three inter-related factors. The first was simply that the focus of the lab, whether cosmetology or the weight room, matched their interests. Second, the labs were free and helped them develop a skill or healthy living habit. And, last, the labs were led by engaging youth leaders who genuinely cared for and were committed to youth. Thus, Latinx youth gravitated towards interest-based labs because as Charles, who regularly attended the weight room, stated "it's free and the mentors were cool."

With the importance of individual youth leaders in mind, and considering the informal and flexible environment within ENGAGE that allowed participants to freely navigate the program, the next sections identify and describe the characteristics of ENGAGE that supported youth's exploration of their racial identity, including: an opportunity to form caring relationships

with adults; the ability to engage in honest conversations with adults and peers; and the role of counter-spaces of resistance.

Keeping it Real: The Role of Authentic Caring Relationships with Adults

Throughout data collection, Latinx youth consistently identified Tito and Emilia as outstanding mentors they had formed a strong relationship with due to their ability to relate to youth and the care they demonstrated in supporting students. On the surface, Tito and Emilia, who ran the weight room and cosmetology lab respectively, appeared to be vastly different from one another in their approach to working with youth, however they shared many characteristics and qualities that made them stand out in the eyes of participants.

Based on interview responses, and informal follow ups, the characteristics Emilia and Tito shared included: an commitment to youth as evidenced by their "affection of caring" (Kimberly); a "down to earth," easy going personality that made them approachable; a willingness and availability to engage in honest conversations around controversial topics such as race, racism, and (im)migration; and the self-love they modeled that encouraged youth to be true to themselves and embrace their cultural and linguistic differences. Traits that helped them form caring relationships with youth while providing affirming messages that made youth feel welcomed in the program, encouraged them to dream big and love themselves, and supported the creation of counter-spaces where they could be themselves and explore their racial identity.

The first characteristics of caring adults that youth identified was a genuine commitment to the success of youth. Although participants did not explicitly state Tito and Emilia were committed to them, their descriptions of the care and support they demonstrated for youth shows participants believed they truly cared for and were committed to their well-being and success. For example, when Sergio, a 12th grade participant, was asked to describe why he was able to

"open up to" Tito, he stated that "it took me a while because I got trust issues [sic]. And, I'm not really the type of person that would reach out to someone first, I would just stay to myself. So, when someone reaches out to me like [Tito], it shows a lot." In this short response, Sergio acknowledges that he not only has self-described trust issues, he "is not the type to reach out" which makes it difficult for him to build relationships with others. As a result, when someone goes out of their way to get to know him or consistently offers assistance, despite his seemingly rude personality, Sergio is left with a lasting impression that shows him they are committed and truly care enough about him to make themselves available. This is evident when Sergio explains he built a connection with Tito because "he just kept pushing, and like, not giving up [on me]. He could always tell, like, when someone's down or like someone's not okay. So, he just kept pushing. It was like 'you know, if you ever need anything, I'm *always* here [his emphasis].'"

Underlying Sergio's response is a belief that youth leaders truly care for and are concerned about participants' immediate well-being and future success, an idea that Kimberly echoed when she described her experiences with Tito. In Kimberly's eyes, the "affection of caring" that youth leaders like Tito and Emilia displayed through small, everyday interactions such as asking "oh, how are you and stuff like that," made Latinx youth "feel like you actually are (slight pause), like you're important or you actually mean something" to them. As such, the care and commitment that Emilia and Tito displayed via their persistent engagement and presence, informal check-ins, and care they showed for participants, made youth feel they could trust in and be comfortable around these youth workers. Combined, these experiences facilitated the formation of relationships built on genuine care with Tito and Emilia; connections that would later support youth's exploration of their racial identity.

The second characteristic Emilia and Tito shared that facilitated the formation of care-based relationships with youth was their friendly personality and "approachable demeanor" (Mark). According to participant descriptions, Emilia and Tito were both "down to earth" individuals who "didn't take [themselves] too seriously," and were truly invested in getting to know students on an individual basis. For instance, when I asked Jasmin, a 10th grade student, to describe what drew her to the program, and cosmetology specifically, she began by pointing to her interest in learning to do make up and explained "it might help me in my future career as a singer." She then added that she continued attending the cosmetology lab because of Emilia and the strong connection she had formed with her. She elaborated, "so, I ended up joining and then Ms. Marquez was there, and she would talk about how her life was and all of that, and like (slight pause, thinking), the bond we have between all of us, like, I feel connected to her."

It is clear that Jasmin valued the connection she had formed with Emilia and felt it contributed to her continued participation in the cosmetology lab. Additionally, Jasmin implied that Emilia's personality, and her honesty when discussing and sharing her life experiences with participants, helped Jasmin get to know and develop a trust in her. This is seen when Jasmin identifies Emilia's fun and approachable personality as one of the reasons she felt connected to her, "she acts like us sometimes. Like, sometimes (laughs heartily) we can be in a moody way [sluggish, bad mood], and she'll find a way to make us happy again. Like, she acts like she's our age." Here, Jasmin explains how Emilia's ability to relate to youth, what she describes as acting "like she's our age," helps her motivate them and form care-based relationships with them.

In the descriptions of Emilia's demeanor above, we are given a sense of her fun and out-going personality, her seemingly carefree attitude, and willingness to take herself lightly, all of which helped her motivate, build trust, and form authentic caring relationships with youth. In

much the same way, the descriptions of Tito's personality revealed student's viewed him as someone who "looks happy" and has "got a very approachable demeanor and is chill" (Charles), which made him "easy to talk to" (Kimberly). Tito's down to earth, chill demeanor helped ease student's nerves when they entered the weight room, while his happy and approachable personality made it easier for them to engage him in conversation. The approachable personality and demeanor of these adults helped them build relationships with youth based on genuine care.

The genuine commitment of youth leaders to the success and development of participants, along with their friendly personality and approachable demeanor, contributed to their supportive interactions with youth within a welcoming environment. Together, these characteristics helped Tito and Emilia form care-based relationships with youth within a flexible and welcoming space, where participants could engage in honest discussion around race, racism and current events, conversations that contributed to the exploration of their racial identity.

Opportunity to Engage In Honest Conversation: Facilitating Exploration of a Racial Identity

Due to the informal structure of ENGAGE that allowed youth to freely navigate labs and socialize with their peers, along with the presence of adults who genuinely cared for and were committed to their success, participants had the chance to build authentic caring relationship with youth workers who were willing to engage all participants in open, honest, and respectful conversations around race, racism, and current events. According to Joaquin, being able to hold conversations allowed youth to "see a lot of people that have different points of views. To see how they see it…which is kind of cool because [it can] alter certain views of…society and all that stuff." Such opportunities to engage in conversation contributed to the exploration of their own ideas and racial identity; opportunities largely unable to them at school or across their daily

lives, making ENGAGE a unique space where they could express their opinions and present their authentic self in conversation as they explored their racial identity.

Towards the end of the 2017-2018 AY, I interviewed Veronica who explained that she had started attending ENGAGE more regularly over the past year because of how much fun she was having in cosmetology and the caring relationship she had built with Ms. Marquez (Emilia). Curious to know what made the lab fun, I asked Veronica to provide more detail about why she felt connected to Emilia, to which she replied:

> Well, 'cause [sic] she is *so* open herself [her emphasis]. She was just talkative
> and, like, she wasn't (slight pause) she didn't have that *vibe* [her emphasis], you
> know, that was like 'oh, you can't talk to her,' or anything like that…she talks to
> us about anything, like *anything* she wants to [her emphasis]

Veronica identifies having the ability to engage in honest conversations with Emilia, and the commitment she has to help students, as factors that allowed them to build a relationship based on care. She specifically states that Emilia encouraged conversations because she was talkative and "didn't have that vibe…[where] 'you can't talk to her,'" meaning youth felt they could openly talk to her about anything. Veronica's response demonstrates how youth worker's model practices and/or qualities they hope to instill in participants, which are then emulated by youth themselves once an authentic caring relationship is established. For instance, in the cosmetology lab, Emilia's honesty and willingness to talk about her life experiences, along with her energetic personality and attempt to get to know the Latinx womxn in her lab, led Veronica and her peers to feel safe, welcomed, and comfortable enough to talk about anything in their life.

Similar to the experiences Veronica shared regarding the importance of conversations to forming authentic relationships, Joaquin explained that he truly enjoyed and felt comfortable talking to Tito about his life, goals, opinions, and problems he might have, because:

he's not like "I've heard it all before. All teenagers have the same problems," and all that. No. What he does is that he *listens* [his emphasis] to you genuinely, and what he does is offer you advice. He doesn't tell you what to do, he just gives you options and opinions.

According to Joaquin, the willingness of youth workers to listen to participants and the respect they showed towards their voice/opinions, encouraged youth to engage Tito and Emilia in conversation and seek them out when they needed help. Such opportunities are largely absent to youth in school and across their lives, but are very important to the development and exploration of a racial identity (Pacheco, 2018; Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000; Vygotsky, 1983).

Thus, within the informal structure of ENGAGE and through honest conversations with others who share their experiences, youth are afforded the opportunity to explore, question, and redefine their opinions and views, informing their racial identity (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). More specifically, the spontaneous conversation groups that formed within the counter-spaces, based upon authentic caring relationships allowed youth the opportunity to informally "situate their own lived experiences in new historicized understandings" (Gutierrez, 2008, p. 153). With the understanding that "identities permeate structures, activities, practices, and discourses" (Pacheco, 2018, p. 107), youth explored their identity in ENGAGE by voicing their opinions, listening to diverse perspectives that challenged or extended their thinking, and freely debating with their peers and youth leaders, all without the fear of being judged or reprimanded for having a voice. More succinctly, Mark, a 12th grade participant, believed the opportunity to

engage in open conversations with adults youth had established a care-based relationships with, directly contributed to participants' exploration of their racial identity because "you learn about who you are by talking with youth leaders." In other words, youth learned about themselves when they could share about themselves, when they could listen and be exposed to diverse perspectives that challenged their ideas, and when they could explore their own opinions and values freely in conversation with others (Pacheco, 2018).

As has been shown, the flexible and informal structure of ENGAGE, in conjunction with the willingness and availability of youth leaders to engage in honest discussion around race, racism, and current events, were highly important not only for the formation of authentic care-based relationships with youth, but were equally important for youth's exploration of their racial identity development. In short, the opportunity to engage in conversation with adults and peers allowed Latinx youth to explore, question, and (re)define their opinions/beliefs, while helping them learn about themselves and their cultural identity in the process (Pacheco, 2018).

Counter-Spaces of Resistance: Models of Self-Love and a Space to Reveal "Authentic" Self

The third characteristic of ENGAGE that supported and contributed to youth's exploration of their racial identity was a combination of (a) the flexibility of ENGAGE that allowed them to create counter-spaces of resistance where they could be themselves and (b) the presence of adult youth leaders who provided models of self-love. Within counter-spaces, youth were encouraged to be themselves by Emilia and Tito, both of whom provided models of self-love through their embrace of their own cultural and linguistic differences. Latinx youth revealed Tito and Emilia both encouraged participants to embrace their differences and love themselves for who they are by modeling and practicing this behavior themselves. For instance, Jasmin explained that in cosmetology Emilia frequently reminded participants of the beauty of their

culture and the benefits of speaking Spanish, as she said "in the lab, my teacher [Emilia] always says 'speaking other languages gives us a better benefit, of getting a better job,'" and, if we also, like, if you know two languages, that's even better for you." In using Spanish and actively including their culture, Emilia and Tito showed youth it was okay to be yourselves and their culture/language was valued and welcome, encouraging them to explore their racial identity.

Towards the end of the data collection process, while conducting campus observations, I began to notice that youth leaders participants had previously identified as genuinely caring, and whom they had built relationships with, not only provided affirming messages verbally but often sent said messages by modeling behaviors, practices, and mindsets they hoped to instill in youth. More specifically, Tito and Emilia modeled affirming messages, such as love yourself and embrace your cultural and linguistic differences as a resource/benefit for the future, by being honest and authentic with youth about their own experiences and in their use of Spanish to communicate and express themselves as seen above. Through these efforts, Tito and Emilia echoed affirming messages youth received from home pedagogies that encouraged them to be proud of who they are and to view their ability to speak Spanish as an asset for the future.

