

Unveiling the Unheard Voices:
Raciolinguistic Ideologies Impacting Indian American Students
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Abstract

Schools are recognized as sites where raciolinguistic ideologies operate, impacting Spanish- and African American Vernacular English-speaking students' education. However, it is often assumed that Indian American students are unaffected by these ideologies. This is fueled by headlines about Indian Americans excelling at spelling bee competitions, depicting a successful "model minority." Yet, Indian American students, like other racialized students, are perceived through a lens of racial hierarchy that positions their language practices as a deficit to White, English-monolingual students and in need of remediation. This dissertation study uses a raciolinguistic perspective to focus on the racial and linguistic experiences of Indian American students in the U.S. education system. This study uses an exploratory case study design to present the experiences of six Indian American students studying at a large Midwestern university in the United States.

The key findings of this research study uncovered insights into the challenges and systemic biases faced by Indian American students as a result of raciolinguistic ideologies. These ideologies contribute to the marginalization of these students within educational policies, structures, and interpersonal interactions. The findings also highlighted a complex interplay between the internalization of raciolinguistic ideologies and active resistance exhibited by Indian American students. All participants had experienced accommodating and/or internalizing raciolinguistic ideologies at various points in their lives. However, the majority of participants also demonstrated critical thinking, questioning, and active resistance to the raciolinguistic ideologies that promoted the idealized linguistic practices of Whiteness.

This research challenges the invisibility of Asian Americans in the discussion of racial (in)equity and the harms of dominant raciolinguistic ideologies. Additionally, this research not

only sheds light on the challenges faced by Indian American and Asian American students but also contributes to our understanding of how race and language intersect, affecting students from minority communities. Furthermore, this research emphasizes the pressing need for social justice and equal educational opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds. Finally, it highlights the significance of recognizing and addressing raciolinguistic ideologies in educational environments to establish inclusive spaces that appreciate linguistic diversity, encourage cultural identity, and enable all students to thrive.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In a conversation with a first-generation Indian immigrant mother, she shared her confusion about why her daughter, Simran, who was born in the United States, was placed in ESL (English as a Second Language) classes up until grade 6. She added that Simran understands Hindi but only speaks English and considers English her first language. Experiences and positioning of Indian and Indian American students like Simran are complicated by headlines such as “The Extraordinary Success of Indian Americans at the Spelling Bee” (Mago, 2021). Such headlines have created the social construct of Indian Americans, like other Asian groups, as high achieving, part of the “model minority” who are innately primed for success (Bhatia & Ram, 2018). However, the story of Indian Americans in the United States gets more complex. Indians who were allowed into the United States during the 1960s and 1970s were “hyper-selected” (Lee & Zhou, 2015) for technical skills that were seen as a contribution to America’s competitive advantage against the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, post-9/11, Indian Americans were constructed as a national threat and subjected to various surveillance measures instituted by the government (Murjani, 2014).

Addressing the experiences of Indians and Indian Americans in the United States is incomplete without discussing their racial ambiguity. My awareness of this ambiguity started forming only a few days after landing in the United States when a gentleman approached me at the bus stop and spoke to me in Spanish. Over time, I have experienced similar incidents where people expect me to speak Spanish or just mention that I look Hispanic. Another time, I was told in a supermarket that I looked Brazilian. When I further asked what made them think that, they said that usually, Indians have darker skin color and a different accent than mine. The ability of my outward appearance to pass for Latine, Brazilian, or other ethnicities in the United States

aligns with what Harpalani (2013) states, that a changing racial characterization and racial ambiguity is an integral part of the experience of Indians in the United States. He further argues that it is necessary to understand this racial ambiguity as conditional to the positioning of the individual (and groups) in relation to other groups and the social and political circumstances of the country (Harpalani, 2013). “Understanding racial ambiguity requires a nuanced consideration of the relationship between physical appearance, racial stereotypes, and media depictions in promoting understanding of race” (p.85). Indian Americans are perceived as “more black,” “more White,” or just “ambiguous non-Whites” (Kibria, 1996), depending on history, context, and viewer. Moreover, the various physical features, economic standing, different political stances, and diverse religious, cultural, and language practices contribute to the racial ambiguity of Indians and Indian Americans through formal and informal classification and racialization (Harpalani, 2013).

As a result of these social constructs of Indians and Indian Americans in the United States, the experiences of Indian American students within the educational system are imbued with prejudice and alienation, which are veiled and compounded by the United States’ achievement ideology and profile of Asian American success (Ngo, 2006). The model minority stereotype masks some students’ educational struggles and needs (Rahma & Paik, 2017). “More and more scholars are starting to notice that children from this subgroup face difficulty in schools. Often, the model minority stereotype of South Asians confounds their struggles as school teachers, and even their parents expect them to excel in academics, yet do not have the human capital nor assistance at school to achieve those outcomes” (p. 46). Unfortunately, their needs are buried under the favorable statistics and reputation of the thriving Asian groups. Indian American students face stereotypes that establish expectations not only for academic

accomplishment but also for linguistic use. The languages of Asian Americans broadly, and Indian Americans specifically, are widely connected with foreignness and national subterfuge (Lee, 2019). These are also reflected in racist bullying, such as mocking the language and accent of Asian American groups. Like other racialized students¹ in the U.S. education system, Indian Americans are subjected to scrutiny and judgment about their cultural and linguistic abilities and choices (Shankar, 2008a).

The raciolinguistic perspective (Flores & Rosa, 2015) in education research helps reveal how ideologies of race and language converge and co-constitute one another to impact racialized communities that are users of non-dominant languages, such as Indian Americans. This raises awareness about the ways White dominant culture has co-constructed language and race since the era of colonialism (Rosa & Flores, 2017). Another focus of the raciolinguistic perspective is to demonstrate how listening subjects inscribe racial or ethnic identities onto speakers based on raciolinguistic ideologies that associate language practices with certain races or ethnicities (Alim, 2016). However, individuals who are presented as racially ambiguous, such as Indian Americans, may be subject to increased scrutiny or categorization (Tsai et al., 2021). Examining racial and linguistic experiences of Indian Americans in the education setting through a raciolinguistic perspective will help to unveil the structures and discourses which shape their experiences. The raciolinguistic perspective shifts our attention from individual racialized speaking subjects to the institutions and policies that categorize and position racialized students, including Indian American students' linguistic practices, as deficit and inferior (Rosa, 2016). However, the impact of these ideologies on Indian American students is usually masked under the model minority myth. Studying the Indian population, which is multilingual, seen as racially ambiguous, and a

¹ I have used the term “racialized students” instead of “students of color” to highlight the processes through which linguistic valuation and devaluation takes place (Flores & Rosa, 2015)

part of the model minority, presents a unique case to be analyzed using a raciolinguistic perspective that focuses on the intersection of race and language.

Research Questions

This dissertation examines the racial and linguistic experiences of Indian American students in the U.S. education system through a raciolinguistic perspective by focusing on the following questions:

1. What raciolinguistic ideologies do Indian American students encounter in structures, policies, and interpersonal interactions within schools, including with personnel and peers?
2. How do Indian American students navigate the raciolinguistic ideologies they experience in the U.S. education system and beyond?

Rationale

This research aims to conduct a qualitative exploratory case study to understand and capture the racial and linguistic experiences of Indian American students in the U.S. education system using a raciolinguistic perspective. This research aims further to broaden the understanding and scope of this perspective. It also aims to contribute to the currently scarce literature on the experiences of Indian American students.

The raciolinguistic perspective examines the intersection between language and race. This raises awareness about the ways White dominant culture has co-constructed language and race since the era of colonialism (Rosa & Flores, 2017). Another focus of raciolinguistic is to demonstrate how listening subjects inscribe racial or ethnic identities onto speakers based on raciolinguistic ideologies that associate language practices with certain races or ethnicities (Alim et al. 2016). However, individuals who are presented as racially ambiguous may be subject to

increased scrutiny or categorization (Tsai et al., 2021). Studying the Indian American population, which is multilingual, seen as racially ambiguous, and a part of the model minority, presents a unique case to be analyzed using a raciolinguistic perspective that focuses on the intersection of race and language. Employing a raciolinguistic perspective to analyze Indian American students' experiences in the education setting will also widen the scope of the raciolinguistic perspective. As an exploratory study within this research domain, this study's results will contribute to presenting the experiences of Indian Americans and inform practitioners about the diverse needs of Indian American students, which are often masked by the various stereotypes associated with the community.

Chapter Outlines

This research study is divided into seven chapters. Chapter 2 begins by describing the literature on South Asian communities. This chapter introduces South Asian Americans, their histories, and their racial standing in U.S. race politics. Chapter 3 describes the theoretical framework used to provide a lens and a perspective for the study's design and content analysis. Then, Chapter 4 discusses the study design and methodology, including six participant introductions based on their self-descriptions in the questionnaire and interviews. In Chapter 5, the first key finding of this research is presented, which sheds light on the raciolinguistic ideologies encountered by Indian American students in the U.S. education system, leading to their marginalization. It illustrates how teachers' deficit perspectives unfairly label racialized students as linguistically deficient, leading to ESL placements and academic consequences. The push for assimilation and English dominance is evident in limited Indian or even South Asian heritage language representation, while societal expectations contribute to erasing linguistic and cultural identities. Finding one also explores accent bias that Indian American students

experience, which is shown to impact academic assessments and interpersonal interactions, emphasizing the pressure on racialized students to conform to perceived linguistic norms, ultimately perpetuating biases against their communities.

In Chapter 6, finding to presents how Indian American students navigate and respond to raciolinguistic ideologies. The analysis reveals two significant findings: first, participants internalize raciolinguistic ideologies, manifesting through beliefs about language correctness and accents rooted in racial hierarchies; second, participants resist these ideologies through self-reflection, questioning biases, and strategic language choices, highlighting the need for critical examination of linguistic norms in education. Finding two also discusses how schools contribute to perpetuating raciolinguistic ideologies, impacting students' experiences and creating disparities. Examples from participants, such as altering accents for higher scores or persistently using heritage languages, illustrate the complexities of identity and language choices within the U.S. education system, emphasizing the ongoing challenges of addressing and resisting raciolinguistic ideologies. Finally, Chapter 7 presents the key summary of the research and outlines the implications of this research and avenues for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

To fully comprehend the historical background and experiences of Indian Americans in the United States, it is vital first to have an understanding of the South Asian diaspora as a whole. The complexity of South Asian identities is nuanced by regional, linguistic, and religious affiliations, highlighting the heterogeneous nature of the South Asian community at large and the Indian American community in particular. As immigrants from South Asia have settled in the United States through various waves of migration, their experiences have been influenced by changing immigration policies, societal perceptions, and racial dynamics, as well as prevailing stereotypes such as the model minority myth and the perpetual foreigner image. By exploring the historical trajectory and racializing experiences of South Asians and Indians, this dissertation chapter aims to clarify the multifaceted dynamics that shape the identities and realities of Indian Americans within the broader South Asian diaspora context.

Getting to Know South Asian Americans

From a geographic perspective, South Asia refers to the countries of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, and the Maldives. South Asian Americans (SAAs) are those who trace their ancestry to these regions. This group also includes people of South Asian descent who migrated to the United States from other regions such as the Caribbean (such as Guyana, Trinidad), Africa (including Kenya, South Africa), Canada, Europe, the Middle East, and other parts of Asia and Pacific Islands (such as Singapore, Fiji) (SAALT, 2019). The South Asian community in the United States is home to various cultures, ethnicities, languages, and religions, including four of the world's largest religious faiths- Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism.