To be clear, Latinx youth never explicitly stated Emilia and Tito's actions modeled self-love to them, however throughout my observations, both adults were observed speaking Spanish to help others or using colloquial Spanish terms to emphasize points. In addition, both youth workers were observed continually modeling self-love by discouraging youth from adopting deficit perspectives. On more than one occasion I saw Tito motivating discouraged youth by saying, "I don't want to hear that negative language in here. Don't say you can't. You can. We just have to get you there" (Field Observation, 2/2018). These observations were reflected youth responses, particularly in descriptions of why they built care based relationships with Tito and

Emilia, which revealed adults were modeling behaviors that sent youth affirming messages. For

example, when I asked Jasmin to describe why she felt connected to Emilia, she explained:

> I really like her personality and everything about her. Like, I guess you could say
>
> she's unique, like, people who are older than us, they don't act like us. They don't
>
> like to open up [share their lives] a lot. And, she's just trustworthy and she's
>
> always there to listen to us and everything like that.

In this description, Jasmin identifies Emilia's personality, her trustworthiness, and her

willingness to "act like us" as factors that drew her to Ms. Marquez and helped them build a

connection. For Jasmin, the fact that Emilia acts like participants in her interactions with them is

particularly important as it shows that Emilia is always true to herself. In letting her personality

show when she opens up to students and acts like them, Emilia reveals who she really is. By

being authentic and honest with youth she shows them that it is okay to be yourself, even if it

means being silly, childish, or speaking a different language. In cosmetology, since "it's not like

a strict class" (Veronica), youth were encouraged to be themselves, talk in their home language,

and build relationships with one another, all while learning about and developing cosmetology

skills. As Jasmin succinctly explained, "Ms. Marquez, she gave us a (pause), like, she showed us

that right here we could just be ourselves. Like, without nobody judging us and everything."

In addition to modeling self-love by being true to herself in her interactions with

participants, Emilia encouraged youth to love themselves for who they are. For example, at the

end of the 2017 fall semester, Emilia and the Latinx womxn in the cosmetology lab decided to

showcase what they had learned by hosting a mini workshop and make-up competition for the

school community. At the end of the event, participants presented the models they worked with

and a winner was selected based on technique/skill demonstrated. As Emilia ended the event by

thanking the womxn in her lab and expressing how proud she was of them, she reminded them that they were "all beautiful and don't *need* make up [her emphasis]. Cosmetology just highlights your features, the beauty comes from you" (Field Notes, 12/18). In so doing, Emilia reminded them that to love themselves for who they are and remain true to themselves. In this way, Emilia and Tito modeled self-love for youth by being caring and embracing their culture and language, while their use of Spanish showed youth that it was "okay to be yourself" and encouraged them to embrace their differences, all of which made youth feel more comfortable to engage in the lab, build relationships, and reveal their true selves. Thus, the use of Spanish by caring adults sent participants affirming messages that encouraged them to embrace their language and take pride themselves. In addition, adult's use of Spanish revealed the functions of language as a resource, a signifier of potential to create space, and a bridge to form relationships, which youth emulated.

Functions of Language as a Resource, Sign, and Bridge

With the model provided by Tito and Emilia, who both embraced their ability to speak Spanish and utilized it as both a resource to help others and a bridge to form connections, youth were observed emulating this behavior and embracing their ability to speak Spanish[16]. For Latinx youth, hearing Spanish used within ENGAGE, specifically in cosmetology and weight room, showed them their culture and language were not only welcomed in the space, but served various functions as a resource, a signifier of potential, and a bridge to forming authentic relationships. More specifically, considering the deficit-based framing of Spanish during the school day and their limited use of Spanish in academic labs as described earlier, observing Tito and Emilia use

---

[16] Please note, 11 of 12 youth participants were native Spanish speakers. One participant did not speak fluent Spanish, but was learning it at school and on her own. With this in mind, the following section highlights youth who regularly spoke Spanish. Yet, as was discussed in Ch. 3, even those who did not regularly speak Spanish were often assumed to, and thus, the issues and benefits discussed here apply to them too.

Spanish in the labs to help those who could not speak English and as a means of building relationships, showed youth that these labs were a unique space where they could be themselves.

In the cosmetology lab and weight room, Emilia and Tito most frequently utilized Spanish to engage with youth who either could not speak English or to engage with youth they had established a strong relationship with. When I asked Mark, a participant in 12ᵗʰ grade, about Tito's use of Spanish in the weight room he explained Tito used Spanish to help others, like "if there's a student that only speaks Spanish comes by, he'll teach them only in Spanish, because, you know, he knows the language too. So, he'll be teaching them every single thing, how he would teach me, but it would be in Spanish." Youth in cosmetology provided similar examples of Emilia, describing her use of Spanish as "to help [them] understand what they're learning" (Jasmin) and "if they [youth] need help, she speaks it" (Riley). Adults use of Spanish as a resource to support/teach Spanish speaking students was noticed and emulated by youth in labs.

Considering the model that Tito and Emilia provided in their use of Spanish as a resource to help others, youth were observed emulating this behavior and readily offering support to non-English speaking students in the labs. This is exemplified by Veronica and her description of the ways Spanish allows her to help others in the community. She explains, "last semester, there was a transfer student that only spoke Spanish, so I was able to, like, help her a bit." When asked to clarify why she offered to support an unknown student, Veronica quickly responded "mainly because, like, if I were that student I would want somebody to help me." Veronica's response shows she is able to empathize with non-English speakers and understands the struggle they may potentially face when participating in a program that uses a language they may not have a full grasp of. This use of Spanish as a resource was echoed by multiple participants including Charles, an 11ᵗʰ grade student, who told me "it's [Spanish] allowed me to talk to, like, people

that can't speak English. That only speak Spanish, you know. And it's [basically] helped me, to help them." Across the responses, youth's use of Spanish to help others, as modeled by adults, is evidence of their comfort in counter-spaces and shows language functions as a resource to help.

In addition to using language as a resource, my observations of the cosmetology and weight room labs revealed language functioned as a bridge for Tito and Emilia to build care-based relationships with youth. Their use of Spanish to engage with Spanish-speaking youth, as well as their use of Spanish slang and colloquial terms to punctuate statements or provide emphasis in conversations, helped participants feel welcomed and created a sense of shared counter-space that they could control and be themselves in. For example, when describing how youth in the cosmetology lab created a sense of shared community and space, Jasmin explained:

> at the beginning, we were really shy to talk to her .... And then we got more used to being around her, and then I guess, we had a good connection afterwards, and that connection helped us understand that she speaks more than [just] English, well, Spanish too. And that gave us more [confidence], like, "oh, now we could be ourselves, we could do whatev-, we could act like us, and nobody's gonna [sic] judge us here.

Jasmin makes it clear that Emilia's use of Spanish within the cosmetology lab helped the womxn who participated in it feel more comfortable with her and within the space. As a result of this level of comfort, and the model that Emilia provided, Jasmin goes on to describe how they became more confident within the lab amounting to youth feeling free to be themselves, express their ideas, and speak Spanish without fear of being judged. Jasmin's description clearly shows that, in the eyes of participants, the use of Spanish in labs functioned as a signifier of potential to build relationships and a sign they could create counter-space where they could be themselves.

Jasmin's description of the cosmetology lab as a space where "we could be ourselves" was echoed by her peers in the lab and youth who regularly attended the weight room. Participants described these labs as spaces where they could socialize, build relationships with adults and peers, and could be themselves and talk about anything. Considering the cosmetology lab and the weight room provided youth with an opportunity to "be ourselves" they did not normally get in their school or across their daily lives, the labs can be understood as counter-spaces of resistance. A space where youth could take pride in and embrace their cultural and linguistic differences as subtle resistance to a hostile national context and subtractive schooling environment, as evidenced by their statements that they could "be ourselves." For instance, when asked what motivated her to continue attending cosmetology, Veronica simply stated "well, you could be yourself! You know, whatever characteristic you are- you have, you don't necessarily have to hide it." As such, counter-spaces youth created in labs allowed them to reveal their true selves, regardless of characteristics, and express their opinions without fear of being judged or having to "hide it," which supported their development and exploration of a racial identity (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). An identity they understood to be informed by the intersection of race, ethnicity, language, and citizenship, as seen in chapter 4.

The above responses from youth demonstrate the connections they establish with caring adults, along with the freedom to be themselves and engage in open conversation in counter-spaces, make them feel welcomed, comfortable, and confident. Within the flexible and informal counter-spaces they constructed in labs, youth were encouraged to be true to themselves, express their opinions, and embrace their cultural/linguistic differences, all of which supported the exploration of their racial identity and reinforced asset-based views of their language. Thus, youth participation in cosmetology and weight room, two labs they utilized as counter-spaces

where they were free to be themselves and regularly saw models of self-love from caring adults, revealed the various functions and benefits of their language to youth.

As can be seen, language played an important role in youth's formation of authentic relationships with caring adults, in their identification and creation of counter-space, and as an active form of resistance that revealed their "authentic" self. As such, their embrace and use of Spanish within the counter-spaces they created was a rejection of the deficit-framing of Spanish they experienced within school and throughout society. For youth would could speak Spanish, language became a form of resistance that revealed their authentic self, one they no longer felt the need to hide within the counter-spaces they established. Rather, in these spaces, the use of Spanish and embrace of their culture reinforced a love of self, the value and beauty of their culture and language, and supported the exploration of their racial identity.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have shown the ways in which youth's participation within ENGAGE contributes to their exploration of a racial identity. I described the economic context ENGAGE exists in, their internal context, and the messages youth are exposed. I also detailed the sources of these messages and the ways in which they informed how youth perceived and navigated ENGAGE. More importantly, I demonstrated how the flexible structure of ENGAGE allowed participants to form "counter-spaces," in a purposeful subtle act of resistance, that provided them with a space in which they could: form authentic caring relationships adults; engage in honest conversations around race, racism, and current events; freely utilize their home language; and "be themselves," affording them the chance to explore and develop a racial identity within a supportive space. An opportunity lost to them within traditional, subtractive schools.

A key finding was the significant role that language played in how Latinx youth established connections, claimed space, and explored their racial identity within a CBES, something that has been little studied in the literature around Latinx racialization and their participation in community-based educational spaces. For youth in this study, language served as a resource they could utilize to help others; as a signifier of potential to claim space and form counter-spaces within ENGAGE; as a bridge to building caring relationships with others; and as a subtle form of resistance to hostile contexts. As such, this study helps us better understand how language informs the ways in which Latinx youth perceive and navigate ENGAGE, and how language exists as an ever-present reminder of their unique identity. In contrast to how language functions to mark youth as intellectually deficient outsiders, this study has shown that their experience in ENGAGE reinforces home pedagogies that reframe language as a resource, a benefit, and a form of resistance, motivating participants to pursue their goals and encouraging them to always believe in and love themselves and embrace the promise, potential, and benefits of their unique racialized ethnic identity.

Chapter 7

Discussion: Youth Understandings of Race, Home Pedagogies, and Caring Relationships

Throughout this study, I identified three key findings related to Spanish-speaking Latinx youth that inform their understandings of race and racialization and the factors within a CBES that support their exploration and development of a racial identity. Findings include: 1) a deeper understanding of how Latinx youth define, understand, and experience race/racialization and, importantly, the role that language plays in both the racialization process and resistance of racist stereotypes; 2) youth's meaning making of home pedagogies as motivation, encouragement, inspiration, and resistance; and 3) how youth negotiate and experience a CBES and the factors that supports their exploration and development of a racial identity. In the following sections, I outline the main findings of this study and discuss their contributions to the field.

Youth Understand Race, Ethnicity, Language, and Citizenship Intersect to Racialize

In the process of studying Latinx youth's experience within ENGAGE and how their participation informed their racial identity development, the first finding that emerged was youth participants nuanced and complex understanding of race, racism, and racialization. As identified in chapter 4, youth were viscerally aware of vitriolic racism and xenophobia in the country because they saw and experienced them across their daily lives within national and social forms of media, from the Trump administration, and within their own school. Their experiences with racism, specifically their confrontations with racist stereotypes and the framing of Latinx populations as intellectually deficient, both of which were informed by other's perception of their language abilities, led youth to understand race as being inseparable from their ethnicity, language, and citizenship status. Further, they understood the intersection of race, ethnicity, language, and citizenship contributed to their marginalization and racialization within

educational settings. As a result, participants resisted racist stereotypes and deficit-based frames by using them as motivation to succeed in order to disprove them, being selective of their use of Spanish, and embracing their culture and language in social settings.

The finding around youth understandings of race and racialization helps addresses my first research question regarding how youth understand and negotiate their racial identities, as one cannot understand how youth negotiate and develop a racial identity without first grasping how they understand the concept of race and the process of racialization. *From a critical coloniality lens, the above finding reveals that, as scholars, we cannot understand, study, or theorize Latinx racialization without considering the intersection of race with language in the process.* Participants in this study articulated experiences where language served as a signifier of difference that marked them as "other" and racialized them within school and/or society. Youth such as Joaquin, Riley, Sergio and Angela shared instances where their (assumed) language abilities made them the target of overt racism in public (being called derogatory names, profiling) and institutional racism (school practices, tracking). Similarly, Joaquin, Jasmin, Charles, and Will shared experiences where their assumed language abilities led others to perceive them as (im)migrant "outsiders" who do not belong within the U.S, as evidenced by their description of stereotypes about Spanish speakers in the U.S.