SAAs sometimes also identify with the term "Desi," a colloquial term that comes from

the word *Desh*, which means “country” or “homeland” in several South Asian languages (Mishra, 2016). It is also one of the long lists of names used to refer to the South Asian diaspora. However, many do not resonate with the terms South Asian or *Desi*, and these terms are not always meaningful in the context of diaspora (Kaduvettoor-Davidson & Weatherford, 2018). More typically, diasporic organizations such as Indian-American, Nepalese Americans or Bangladeshi-American, etc., indicate the vast and varied terrain of religion, culture, and political division among South Asians. A significant factor for diversity within the South Asian community is the variety of languages spoken on the subcontinent and even within South Asian countries. First-generation SAAs who find themselves together with others from their country of birth, even if they belong to the same religion, may have different Native languages and cultural practices (Dave et al., 2000; Kaduvettoor-Davidson & Weatherford, 2018). Additionally, first-generation immigrants’ identities are closely related to their homeland nation-state and occasionally to their religious or regional identity, such as Gujarati, Bengali, Punjabi, etc. (Jacob, 1998). Although, within the diversity among South Asians, the first-generation SAAs from these countries may share some commonalities in worldview, cultural values, family norms, and traditions, as well as the desire for education or economic success when immigrating to the United States. Another commonality among SSAs, particularly when they first come to the United States, is the challenges of acculturation (Bhattacharya & Schoppelrey, 2004).

Alternatively, for the second generation, the labels South Asian and *Desi* are adopted as a marker of solidarity. It also marks a significant moment for the South Asian diaspora as it signals the shift from South Asians as immigrants longing to return to their homeland “to public consumers and producers of distinctive, widely circulating cultural and linguistic forms” (Shankar, 2008a, p.4). For the second generation, the term “South Asian American” does not

refer to a place (South Asia) but a sense of community among children of parents from various South Asian countries. “The second generation falls in between the first and third, with attachments to both ethnic and mainstream cultures” (Dhingra, 2003, p. 250). Their parents did not have much in common, but the children instructively saw the connections and associations (Purkayastha, 2005; Prashad, 2012). Given these variations and ambiguity, it is crucial to recognize that despite certain similarities between the subgroups of the South Asian community, it is a heterogeneous community speaking varied languages and practicing varied religions and cultures (Kaduvettoor-Davidson & Weatherford, 2018).

Among all the South Asian countries, the most available research is on the SAAs of Indian descent. One of the reasons for this is that they are numerically the largest group among South Asian countries. To understand another reason why most historical literature on South Asian immigration to the United States discusses only migration from “India,” we first need to get familiar with the historical context of the Indian subcontinent.

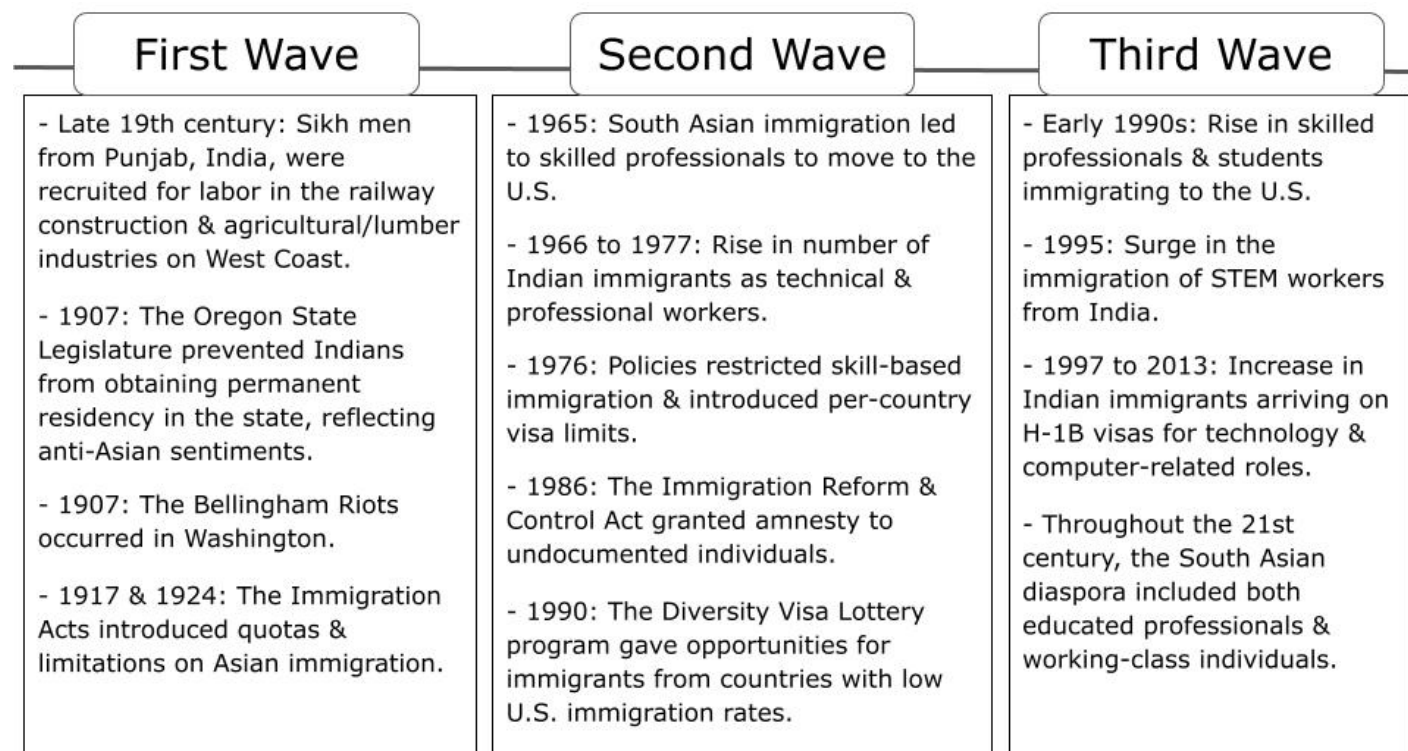
Present-day India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh were once part of one big nation under British rule, called British India. In 1947, when British rule ended, the country was divided into two independent countries: India and Pakistan. At the time of the partition, as part of the two-nation theory, which was presented due to religious issues, it led to Pakistan becoming a Muslim country and India becoming a majority Hindu but secular country. Further, in 1971, another division occurred when the eastern half of Pakistan became an independent country of Bangladesh (Ambedkar, 1945; Kumar, 1997; Hasan, 1998; Engineer, 2009; Ranjan, 2019). This historical context of the Indian subcontinent will help us understand the immigration story of South Asians to the United States.

Immigration History

The immigration history of South Asian immigration to the United States can be broadly divided into three major waves (Kibria, 2006; Chakravorty et al., 2016; Rahma & Paik, 2017). With each successive wave, the SAA population has grown in number and become more diverse in its national origins, social class, and immigrant generation (Kibria, 2006). It is essential to understand the different time periods when groups of South Asians migrated to the United States since each group had specific characteristics in common that affected their racializing experiences and contributed to the racially ambiguous South Asian and Indian image in the United States.

Figure 1

Historical Timeline: Summary of Immigration History of South Asians to the United States



First Wave

The first wave of immigration to the United States from South Asia was identified in the late nineteenth century (Kibria, 2006; Bhatia & Ram, 2018). The South Asians that arrived were, at this time, British colonial subjects, mainly composed of people from what is now India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, and almost without exception, were male (Purkayastha, 2005). The number of immigrants that arrived from South Asia was very few in number and mainly Sikh men from farming communities in the state of Punjab in India who settled on the West Coast (Bhatia & Ram, 2018). They were initially recruited by the Western Pacific Railroad to construct railway lines, but they gradually branched out to agricultural and lumber industries. Like East Asians, South Asians came to the United States to look for better economic opportunities while fulfilling the cheap labor demands in the rail, agricultural, and lumber industries in California, Oregon, and Washington (Prashad, 2000). During this period, a smaller number of Muslim men also started migrating from the Bengal region of India (what is present-day Bangladesh), working for the peddlers in New York, New Jersey, Maryland, and New Orleans (Bald, 2015; Rahma & Paik, 2017).

However, despite the small number of immigrants from South Asia, their presence generated a backlash. South Asian immigrants experienced hostility and vigorous opposition to their presence and settlement due to the tremendous anti-Asian hate in the United States (Kibria, 2006). In 1907, the Oregon State Legislature enacted a law that prohibited Indians from acquiring permanent residence in the state. The same year, a major riot in Bellingham, Washington, occurred when a mob of six hundred workers attacked the compounds of immigrant workers from India (Shankar, 2008a). After the riots, many immigrant workers from Bellingham and other neighboring towns fled to Canada, traumatized by the incident (Chakravorty et al.,

2016). A 1909 federal Immigration Commission report stated that “the Hindu is regarded as the least desirable, or better, the most undesirable, of all the eastern Asiatic races which have come to share our soil.” (Leonard 1992, p.24 quoted in Shankar, 2008a).

Further, a 1920 report by the California State Board of Control similarly stated, “The Hindu is the most undesirable immigrant in the state. His lack of personal cleanliness, his low morals, and his blind adherence to theories and teachings so entirely repugnant to American principles make him unfit for association with American people” (Leonard 1992, p.24 quoted in Shankar, 2008a). Such hostile conditions and restrictions to bringing their family or spouse to the United States, owning land, and gaining citizenship rights, coupled with the Immigration Acts of 1917 and 1924, which barred the entry of all Asian groups and set quotas on the number of immigrants from Asia, ensured the limited migration and settlement of Asian groups including South Asians in the country at this time. According to Hing (1993), the number of Asian Indians who entered the United States between 1881 and 1917 was 7,000, and by 1940, an estimated 2,400 Asian Indians remained in the country.

Second Wave

The second wave of South Asians to the United States was between 1965 to 1979, which brought around 12,000 Indian-born immigrants to the United States (Kibria, 2006; Bhatia & Ram, 2018). Immigrants who migrated during this time were a group of individuals with professional degrees and high English proficiency who gained legal entry based on their education and skills. The Immigration Reform Act of 1965 played a significant role in the immigration story of South Asians and marked the beginning of the second wave of immigration. The post-1965 immigrants that came to the United States were trained as medical doctors, engineers, scientists, university professors, and doctoral and post-doctoral students in science-

related disciplines, including chemistry, biochemistry, mathematics, physics, biology, and medicine (Kibria, 2006; Bhatia & Ram, 2018). The Reform Act of 1965 was passed with two main objectives. The first was to boost the number of highly qualified immigrants who could utilize their technical skills to provide the United States a competitive advantage against the Soviet Union's technological breakthroughs at the time and to help staff expand the Medicare system (Prashad, 2012). The second objective of the reform was to dispel the notion that the United States was a racist country (Prashad, 2000).

This wave of immigrants was drawn from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and all over India. The state of Gujarat in India was the most overrepresented subgroup in this population (Chakravorty et al., 2016). The Act eliminated 1924 restrictions on entry based on national origins. Keeping in mind the entry barriers to the United States that were in place before 1965, the South Asians who migrated at this time were first-generation immigrants (Kibria, 2006). There was also a continuous stream of students coming to the United States for higher education (Rahma & Paik, 2017).

Prashad (2000) notes that between 1966 and 1977, 83% of Indians who entered the United States came under the occupational category of technical and professional workers (i.e., scientists, engineers, and medical personnel). South Asian immigrants who came post-1965 did not need to rely on co-ethnic communities for employment or resources because they were equipped with their human, social, and cultural capital (Bhattacharya & Schoppelrey, 2004; Purkayastha, 2005; Rahma & Paik, 2017). This wave of professional immigrants assimilated into the middle class and settled in suburban diasporas in towns and cities around the United States (Bhatia & Ram, 2018).

Family Reunification Act.

The immigration flow started shifting in the mid-1970s and was established in the early 1980s. Many well-established SAAs who came as a result of the Reform Act of 1965 began to pull and sponsor their family members through the Family Reunification Act (Rahma & Paik, 2017). This was also the time when skill-based immigration became restricted as a result of the United States policies that were enacted in 1976 (Chakravorty et al., 2016). In 1976, a 20,000 per-country limit for visas was applied to Eastern and Western Hemisphere countries, followed by a 290,000 immigrant visa quota worldwide in 1978. The demographic profile of South Asian immigrants has widened due to relationship-driven immigration. By the 1980s, the highly trained and educated class of South Asian immigrants had shrunk and was complemented by South Asians who invested in hotels and worked in family businesses, the service industry, and other low-wage positions (Bhatia & Ram, 2018). According to Prashad (2000), in 1996, 34,219 Indians, 9,122 Pakistanis, and 8,221 Bangladeshis entered the United States under the family-related categories. At this time, the Gujaratis and Punjabis were well-established groups who had been in the United States for the longest time and were overrepresented (Chakravorty et al., 2016).

Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 also allowed some undocumented South Asians who had resided in the United States since 1982 or worked in agricultural labor in 1985 to legalize their status in the United States through applications for amnesty (Kibria, 2006). Another program for legal entry was the 1990 Diversity Visa Lottery (popularly known as Green Card Lottery) which benefited Bangladeshi immigrants in the 1990s. For the purpose of achieving diversity while keeping the low levels of immigrants, the lottery is open to those countries that have sent fewer than 50,000 people to the United States in the past five years. As a

result of this program, in 1991, 40% of Bangladeshi immigrants entered under the Diversity Visa Lottery (Baluja, 2003). Post Family Reunification Act, Immigration Reform, and Control Act of 1986, and the Diversity Visa Lottery, a subgroup of immigrants from South Asia arrived in the United States who were less educated and less fluent in English than their predecessors who came to the United States based on their educational degrees and skills (Rahma & Paik, 2017). However, about one-third of this group either already possessed post-graduate degrees or later acquired them, while the share with professional degrees and doctorates was half that of the previous group who came post-1965.

Third Wave

Since the early 1990s, skilled professionals and students continued to arrive, but there was a significant spike in the immigration of South Asians in 1995. There were also large dips during 2001- 2002 and 2008-2010 because of recessions, but “it averaged around 65,000 new entrants per year” (Chakravorty et al., 2016, p.30). This period was marked by significant technological changes in the United States labor market, which impacted the change in immigration policy. The period witnessed a massive and unprecedented flow of India-born IT and science and technology workers and students to the United States. With the increase in the population of South Asian immigrants, there was also an increase in linguistic diversity. Since 1995, there was a significant linguistic shift where languages such as Telugu, Tamil, and Hindi speakers were dominant in this cohort (and to a lesser extent, Kannadigas, Marathis, and Bengalis). In contrast, the previously dominant groups during the first two waves, Gujarati and Punjabi speakers, grew at a much lower rate (Chakravorty et al.,2016).

Employment and skill-related visas again became the most common category for entering the United States during this period. The Immigration Act of 1990 contributed to expanding the

highly skilled temporary foreign workers in the United States under the category known as H-1B. Under this category, workers who had specialized skills, which were sought by United States companies, were given three to six years of visas (Williams, 2019). From 1997 to 2013, almost half of all H-1B employees were Indians recruited for technology and computer-related jobs. The L-1 visa was similar to H-1B but with a provision that applied to intracompany transfers. Apart from H1-B and L1 visas, another big stream of South Asian immigrants entered the United States using the F-1 student visa (Chakravorty et al., 2016).

Today's South Asian diaspora includes educated, upwardly mobile professionals and a rising number of working-class people. Nonetheless, the success tales of post-1965 migrants who came to the United States as students and professionals contribute to the model minority myth of SAAs. At the same time, they are a multi-generational group that encounters the racialized hierarchy as a non-White immigrant community that is deeply embedded in U.S. society. The following section examines how these ideas of success and achievement persist in creating powerful myths and stereotypes that contribute to the construction of South Asian identity.

Politics of Race

The experiences of Asian American groups in the United States have been dominated by the model minority discourse (Kitano & Sue, 1973; Li, 2005) and the perpetual foreigner image (Lei, 1998; Ng. et al., 2007). Although both these framings are contradicting, Asian American scholars have discussed how these oppositional framings are two sides of the same coin (Wu, 2002; Park, 2008; Lee, 2008; Lee et al., 2017). While the model minority stereotype appears to give security, stability, and belonging, with Asians appearing to be welcomed into the folds of American mainstream culture and society, this model minority status is not permeable. It cannot protect Asians from backlash in times of crisis (Shams, 2020). Since the model minority

discourse and the perpetual foreigner image have shaped the experiences of the Indian American community and the broader Asian American community, I will be referring to both groups in this section.

Model Minority

The model minority myth was created in the 1960s during the Civil Rights movement. As a response to the demands of African Americans and Mexican Americans to end discrimination and be treated as equal citizens, several White scholars, politicians, and journalists conceived the model minority myth to “allege that all Americans of color could achieve the American dream—and not by protesting discrimination in the stores and streets as African Americans and Mexican Americans were doing, but by working as ‘hard and quietly’ as Japanese and Chinese Americans supposedly did” (Chou & Feagin, 2008, p.12). Asian Americans were pictured as a group who can “make it” without any assistance or anyone’s help. On the other hand, historically marginalized groups such as African Americans are implicitly told that their failure is not because the United States is fundamentally a racist society (Osajima, 2005) but rather because there must be something wrong with their culture. Prashad (2000), in his book *The Karma of Brown Folks*, called the model minority myth a “pillar of inferential racism” (p.170). He further explains that this stereotype portrays Blacks as a “problem” and South Asians as a “solution.” Like other Asian groups, this stereotype glorifies the South Asian community as successful due to their hard work, inferring that the Black community is unsuccessful because of their character. This diverts attention away from structural inequalities and historical factors to blaming communities of color for the racial disparities and the problems they face (Ngo, 2006).

South Asian Americans and Indian Americans, like other Asian American communities, are viewed as politically subservient, diligent high achievers with an aptitude for math, science,

and engineering. Over 80% of South Asians have degrees or jobs in the fields of social sciences or STEM (science, technology, engineering, or mathematics) (Prashad, 2000; Shams, 2020).

South Asians who immigrated to the United States in the second wave of immigration post-1965 lauded the popular image of SAAs as the “model minority.” This resulted from the rapid rise in well-educated, technically skilled, and well-paid South Asian workers in the United States. South Asian immigrants in the post-1965 era also adopted and reinforced the model minority image as a way to understand their racial identities and class positions (Dhingra, 2003; Lee et al., 2017; Bhatia & Ram, 2018).

South Asian and Indian immigrants in the immediate post-1965 period were essentially positioned for success and mobility. To begin with, not only did the U.S. immigration system allow for the selection of the most educated group of people from India and other South Asian nations, but the base population from whom this group was picked had been chosen via decades and centuries of hierarchy and discrimination (Prashad, 2000; Chakravorty et al., 2016). After arriving in the United States, this group had easy access to the status of honorary Whites (Tuan, 1998), which was aided by the increasing model minority stereotype of Asian Americans. This group was thus able to adapt socially and economically to White areas very rapidly, even while many of them maintained their cultural identities. “The benefits that once would have been gained by former classification as ‘White’ were now accrued largely through symbolic status as honorary Whites.” (Harpalani, 2013, p.142). An integral part of the model minority framing was the perception that Asian Americans do not face racism or racial obstacles (Bhatia & Ram, 2018). However, despite the reputation of a “model minority” with educational degrees and even proficient in English, many faced discrimination such as the glass ceiling, unfair employment,

and other factors such as their accent and manner of speech (Ngo, 2006; Harpalani, 2013; Rahma & Paik, 2017).

The model minority myth makes the complexities of the South Asian and Indian communities invisible. For instance, in contrast to the second wave of post-1965 immigration, people who arrived in the first and family reunification wave had far less technical skills and formal education (Bhatia & Ram, 2018). This segment of South Asian immigrants worked in low-wage jobs that are not often associated with academic accomplishment. SAAs account for nearly half of all hotel proprietors in the United States. A significant number of SAAs also work at petrol stations and run convenience shops (Harpalani, 2013). Additionally, within the South Asian population, Bangladeshis and Pakistanis have been known to enter the United States through a close relative of a United States citizen or family sponsorship. “Bangladeshi and Pakistani Americans tend to be less wealthy than the general Indian American population. Among Asian Americans, Bangladeshis have the second-highest poverty rates after Hmong, with about 20% of Bangladeshis living in poverty ” (Rahma & Paik, 2017, p.43).

The “model minority myth” can play a deleterious role in the education of Indian Americans (Ngo, 2006) as well. Many subgroups within the South Asian and Indian communities struggle because of a lack of family human capital and do not get assistance at school to achieve the same outcome. Often, assumptions and stereotypes about a community determine the amount and type of assistance offered to the students by teachers and counselors. However, the model minority stereotype can affect how these children are perceived in school. Shankar (2008a), in her study of South Asian high school students in Silicon Valley, shares an example of a Science teacher who is surprised by the grades of some of the South Asian students in her classroom. She states,

I had A students, and then some others were Ds and Fs with no in-between- not a B or a C Indian student. That surprised me a lot because of my own background... And being stereotypical, I thought, you are Indian, but apparently, that doesn't count for anything anymore. Some of the kids don't have that, I don't know if it's their background, but they just don't have it. (p.154).

Although the teacher was aware that she was stereotyping, she concluded that some students inherently lack what is needed. The education experiences of South Asian and Indian American children are imbued with prejudice and alienation, which are veiled and compounded by the United States' achievement ideology and profile of Asian American success (Ngo, 2006). Unfortunately, their needs are buried under the favorable statistics and reputation of the thriving South Asian groups. Further, Nadal (2019) highlights that many Brown Asian Americans, including SAAs, have been vocal about the need for data disaggregation to understand their ethnic groups' distinct needs better and to combat misleading conceptions of a homogeneous model minority.

Perpetual Foreigner

As the name suggests, the perpetual foreigner image casts and essentializes Asian Americans as always foreigners, never belonging and not fitting into White American ideals. "Since Whiteness is often conflated with authentic citizenship, the foreigner designation represents Asian Americans as not being "real" United States subjects: always global, always outsiders, and always foreign" (Subedi, 2013, p.170). Even though the United States has a long history of immigration and an ethnically and culturally varied population, individuals of ethnic minority groups are frequently denied the American identity and are instead viewed as a foreigner and a threat and treated as permanent outsiders. The idea of Asian Americans as

perpetual foreigners emerged during World War II when Japanese Americans were placed into internment camps because they were positioned as foreign threats to the nation's security (Suzuki, 2002; Murjani, 2014). This perception of Asian American immigrants as perpetual foreigners has existed ever since.

In the late 1980s, Dotbusters, a Hinduphobic hate group in Jersey City, attacked and threatened many Indians. They were motivated by jealousy of Indian economic success and the perception that Indians are a "separate, alien group" (Marriott, 1987). In 1987, they published a letter in *The Jersey Journal* stating.

We will go to any extreme to get Indians to move out of Jersey City. If I'm walking down the street and I see a Hindu and the setting is right, I will hit him or her... We use the phone books and look up the name Patel. Have you seen how many of them there are? Soon after, a group of White supremacists beats to death Navroze Mody, a thirty-year-old banker; they grievously injured Kaushal Sharan, a physician by profession, and they beat Bhered Patel with a metal pipe while he was sleeping in his Jersey City apartment in three separate incidents. In 1992, the Dotbusters returned, as B. Patel was assaulted and his family harassed with slogans like "Hindu, go home."

The terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, happened not long after. The effects of 9/11 are particularly salient in the experiences of SAAs. SAAs, especially men from South Asian Muslim countries like Bangladesh and Pakistan, along with other South Asian countries like India, were subject to various surveillance measures instituted by the United States government, including mandatory special registration and interviews with immigration authorities (Kibria, 2006; Ngo, 2006; Prashad, 2012; Shams, 2018; Shams, 2020). They emerged as "the other" and faced backlash (Prashad, 2000). Language has also played a salient role in the racial profiling of

Muslims. In 2016, an Italian professor of economics “with dark, curly hair, olive skin, and an exotic accent” was traveling from Philadelphia to Syracuse. He was profiled and accused of terrorist behavior on a plane for writing what was perceived as Arabic by a fellow passenger. He, in fact, was writing a mathematical equation (Rampell, 2016). For the Muslim diaspora and Arabic speakers, who make up a major portion of the South Asian population, the racialization of their language has specific ramifications that cannot be ignored. With these types of racialization in mind, the languages of Asian Americans, broadly and SAAs specifically, are widely connected with foreignness and national subterfuge (Lee, 2019). These are also reflected in the examples of racist bullying, such as mocking the language and accent of Asian American groups. Indeed, the perpetual foreigner stereotype often manifests in assumptions tied to language and accent, highlighting prejudice against Asian American groups for their racialized language use (Lee et al., 2017; Lee, 2019).