The critical coloniality lens also demonstrates that youth's understanding of the connections between race, ethnicity, language, and citizenship, and specifically their awareness that Spanish was tied to conceptions of citizenship, was informed by the international context and national narrative around Latinx populations at the time of data collection. A critical coloniality framework calls for the inclusion of the international context in an analysis of national and/or local issues due to the belief that the treatment of colonies at the international

levels reveals how internal colonial subjects (Latinxs) are viewed and treated (Grosfoguel, 2003, 2007; Mignolo, 2012; Quijano, 2000). As such, when looking at youth experiences with race, racism, and racialization in the U.S, an eye must also be kept to the international issues or actions of the U.S. to better understand the framing, treatment, acceptance, and racialization of Latinxs. An eye towards international action the U.S takes is important because it directly informs how Latinx populations within the U.S. are framed in national media, their level of acceptance within society, and their treatment within social institutions. Considering Latinx youth's understandings of race and racialization are informed by their lived experiences with racism, as well as by televised news media and social platforms, knowing how Latin American countries, and their populations, are framed can help us contextualize youth experiences and understandings in the U.S. Additionally, understanding issues Latinx populations are associated with in media, such as (im)migration, socialism, poverty, and deviancy, can help us understand the stereotypes that might exist that inform youth's experiences with racism and racialization.

To this end, while conducting data collection, multiple notable international events related to Latin America countries made national headlines, such as: attempted coup d'état of democratically elected officials in Latin America; sanctions and economic attacks against socialist Latin American countries (Cuba, Venezuela), and migrant caravans. These international issues can be tied to choices and political actions made within the U.S that impact Latinxs, including: the election of Donald Trump, increased immigrant deportations, increased framing of Latinxs as internal threat to the U.S. by Trump's administration and policy, and increased ICE raids. The resulting policy, actions, and national narrative around Latinxs, following these international issues, demonstrated to youth that they, as Latinxs, were framed as and perceived to be (im)migrant outsiders who's assumed language abilities mark them "other."

As a result, throughout data collection, when youth were asked about the biggest issues they perceived in the U.S, many of them responded by indicating racism against Latinxs and Black people was a big problem. When asked to clarify, youth including Joaquin, Will, Charles, Mark, and Jasmin, indicated they believed the national framing of Latinxs as "other" was tied to Trump and his narrative and actions that framed Latinxs as (im)migrants and "criminals, drug dealers, and rapists" (Trump, as cited in Neale, 2015). They also often pointed to the racist narrative around migrant caravans, the militarization of the border, and instances where they were believed to be (im)migrants due to their language ability as evidence that racism against Latinxs was on-going and framed them all as outsiders. As such, the national narrative around Latinxs and international actions of the U.S, shaped youth's daily experiences and understandings of the connections between race, ethnicity, language, and citizenship.

As can be seen, this finding confirms the idea that language and race have been historically co-naturalized (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Rosa & Flores, 2017), meaning language itself is racialized and the two are inseparable in the subjugation of Latinx populations, to the point that Latinxs are believed to "look like a language, and sound like a race" (Rosa, 2018). *However, this study adds to our understanding of racialized language as a tool of coloniality and signifier of difference by importantly revealing how Latinx youth themselves, who are experiencing racialization tied to language, perceive and understand the connections between race, ethnicity, language, and imaginations of citizenship in structuring their lived experiences and opportunities in school.*

These findings echo past research on the concept of race by documenting it's socially constructed unstable nature, it's inherent limitations, and it's ridiculously ineffective use as category. Similarly, this work also reinforces and, extends, our understanding of the process of

racialization by revealing how important language and race, despite its stated limitations, are in structuring youth experiences and determining their opportunities. Lastly, Latinx youth's understandings of the intersections between race, ethnicity, language, and citizenship in their racialization pushes back on the need within literature to separate race and ethnicity as categories as it concerns Latinxs. To be clear, I agree and have shown that race and ethnicity are very much separate categories. However, throughout this study, Latinx youth frequently equated race and ethnicity as one and the same. One can argue this may be a sign that they do not fully understand the differences between both, but I would counter that regardless of their differences, their intersecting use with language to racialize youth and structure their experiences showed youth they serve the same role in society, and thus were the same. Thus, much like Flores and Rosa (2015) and Rosa and Flores (2017) have theorized raciolinguistics and revealed that language is co-naturalized with race (racialized) and functions as a tool of racialization, this work echoes that we should consider ethnicity as racialized itself. As such, in future work, care should be taken to investigate how youth understand the relationship between ethnicity and race, and if they believe both categories to be the same in definition and in their racialization, we might utilize racio-ethnicity as a term to explain Latinx understandings of race.

As shown in Chapter 3, Latinx youth were motivated to resist and disprove racist stereotypes and deficit-based framing they experienced across society and school by doing well in school, embracing their culture and language, but selectively using Spanish in subtractive spaces. These practices were tied to the second finding of this study, the pedagogies of the home youth were exposed to via *consejos* (advice), *apoyo* (support), and family models of academic and financial success.

Pedagogies of the Home Offer Teachings, Affirming Messages, and Prepare Youth to Resist Racist Stereotypes

The second finding that emerged throughout this study was youth's identification and meaning-making of the pedagogies of the home their families, guardians, and other caring adults provided in the form of *consejos* (advice), *apoyo* (support) and family models. These home teaching motivated, encouraged, and supported youth to reach their goals and prepared them to resist racist stereotypes.

As identified in Chapter 5, youth indicated that, in contrast to the racist-stereotypes and deficit-based messages they were exposed to across society and in their schools, they received affirming messages of support at home from their parents, guardians, and other trusted caring adults, in various forms. Though youth themselves did not explicitly use the labels *consejos* (advice), *apoyo* (support), or family models, I organized their responses under these labels because their descriptions of the advice, support, and examples their families and guardians provided were more nuanced than the English equivalents imply. Youth responses indicated they received *consejos* at home that offered not only advice about life and their education, but related included teachings, morals, suggestions, information, and warnings, all of which served as encouragement for youth and helped prepare them to confront hostile social and educational contexts. Similarly, the *apoyo*, or support, they received at home included not only moral support, but financial, emotional, and familial sacrifice, all of which supported youth's embrace of their cultural and linguistic differences, made them confident in their abilities to reach their goals, and motivated them to give back to their families and communities. Lastly, home pedagogies provided youth with family models of academic and financial success that served as counternarrative examples that not only directly disproved racist stereotypes, but were guide youth could follow when navigating social contexts or new career paths. This finding helps address research question one by revealing that home pedagogies fostered youth's motivation,

inspiration, and positive conceptions of themselves and their cultural and linguistic differences, with the embrace of language in particular serving as powerful, yet subtle, form of resistance and resource to give back to their community.

From a critical coloniality lens, the home pedagogies of *consejos, apoyo*, and family models combined to provide youth with encouragement, advice, strategies, and examples of academic and financial success that helped prepare them to confront racist stereotypes and navigate hostile social contexts. This finding echoes previous research on home pedagogies by demonstrating that the affirming messages families provided, including reminding youth to love themselves, embrace their cultural/linguistic differences, be self-confident, and hold high college and career aspirations, helped prepare youth to resist hostile social and educational contexts. However, considering the current socio-political moment, the continued attacks on Latinx populations at large, and targeting "foreign looking Latinx" citizens, home pedagogies and the resistance they teach take on a higher importance. As such, this study contributes to our understanding of pedagogies of the home by revealing the multiple subtle forms these teachings take on a day to day basis and how youth internalize them. It also reveals home pedagogies inform youth's racial identity development by serving as a reminder that being Latinx is powerful and providing a source of motivation, inspiration, self-confidence, and pride in their cultural differences, all of which contribute to their transformational resistance and their community orientation as seen in their commitment to give back to their families and communities.

This study demonstrated that youth's transformational resistance mentality began to emerge from their exposure to racist stereotypes that motivated them to disprove them, and from the encouragement they received at home from family, guardians, and other trusted adults.

Together, the misconceptions held about Latinxs, and the encouragement they received via *consejos* (advice), *apoyo* (support), and family models, inspired youth to resist racist stereotypes and transform public perception by proving stereotypes wrong. In addition, they were motivated to transform opportunities by being successful and achieving their goals in order to serve as a model for other young people in their family and/or communities. Similarly, their desire to serve as a model and be able to "give back" to help their family and communities stand as evidence of youth's community orientation. A community orientation refers to one's approach to and view of the world not from an individualized neoliberal perspective, but from one where they view themselves, their success, and future goals as informed by and tied to community. For youth in this study, the framing of their individual success as being imbedded within the larger family structure and tied to familial sacrifices helped them see beyond the neoliberal myth of individuality, and see themselves as part of a community (family or neighborhood) which inspired them to one day be able to give back. The above understandings are important because they help us, as researchers, understand youth's motivations and racial identity development as being tied to forms of resistance and desires to give back. This knowledge can then inform the practices within CBES by providing structured opportunities for youth to engage these motivating factors for volunteering, activism, community engagement, and so forth.

Similarly, knowing the role that families, guardians, and trusted caring individuals have on Latinx youth's racial identity development, and their ability to resist and overcome racist stereotypes and hostile schooling context, indicates that it is necessary to actively involve parents, guardians, and trusted adults within CBES by having them be part of the overall planning/direction of programs, invite them to get involved at the site, and provide yearly updates. For example, during data collection, ENGAGE offered a series of weekly "parents

education" classes, that were led by a parent who was from the community and was employed with RMEO, and covered a range of topics of interests to parents themselves. These classes not only kept parents informed of what ENGAGE was doing, but involved them at the site, and provided classes parents requested related to using technology and staying connected to their schools online portal, navigating higher education, paying for college, psychology, and more. Though popular with some parents, attendance was a bit low due to time the classes were offered. Thus, knowing the role that pedagogies of the home played in youth's resistance and racial identity development, continuing to provide these opportunities for families to be involved is important.

However, given the economic constraints that Ranch Mountain faced, the parent classes offered through ENGAGE at Rose City high school was one of the last parent specific programs RMEO was able to provide. In previous years, RMEO was able to offer many more opportunities for parents, including parent workshops and classes at multiple sites, home visits to check in and educate parents led by parent promoters they hired, and, at some sites, parent councils that advised ENGAGE programs and organized their own events they felt were needed for the community. Due to the funding pressure, rising costs of operation, and the "sun setting" of some funding streams, these parent focused programs were some of the first to be cut in order to be able to continue to offer core academic programs for youth that would help them get refunded. With this in mind, care must be taken to offer structured opportunities for parents to get involved and advise programs even if it is in limited forms or on a volunteer basis.

Authentic Caring Relationships and Opportunities to Engage in Conversation Support Exploration of Youth's Racial Identity

The final significant finding that emerged in this study was the role that authentic, care-based relationships with adults and the opportunity to engage in honest conversation with others

had on Latinx youth's exploration and development of a racial identity, as well as the central role that language had in facilitating care-based relationships and open conversation.

As discussed in Chapter 6, Latinx youth's participation within ENGAGE, a CBES, exposed them to contrasting affirming and deficit-based messages that informed how they perceived and navigated the program. However, the flexible and informal structure of ENGAGE also allowed participants to form "counter-spaces," in a purposeful subtle act of resistance, where they could form authentic caring relationships with adults and engage in honest conversations around race, racism, and current events that were of concern to them. Through the care-based relationships they established, and the conversations they engaged in, Latinx youth felt free to utilize their home language and be their "authentic" selves, both of which afforded them the opportunity to explore and develop their racial identity within a supportive, judgement free space. An opportunity that youth did not have available to them within traditional subtractive environments across their daily lives.