Many studies have captured examples of how South Asian hate has manifested and continued post-9/11. For instance, Verma’s (2006) study on Sikh immigrants in the aftermath of 9/11 revealed that Sikh students became victims of racist slurs, physical assault, and threats post-9/11. In response, students sought to navigate the reaction against them by assuming national identities and changing their physical appearance. Still, many ended up feeling dejected or suicidal after the attacks. In another study, Maria (2009) discovered that in the post-9/11 setting, South Asian youth in her ethnographic study in New England were subjected to monitoring and surveillance, making their belonging conditional. Post 9/11, everyone who was a Muslim or was assumed to be a Muslim was not just unable to be American but was also considered a terrorist (Murjani, 2014; Lee et al., 2017).

However, the countless acts of violence and discrimination were not only limited to the days and weeks following 9/11. Over the years, there have been many incidents of hate crimes against the SAAs. For instance, in 2012, six Sikh worshippers were shot dead at a Gurudwara in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, by a U.S. Army veteran and White supremacist (“Sikh temple shooting suspect Wade Michael Page was a White supremacist,” 2012); in 2017, an Indian immigrant was told to “get out my country” before he was shot dead in a Kansas bar (Elision et al., 2017). More recently, in early 2022, an Indian-origin Sikh taxi driver at JFK was attacked. The attacker shouted, “Go back to your country,” and called the taxi driver “turbaned people” in a derogatory manner while punching and shoving him (“Man arrested, charged with hate crime for attacking Indian-origin Sikh taxi driver in the US,” 2022). As of February 2024, there have been reports of five tragic deaths involving Indian-origin students from various universities (Kulkarni, 2024), alongside the passing of Vivek Taneja, a 41-year-old Indian-American executive residing in Virginia (Prisha, 2024). Reflecting on this sobering reality, Mohan Nannapaneni, the founder of the volunteer-based nonprofit organization TEAM Aid, remarked in a recent interview, “We deal with at least one death a day across the country” (“We Deal With One Death Of Indian A Day Across US”: Community Leader,” 2024).

Both model minority and perpetual foreigner images have continued to influence and contribute to the racializing experiences of South Asians and Indian Americans. Recognizing the ways in which the South Asian diaspora is racialized allows us to understand better the constant process of contradictions, negotiation, and mediation that is connected to a larger set of political and historical practices. The following section will help to further bring the other pieces of racializing experiences into focus, including both formal and informal racialization of SAAs.

Racial Classification

Census

Given the significance of race in the formation of American nationhood, the U.S. government has grappled for over a century to identify an appropriate racial classification for South Asians. Thus the U.S. census classification of SAAs has morphed over time (Table 1). SAAs' ambiguous racial positioning in the United States has historically led to their contradictory and varied classification and impacted their racializing experiences. During the 1800s, they were classified concurrently as Caucasian, distinct from Asians, and also a part of a "Hindoo invasion" (Buchanan, 1908). However, the majority of immigrants at the time were Sikhs or Muslims (Mudambi, 2019). This was also when early South Asian Indians were pointing to their racial genealogy as Aryans in United States courts to obtain "White" status. The Aryan race used to be a historical race concept that regarded the Aryan race as one of the major branches of the Caucasian race (Jackson, 1869). South Asian Indians hoped to use this connection to secure citizenship under the Naturalization Act of 1790, which granted citizenship to White persons and people of African descent. The first time when SAAs were counted in the census, they wavered between being categorized as "White" and "Other: Non-White Asiatic/Hindu" by the United States Census Bureau (Harpalani, 2013; Chakravorty et al., 2016).

The debates within the Census Bureau on the classification of South Asians were also reflected in the legal battles in the United States judicial system. South Asians were ruled "White" by courts and racially eligible for naturalized citizenship in cases like *U.S. v Dolla* in 1910 and *U.S. v Mozumdar* in 1913. However, in other cases like *U.S. v Thind* in 1923, South Asians were not declared "White" by the Supreme Court, thus making them ineligible for citizenship. As a result of *U.S. v Thind*, those who had acquired citizenship earlier were

denaturalized and essentially rendered stateless (Das Gupta, 2006; Harpalani, 2015). In the following census in 1920, they were categorized as “Other/ Hindu,” and in 1930 and 1940, South Asians were classified under the category “Hindu.” The combination of the 1917 and 1924 Immigration Acts, which restricted the entry of immigrants by imposing specific criteria and national origin quotas, resulted in minimal immigration, and those who came were mostly students. Some immigrants also returned to their home country, unable to bear the racism and the limited opportunities. As a result, the South Asian population shrunk significantly and was no longer separately counted in the 1950 and 1960s Census and was classified along with the other Asian groups. In 1950 they were categorized as “Other/Non-White/ Asiatic Indian,” and in 1960, they were categorized as “Other/Non-White/ Hindu” (Chakravorty et al., 2016).

For the 1970 Census, the United States government wanted to standardize the categories for ethnic and racial data collection post-1965 Immigration Act. This restructuring sparked debates about whether South Asians should be classified as Asian or White; Asian because South Asians are from Asia, or White because they are Caucasian (as part Aryan race). It was decided that South Asians would be classified as “White” in the 1970 census because they were Caucasians. This was in contrast to the Thind ruling, which held that Asian Indians were not considered “White” under the Naturalization Act of 1790. Classification as “White” also meant that they were denied minority status and disqualified them from civil rights protections (Kurien, 2018).

Half a century ago, the immigrants from the Indian subcontinent fought to have themselves classified as White; ironically, during the 1970s, in the post-civil rights era, they fought to avoid this classification. Even though the post-1965 immigrants were highly educated in contrast to their predecessors, racial discrimination, while less, was still a common

occurrence. In the late 1960s, the Indian-American community lobbied for minority status, arguing that not only would denying minority status have negative consequences for access to benefits in employment, housing, and education but that classifying the Indian-American community as White would hide more subtle forms of racial discrimination. These efforts finally paid off, and in the following 1980 Census, their racial classification was changed from “White” to “Asian Indian,” and they were designated as a minority group within the Asian umbrella (Koshy, 1998; Chakravorty et al., 2017; Nadal, 2019).

Since 1980, South Asians have been racially classified under the broader rubric of Asian Americans or Asian/ Pacific Islanders with slight changes. For example, in 1990, the term changed slightly by including “Asian or Pacific Islander” in addition to “Asian Indian,” and in the following 2000 Census, the designation changed again to “Asian/ Asian Indian.” The 2010 and 2020 Census forms also listed “Asian Indian” along with other Asian groups but had an “Other Asian” category that listed “Pakistani” as one of the examples. Some Asians and SAAs have completely or partially embraced this classification to highlight the shared experiences of diverse Asian groups and to foster cooperation across Asian American communities. Conversely, other scholars have questioned SAAs’ placement in the Asian American community because of their cultural, religious, and racial/phenotypic characteristics. Many SAAs have expressed how they are excluded from the Asian American umbrella, resulting in a lack of representation in Asian American studies, narratives, and media depictions. The prevailing narrative is that “Asian” refers to East Asians alone, which leads to a sense of marginalization and invisibility within the Asian American umbrella (Nadal, 2019).

Table 1

History of the Classification of South Asians by the U.S. Census Bureau

Census Year	Census Classification
1910	Other/ Non-White Asiatic/ Hindu
1920	Other/ Hindu
1930	Hindu
1940	Hindu
1950	Other/ Non-White/ Asiatic Indian
1960	Other/ Non-White/ Hindu
1970	White
1980	Asian Indian
1990	Asian or Pacific Islander/ Asian Indian
2010	Asian Indian/ Other Asian
2020	Asian Indian/ Other Asian

Racial Ambiguity

SAs are seldom regarded as an ethnic group without a reference point (Black or White) and might be perceived as “more Black” or “more White” or just “ambiguous non-Whites” (Kibria, 1996) depending on history, context, and viewer (Khandelwal, 2020). The ambiguous positioning of South Asians is not new and has existed since the first waves of immigrants from the Indian subcontinent. As discussed in the previous section, South Asian immigrants presented a particular dilemma in the late 19th century while establishing their eligibility for citizenship in

the United States. This was the time when the Naturalization Law of 1790 granted citizenship rights to free, White persons', Blacks, and Native Americans. Unlike other Asian groups, South Asians were deemed "Caucasian" and "Aryan," thus White racial origins. In *U.S. vs. Dolla*, the court ruled that Dolla was White citing his light skin color, but in cases like the *U.S. vs. Singh* and the *U.S. vs. Thind*, the court agreed that South Asians were "Caucasians" but not necessarily equivalent to "White" (Harpalani, 2013).

Race is a "commonsense aspect of reality" (Kibria, 1998) in the United States, serving as a basic frame of reference for interpreting social ties and encounters. SAAs clearly do not fit within the Black-White paradigm of race relations, as either marginalized in the same manner as Black Americans or as fully integrated into the mainstream "White" (Kibria, 1998; Dhingra, 2003; Harpalani, 2015). Instead, SAAs share a racially ambiguous identity in the United States. South Asians are clearly non-White in the United States racial system, and their racial ambiguity "does not then stem from the question of whether they are White or nonWhite, but rather, who exactly they are as nonWhites." (Kibria, 1998, p. 71).

Harpalani (2013) highlighted that racial ambiguity is a significant aspect of the South Asian experience in the United States. Their racial ambiguity elucidates the social meanings and stereotypes linked with a race that has been identified in the modern United States. It also demonstrates how these social meanings shift across time and space. Racial ambiguity is relational, and it may be understood by looking at how people and groups are positioned in relation to other groups, as well as how that positioning changes through time. Racial ambiguity is not exclusive to South Asians; it also affects Latine, Arab Americans, and biracial and multiracial individuals (Kibria,1996; Johnson, 1998; Naber, 2000; Harpalani, 2015).

Many factors have contributed to the racial ambiguity of SAAs in the United States. Their divergent educational, economic, and occupational trends are reflected in the different immigration waves to the United States. As mentioned in the previous section, in the 1960s and 1970s, immigration preferences were based on occupational skills in contrast to the earlier immigrants who came due to cheap labor demand. In the 1980s, the immigrants came largely through family immigration preference and did not necessarily have educational degrees or occupational skills. This economic and occupational divide is still prevalent in the South Asian community. On the one hand, there are educated professionals like physicians and engineers; on the other hand, SAAs are also well known for occupying working-class jobs such as taxi drivers. Additionally, SAAs' diverse physical features and their variety of cultural, religious, and language practices contribute to their racial ambiguity, as reflected in both formal racial classification and informal modes of racialization.

This section has discussed the different factors that have affected the racialization process of SAAs. The immigration history and stereotypes of the model minority and the perpetual foreigner image have dominated the experiences of SAAs. These have also impacted the way SAAs have been officially and unofficially ascribed different and sometimes contradictory racial identities. Such designations result in the ambiguous racial positioning of SAAs in American society.

Conclusion

In conclusion, delving into the intricate history and experiences of South Asian Americans and Indian Americans in the United States reveals a multifaceted journey shaped by diverse waves of immigration, socio-political contexts, and racial dynamics. By understanding the broader context of South Asian Americans, including their geographic origins, cultural

diversity, and religious plurality, we gain insight into the unique path of Indian Americans within this vibrant community.

From the early waves of immigration, marked by labor exploitation and racial discrimination, to the emergence of the model minority myth and the enduring perception of perpetual foreignness, the experiences of Indian Americans are deeply intertwined with broader discussions on race and immigration in the United States. The persistence of discriminatory attitudes and hate crimes against South Asians, particularly in the post-9/11 era, underscores the ongoing challenges faced by this community in navigating their identity and belonging in the U.S. society. Additionally, the racial classification of South Asians in the United States has undergone significant evolution and ambiguity over the past century. Within the Asian American umbrella, South Asians continue to face challenges due to their diverse cultural, religious, and phenotypic characteristics, resulting in a sense of marginalization and invisibility. Despite efforts to foster cooperation across Asian American communities, the ambiguous racial positioning of South Asians persists, shaped by immigration history, stereotypes, and societal perceptions.

This chapter illuminates the complex intersections of race, immigration, and identity formation among Indian Americans, urging for a nuanced understanding of their experiences within the larger tapestry of American history and society. By humanizing these stories, we can better appreciate the resilience, struggles, and contributions of South Asian Americans, fostering a more inclusive and empathetic understanding of their and many other immigrant group's experience in the United States.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework: Raciolinguistic Perspective

In this chapter, I will present the theoretical framework that guides my research on the racial and linguistic experiences of Indian American students in the U.S. education system. Specifically, I will be using Rosa and Flores's (2017) raciolinguistic perspective as the theoretical framework for this study. The chapter begins by exploring the scholarly work that informs this perspective, before delving into its five core components of raciolinguistic perspective as defined by Flores and Rosa (2015). To contextualize this perspective within the experiences of South Asian and Indian American students, I will also be examining the literature on the stereotypes and perceptions of South Asian Englishes. Finally, the chapter examines the perceptions towards Indian English and the racial and linguistic experiences of Indian American students within and outside the U.S. education system underscores the intricate interplay between language, race, and power dynamics.

A Raciolinguistic Perspective

Raciolinguistics is seen as a new field of study “dedicated to bringing to bear the diverse methods of linguistic analysis to ask and answer critical questions about the relationships between language, race, and power across diverse ethnoracial contexts and societies” (Alim, 2016, p.3). The focus on raciolinguistics is significant given the nationalist and monoglossic (García, & Torres, 2009) rhetoric that underlies the anti-immigrant political discourse in the United States. As theorized by Flores and Rosa (2015), a raciolinguistic perspective helps us understand the relationship between race and language and helps reveal how ideologies of race and language converge and co-constitute one another to impact racialized communities that are users of non-dominant languages or language practices.

The raciolinguistic perspective was popularized by Flores and Rosa (2015) in education and language studies for theorizing race through language. In their article *Undoing Appropriateness: Raciolinguistic Ideologies and Language Diversity in Education*, Flores and Rosa (2015) critique the U.S. education system by arguing that the standardization of “appropriate” English, which is defined by the dominant White middle class, is the result of raciolinguistic ideologies; that is, ideologies that validate certain linguistic practices as normative and others as a deficient, while also racializing and positioning language minoritized communities as racial others.

A raciolinguistic perspective builds on the critique of the White gaze (Morisson, 1998), which is a perspective that privileges dominant White perspectives as normative. If it is normative, it also has the power to define deviance as the linguistic and cultural practice of racial communities (Paris & Alim, 2014). Flores and Rosa (2015) go even further, arguing that the White gaze is not only the “eyes” or mode of vision of Whiteness but is also attached to both a speaking subject who engages in idealized White linguistic practices and a listening subject who hears it and interprets the linguistic practices of language-minoritized populations as deviant based on their racial positioning in society rather than any objective characteristics of their language use. They further add that the White speaking and listening subject should be understood as an ideological stance and a mode of perception that shapes our racist society, not as a biographical individual (Flores & Rosa, 2015). That is to say that a White listening subject is a historically constituted structural position; for example, it can be a societal institution, a technology, a school, an assessment, etc., that can all function as a White listening subject. Additionally, it can also be an individual, but even a person of color can function as a White listening subject who is structurally located in a way that is anchored in White supremacy.

The concept of “appropriateness” is predicated on an idealized White-speaking subject who speaks a perfect “standard” language, against which deviance is measured. This perfect speaker is also perceived to be monolingual, and we speculate that the speaker’s “perfect” language practice is due to their monolingualism. Furthermore, these “standard” language practices are not spoken by any group in everyday life, but we accept them as existent since they are legitimized by many societal institutions, one of which is the education system. Thus, when we perceive inappropriate speech, we deviate from the norm that is not linguistic alone but is also a deviation from a norm based on racialized perceptions of language, based on a perception of the White listening subject and concerning an idealized White speaking subject (Flores & Rosa, 2015).

Raciolinguistic ideologies have affected all linguistically minoritized students, including students who are labeled as English learners (EL) and heritage language learners. The students labeled as EL are also language-minoritized students who have experienced low academic achievement. For a long time, the term “semilingualism” was also used to describe the language abilities of the students. The phrase refers to the linguistic competency, or lack of it, of people who have been exposed to two languages since childhood but have not received appropriate instruction or stimulation in either (Cummins, 1976). Studies since then have criticized and abandoned the deficit perspective it reinforces (Martin-Jones, & Romaine, 1986; Spolsky, 1984; Valadez et al., 2000; MacSwan, 2000). Raciolinguistic ideologies in the context of EL and heritage language learners are also associated with the discussion of speakers of “non-standard” English. Historically, there have been efforts and conversations to validate “non-standard” varieties of English, such as African American English (AAE), by analyzing the structure and its

rich rhetoric style (Baker-Bell, 2017). However, AAE has continued to be positioned as deficient in the education system in relation to standardized “appropriate” English.

A raciolinguistic perspective pursues a more nuanced and complex comprehension of the interactions of language and race within the historical development of nation-state/colonial governmentality and how these distinctions continue to shape contemporary linguistic and racial formations, fostering raciolinguistic ideologies (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Raciolinguistic ideologies “produce racialized speaking subjects who are constructed as linguistically deviant even when engaging in linguistic practices positioned as normative or innovative when produced by privileged White subjects” (Flores & Rosa, 2015, p. 150). That is, even if the manner in which a racialized person communicates is linguistically identical to “appropriate” English, the racialized person, and their languaging practices will always be stigmatized because of the broader racial ideas projected onto their ways of languaging.

Rosa (2016) examines this relationship between ideologies of language standardization and what he calls “languagelessness” and how processes of racialization mediate this relationship. Rosa (2016) argues that racialized conceptions of language, which define legitimate language in terms of racial groups, link ideologies of language standardization to ideologies of languagelessness. When languaging practices of certain populations are perceived as nonstandardized, racialization can frame those people as not proficient in any legitimate language. Using a raciolinguistic perspective helps move the focus away from the speaker and toward the White listening subject. This shift in focus rejects the idea that speakers of marginalized language practices are incompetent or lack proficiency in a named language of power, instead asserting that it is how speakers of marginalized languages are heard that leads to stigmatization.

Components of Raciolinguistic Perspective

Rosa and Flores (2017) further theorized a raciolinguistic perspective by proposing its five fundamental components and how it can be used to explain how and why language and race have been linked throughout history. The first component of a raciolinguistic perspective is *historical and contemporary co-naturalizations of race and language as part of the colonial formation of modernity*. This component refers to the construction and naturalization of race and language, positioning the racial groups and their language practices such as that of Indigenous American and enslaved African populations as subhuman and inferior to Europeans and their languages under European colonialism in America. This hierarchy created by the European colonizers positioned Europeans as superior and non-European colonized groups, and their languages as inferior, and positioned as “incapable of communicating legitimately in any language” (p. 624). This positioning as linguistically subhuman is also part of racialized ideologies of languagelessness (Rosa, 2016), that are positioned as incapable of communicating legitimately in any language. These raciolinguistic ideologies continue to shape the world in the post-colonial era by “framing racialized subjects” language practices as inadequate for the complex thinking processes needed to navigate the global economy, as well as the targets of anxieties about authenticity and purity” (p. 627).

The second component, is *perceptions of racial and linguistic differences*. This component elaborated on the conceptualization of the White listening subject. Flores and Rosa (2017) underline both human and nonhuman (e.g., technologies, standardized assessments) perceiving subjects that replicate raciolinguistic ideologies through racially hegemonic modes that determine how racialized subjects’ language practices are perceived. As an example of a non-human perceiving subject, consider the voice-recognition technologies that are often

programmed to privilege languages, varieties, and pronunciation patterns associated with normative languages. This example elaborates how non-human subjects such as technology are propelled by raciolinguistic ideologies that give them the ability to operate as perceiving subjects. The third component is *regimentations of racial and linguistic categories*, describing how raciolinguistic perspective uses the process of raciolinguistic enregisterment, which investigates how and why specific linguistic patterns become a representative of certain racial groups and vice versa, and in what historical, political, and economic circumstances, and with what institutional and interpersonal implications. For example, in schools, rubrics are used to assess the language proficiency of ELs who are either racialized students or immigrant students. These rubrics are created with the understanding of White mainstream English as the standard, which then positions the language practices of racialized and immigrant students as inherently deficit.

The fourth component of the perspective is *racial and linguistic intersections and assemblages*, which encourages attention to how linguistic, racial, and gender oppression co-articulates in the system of power, and dominance. The fifth and final fundamental component of this perspective is *the contestation of racial and linguistic power formations*, which advocates that rather than focusing on changing the language practices of the racialized subject, combating raciolinguistic ideologies necessitates the unsettling of White supremacy and racial capitalism. It becomes essential to examine those systems that continually position racialized populations as deficient.

These components take a step forward in theorizing the perspective by examining how and why race and language have been associated throughout history. These five components of the perspective develop our understanding of how deficit perspective is rooted in the historical

and structural processes that organize different ways of stigmatization. These components further help shift our focus from a site or a place that privileges individual interactions and speaking practices to examining “how institutionalized hierarchies of racial and linguistic legitimacy are central to processes of modern subject formation” (Rosa & Flores, 2017, p. 622). Additionally, the perspective is centered on analyzing the continued effort to rearticulate colonial distinctions between Europeanness and non-Europeanness and, by extension, Whiteness, and non-Whiteness.

In just a few short years since the term was first popularized in the field of education and language studies, a raciolinguistic theoretical perspective has fostered a sophisticated understanding of how students experience the consequences of language and racial ideologies. Taken together, the body of literature on studies in education using a raciolinguistic theoretical perspective complicates and adds nuance to perspectives on racially and linguistically minoritized students. However, the current literature using a raciolinguistic perspective has majorly focused on the experiences of Latine students. There are very few studies focusing on students from other racialized communities and none focusing on South Asian American or Indian American students. In the following section, I present how the racial and linguistic experiences of South Asian American students, Indian American students, and South Asian communities have been studied within and outside the U.S. education system.

South Asian Experiences and Raciolinguistic Perspective

While the field of education lacks studies utilizing a raciolinguistic perspective to explore the racial and linguistic experiences of South Asian American (SAA) students in the U.S. education system, some linguists have employed this perspective to analyze the stereotypes and perceptions of South Asian English varieties, including Indian English. This section will initially delve into the historical and contemporary presence of English in South Asian nations, as well as

the positioning of South Asian Englishes among global English varieties. Followed by a review of studies that have applied a raciolinguistic perspective to investigate the stereotypes and perceptions associated with Indian English, along with the racial and linguistic experiences of SAA students both within and outside the U.S. education system.

South Asian Englishes

The dominance of English in many present-day South Asian countries results from British colonization. It began in the early 17th century and spread with the increasing influence of the East India Company and the implementation of English in the educational system (Gargesh, 2019). The majority of the population in these countries is exposed to English from birth, either as simultaneous bilinguals or sequential bilinguals (Kutlu & Wiltshire, 2020). Furthermore, the presence of English languages in the region for more than 200 years has led to the nativization of the language (Kachru, 1981; Pandharipande, 1987), as evidenced by the various local varieties of English known collectively as South Asian Englishes (Baumgardner, 1996; Kachru, 1983; Annamalai, 2004; Kachru, 2005). Despite the widespread use of South Asian Englishes by over a billion people in South Asia, these varieties are perceived negatively by monolingual speakers of English (Lindemann, 2003, 2005). Moreover, these varieties of Englishes are derived mostly from historical context (Kachru, 1992), which were often affected by colonial movements. Genocidal settler colonialism shaped variants of English that have been coded as White in places like the United States and Australia, whereas extractive, largely non-settler colonialism in South Asia has meant that variants of English that have become dominant in the region have been coded as non-White, non-standard, and inferior (Kultu, 2020).