In regards to genuine care-based relationships, this study importantly demonstrated that adult youth workers the participants looked up to and considered mentors, shared common characteristics which facilitated their ability to form relationships and engage youth in conversation. These common characteristics they shared included: a commitment to and concern for the well-being of youth; an approachable, "down to earth" and easy-going personality; a willingness to engage in conversation and actively listen to youth; and providing a model of self-love and academic success that encourage youth to be true to themselves, embrace their culture, and value their language. These traits helped youth workers form caring relationships with youth while providing affirming messages that made youth feel welcomed in the program, encouraged them to dream big and love themselves, and supported the creation of counter-spaces where they

could be themselves and explore their racial identity. However, these spaces were few and far between within ENGAGE, and were becoming harder to establish as RMEO faced increased pressure to narrowly focus on academics in response to the larger neoliberal economic environment and paternalistic funding context they existed within. In particular, funding precedence, changes to the wording and goals of funding streams, and rising costs of operation tied to rising costs of living and neoliberal spatial changes (gentrification), constrained RMEO's ability to offer youth holistic programming and instead focus their attention on academic development. These changes to programming, and the pressure the organizations faced, indicate that despite the role caring adults played, their presence alone is not sufficient to overcome contextual pressures or ensure youth holistic development. Rather, CBES themselves must be responsible in how they navigate, identify, and apply for funding, and the programs they offer.

To be sure, the multiple roles authentically caring youth workers serve, and the multiple hats they wear within the organization, make them an integral part of CBES' (Baldridge, *In Progress*). However, even if CBES' continue to face pressure to focus on academics and their funding streams continue to prioritize "demonstrating impact" through academic achievement, care must still be taken to provide a range of structured holistic services to youth and incorporate their voice, culture, and interests within programs. Doing so allows youth to form authentic relationships, and feel welcomed within the space, which research has shown is necessary for youth to feel connected and be successful since education and learning is a social process (Valenzuela, 1999; Vygotsky, 1983).

Similarly, a second important contribution to the literature that this finding provides is revealing the significant role that language played in how youth established connections, claimed space, and explored their racial identity within a CBES. Throughout this study, youth articulated

various functions that language served throughout their daily lives and in their navigation of

ENGAGE. More specifically, language served as a resource they could use to help others; it

functioned as a signifier of the potential and opportunity to claim and form counter-spaces within

ENGAGE; as a bridge to building caring relationships with adults; and functioned as a subtle

form of resistance to perceived hostile contexts (school and academic based labs). As such, this

study contributes to our understanding of how language informs the way Latinx youth's perceive

and navigate CBES, as well as how it informs their exploration and development of a racial

identity by serving as an ever-present reminder of their unique identity. Further, this study shows

that youth experiences in a CBES reinforce home pedagogies that frame their language as a

resource, a benefit, and a form of resistance, which motivates participants to believe in and love

themselves, hold high college and career aspirations, and ultimately embrace the promise,

potential, and benefits of their developing racial identity

Chapter 8

Conclusion: Implications and Recommendations

Centering Latinx Youth Voices

The contributions of the three findings described in Chapter 7 can be summarized as two primary contributions to the field. The first contribution is that this study powerfully reveals the importance of considering the intersections between language, race, and citizenship when theorizing Latinx racialization. The second contribution this study makes is that it provides voice to how Latinx youth negotiate and make meaning of their experiences within a CBES that is facing neoliberal, economic constraints, and the role that these spaces play in youth's exploration and development of a racial identity. Below, implications for future research and recommendations are provided.

Considering Latinx youth's experiences with racism, specifically their confrontations with racist stereotypes and the framing of Latinx populations as intellectually deficient, both of which are informed by other's perception of their assumed language abilities, youth come to understand race and racialization as intimately tied to and inseparable from its intersections with ethnicity, language, and citizenship status. With youth understanding race as tied to ethnicity, language, and citizenship status, and keeping in mind the central role language played in youth's experiences with racialization and within ENGAGE, this study holds implications for future research. This study shows that future research <u>must</u> take language seriously as a tool of racialization, one that is co-naturalized with race and holds power to "other," subjugate, and limit opportunities for youth (Donato & Hanson, 2012; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Rosa & Flores, 2017). As such, any future study, analysis, or theorizing of Latinx youth understandings of race or the racialization process itself <u>must</u> include language and race equally. In the U.S., with its multiple

hierarchies of separation that operate simultaneously to subjugate and control populations, race and language cannot be separated, especially when it comes to Latinx youth who understand and experience racialization through both race and language.

Similarly, despite the changes ENGAGE had undergone to increasingly focus on academics in response to pressure from the economic context in Los Angeles, the program played an important role in Latinx youth's exploration and development of their racial identity. More specifically, due to the flexible and informal structure of ENGAGE, Latinx youth were afforded the opportunities to navigate the program and establish counter-spaces where they built authentic care-based relationships with adults and engaged in honest conversations around race, racism, and current events. These opportunities, largely absent to youth within traditional schooling environments and across their daily lives, helped participants explore and develop a racial identity within a judgement free space. Considering the multiple factors that informed youth's racial identity development, this study implications for future studies on Latinx youth experiences and development within CBES as it demonstrates the need to take a broader look at youth participation. Rather than investigating youth themselves, and looking at their participation patterns, this study shows we must look at the international, national, and local factors that shape the context of the CBES youth participate within. It also reveals the need to include the voices of adults who represent different levels within the CBES, i.e. administrators, managers, writers, coordinators, and front-line college-aged youth workers. To this end, future studies would do well to consider studying the CBES, changes it is undergoing, and the ties of these changes to larger neoliberal driven spatial changes and policy (i.e. gentrification, school privatization, etc.).

With this said, few recommendations for practitioners emerged from this study. As it relates to youth, we should keep in mind that, in modern times, the world is globalized and youth

see this. They know it and understand it. As they develop their various identities, Latinx youth are exposed to deficit-based messages and racist stereotypes that perpetuate the belief that they are intellectually and linguistically deficient, and that they do not belong in the physical or imagined community of the U.S. However, Latinx youth are not passive beings, they are active agents with a deep understanding of the role racialized language has on their racialization. As a result, they navigate the hostile, xenophobic context of the U.S. and maintain high college and career aspirations and strong self-confidence due to the *consejos* (advice), *apoyo* (support), and models they receive from home pedagogies, as well as their participation in a CBES that allows them to form counter-spaces, build authentic relationships, and engage in open conversation as they explore their racial identity.

Considering that Latinx youth benefit from building strong, care-based relationships with others and having conversations about current events that concern them, it is recommended that CBES train staff in holistic, asset-based approaches to building authentic caring relationships. Though economic constraints make it difficult to recruit staff at times, is also recommended CBES take the time to recruit, identify, train, and retain youth workers who not only demonstrate a genuine commitment and care for supporting youth from underserved backgrounds, but to also ensure that these youth workers share either similar interests or a background with youth. To be clear, this does not mean only Latinx youth workers can form relationships with Latinx youth. Rather, it means that a shared basis of interests or an understanding of the community/cultural background of youth is important. For example, a former youth leader, Tom, who left before research began did not share a cultural background with youth, yet was still able to form care-based relationships with youth and frequently mentioned by them in interviews. Lastly, this study indicates that it is important to provide youth structured opportunities and/or open space

that allows them to take control of the space and lead discussions, encourages them to explore their cultural and linguistic differences, and values their voices, experiences, and knowledge as valid (Pacheco, 2018; Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2018). This latter point regarding structured opportunities for youth take control of space and explore differences is of particular importance considering the current socio-political moment where Latinxs are being figuratively and physically attacked throughout the U.S. As such, efforts must be made by the organization to actively provide spaces and opportunities where racially minoritized youth, such as Latinxs, can speak back to and actively engage in refuting deficit-based characterizations of themselves.

In regards to CBES organizations themselves, this study revealed that the constraints from the economic context was a huge concern that limited their ability to offer holistic programs and increased staff instability. Genuine, caring staff were also important for the racial identity development of youth. As such, this study shows that identifying, recruiting, training, and retaining staff should be of central concern for CBES. Though the costs of operations continue to rise, including increases in minimum wage, making it harder for organizations to remain competitive for high quality youth workers, it is recommend that CBES, in particular Ranch Mountain Educational Organization, start their recruitment efforts with their former participants and local community members. Both Tito and Emilia, who were identified by youth as "down to earth," caring, and trustworthy individuals came from the local community, while the site coordinator, Olivia Mae, and Kevin, a youth worker, were former ENGAGE participants who clearly expressed they were motivated to return to work for ENGAGE because of the role their CBES had played in their lives. Also, considering participants indicated they hoped to one day return as a youth worker, it would be a good idea to recruit youth workers with in the community and within their program.

Final Thoughts

Scholarship on Latinx youth participation in community-based educational spaces has addressed how these spaces have been able to increase and/or maintain youth participation; best practices that highly engage youth on site; academic, linguistic, and behavioral outcomes of youth participation; how to engage communities and parents; the importance of responsive and caring youth work; and the benefits of political engagement, activism, and organizing on youth development (Brugere & Salazar, 2010; Dawes et al., 2015; Fuller et al., 2013; Fredricks & Simpkins, 2012; Kirshner & Ginwright, 2011; Kwon, 2013; Matloff-Nieves et al., 2018; Mitra, 2009; Park, Lin, Liu, & Tabb, 2015; Skogrand, Riggs, & Hufftaker, 2008; Strobel et al., 2008). Amongst studies on Latinx youth in CBES, few have looked specifically at Latinx youth racial identity development within CBES (Erbstein & Fabionar, 2019; Pacheco, 2018; Pacheco & Nao, 2009), with those that do studying both Black and Latinx youth identity development together (Anderson & Larson, 2009; Brooms, Franklin, Clark, & Smith; Ginwright, 2007; Ginwright & Cammarota, 2007; Noguera, 2008; Woodland, 2016). These latter studies have been able to successfully demonstrate the potential of CBES to help racially minoritized youth explore and develop a positive racial identity and healthy imagination of future possibilities (Ginwright, Cammarota, & Noguera, 2005; Kwon, 2013; Nelson, 2010; Pacheco, 2018; Riggs et al., 2010; Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000).

Even with this breadth of scholarship on Latinx youth experiences and participation in CBES, there remains a gap in the literature as we have yet to study or fully understand how Latinx youth, in particular those who can speak Spanish, make sense of their experience within CBES and how their participation informs their exploration and development of a racial identity and shapes their college and career aspirations. This study addresses this gap by centering

Spanish-speaking Latinx youth's voice to understand how they made meaning of their experience within a changing CBES, as well as the role their participation and language has on their exploration and development of a racial identity. As such, this study was guided by the following research questions: 1) how do Spanish-speaking Latinx youth within federally funded community-based educational spaces understand and negotiate their racial identities? How do they imagine their future college and career possibilities? And 2) what is the historical context within which federally funded community-based have proliferated over the last 30 years in Southern California? How does funding shape practices, relations, and context of the CBES?

To address the first question, I identified, interviewed, observed, and collaborated with 12 youth participants who regularly attended and took part in ENGAGE, a community-based educational space, in order to investigate how they understood the program and their experiences within it, as well as their understanding of race/racism and their development of a racial identity. To help address the second question, I interviewed, observed, and studied 8 adult participants who held various positions within Ranch Mountain Educational Organization, including administrative leaders (CEO, COO, Program manager), site coordinators, and frontline college-aged young people. Adults in this study were recruited to provide a range of voices that could speak to the goals of the CBES, the economic context they existed within, how they navigated economic constraints, and changes the CBES experienced.

Throughout my work with these 20 participants, I prioritized and centered youth voices to better understand Spanish-speaking Latinx youth's experiences within a CBES, and more importantly, the role their participation and language has on their exploration and development of a racial identity. In so doing, I was able to illuminate how youth made sense of race, racism, and racialization and their intersection ethnicity, language, and citizenship, as well as the role

home pedagogies and their participation in a CBES had on their development. I came to see the

authentic caring relationships youth established within a CBES, as well as the teachings received

via home pedagogies, encouraged them to embrace their cultural and linguistic differences,

which supported their exploration and development of a racial identity and allowed them to be

"somebody" by maintaining their agency, humanity, and resistance.