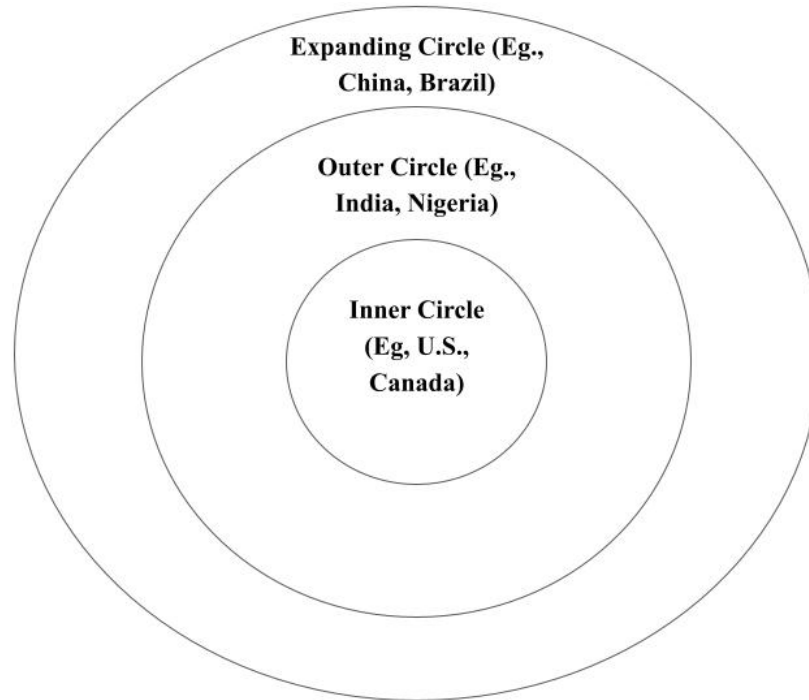
The differences between the varieties of Englishes, according to Kachru (1983), are a result of the timeline and circumstances surrounding the advent of English. He examined the

arrival of English through the framework of three concentric circles of English: the inner circle, the outer circle, and the expanding circle (Figure 2). For the purpose of our discussion, we will focus on the inner circle and the outer circle (Kachru, 1990). The inner circle includes nations where English is the dominant language spoken by “native speakers.” The inner circle includes varieties such as American English, Australian English, New Zealand English, British English, and Canadian English. The inner-circle variations arose from settler movements known as “norm-providers.” The outer circle includes the English varieties that arose as a result of predominantly British colonization, such as Indian English, Pakistani English, Sri Lankan English, Bangladeshi English, and Nigerian English. Outer circle Englishes, unlike inner circle Englishes, are not considered norm-providers. Hence, despite being spoken by L1 speakers, English varieties are not considered the native language of people living in outer circle nations. Furthermore, in certain situations, outer circle variants of English are considered less prestigious by its speakers, as well as those who speak an inner circle variety (Kachru, 1986).

Bi/multilingualism is frequent in most outer circle countries, where English shares the status of being the official language with other languages, such as in India and Pakistan. While English’s status is mediated by its historical context, its perception is beginning to be explored via a raciolinguistic perspective since the two groups, inner and outer circle varieties, are closely linked with White and racialized people, respectively (Kutlu, 2020).

Figure 2

Kachru’s three concentric circles model



Note: Adapted from Kachru's three concentric circles model (1985)

Some linguists have used a raciolinguistic perspective to examine the perception of South Asian Englishes in a global context. The number of studies is limited, but two themes have been prominent in those studies. The first theme looks at the call centers in South Asian countries (e.g., Cowie, 2007), and the second theme includes studies investigating attitudes towards Indian English in the United States (e.g., Kutlu, 2020).

Call Centers

South Asian countries such as India and Pakistan, which have relatively large English-speaking populations and highly skilled and inexpensive workforces, have been attractive sites for many U.S.-based corporations that provide various telephone-based services for customers in the Global North. These Call Centers in South Asian countries are a current example of raciolinguistic ideologies. Since the English variety spoken by the South Asian population is considered deficit, the workers at these call centers are required to undergo accent neutralization

training which includes neutralizing various elements of, for example, Indian-accented English and learning American and/ or British accents in particular (Cowie, 2007; Rahman, 2009; Raj & Raj, 2013). These practices question the “appropriateness” of their language use and serve the perceptions of the White listening subject (Flores & Rosa, 2015).

Furthermore, the call center employees mask their identities by adopting Western names and making allusions to Western culture, both of which are designed to make customers assume they are receiving service from someone in their native country (Rahman, 2009). The call centers in South Asia reinforce the conceptions of “sounding right” that privilege Whiteness by making the workers “look better in the minds of western callers by “Whitening their voices” (Ramjattan, 2019, p.726).

Perceptions Towards Indian English

As mentioned above, many South Asian countries, such as India, have English as one of the most widely spoken languages in the country for decades now, leading to the nativization of English, and the emergence of Indian English as its own variety. Indian English originated from British English, which is typically stereotyped as the most prestigious variety of English. Although other English varieties, such as American and Australian English, originated from British English as well, however, Indian English is associated with non-White multilingual communities. With the growing population of Indian immigrants in the United States, Kutlu and Wiltshire (2020) investigated attitudes toward Indian English using a raciolinguistic perspective. The findings indicated that, while American English speakers did not expressly state that they had communication problems with Indian English, they favored British English over Indian English. The results also showed that the American English speaker had more exposure to British English than to Indian English. This disfavoring of Indian English, using a raciolinguistic

perspective, suggests that post-colonialism, especially Whiteness, is a factor in language positioning and how different varieties are perceived (Flores & Rosa, 2015).

Apart from the attitudes and disfavoring towards Indian Englishes, linguistics has also investigated listeners' judgments of accentedness. Kultu (2020) investigated listeners' judgments of the accentedness of Indian English using a raciolinguistic perspective. For this research, they employed an audio-visual test to assess listeners' judgments of accentedness towards American and Indian English using either a White female face or a South Asian female face. The results of the study showed that listeners' accentedness judgments increased for Indian English compared to American English. Importantly, they found that the South Asian racial identity of the speaker's "face affected listeners" accentedness judgments. Concluding that English varieties such as American English and Indian English are seen differently, and that the racialization of some English varieties mediates the general foreignness or accentedness.

Indian American Students' Experiences Outside the U.S. Education System

Immigrants in the United States are frequently confronted with the challenge of transitioning to English while preserving their heritage language. Maintaining the heritage language for second-generation children who grow up in an English-dominant society is even more critical. According to Jo and Rong (2002), the language learning process of children from immigrant families in the United States includes not only the acquisition of English but also the loss or maintenance of a heritage language, and the outcome of this process is influenced by a complex interplay of social factors that are often beyond the caregiver's or the child's control. Valdés (1999) formulates that a heritage learner is "a student who is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken, who speaks or merely understands the language, and who is to some degree bilingual in English and the heritage language" (p.38). Given the fact that heritage

language maintenance typically necessitates explicit instruction, the location of public education, its language policies, and the implementation of those policies become some of the most important processes that shape the experiences of linguistically minority children.

Sridhar (1988, 2008) studied language maintenance and language shift among South Asian Indians in New York from randomly selected Kannada-speaking, Malayalam-speaking, and Gujarati-speaking families. The data revealed that the use of the native language was low for both Kannada and Malayalam speakers. Most parents mentioned the use of a variety somewhat codes mixed with English. The percentage that uses the native language exclusively was higher in Gujarati-speaking families than the other two, but even among them, about 33% of the parents reported using a variety of languages mixed with English. Sridhar (2008) further adds that, since English is the most often used language among educated Indians, it was not surprising to note the “intrusion” of English into the home domain of highly educated Indian immigrants in the United States.

Like Sridhar (1988), Canagarajah (2006, 2008, 2013) also discovered a substantial generational shift to English among Sri Lankan Tamils. Canagarajah (2006, 2008, 2013) investigated the multifaceted attitudes regarding language maintenance among Sri Lankan Tamils in California (U.S.), East London (UK), and Toronto (Canada). He noted a transition from grandparents who were largely monolingual in Tamil and parents who were bilinguals to their children who were overwhelmingly monolingual in English. However, the interview data revealed a more complex picture. The youth emphasized that their language proficiency did not change their positive attitudes toward ethnic identity and community affiliation. They reported using various linguistic strategies to enjoy in-group identification, such as code-switching to Tamil, using Tamilized versions of English, and receptive competence in Tamil that allowed

them to reply in English. These results were also consistent with Rohani et al. (2006) work, which studied language maintenance among Urdu-speaking immigrant families from Pakistan and India in New York City.

In the context of the South Asian diaspora, Indian languages have deteriorated more than other aspects of Indian culture (Gambhir, 1988). It has been difficult to preserve and maintain Indian languages, especially when English was the host country's language. Furthermore, according to Gambhir and Gambhir (2013), immigrants arriving in the 1960s and 1970s in the United States struggled to pass on their heritage language to future generations because there were no language programs or efforts, communication links with India were weak, trade was expensive, phone calls were expensive, and social media was not available at the time. However, IT immigrants who arrived post-2000 lived in a global technological world and had more means to transfer their heritage language skills to future generations. Due to strong social networks, Bollywood movies, phone and video chats, and frequent travels to India, first-generation immigrants in the United States have little trouble maintaining their heritage language (Gambhir & Gambhir, 2013). However, the higher usage of English at home by first-generation parents poses a barrier to intergenerational heritage language transfer. In most Hindi-speaking families, for example, parents speak Hindi with each other around their children and sometimes to their children, but they do not insist on receiving a response in Hindi. The second generation's lack of speaking ability has serious consequences for the loss of a heritage language in the third generation (Gambhir & Gambhir, 2013). To prevent the obsolescence of numerous South Asian heritage languages, certain official and informal opportunities for developing and conserving heritage languages have increased. The federal government, secondary education, public schools, and community language schools are examples of these resources (Gambhir & Gambhir, 2013).

For the United States, Hindi language proficiency is critical for tapping India's emerging markets. Thus, the U.S. government has included Hindi on its list of foreign languages in which they need expertise (Gambhir & Gambhir, 2013). To meet the growing need for bilingual speakers in international trade, the federal government has launched many different programs, such as the National Security Language Initiative for Youth (NSLI-Y) (National Security Language Initiative for Youth (NSLI-Y), 2006) to advance proficiency in a set of selected languages, including Hindi, and STARTALK summer programs in Hindi which was initiated in 2008. Another federal initiative is establishing the Hindi Urdu Flagship program at the University of Texas, Austin. Further, under the National Defense Education Act (NDEA), many NDEA South Asia Centers were established at several universities, including the University of Pennsylvania, Columbia University, University of Wisconsin, University of Chicago, University of California-Berkeley, and University of Texas, Austin. The teaching of South Asian languages is an important activity across these centers in different universities. South Asian languages, such as Hindi, Urdu, and Punjabi, are taught at multiple levels in schools, colleges, and universities. School districts such as Bellaire High School in Houston, Texas, the Edison School District in New Jersey, and the Fremont United School District, along with many other high schools in California, offer language programs in Hindi and Punjabi. In addition to these formal education opportunities, several community language programs usually located in temples and religious centers offer opportunities to maintain and learn South Asian languages. Parents, grandparents, and community members serves as educators in these programs (Kulkarni, 2013; Tiwana, 2013; Gambhir & Gambhir, 2013).

Indian American Students' Experiences Within the U.S. Education System

There has been limited research centering on the racial and linguistic experiences of Indian American students within the U.S. education system. For specific studies concerning Indian American and more broadly SAA students' linguistic and racial experiences in the U.S. education system, I came across the work of sociocultural and linguistic anthropologist Shalini Shankar. She conducted a 16-month ethnographic study focusing on the experiences of South Asian high school students in Silicon Valley. Along with examining aspects of SAA students' model minority and Desi teen culture experiences in the high schools, she also particularly examined their racial and linguistic experiences. Along with the book *Desi Land: teen culture, class, and success in Silicon Valley*, there have been other publications (Shankar, 2004; Shankar, 2008a; Shankar, 2008b; Shankar, 2006) examining the schooling experiences of SAA high school students using the same data set. While Shankar (2008) did not employ a raciolinguistic perspective, she provided many examples in the study that, using a raciolinguistic perspective, can help uncover the impacts of raciolinguistic ideologies that South Asian students negotiate in their schooling experiences. In this section, I will analyze some examples from Shankar's (2008) study, which I feel will benefit from a raciolinguistic perspective to highlight how SAA students navigate raciolinguistic ideologies in the U.S. education system.