Appendices:

Appendix A: Research Timeline

Research Activity	Dates (MM/YYYY)
IRB	05/2017
Confirmed site with approval	05/2017
Archival Work (Context)	06/2017
Primary observations, document collection, participant recruitment (adults and youth)	06/2017 - 07/2017
Participant observations	08/2017 – 06/2018
Adult participant interviews	08/2017 - 06/2018
Confirm participation of youth- (collect parental permission forms)	08/2017 - 06/2018
Youth participant interviews	08/2017 - 06/2018
Data analysis (concurrent)	11/2017 – 12/2018
Finalize analysis	11/2018 – 01/2019
Writing period	01/2019 – 04/2020
Defense of dissertation	April 29, 2020

Appendix B: Questions and Methods

Research Questions & Population	Sample Interview Questions	Type of Data	Methods
Main Question 1: How do Spanish speaking Latinx youth within federally funded community-based educational spaces understand and negotiate their racial and ethnic identities? How do they imagine their future college and career possibilities? **Population: Youth**	Has your imagination of your future goals changed recently? If so, in what ways? Follow up: what do you think might have caused this change? Do you believe your involvement in the program has contributed to this change? In what ways does (has) your participation in the program support(ed) your personal development? How does it help you prepare to meet your future goals? Have your future goals changed because of your involvement in the program? What would you say has been most helpful in your development? (getting to know self?) i.e. What about the program has helped you develop? Do you believe you will be successful in the future? How does the program support youth in reaching personal goals? How do you understand race? How do you understand ethnicity? How do you define your race and/or ethnicity?	Field Notes from participant observations Interview responses Site and Archival Document -Questionnaire (background questions) -Photo/Video assignment and drawing as pre-cursors to individual interviews? **Optional (did not conduct)** Focus Group W/Youth-discuss general experience and knowledge of site.	Participant observations Informal interviews Semi-structured, 1 on 1 interviews Document analysis

	When you hear the term Latinx, what does that mean to you? What race do you think other people think you are? -Why do you think they think of you this way? -How does it make you feel? What are your thoughts on racism? What does it look like? How do you know? Tell me about a time you were or felt excluded within the program because of your race or language? Please explain. How did that make you feel? How did you respond? In what ways? What do you think has been most helpful in understanding your own racial identity?		
Sub Q1: How, and in what ways, does the organization imagine it's work with Latinx youth? How do they foster racial/ethnic identity development and positive future aspirations? **Population: Adults**	Could you tell me about the ways the program supports Spanish speakers? What is your experience in working with Spanish-speaking youth? How does the program describe Spanish-speaking youth? What is said about them? What are expectations for this group?	Observation field notes of day-to-day activities of Spanish Latinx youth participants Data from youth participant semi-structured interviews Artifacts/documents collected from youth (drawings, assignments, program schedules).	Participant observations Informal interviews & semi-structured 1-on-1 interviews Document analysis

	What might the program/org. do to better support Spanish-speakers? What do you think about Spanish speaking youth? What do you think are their strengths? What challenges have you noticed Spanish speakers face that other students do not? Is the program/org. aware of these unique challenges? How does the program/org. address these challenges? What do you personally do to address these issues? What sorts of programs/activities are Spanish-speaking youth offered? How does the program support the identity development of Spanish speakers? (rephrase) how does the program help Spanish-speaking youth learn about themselves? What is your role in supporting their development? Does race/racism ever come up in the program? Is it ever addressed? If so, in what ways? If not, do you think it is something that should be addressed? What would you like to see the program do to address it?		

	Describe the way the program/org. talk about the community serves…		
Main Question 2: What is the historical context within which federally funded community-based programs and organizations have proliferated over the last 30 years in southern California? **Population: Youth & Adults, Plus historical context**	Tell me about the program? Why did it start? What is it intended to do? Tell me about your community? / Tell me about the community this program serves/is intended to serve? (*For youth*) Tell me about your experience in school? (to inform academic context students situated within).	Documents (self-reports, funding applications, etc.), primary texts, photographs, census data, state reports on education/ "expanded learning"	Archival research Primary text and document analysis *important to gain contextual information on state, city/community, CBESs in general and site itself.
Sub Q2: How and in what ways do youth leaders and administrators navigate funding? How does funding shape practices, relations, and context of the CBES? **Population: Youth and Adults**	Tell me what you know about the type of funding the program/org. receives… How do you think the type of funding received affects the organization? Does it affect the programs the site offers? What other areas might it affect? How does the type of funding received affect you and your work? What sorts of limitations does funding present? In what ways has your work changed over the years? What do you think caused these changes? Did funding have a role?	Data of Adult participants (youth leads, admin., supervisors, volunteers, support staff) – interviews Observation field notes from site/program, classrooms with youth participants, admin. meeting, staff meetings, special events. Observation field notes of adult/youth interactions Site artifacts and documents related to programming and imagined community of participants	Participant observations Informal interviews & semi-structured 1-on-1 interviews Document analysis

	Tell me about a time when programmatic changes were made due to funding…What were those changes? Why did they occur?	(advertising, applications, programs offered, demographics).	

Appendix C:

Youth Participant Interview Protocol

Background Information and Community Context
 *Background Information **Potential for questionnaire to eliminate info. Qs during interview***
 1. Age/Gender/Grade:
 2. Where do you live?
  a. Who do you live with?
  b. What is highest level of education completed by your parents/guardians?
   i. Would you be the first generation to enter college?
 3. What is your first language?
 4. What language(s) do you speak at home? In school?
 5. How do you self-identity?
  a. (rephrase) when you are asked to identify yourself, what do you say?
  b. I.e. racial, ethnic, cultural, nationality, etc.
 6. Tell me about your family?
 7. Can you recall and describe your first experiences in school?
 8. Before the program, how did you spend your time outside of school?
  a. How did you come to find out about the program?

*Community Context: **Potential to ask Youth to take photos/video of community to show parts that 1. Define community for them 2. Are of important to them, 3. Would like represented within the site***
 9. Could you please describe your community for me?
  a. What is it like? Who lives here?
  b. What do you like about your neighborhood?
   i. What would you change?
  c. How do others describe your community?
   i. How does this make you feel? Is it accurate?

 10. How does the program involve your community within its events and programs?
  a. How does the program reach out to parents and others in the community?
  b. What would you like to see them do to involve the community?

 11. Tell me what you think are the major issues facing the country? Your community?
  a. Why do you think is? How do you know this?
  b. How is it being address?
  c. How could you address these issues? What could you do?

 12. Keeping in mind the issues you mentioned, how does the program/org. address (acknowledge) these issues?
  a. Have they ever come up while you're at the site? In what ways?
  b. Does the program attempt to change them? How?
   i. Follow up, if they address them: do they teach or involve youth in addressing these issues? (critical lens)

    c. Is there a person that you can talk to about these issues?
        i. Why do you feel you can speak to this person about these issues?

School Background Information (for comparison? Necessary?)
13. Describe what school is like for you…
    a. What do you like about it? What do you dislike?
    b. What racial groups is your school made up of?
        i. What languages, that you know of, are spoken at school?
    c. How would you describe your relationship with peers at your school? With adults?
        i. What might others at your school say about you?

14. How do you see your school helping you get to college?
    a. What type of student are you? Grades?
        i. Why do you think you are this type of student?
    b. Have you ever been placed in any special classes (i.e. gifted, ESL)?
        1. If so, why do you think you were placed in these classes?
        2. What was your reaction?

Imagination of Future (College/Career)
15. Could you describe your plans for the future after high school?
   **This question could potentially be a pre-interview activity/assignment they are asked to complete, i.e. they sketch/draw their response to the question prior to meeting as a point to begin this portion of the interview
    a. (rephrase) what do you imagine you will be doing in 5 years? In 10 years?
    b. What are your goals for the future?
        i. What do you think it will take to accomplish these goals?
        ii. How do you know this?
    c. What are your family's goals for you?
        i. How do they define success?
    d. How do your parents/family/guardians feel about your personal goals?

16. Do your future plans include attending college/university after high school?
    a. IF YES, what do you think it will take to get into school?
        i. Could you explain how you know this? where did you learn this info?
    b. If NO, what do you imagine you will do after high school?
        i. How will you get there? What do you need to reach this goal?
    c. If you plan to attend college, do your parents/guardians/family support your plans?
        i. (rephrase) could you tell me how your parents/family/guardians feel about college?
        ii. What do they say about it? Do they have any concerns?
        iii. How much do they know about the process? What don't they know?
        iv. How (in what ways) does the program help your family/parents/guardians understand college? (For the CBES section?)
17. In what ways does (has) your participation in the program support(ed) you?

      a. How does it help you prepare to meet your future goals?
           i. Have your future goals changed because of your involvement in the program? How?
      b. What sorts of activities, events, conversations, etc. have helped you the most in the program?
           i. What do you value most about the program?
           ii. What would you change about the program?
      c. Do you think the program/organization (or a specific mentor) believes you can reach your goals? Why or why not?

18. What kind of person do you want to be known as? (how do you want to be remembered?)

19. Do you have any fears about the future? If so, what are they?
      a. Do you think these fears will stop you from reaching your goals? In what ways?

Racial/Ethnic Identity & Language
20. How do you understand race? How do you understand ethnicity?
      a. How do you define your race and/or ethnicity?
           i. When you hear the term Latinx, what does that mean to you?
      b. What race do you think other people think you are?
           i. Why do you think they think of you this way?
           ii. How does it make you feel?
21. What are your thoughts on racism?
      a. What does it look like? How do you know?
22. Tell me about a time you were or felt excluded within the program because of your race or language? Please explain.
      a. How did that make you feel? How did you respond?

Spanish Related Questions:
23. Could you please describe the most commonly held misconceptions about people who speak Spanish in the U.S/School/Program??
      a. Do you think these misconceptions have ever been held against you?

24. How and in what ways has the ability to speak Spanish shaped your daily life? Could you give me an example?
      a. Has the ability to speak Spanish ever presented a challenge in your life? Explain.

25. Thinking about the program…
      a. In what ways is your culture/language reflected?
      b. is Spanish accepted/welcomed?
      c. Tell me how Spanish is represented/ within the site
      d. Could you describe a time when you saw Spanish being used within the program?
           i. How was it used? Why?

CBES & Context
Context of the Site:
26. What can you tell me about the site/program/org?

a. Why do you think this program/org was started? Who or what are they meant to help?
b. Why did you get involved with the program/org.? What keeps you coming back?
   i. What do you like about it? Dislike about it?
c. What sorts of programs do they offer?
   i. Have these changed recently? Why do you think they've changed?
d. If you could describe the program in one word, what would it be?
   i. Could you explain what this word means do you? Why choose this word?
e. Is there anything you would change about the program? What would it be? why?
f. What can you tell me about how the org. pays for the programs they offer?

Race within Site:
27. How is race discussed within the site? Does it matter within the site?
28. In your opinion, does race affect the way people are treated within the site? Explain.
   a. Does the language a person speaks affect the way they are treated within the site?
29. What sorts of messages about race does the program provide?
   a. How does this compare to the messages of race you receive within school?
   b. In what ways has the program/org. helped you understand your own race?
   i. What has been most helpful in understanding your racial identity?

Relationships and Experience within Site:
30. Tell me about the types of groups at the site.
   a. With what groups, or with who, do you feel most comfortable? why?
   b. What language do you all speak together? Why?
   c. Do you ever talk about race with your friends or groups you have a relationship with? In what ways?
   d. Could you tell me about a time you felt the program was not supportive of your home culture or language? Why do you think that was?
31. Do you think peers treat you differently because of your race/ethnicity/gender/language?
   a. If so, in what ways? If not, how come?
32. What is your relationship with adults in the site?
   a. Who helps you the most at the program/org?
   b. What kinds of things does your favorite leader do? Why do you like these things?
33. How has your participation within the program changed as you have gotten older?
   a. Why do you think these changes occurred?
   b. Outside of these changes related to your growth, do you think the program has changed for any other reason? What caused these changes?
34. Could you describe the way you believe the organization views you?
   a. Why do you think they view you this way?
35. In what ways do you feel this program has benefitted you? What have you learned from your time here?
   a. What activities/groups/events/people from ENGAGE are most important? Why?

Critical Lens
36. In what ways do you think the program has prepared you to enact change in the community? How did they do this?

Last Question: Is there anything else you would like to share that we may not have covered?

Appendix D

Adult Participant Interview Protocol (For all adults, unless noted by *)

Background Information and Community Context
  Background Information
1. Tell me about yourself…
    a. Background (age, gender, etc.)
        i. High level of education completed? First generation?
    b. How did you come to work here?
        i. What is your role and responsibilities at the site?
2. How do you self-identity?
    a. (rephrase) when you are asked to identify yourself, what do you say?
    b. I.e. racial, ethnic, cultural, nationality, etc.

3. What language(s) do you speak?
    a. Which of these do you utilize within the site?
    b. If Spanish mentioned, does it benefit in your work? In what ways?

4. Do you live within the community the program serves?

Race Background Questions
5. How do you understand race? How do you understand ethnicity?
    a. How do you define your race and/or ethnicity?
    b. When you hear the term Latinx, what does that mean to you?
    c. What race do you think other people think you are?
        i. Why do you think they think of you this way?

6. What are your thoughts on racism?
    a. What does it look like? How do you know?

7. What do you believe can be done to address racism and prejudice in the country?
    a. Does race/racism ever come up in the program? Is it ever addressed?
    b. If so, in what ways?
    c. If not, do you think it is something that should be addressed? What would you like to see the program do to address it?

CBES & Context
8. Tell me about the program/organization…
    a. How would you describe the site to a prospective participant or parent?
    b. Why did it start?
    c. What is the program intended to do? (goals)
        i. How were you made aware of this?
        ii. How do your values align with these goals?
    d. In your opinion, what are the strengths of the program/org.?
        i. What are areas of improvement for the program? Why?