SAA students face stereotypes that establish expectations not only for academic accomplishment but also for linguistic use. During the tech boom, Shankar (2008a, 2008b) conducted a 16-month ethnography between 1999 and 2001 with SAA students in three public high schools in Silicon Valley, Northern California. Out of the three public high schools, two served mainly middle-class students, while one school primarily served upper-middle-class students. All three high schools were racially diverse, with a large population of SAA students.

Shankar examines how South Asian teens embody the hope of the American dream and the constraints of race, class, and language.

In the study, she underlines how the children of South Asian immigrant parents, like other racialized children, are subjected to scrutiny and judgment about their cultural and linguistic choices when they enter the U.S. education system. However, when White or European immigrants cross the borders to come to the United States, they are seen as hybrid and not a threat to the nationalism of a White hegemonic world (Kalra et al., 2005; Shankar, 2008). For instance, students of European descent are tested on their language proficiency only when their family immigrated recently; however, by and large, language proficiency test is administered to racialized children, including Latine and Asian immigrant children, children of immigrants, or even grandchildren of immigrants (Shankar, 2008b; Bunch & Panayotova, 2008). A raciolinguistic perspective helps to uncover raciolinguistic ideologies behind standardized tests, which reflect the assumptions of the White listening/ reading subject, “shifting the focus from the linguistic practices of the speaker/ writer towards the perceiving practices of the listener/ reader” (Flores, 2020, p.24). Such standardized language proficiency tests do not reflect bilingual racialized students’ language abilities and inequitably impact them. Standardized tests privilege ideologies of English monolingualism and single out immigrant and bilingual youth, both of whom are predominantly racialized students, such as SAA students in this study (Flores & Rosa, 2015).

Further, focusing on social class within the South Asian community, Shankar (2008a, 2008b) also investigated how socioeconomic variance within this group shapes their social and linguistic practices and experiences in school. In her study, the upper-middle-class students experienced higher model minority pressure to excel from parents and teachers. In contrast,

middle-class students were often criticized and marginalized for academic performances falling short of meeting this stereotype. Further, the upper-middle students upheld the norms of speaking “standard” English and the model minority expectations to benefit their academic goals and school activities (Shankar, 2008b, 2011). Middle-class students, however, drew unwanted attention from the teachers who perceived their heritage language use as evidence of a lack of proficiency in English. School faculty also overlooked these students for school activities and leadership positions (Shankar, 2008b, 2011). This is another example where a raciolinguistic perspective helps to examine how White monolingual public spaces reproduce raciolinguistic ideologies by privileging English monolingualism and positioning heritage languages as inferior (Shankar, 2011; Flores & Rosa, 2015).

Shankar (2008b) highlights how the bilingualism of middle-class South Asian students and their engagement in translanguaging practices (García, 2009) in school displays an immediate marker of “otherness,” which needs further investigation and often standardized language proficiency of students’ abilities. Mr. López, a Greene High School administrator, shared how hearing loud displays of Punjabi is how he initially noticed and identified SAA students in the school. In the study, Mr. López shared his surprise when he realized that the students were not Latine, further mentioning how some Indians look Hispanic and those with darker skin look African American (Shankar, 2008a, 2008b). This example highlights the racial ambiguity (Harpalani, 2013) that most SAA students experience, which further complicates the relationship between their race and language and how then the ideologies of race and language intersect and co-constitute, impacting the SAA students (Flores & Rosa, 2015).

Shankar (2008a, 2008b) noticed that amongst the middle-class SAA students, only a handful of students actually needed ESL classes, the majority of the students were, in fact, fluent

in English, with an American accent, and could even speak English better than their heritage language. However, their translanguaging practices in the school and the home survey prompted their placement in ESL classes. Shankar (2008a) shares the example of Avinash, who was among other SAA students placed in ESL. Avinash shared his frustration of being tracked in ESL despite being only fluent in English and could only understand his heritage language. Many students like Avinash who are placed in ESL miss out on educational opportunities because they feel ESL classes are not challenging enough for them. This also leads to their lack of involvement in school activities, putting them at a severe disadvantage. Such examples highlight how SAA students' bilingualism is devalued, and their language practices are labeled deficit. Focusing on these racial and linguistic experiences through a raciolinguistic perspective helps recognize the deficit perspective that SAA students negotiate in their schooling concerning their linguistic practices. Language practices and experiences of racial ambiguity among South Asian students contribute to creating racialized meanings in the schools by disrupting the homogeneity of the model minority stereotypes and playing a vital role in racial formation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the raciolinguistic perspective offers a powerful lens through which to understand the intricate interplay between language and race, revealing how ideologies surrounding language serve to reinforce and perpetuate racial hierarchies. Drawing on the raciolinguistic perspective as theorized by Flores and Rosa, this study draws attention to the notions of linguistic appropriateness that are deeply intertwined with racialized perceptions, perpetuating systemic inequalities within education systems and beyond. Although research specifically addressing the racial and linguistic experiences of SAA students in the U.S. education system is scant, the existing body of work offers crucial insights into the intersection

of raciolinguistic ideologies with the educational trajectories of these students. This study employs a raciolinguistic perspective to reveal further and contest the implicit biases and assumptions that shape the scholastic journeys of SAA students. As scholarship in this field continues to evolve, it is imperative that future research expands its focus to encompass a broader range of racialized communities, ensuring a more comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics at play.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

This qualitative research study consists of multiple case studies (Yin, 2018). Six Indian American undergraduate students participated in the series of semi-structured interviews about their linguistic and racial experiences in the U.S. education system. This study draws on raciolinguistic perspectives (Flores & Rosa, 2015) to explore some of the raciolinguistic ideologies that Indian American students encounter in the U.S. education system. The study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What raciolinguistic ideologies do Indian American students encounter in structures and policies that shape education and interpersonal interactions within schools, including with personnel and peers?
2. How do Indian American students navigate the raciolinguistic ideologies they experience in the U.S. education system and beyond?

In this chapter, I provide an overview of the research design, followed by a discussion of the research setting and participant recruitment. I then introduce the six participants and outline the data collection and analysis procedures employed to answer the research questions. I conclude this chapter by discussing the statement about my positionality.

Research Design

This research employed a qualitative multiple-case study research design, embracing the tenets of qualitative inquiry. This approach entails gathering insights from participants through interactions and conversations within their natural setting, with the researcher serving as the primary instrument (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). In accordance with Merriam's (1998) characterization, a qualitative case study is characterized as an in-depth exploration and analysis of a singular entity, phenomenon, or social unit, providing a comprehensive perspective. Within

the scope of this dissertation, a case study as a research design allowed me to delve deeply into the experiences of each participant, providing a rich and detailed understanding of their encounters with raciolinguistic ideologies in various educational contexts as well as interactions with school personnel and peers.

Consequently, the research design adopted an exploratory multiple-case study design (Yin, 2003), facilitating an examination of multiple cases to understand the differences and similarities in the experiences of Indian American students within the U.S. education system (Stake, 1995). The foundational unit of analysis is the “case,” defined as a functional unit or a bounded system (Stake, 2006). Within the context of this study, an individual of Indian American descent constitutes a case, with emphasis placed on the reciprocal interactions between them and their educational environment, encompassing both individuals and institutional structures. By selecting multiple cases (in this case, six participants), the research design allowed to capture a diverse range of perspectives and experiences among Indian American students, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of how raciolinguistic ideologies manifest and are navigated within the education system. Additionally, examining multiple cases also helped in identifying common patterns and differences in how Indian American students encounter and navigate raciolinguistic ideologies. The multiple-case design, as a research approach, delves into processes and outcomes through an exhaustive exploration of diverse cases (Mills et al., 2009).

A qualitative multiple-case study research design was deemed most fitting for this study due to the flexibility it affords, allowing the researcher to engage as the instrument and integrate diverse data sources aimed at comprehending and exploring the phenomenon under scrutiny (Merriam & Tisdell 2015). Importantly, while a single-case study may yield valuable insights, the adoption of a multiple-case study design enhances the study’s robustness and reliability (Yin,

2018). As underscored by Stake (2006), the findings of case studies extend beyond the specific cases examined, particularly in the context of a multiple-case study where the derived theory gains credibility grounded in empirical evidence from multiple cases (Gustafson, 2017).

Research Site and the Participants

Data collection occurred during the spring of 2023 at a large public midwestern university. I employed snowball sampling (Noy, 2008) and purposive sampling (Tongco, 2007) to recruit individuals who were enrolled in an undergraduate program at the university, who trace their ancestry to India, identify as Indian Americans, and who attended K-12 schools in the United States. All the participants are children of immigrant parents who were born in the United States or moved here as young children. Due to their relative maturity, this population offered a more critical perspective than current K-12 students and was able to reflect on how their experiences may have influenced their racial and linguistic identities.

To recruit participants, I connected with different student organization heads and their members on the university campus (e.g., the Indian Student Association and Sikh Student Association) by sharing a recruitment letter and a research flyer. In addition, I also used personal connections to recruit participants for this study. I recruited six participants for this multiple-case study, representing a diverse sample size. These six cases ensured a variety of ages, religions, types of schools attended, and languages spoken. It is worth noting that, according to Stake (2006), the benefits of multiple-case studies can be limited if fewer than four cases or more than ten are chosen. Therefore, I ensured the sample size was adequate to achieve the study's objectives. Since the recruitment of participants occurred at the university level, it might be reasonable to assume that students enrolled at the university surpassed their peers in both academic and financial terms. This group, therefore, excluded Indian Americans from the K-12

system who may have faced academic challenges or economic limitations. Additionally, this study only included participants who had completed their K-12 education in the United States; it excluded students who might have joined a U.S. school mid-way (i.e., middle or high school) through their education. Nevertheless, this limitation is also a strength, as it sheds light on the experience of 1.5-generation, and second-generation Indian Americans.

Participants

Before discussing the data collection process, it is essential to introduce the people who have shared their experiences to make this dissertation possible. Table 2 below shows the demographic details of each participant in the order of recruitment, followed by a more detailed introduction of each participant. Each participant's profile offers a snapshot of their cultural and educational background. To protect their privacy, pseudonyms have been used for each participant.

Table 2

Participant Demographic Information

Name	Place of Birth	Age	Gender	Year at the University	Languages Spoken	K-12 schools attended	ESL	Religion
Rahul	U.S.	21	Male	Senior	Malayalam, Hindi, English	Private schools	No	Hindu
Amrita	India	19	Female	Freshmen	Punjabi, Hindi, English	Public Schools	Yes	Sikh
Kabir	India	20	Male	Junior	Hindi, English	Public Schools	Yes	Hindu

Maitri	U.S.	20	Female	Sophomore	Kannada, English	Public schools (3 different states)	No	Hindu
Ria	U.S.	19	Female	Freshmen	Tamil, English	Public school, Charter school, Catholic private school	No	Muslim
Kiran	U.S.	20	Female	Sophomore	Telugu, English	Public schools	No	Hindu

Rahul

I was introduced to Rahul through a mutual connection. He identifies as Indian, specifically from South India. Rahul was born in the United States after his parents moved from India in the late 1980s for higher education. His father works as an engineer, and his mother is a professor at a university. While growing up, English was his primary language, but he also had some proficiency in Malayalam and Hindi, which he learned through interactions with his parents during his formative years. He grew up on the West Coast and attended selective private schools from K-12 that did not offer ESL programs. The schools he attended and the neighborhood he lived in had a large Indian population, which allowed him to have many Indian friends. At the time of the data collection, Rahul was completing his senior year at the university, majoring in data science with a minor in computer science.

Amrita

Amrita reached out to me after seeing my research flyer on a student organization's social media page. Amrita identifies as Punjabi American or Sikh American, as her religion is a

significant part of her identity. She moved to the United States from India with her parents at the age of five, sponsored by her maternal uncle or grandfather, who had settled in the United States in the 1980s. Amrita's father runs an online retail business and drives for Uber and Lyft, while her mother works as a pharmacy technician. She is the first in her family to pursue higher education in the United States and is on a full scholarship. Growing up, Punjabi and English were the primary languages spoken at her home, but Amrita also knows Hindi, which she was exposed to at a young age in India. She still uses Punjabi and Hindi with her immediate and extended family and friends.