9. Describe your role within the organization…
    a. What do you do? Who do you work with?
    b. How often do you engage with youth? With Spanish-speaking youth?

10. Could you tell me about the ways the program supports Spanish speakers?
    a. How does the program support Latinx youth?
    b. What is your experience in working with Spanish-speaking youth?
    c. How does the program describe Spanish-speaking youth?
        i. What is said about them? What are expectations for this group?
    d. What might the program/org. do to better support Spanish-speakers?

11. Tell me what you know about the type of funding the program/org. receives…
    a. How do you think the type of funding received affects the organization?
        i. How does the type of funding received affect you and your work?
            1. In what ways has your work changed over the years? What do you think caused these changes? How might funding play a role in these changes?
    b. Tell me about a time when programmatic changes were made due to funding…
        i. What were those changes? Why did they occur?
    c. Who makes decisions about how funding is used?
        i. Are youth interests ever considered?
        ii. Is your voice ever heard in the decision making process?

Imaginations of Community Served (Race/Ethnicity/Culture/Language)
12. Describe the way the program/org. talk about the community serves…
    a. Who lives here? What culture? Language? Reputation?
    b. Why was the community selected for programming?
    c. What are commonly held beliefs about this community?
    d. What did you hear/what were you told about this community and the participants prior to starting?
        i. How did this inform the way you imagined the community/participants?
    e. What strengths does the community offer?
        i. How does the program/site utilize these strengths?
    f. What do you think is the biggest issue(s) facing this community?
        i. How does the program address these issue(s)? how do you address them?
        ii. Does the program attempt to change them? How? Do you? In what ways?
            1. Follow up, if they address them: do they teach or involve youth in addressing these issues? (critical lens)
        iii. Do you think it is important to prepare youth to address issues in their community? Why or why not?
            1. What do you do to help prepare them to address these issues?

11. How does the program involve the community within its events and programs?
    a. How does the program reach out to parents and others in the community?
    b. What would you like to see them do to involve the community?

Relationship with Students

13. Tell me about the students that attend the program…
    a. Cultural and racial background? Languages spoken? Reputation?
    b. How are they spoken about?
    c. How would you describe the strengths of the youth in the program, in general? Their needs?
        i. Do you hear more about their strengths or their needs?
            1. How might this inform your thinking about them?

14. Tell me about Spanish speaking youth in the program…
    a. What do you think about Spanish speaking youth?
        i. What do you think are their strengths?
        ii. What challenges have you noticed Spanish speakers face that other students do not?
            1. Is the program/org. aware of these unique challenges?
            2. How does the program/org. address these challenges?
            3. What do you personally do to address these issues?
        iii. What sorts of programs/activities are Spanish-speaking youth offered?
        iv. ** IF CLASSROOM LEAD:
            1. What do you do to address the needs of Spanish speaking youth in the group?
            2. What are your expectations of Spanish-speaking youth in your group in school and for the future?
            3. How do you work with Spanish speaking you to support their development within the classroom?
            4. How do you support student's goals and aspirations?

    b. In what ways does the program support the academic, social, emotional, mental development of Spanish-speaking youth?
        i. What might the program do to improve support of Spanish speaking youth?
        ii. What is your role in supporting the development of Spanish-speaking youth?

    c. How does the program support the identity development of Spanish speakers?
        i. (rephrase) how does the program help Spanish-speaking youth learn about themselves?

15. What are your expectations of students in the program and for the future?

16. Describe the ways in which the program supports youth' goals for the future?

Last Question:

17. Is there anything else you would like to share with me that we may not have covered?

References:

Afterschool Alliance. (2014). America After 3pm: Afterschool Programs in Demand. Washington, D.C.

Acosta, O., Weist, M., Lopez, F., Shafer, M., Pizarro, L.J. (2004). Assessing the psychological and academic needs of Latino youth to inform the development of school-based programs. *Behavior Modification*, *28*(4), 579-595.

Afterschool Alliance. (2017). http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/Issue-21stCCLC.cfm

Al-Hardan, A. (2014). Decolonizing Research on Palestinians: Towards Critical Epistemologies and Research Practices. *Qualitative Inquiry, 20*(1), 61-71.

Alemán, E., & Alemán, S. (2010). 'Do Latin@ interests always have to "converge" with White interests?': (Re)claiming racial realism and interest-convergence in critical race theory praxis. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 13*(1), 1-21.

Alemán, E., Delgado-Bernal, D., & Cortez, E. (2015). A Chican@ Pathways Model of "Acción": Affirming the Racial, Cultural and Academic Assets of Students, Families and Communities. *Association of Mexican American Educators Journal, 9*(1), 13-27.

Alexander, M. (2010). The new Jim Crow mass incarceration in the age of colorblindness. New York: New Press.

Anderson, N., & Larson, C. (2009). Sinking, like Quicksand: Expanding Educational Opportunity for Young Men of Color. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 45*(1), 71-114.

Anderson, B. R. (2006). Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism. London; New York: Verso.

Andrews, M. (2014). Narrative imagination and everyday life. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Anzaldúa, G. (2012) *Borderlands :the new mestiza = la frontera*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.

Apple, M. W. (2006). Educating the "right" way: markets, standards, God, and inequality. New York: Routledge.

Apple, M. W. (2013). *Education and Power.* New York: Routledge.

Baldridge, B. J. (2019). *Reclaiming Community: Race and the Uncertain Future of Youth Work,* Stanford: Stanford University Press.
(2016). "It's like this Myth of the Supernegro": Resisting narratives of damage and struggle in the neoliberal educational policy context. *Race Ethnicity and Education,* 1-15.

(2014). Relocating the Deficit: Reimagining Black Youth in Neoliberal Times. *American Educational Research Journal,* Online, 1-33

Baldridge, B., Hill, M., & Davis, J. (2011). New Possibilities: (Re)Engaging Black Male Youth within Community-Based Educational Spaces. *Race, Ethnicity and Education, 14*(1), 121-136.

Banks, J.A. (2008). Diversity, group identity, and citizenship education in a global age. Educational Researcher, 37(3), 129-139.

Battilana, J. (2004). *Foundations for a theory of institutional entrepreneurship: Solving the paradox of embedded agency* (Faculty & Research / INSEAD 2004,61 OB). Fontainebleau: INSEAD.

Bell, D. (1980). Brown v. Board of Education and the Interest-Convergence Dilemma. *Harvard Law Review, 93*(3), 518-34.

Bender, S. (2003). *Greasers and Gringos: Latinos, Law, and the American Imagination.* New York: New York University Press.

Bernstein, B. (1975) *Class, Codes, and Control, Vol. 3.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Beyond the Bell (2017). Statistics. Accessed at https://btb.lausd.net/elibrary (February 2017).

Bonilla-Silva, E. (2003). "New racism," Color-blind racism, and the future of whiteness in America. In A. W. Doane & E. Bonilla-Silva (Eds.), White out: The continuing significance of racism (pp. 271-284). New York, NY: Routledge.

Booher-Jennings, J. (2005). Below the Bubble: "Educational Triage" and the Texas Accountability System. *American Educational Research Journal,* 42(2), 231-268.

Borden, L., Perkins, D., Villarruel, F., Carleton-Hug, A., Stone, M., & Keith, J. (2006). Challenges and Opportunities to Latino Youth Development: Increasing Meaningful Participation in Youth Development Programs. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences, 28*(2), 187-208.

Bourdieu, P. (1984). Distinction. Cambridge: Harvard 1984.

Briggs, L. (2002). Reproducing Empire Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Brugere, B., & Salazar, G. (2010). Engaging Latino Audiences in Out-of-School Programs about Science. Journal of Extension, 48(3), Journal of Extension, 2010, Vol.48(3).

Bulanda, J., & McCrea, J. (2013). The Promise of an Accumulation of Care: Disadvantaged African-American Youths' Perspectives About What Makes an After School Program Meaningful. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal, 30*(2), 95-118.

Byrd, C., & Hughey, M. (2015). Biological Determinism and Racial Essentialism. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 661*(1), 8-22.

California Afterschool Network. (2016). State of the State of Expanded Learning in California. Retrieved from www.afterschoolnetwork.org on 2/17/2017.

California Senate Office of Research. (2014). A Statistical Picture of Latinos in California: Demographic, Income, Education, Health, and Other Social Characteristics.

Callahan, R.M. (2005). Tracking and high school English learners: Limiting opportunity to learn. *American Educational Research Journal*, 42 (2), 305-328.

Camarillo, A. (1979). Chicanos in a changing society: from Mexican pueblos to American barrios in Santa Barbara and southern California, 1848-1930. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Cammarota, J., & Aguilera, M.. (2012). "By the Time I Get to Arizona": Race, Language, and Education in America's Racist State. Race, Ethnicity and Education, 15(4), 485-500.

Cammarota, J. (2014). Misspoken in Arizona: Latina/o Students Document the Articulations of Racism. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 47*(3), 321-333.

Carspecken, P. (1996). Critical ethnography in educational research: a theoretical and practical guide. New York: Routledge.

Carspecken, P., & Walford, G. (2001). Critical ethnography and education. Amsterdam; New York: JAI.

Césaire, A. (2000). Discourse on colonialism. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Chavez, L. (2013). *Latino Threat: Constructing Immigrants, Citizens, and the Nation, Second Edition* (2nd ed.). Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.

Clandinin, J. (2013). Engaging in narrative inquiry. Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press, Inc.

Cordell, D. (2017). *African American Community College Students' Experiences with Professorial Radical Care* [Doctoral Dissertation, University of Southern California. Proquest LLC.]

Cowan, J. (2012). *Becoming "American": Race, Class, Gender and Assimilation Ideologies in Young Adult Mexican Immigrant Fiction.*

Creswell, J. (2007). Qualitative inquiry & research design: choosing among five approaches. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. (2014). Designing and conducting mixed methods research. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications.

Cummins, J. (2007). Pedagogies for the Poor? Realigning Reading Instruction for Low-Income Students with Scientifically Based Reading Research. *Educational Researcher*, 36(9), 564–572.

Czarniawska, B. (1997). *Narrating the organization: Dramas of institutional identity.* University of Chicago Press.

Daniels, R. (2004) *Guarding the Golden Door: American Immigration Policy and Immigrants Since 1882.* 1st paperback ed. New York: Hill and Wang.

Dawes, N., Modecki, P., Gonzales, K., Dumka, L., & Millsap, N. (2015). Mexican-Origin Youth Participation in Extracurricular Activities: Predicting Trajectories of Involvement from 7th to 12th Grade. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 44(11), 2172-2188.

Delgado-Bernal, D. (2001). Learning and Living Pedagogies of the Home: The Mestiza Consciousness of Chicana Students. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 14(5), pp. 623-639.

Denzin N. & Lincoln Y (2000) The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In: Denzin and Lincoln Y (eds) The Handbook of Qualitative Research, 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

DiMaggio, P., & Anheier, H. (1990). The sociology of nonprofit organizations and sectors. *Annual Review of Sociology, 16*, 137.

Dryfoos, J. G. (1999). The Role of the School in Children's Out-of-School Time. *Future of Children, 9*(2), 117-34.

Donato, R., & Hanson, J. (2012). Legally White, Socially "Mexican": The Politics of De Jure and De Facto School Segregation in the American Southwest. *Harvard Educational Review*, 82(2), pp. 202-223.

Duncan-Andrade, J. (2005). An Examination of the Sociopolitical History of Chicanos and Its Relationship to School Performance. *Urban Education, 40*(6), 576-605.

Durlak, J., Mahoney, J., Bohnert, A., & Parente, M. (2010). Developing and improving after-school programs to enhance youth's personal growth and adjustment: A special issue of AJCP. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 45*(3-4), 285-93.

Eccles, J., & Gootman, J. (2002). *Community programs to promote youth development.* Washington: National Academies Press.

Ed-data.org, accessed 3/11/2020

Elenes, C., Gonzalez, F., Bernal, D., & Villenas, S. (2001). Introduction: Chicana/Mexicana feminist pedagogies: Consejos, respeto, y educacion in everyday life. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 14*(5), 595-602.

Erbstein, N., & Fabionar, J. (2019). Supporting Latinx Youth Participation in Out-of-School Time Programs. *Afterschool Matters*, 29, pp. 17-27.

Espinoza, M. (2009). A Cast Study of Production of Educational Sanctuary in One Migrant Classroom. *Pedagogies: An Internal Journal*, 4, pp. 44-62.

Feagin, J. R. (2013). *The white racial frame: Centuries of racial framing and counter-framing.* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Fernandez, J.S. (2015). *Latina/o Youth Cultural Citizenship: Re-Conceptualizing Dominant Constructions of Citizenship Through Membership, Sense of Belonging, Claiming Space and Rights.* (3730007). [Doctoral Dissertation, University of California, Santa Cruz. Proquest LLC.

Flores, N. (2016). A Tale of Two Visions: Hegemonic Whiteness and. Bilingual Education. *Educational Policy*, 30(1), pp. 13-38.

Flores, N., Lewis, M.C., Phuong, J. (2019). Raciolinguistic Chronotypes and the Education of Latinx Students: Resistance and anxiety in a bilingual school. *Language & Communication*, 62, pp. 15-25.

Flores, N. & Rosa, J. (2017). Political Correctness is Not the Problem, Systemic Racism is. *Anthropology News* (Website), August, 16, 2017.

(2015). Undoing Appropriateness: Raciolingusitic Ideologies and Language Diversity in Education. *Harvard Educational Review*, 85(2), pp.149-171.

Fredricks, J., & Simpkins, S. (2012). Promoting Positive Youth Development Through Organized After-School Activities: Taking a Closer Look at Participation of Ethnic Minority Youth. *Child Development Perspectives, 6*(3), 280-287.

Freeman, D., & Freeman, Y. (2011). Between worlds: access to second language acquisition. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Freire, P. (1970). Pedagogy of the oppressed. New York: Herder and Herder.

Freire, P. (1998). Teachers as Cultural Workers: Letters to Those Who Dare Teach Boulder:

Westview Press.

Fuller, R., Percy, V., Bruening, J., & Cotrufo, R. (2013). Positive Youth Development: Minority Male Participation in a Sport-Based Afterschool Program in an Urban Environment. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport, 84*(4), 469-482.

Fultz, M. (2001). Charleston, 1919-1920: The Final Battle in the Emergence of the South's Urban African-American Teaching Corps. *Journal of Urban History*. 27(5), 633-649.

Fusco, D., Lawrence, A., Matloff-Nieves, S., & Ramos, E. (2013). The accordion effect: is quality in afterschool getting the squeeze? *Journal of Youth Development, 8.* (online).

Gamoran, A., Secada, W., Marrett, C. (2000). "The Organizational Context of Teaching and Learning: Changing Theoretical Perspectives." In *Handbook of the Sociology of Education*, edited by Maureen T. Hallinan. Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, New York.

Gandara, P. (2000). In the aftermath of the storm: English learners in the post-227 era. *Bilingual Research Journal, 24*(1), 1-13.

Gandara, P. et. al. (2010). "A brief history of U.S. Language Policy," in *Their Forbidden Language: English Learners and Restrictive Language Policies.* New York: Teachers College Press, 20-33

Garey, A. (2002). Social Domains and Concepts of Care: Protection, instruction, and containment in after-school programs. *Journal of Family Issues 23*(6), 768-788.

Gast, M.J., Okamoto, D., Feldman, V. (2017). "We Only Speak English Here": English Dominance in Language Diverser, Immigrant After-School Programs. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 32(1), pp. 94-121.

Gay, G. (2010a). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice.*(2nded.). Teachers College Press, New York, N.Y.

(2010b). Chapter 5: Teaching Authentically. *Counterpoints, Vol. 356, TEACH BOLDLY! Letters to Teachers about Contemporary Issues in Education*, pp. 45-55

Ginwright, S. (2007). Black youth activism and the role of critical social capital in black community organizing. *American Behavioral Scientist, 51*(3), 403-418.

Ginwright, S, (2009). *Black youth rising: Activism and radical healing in urban America*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Ginwright, S., & Cammarota, J. (2007). Youth activism in the urban community: Learning critical civic praxis within community organizations. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 20*(6), 693-710

Ginwright, S., Cammarota, J., & Noguera, P. (2005). Youth, Social Justice, and Communities: Toward a Theory of Urban Youth Policy. *Social Justice, 32*(3), 24-40.

Gorski, P.C. (2013). *Reaching and teaching students in poverty: Strategies for erasing the opportunity gap.* Teachers College Press: New York. (Chapter 3: pp. 35-51).

Griswold del Castillo, Richard. (1992) *The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo: a Legacy of Conflict.* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

Grosfoguel, R. (2003). *Colonial subject: Puerto Ricans in a global perspective.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Grosfoguel, R. (2007). The Epistemic Decolonial Turn. *Cultural Studies*, 21(2-3), 211-223.

Grosfoguel, R. (2013). The Structure of Knowledge in Westernized Universities: Epistemic racism/sexism and the four genocides/epistemicides of the long 16th century. *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge, 11*(1), 73.

Gross, A. (2003). Texas Mexicans and the Politics of Whiteness. *Law and History Review, 21*(1), 195-205.

Gross, A. (2006). "The Caucasian Cloak": Mexican Americans and the Politics of Whiteness in the 20th Century Southwest. Georgetoum Law Journal, 95(2), 1-72.

Gutierrez, K.D. (2008). Developing a Sociocritical Literacy in Third Space. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 43(2), pp. 148-164.

Hahn, S. (2017). *A Nation Without Borders*: *The United States and its world in an age of civil war, 1830-1920*. Penguin Random House, New York, NY.

Hall S (1997) Old and new identities, old and new ethnicities. In: King AD (ed.) *Culture, Globalisation and the World System: Contemporary Conditions for the Representation of Identity*. London: Routledge, 31–68.

Halpern, R. (2002). A Different Kind of Child Development Institution: The History of After School Programs for Low-Income Children. *Teachers College Record.*

Halpern, R. (2003). Making play work: the promise of after-school programs for low-income children. New York: Teachers College Press.

Halpern, R., Baker, G., & Mollard, W. (2000). Youth programs as alternative spaces to be: A study of neighborhood youth programs in Chicago's west town. *Youth & Society, 31*(4), 469-506.

Haneda, M., & Wells, G. (2012). Some Key Pedagogic Principles for Helping ELLs to Succeed in School. *Theory Into Practice, 51*(4), 297-304.

Haney Lopez, I. (1994). The Social Construction of Race. *Harvard Law Review, 29*(1).

Haney Lopez, I. (2006). *White By Law: The Legal Construction of Race.*

Hardcastle, M., Usher, K., Holmes, C. (2006). Carspecken's five-stage critical qualitative research method: An application to Nursing. *Qualitative Health Research, 16*(1),151-161.

Harris, D., & Kiyama, J. (2015). The Role of School and Community-Based Programs in Aiding Latina/o High School Persistence. *Education and Urban Society, 47*(2), 182-206.

Heath, S., & McLaughlin, M. (1994). The Best of Both Worlds: Connecting Schools and Community Youth Organizations for All-Day, All-Year Learning. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 30*(3), 278-300.

Heidenreich, L. (2006), 'En Las Escuelas de San Francisco Se Enseñan el Frances y el Aleman…': Nineteenth-Century Eclectic Readers, Common Schools and the Construction of Second-Class Citizenship in Nineteenth-Century California. In, J. Garcia (Ed.) Beginning a New Millennium of Chicana and Chicano Scholarship: Selected Proceedings of the 2001 NACCS Conference, (pp. 105-114). Berkeley, CA: Inkworks Press.

United States. Congress. House. Committee of Conference. (1965). Higher Education Act of 1965. Washington.

"Help Make Americans of Aliens." *Los Angeles Times (1923-Current File),* Dec. 25, 1921.
Hernández, E. (2015) #hermandad: Twitter as a Counter-Space for Latina Doctoral Students. *Journal of College and Character*, 16(2), 124-130.

Hickson, H. (2016). Becoming a critical narrativist: Using critical reflection and narrative inquiry as research methodology. *Qualitative Social Work*, *15*(3), 380–391.

Hill, M.L. (2017). *Nobody: Casualties of America's War on the Vulnerable, from Ferguson to Flint and Beyond.* Atria Books, New York, NY.

Howard, T. (2010). *Why race and culture matter in schools: Closing the achievement gap in America's classrooms.*New York, N.Y.: Teachers College Press.

Hosang, D. (2006). Beyond policy: Ideology, race and the reimagining of youth. In *Beyond Resistance!: Youth Activism and Community Change: New Democratic Possibilities for Practice and Policy for America's Youth* (pp. 3-19). Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.

Jacobson, M. (2005). Lifting the veil of secrecy from industry funding of nonprofit health organizations. *International Journal of Occupational and Environmental Health*, *11*(4), 349-356.

Jones, J. & Deutsch, N. (2013). Social and identity development in an after-school program: Changing experiences and shifting adolescent needs. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, 33(1), pp. 17-43.

Kellogg Youth Initiative Partnerships. (1997). Lessons Learned from the Crucial First Decade of Positive Youth Development Throughout Community-Based Programming. KYIP, 1987-1997.

Kidsdata.org, publication.

Kohler Riessman, C. (2008). *Narrative analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
Kuperminc, Gabriel P, Smith, Emilie P, Henrich, Christopher C, Jones, Jeffrey N, & Deutsch, Nancy L. (2013). Social and Identity Development in an After-School Program. *The Journal of Early Adolescence, 33*(1), 17-43.

Kwon, S. (2013). Uncivil youth: race, activism, and affirmative governmentality. Durham; London: Duke University Press.

Kwon, S. (2008). Moving from Complaints to Action: Oppositional Consciousness and Collective Action in a Political Community. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 39*(1), 59-76.

Labaree (1997). Public Goods, Private Goods: The American Struggle over Educational Goals, *American Educational Research Journal, 34* (1), 39-81.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2006). From the Achievement Gap to the Education Debt: Understanding Achievement in U.S. Schools (Report). *Educational Researcher,* Educational Researcher, Oct. 2006.

Ladson-Billings, G., & Tate, W. F., IV. (1995). Toward a critical race theory of education. *Teachers College Record, 97*(1), 47-68.

Lassonde, S. (2005). *Learning to Forget: Schooling and Family Life In New Haven's Working Class, 1870-1940*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Lee, S. (2005). *Up Against Whiteness: Race, School, and Immigrant Youth.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Lerner, R., Dowling, E., & Anderson, P. (2003). Positive Youth Development: Thriving as the Basis of Personhood and Civil Society. *Applied Developmental Science, 7*(3), 172-180.

Lesko, N. (1996). Denaturalizing Adolescence: The Politics of contemporary Representations. Y*outh & Society,* 28(2), p. 139-61.

Lewis, O. (1966) Culture of Poverty. *American* 215 (4), 19-25.

Lipman, P. (2011a). The New Political Economy of Urban Education: Neoliberalism,   Race, and the Right to the City. New York: Routledge.

(2011b). Neoliberal Education Restructuring: Dangers and Opportunities of the Present Crisis. *Monthly Review* (Socialist Online Magazine).

Lugones, M. (2007). Heterosexualism and the Colonial / Modern Gender System. *Hypatia, 22*(1), 186-209

MacLeod, J. (2009). *Ain't no makin' it : aspirations & attainment in a low-income neighborhood*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Madison, D. (2005). *Critical Ethnography: Method, Ethics, and Performance*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Mahoney, J., Lord, H., Carryl, E. (2005). An Ecological analysis of after-school program participation and the development of academic performance and motivational attributes for disadvantaged children. *Child Development*, 76(4), 811-825.

Martinez, S., & Rury, J. (2012). From "Culturally Deprived" to "At Risk": The Politics of Popular Expression and Educational Inequality in the United States, 1960-1985. *Teachers College Record, 114*(6), Teachers College Record, 2012, Vol.114(6).

Martis, N. (1994). *#187 Illegal immigrants. Ineligibility for public services. Verification and Reporting*. California Voter Foundation.

Matloff-Nieves, S., Wiggins, T., Fuqua, J., Ragonese, M., Pullano, S., & Brender, G. (2018). Returning to responsive youth work in new york city. In P. Alldred, F. Cullen, K. Edwards, & D. Fusco (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Youth Work Practice* (554-567). Los Angeles: SAGE Publications.

Mayeroff, M. (1971). *On caring.* New York: HarperCollins Publishers.

McElroy, E. J., & Arnesto, M. (1988). Trio and Upward Bound: History, programs, and issues- past, present and future. Journal of Negro Education, 67(4), 373–380.

McNeil, L. M. (2004). Creating new inequalities: Contradictions of reform. In *Critical Social Issues in American Education: Democracy and Meaning in a Globalizing World: Third Edition* (pp. 75-86). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Medina, J.C., Baldridge, B., Wiggins, T. (2020). Critical Reflections on Tensions in Authentic Youth-Adult Partnerships. In "At Our Best: Building Youth-Adult Partnerships in Out-of-School Time Settings, edited by Gretchen Brion-Meisels, Jessica Tseming Fei, & Deepa Sriya Vasudevan, Information Age Publishing.

Memmi, A. (1965). The colonizer and the colonized. New York: Orion Press.

Menchaca, M., & Valencia, R. R. (1990). Anglo-Saxon Ideologies in the 1920s-1930s: Their Impact on the Segregation of Mexican Students in California. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, *21*(3), 222–249.

Menchaca, M. (199**7**). within Valencia, R. (1997). *The Evolution of Deficit Thinking: Educational Thought and Practice. The Stanford Series on Education and Public Policy.* Falmer Press, Taylor & Francis

Menchaca, M. (2001). *Recovering history, constructing race: The Indian, black and white roots of Mexican Americans*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Meyka, M. (2013). *Passports Into Dominant Society: An Examination Of GEAR UP Cultural and Social Capital Experiences On Student Trajectories and College Participation,* ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Mignolo, W. (2007). INTRODUCTION. *Cultural Studies, 21*(2-3), 155-167.

Mignolo, W. D. (2012). *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Mitra, D. (2009.). Collaborating with Students: Building Youth Adult Partnerships in Schools. *American Journal of Education, 115*(3), 407-436.

Monroy, D. (1999). *Rebirth: Mexican Los Angeles From the Great Migration to the Great Depression.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Moreno Sandoval, C. D. (2013). *Mesoamerica Heals Our School: A Critical Narrative Inquiry of Ancestral Computing Para El Vivir Comunitario En El Sereno, 73*(12), Dissertation Abstracts International, A: The Humanities and Social Sciences, Vol.73(12).

NCES (2019). Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups 2019.

NCLB. U.S. Department of Education. No child left behind. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

Nava, P. (2012). *Sin Sacrificio No Hay Recompensa: Apoyo as (Im)migrant Parental Engagement in Farmworking Families of the California Central Valley* (3541999). [Doctoral Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles. Proquest LLC.]

Nelson, I. (2010). *From Stop over to Savior: The Embedded Influence of Out-of-school Time Programs for Mexican American Youth, 71*(08), 2842.

Nicolaides, B. (2019). From Resourceful to Illegal: The racialized history of garage housing in Los Angeles, *Boom California*, January, 31. 2019 (Accessed at: https://boomcalifornia.com/2019/01/31/from-resourceful-to-illegal/)

(2004). The Neighborhood Politics of Class in a Working-Class Suburb of Los Angeles, 1920-1940. *Journal of Urban History*, 30, pp. 428-451.

Noguera, P.A. (2008). Creating Schools Where Race Does Not Predict Achievement: The Role and Significance of Race in the Racial Achievement Gap. *Journal of Negro Education, 77*(2), 90-103.

North, C. (2009). "The promise and perils of developing democratic literacy for social justice." Curriculum Inquiry, 39(4), 555-579.

Nygreen, K. A., Kwon, S., & Sánchez, P. (2006). Urban youth building community: Social change and participatory research in schools, homes, and community-based organizations. In *Youth Participation and Community Change* (pp. 107-124). Taylor and Francis.

Ochoa, G. L. (1999). Everyday ways of resistance and cooperation: Mexican American women building Puentes with immigrants. *Frontier: A Journal of Women Studies*, 20(1), 1- 20.

Omi, M. & Winant, H. (2014). *Racial formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s.* New York: Routledge.

Omi, M. & Winant, H. (2008). Once More, with Feeling: Reflections on Racial Formation. *PMLA*, 123(5), pp. 1562-1572.

Pacheco, M. (2018). Learning and Becoming Writers: Meaning, Identity, and Epistemology in a Newswroom Community of Practice. *Mind, Culture, And Activity*, 25(2), pp. 106-124.

Pacheco, M. & Nao, K. (2009). Rewriting Identities: Using Historicized Writing to Promote Migrant Students' Writing. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, 4, pp. 24-43.

Park, H., Lin, C.H., Liu, C., & Tabb, K. (2015). The relationships between after-school programs, academic outcomes, and behavioral developmental outcomes of Latino children from immigrant families: Findings from the 2005 National Household Education Surveys Program. *Children and Youth Services Review, 53*, 77-83.

Pascoe, P. (2009). *What comes naturally: miscegenation law and the making of race in America.* Oxford University Press.

Pasque, P.A. & Pèrez, M.S. (2015). Centering critical inquiry: methodologies that facilitates critical qualitative research. In G.S. Canella, MS. Perez, & P.A. Pasque, *Critical qualitative inquiry: Foundations and future.* Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 139-170.

Patel, L. (2016). Decolonizing educational research: from ownership to answerability. New York: Routledge.

Pew Hispanic Research Center. (2017). Online Website accessed 3/9/2017.

Quijano, A. (2000). Coloniality of power and Eurocentrism in Latin America. *International Sociology, 15*(2), 215-232.

Quijano, A. (2007). COLONIALITY AND MODERNITY/RATIONALITY. *Cultural Studies, 21*(2-3), 168-178.

United States. Government Accountability Office. (2013). Race to the top: states implementing teacher and principal evaluation systems despite challenges: report to the Chairman, Committee on Education and the Workforce, House of Representatives. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Accountability Office.

Ralph, J. H., & Rubinson, R. (1980). Immigration and the Expansion of Schooling in the United States, 1890-1970. *American Sociological Review*, *45*(6), 943–954.

Ribeiro, G. L. (2011). Why (Post)colonialism and (De)coloniality Are Not Enough: A Post-Imperialist Perspective. *Postcolonial Studies (London, United Kingdom), 14*(3), 285-297.

Riggs, N., Bohnert, A., Guzman, M., & Davidson, D. (2010). Examining the Potential of Community-Based After-School Programs for Latino Youth. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 45*(3-4), 417-429.

Rodriguez, E., Rhodes, K., & Aguirre, G. (2015). Intervention for High School Latino Students in Preparing for College: Steps for Consideration. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 14*(3), 207-222.

Rosa, J. (2018). *Looking Like a Language, Sounding Like a Race*. Oxford University Press. (2016). Racializing Language and Regimenting Latina/os: Chronotype, Social Tense, and American Raciolingusitic futures. *Langauge and Communication,* 46, pp.106-117.

Rosa, J. & Bonilla, Y. (2017). Deprovincializing Trump, Decolonizing Diversity, and Unsettling Anthropology. *American Ethnologist*, 44(2), pp. 201-208.

Rosa, J. & Flores, N. (2017). Unsettling Race and Language: Toward a Raciolinguistic Perspective. *Language in Society*, 46, pp. 621-647.

Rosa, J. & Flores, N. (2015). Hearing Language Gaps and Reproducing Social Inequality. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, 25 (1), pp. 66-86.

Said, E. W. (2003). *Orientalism.* [Rev. ed.] London: Penguin.

Sakai, J. (1989). *Settlers: The Mythology of the White Proleteriat.* Chicago, IL: Morningstar Press.

San Miguel, G. (2004). *Contested policy: the rise and fall of federal bilingual education in the United States, 1960-2001*. Denton, Tex.: University of North Texas Press.

Sánchez, G.I. (1932). *Forgotten people; a study of New Mexicans*. Albuquerque, N.M., C. Horn.

Sánchez, G. J. (1995). *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity In Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Schmidt, S. (2011). THEORIZING PLACE: STUDENTS' NAVIGATION OF PLACE OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM. *JCT (Online), 27*(1), 20-35.

Scott, R., & Hébrard, J. (2012). *Freedom Papers*. Cambridge, Massachusetts; London, England: Harvard University Press.

Silloway, T. (2010). Building Capacity for Better Results: Strategies for Financing and Sustaining the Organizational Capacity of Youth-Serving Programs. *The Finance Project,* September 2010.

Silloway, T., Connors-Tadros, L., Marchand, V. (2009). A Guide to Effective Investments in Positive Youth Development: Implications of Research for Financing and Sustaining Programs and Services for Youth. *The Finance Project,* August 2009.

Skogrand, L., Riggs, K., & Huffaker, S. (2008). Latino Youth Participation in Community Programs. *Journal of Youth Development: Bridging Research and Practice*, 3(2); Fall.

Smith, S. (2003). Government and nonprofits in the modern age. *Society*, *40*(4), 36-45.

Soja, E. (2014). *My Los Angeles: From Urban Restructuring to Regional Urbanization*. University of California Press.

Solorzano, D., Ceja, M., & Yosso, T. (2000). Critical Race Theory, Racial Microaggressions, and Campus Racial Climate: The Experiences of African American College Students. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 69(1/2), pp. 60-73.

Solorzano, D., & Delgado-Bernal, D. (2001). Examining Transformational Resistance Through a Critical Race and LatCRIT Theory Framework: Chicana and Chicano Students in an Urban Context. *Urban Education*, 36(3), pp. 308-342.

Solorzano, D., & Yosso, T. (2002). Critical race methodology: Counter-storytelling as an analytical framework for education research. *Qualitative Inquiry, 8*(1), 23-44.

Soss, J., Fording, R., and Schram, S. (2011). Disciplining the poor: neoliberal paternalism and the persistent power of race. Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press.

Stefancic, J. (1997). Latino and Latina Critical Theory: An Annotated Bibliography. *California Law Review, 85*(5), 1509.

Stefancic, J. & Delgado, R. (edited). (2013). *Critical race theory: the cutting edge*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Temple University Press.

Stern, A.M. (2005). STERILIZED in the Name of Public Health: Race, Immigration, and Reproductive Control in Modern California. *American Journal of Public Health, 95*(7), 1128-1138.

Stewart, E., Martinez, R., Baumer, E., & Gertz, M. (2015). The Social Context of Latino Threat and Punitive Latino Sentiment. *Social Problems, 62*(1), 68.

Strobel, K., O'Donoghue, J., Mclaughlin, M., & Kirshner, B. (2008). Qualities that attract urban youth to after-school settings and promote continued participation. *Teachers College Record, 110*(8), 1677-1705.

Suárez-Orozco, M. M. (1996). California dreaming: Proposition 187 and the cultural psychology of racial and ethnic exclusion. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 27*(2), 151–167.

Tate IV, W. F. (1997). Critical race theory and education: History, theory, and implications. *Review of Research in Education, 22*, 195-247.

Terzian, M., Giesen, L., & Mbwana, K. (2009). Why teens are not involved in out-of-school time programs: The youth perspective. *Child Trends,* Child Trends, 2009.

Thomas, D. R. (2006). A General Inductive Approach for Analyzing Qualitative Evaluation Data. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 27(2), 237-246.

U.S. Census Bureau (2016). Latino Census Data. Retrieved from website on 3/12/2018.

U.S. Department of Education. (2014). *21st Century Community Learning Centers*. Retrieved on January 28, 2017, from http://www.ed/gov/21stcclc/.

U.S. (1801). The Bill of Rights. Washington, DC: Published for the National Archives and Records Administration by the National Archives Trust Fund Board.

United States*. National Commission on Excellence in Education. (1983). A nation at risk : the imperative for educational reform. Washington, D.C.: The National Commission on Excellence in Education*.

Valenzuela, A. (1999). *Subtractive schooling: U.S.-Mexican youth and the politics of caring.* New York: SUNY Press.

Valencia, R. (1997). *The Evolution of Deficit Thinking: Educational Thought and Practice. The Stanford Series on Education and Public Policy.* Falmer Press, Taylor & Francis.

Villalpando, O. (2004). Practical considerations of critical race theory and Latino critical theory for Latino college students. *New Directions for Student Services, 2004*(105), 41-50.

Vygotsky, L.S. (1983). Collected Works, Vol. 3: Problems in the development of mind. Moscow:

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. (2012). 2010-2011 21st century community learning centers executive summary. *Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction*

Wilson, S. (2003a). Brown over "Other White": Mexican Americans' Legal Arguments and Litigation Strategy in School Desegregation Lawsuits. *Law and History Review, 21*(1), 145-194.

 (2003b). Tracking the Shifting Racial Identity of Mexican Americans. *Law and History Review, 21*(1), 211-213

Yosso, T.J., Villalpando, O., Delgado Bernal, D., & Solorzano, D. (2001). "Critical race theory in Chicana/o education." In, J. Garcia (Ed.) Beginning a New Millennium of Chicana and Chicano Scholarship: Selected Proceedings of the 2001 NACCS Conference, (pp. 89-104). Berkeley, CA: Inkworks Press

Yudell, M. (2009). *Making Race: Biology and the Evolution of the Race Concept in 20th Century American Thought, 69*(10), 4102.

Zhang, J. J., & Byrd, C. E. (2006). Successful after-school programs: The 21st century community learning centers. Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance, 77(8), 3-6, 12.