Amrita grew up in the Midwest and attended public schools from K-12. She was placed in ESL from Pre-K to 2nd grade. Amrita mentioned that the student population in her school district was primarily White, with some Hispanic, Black, and Asian students. Her close friends in high school were Hispanic. Additionally, she attended a Punjabi school in a Sikh temple, where she learned to read and write in Punjabi. At the time of data collection, Amrita was a freshman at the university and was double majoring in political science and legal studies.

Kabir

I had previously met Kabir once in a personal setting before inviting him to participate in my research study. Kabir identifies as Indian American, and during our conversations, he shared that he developed a greater awareness of his dual identity when he took his citizenship oath in sixth grade. He moved to the United States from India with his parents in the early 2000s when he was six months old. His father got an opportunity to move and work in the United States. His father works as an engineer, and his mother is a stay-at-home mom. While growing up, he spoke primarily in English and used a combination of Hindi and English at home. He learned Hindi

from his parents and through frequent visits to India. Kabir still uses Hindi to communicate with his immediate and extended family.

At the time of the data collection, Kabir was a junior at the university majoring in computer science. He grew up in the Midwest and attended public schools from K-12. He was placed in ESL from 2nd grade through 6th grade. According to Kabir, the student population in his schools was diverse, consisting of White, Hispanic, and Black students. However, there were very few South Asian or Asian students in his classes, and he was often the only Indian student.

Maitri

Maitri was Kabir's girlfriend at the time Kabir introduced me to her. Maitri identifies as Indian American. Although she was born in the United States, her parents moved back to India when she was only a few months old. After spending three years in India, Maitri's family immigrated back to the United States, specifically to Colorado. She highlighted that spending her initial years in Colorado, where she attended a predominately White school, made her aware of her Indian American identity. Her father works in the field of information technology. Her mother, due to work visa issues, was a stay-at-home mom for ten years and now works in quality assurance testing. Growing up, Maitri used to speak Kannada and English with her parents at home. However, she has observed that as she and her brother get older, they respond to their parents only in English. This has led to her brother having a hard time speaking and understanding Kannada.

She attended a monastery school in India for preschool and kindergarten and then went to public schools in Colorado and two Midwestern states for the rest of her education. Maitri mentioned that she did not have to attend ESL classes because both her parents were comfortable in English, so they could speak to her in English while she was growing up. Her mother also

helped her with English homework. According to Maitri, her high school was very supportive of diversity. She was involved in the Multicultural Student Council and also worked with the minority student advocacy networks while in high school. She added that she has many Indian friends at the University and is also an active member of the Indian student organization. At the time of data collection, Maitri was a sophomore at the University majoring in data science and economics.

Ria

Amrita introduced me to her friend Ria, who identifies as Indian. Ria prefers not to use the term “Indian American” as she feels it can be confused with Native American. Although Ria was born in the United States, her family moved to Dubai when she was only three months old due to green card issues. They returned to the United States a year and a half later. Ria’s father came to the US in the late 1990s for a job opportunity. He is a software engineer, while her mother is employed in the information technology industry. As a child, Ria spoke Tamil and English at home. To practice, she still speaks Tamil with her parents and boyfriend, and she wishes to teach her children Tamil as well. Ria mentioned that in her hometown, there are very few Tamil Muslims. As a result, when she goes to the mosque, people often assume that she speaks Urdu. This is because many Indian Muslims speak Urdu, particularly those from North India.

Ria attended a public school from kindergarten to 1st grade, a charter school from 2nd to 8th grade, and a Catholic private high school. She added that after middle school, her mother wanted her to attend a Muslim private school, but Ria decided to attend the Catholic school since, according to her, academics were better in the Catholic school. Ria mentioned that she learned English mainly at school. Although her parents could speak English, they mostly

communicated with her in Tamil while she was growing up. She added that she feels she speaks English pretty well and never had to attend ESL classes. According to Ria, her high school was not very diverse, but her group of friends was diverse. She added that all her close friends at the University are Indian. At the time of data collection, Ria was a freshman studying computer engineering.

Kiran

Maitri introduced me to her friend Kiran, who identifies as Indian American. Kiran shared that growing up in a predominantly White town while also having a big Indian family friend group made her feel like she did not entirely fit in as either Indian or American. Therefore, she felt that Indian American was the most appropriate label for her. Kiran was born in the United States after her parents moved from India in the late 1990s for a work opportunity. Both her parents work in computer programming. Growing up, Kiran used to speak Telugu and English at home. She also shared that her parents know many Indian languages, including Urdu, Malayalam, Kannada, Tamil, and Hindi.

Kiran grew up in the Midwest and attended public schools from K-12. She was never placed in ESL classes but expressed concern and confusion about her sister being placed in ESL. Her school district was not very diverse; however, Kiran mentioned that when she was growing up, she had two distinct groups of friends: one from school and another from her Indian community who attended different schools. She always felt like a divide, spending weekdays with school friends and weekends with Indian friends at family gatherings. She also mentioned that she felt like she had two different personalities while spending time with these two sets of friends. At the university, she mentioned that she is actively involved with Indian student

organizations and ends up spending more time with her Indian friends. At the time of data collection, Kiran was a sophomore studying biology.

Data Collection Method

Data collection for this study included a pre-interview questionnaire and two rounds of semi-structured in-depth interviews. The first interview lasted approximately 60 minutes with each participant, and the second interview lasted approximately 90 minutes with each participant (except for Kabir, who completed the first interview only). The data collection process began in January 2023 and ended in May 2023. All data collected adhered to the guidelines of the IRB.

Questionnaire

Before the first round of interviews, all six participants were given a pre-interview questionnaire to fill out (see Appendix A). The questionnaire consisted of seven questions to gather information about the participants' family background, language proficiency, and educational history, focusing on their experiences in K-12 schools. The information collected from this questionnaire was valuable in shaping the interview process, as it helped to provide a comprehensive understanding of the participant's background. Additionally, it was helpful in understanding the participant's unique perspectives and experiences.

Interviews

Interviews are one of the most important sources of case study evidence. Seidman (2009, 2012) states that in-depth interviewing "allow[s] both the interviewer and the participant to explore the participant's experience, place it in context, and reflect on its meaning" (p. 20). In-depth interviews also allow for the easier expression of non-conformity for the participants and to pursue their attitudes and experiences in greater detail (Morgan, 1996). Interviews can significantly help by suggesting explanations, the "how's" and "why's" of key events, as well as

reflecting participants' perspectives (Yin, 2018). In-depth, semi-structured interviews with the focal participants allowed me to explore their perspectives on racial and linguistic experiences in different educational settings.

Within this case study, I used semi-structured interviews that allowed me the flexibility to engage in natural conversation with the participants while pursuing a consistent line of inquiry. The first round of interviews focused on their demographic information, beliefs about bilingualism, and English-only policies (see Appendix B). The second round of interviews included discussions about their language practices (at home, at school, and with peers), experiences in K-12 schools, and now at the University (see Appendix C).

Data Analysis

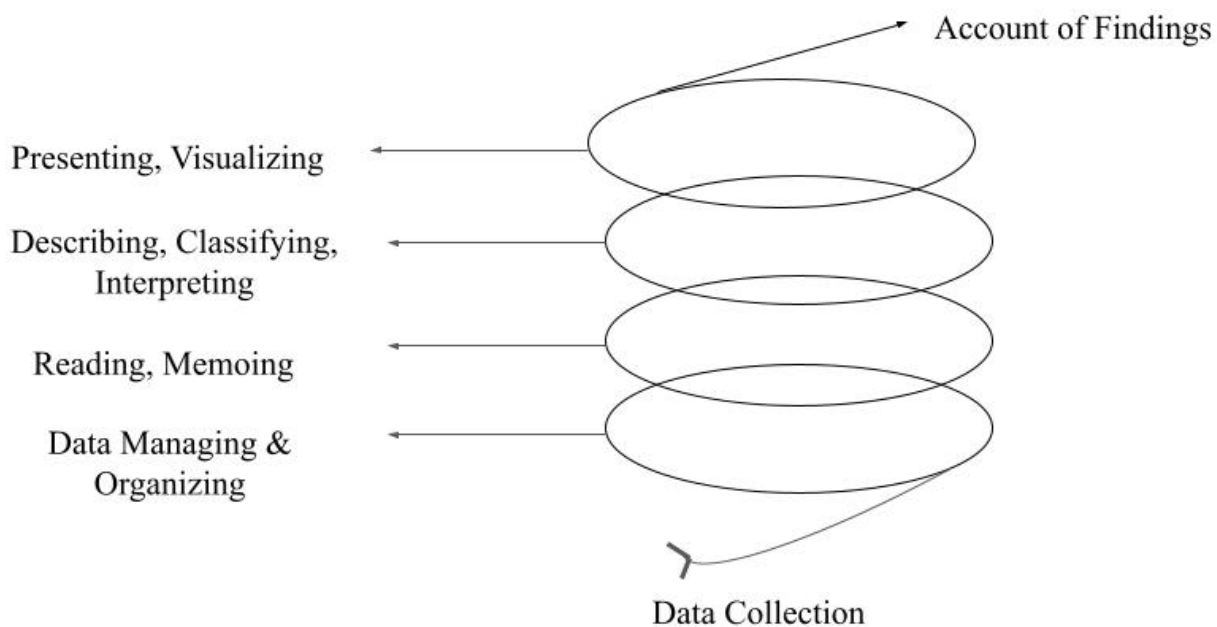
I started analyzing the data during the data collection phase and used memos to record personal reactions, questions, and emerging analyses (Emerson et al., 2011). According to Merriam (1998), the process of data analysis begins with data collection, and it is an ongoing and iterative process throughout the research project. It is crucial to continue analyzing the data as it may identify gaps that need to be addressed during interviews. I also wrote field notes during or shortly after the interview sessions to include my reflections. During data collection, I actively engaged in what Saldaña (2013) refers to as pre-coding, which is basically highlighting passages, writing, or "jotting" (p. 20) preliminary codes and field notes.

To effectively analyze the qualitative data presented in this study, I employed the data analysis spiral as outlined by Creswell and Poth (2016), which can be observed in Figure 3. The data analysis spiral is a flexible and iterative approach to analyzing data, which involves the researcher moving through several analytic phases in a circular, rather than linear, manner. The process of data analysis begins with data management and organization, followed by reading and

taking notes, then describing and classifying the data, and finally presenting the data. In the following sections, I will provide a detailed overview of each phase in the spiral, highlighting key features and considerations.

Figure 3

Data Analysis Spiral



Note: Adapted from Creswell and Poth's (2016)

Data Managing and Organizing

The initial phase of data analysis involves effective management and organization of the data gathered (Creswell & Poth, 2016). As a part of this stage, I transcribed all the interviews. Additionally, I labeled and sorted the responses from the pre-interview questionnaires, along with the transcriptions and memos, into respective folders. Following this, the data collected was uploaded and analyzed using MAXQDA, a powerful software tool for data analysis.

Reading and Memoing

In the analysis process, reading and memoing are crucial because they enable us to gain a comprehensive understanding of the data (Creswell & Poth, 2016). When I read through the interview transcripts and memos, I carefully examined them to identify the major organizing ideas and categories. For example, I started by highlighting data based on students' experiences at school, students' experiences outside the school, etc.

Describing, Classifying, and Interpreting Data

In the third phase of my data analysis process, I shifted my focus towards exploring the data comprehensively by describing, classifying, and interpreting it. In the describing, classifying, and interpreting data phase of the data analysis process, I utilized a combination of deductive and inductive coding. In the first stage, I employed deductive coding to develop three pre-defined parent codes aligned with the research questions. For instance, I created a code, "Raciolinguistic Ideologies in Policies & Structure," to address the first part of research question 1, which investigates raciolinguistic ideologies that Indian American students encounter in the structures and policies that shape their education. I then coded all my data within each of the three parent codes and also devised emergent codes to document segments of the interview that did not fit under the three predetermined codes but were still crucial to participants' experiences as South Asians or Indian Americans in the United States. For example, I created a "Hyper Education" code to document instances when the participants discussed extracurricular activities they were enrolled in.

In the second stage, I used inductive coding to create emergent codes from all the previously coded segments in the first stage. I then classified and interpreted the data, identifying analytical themes by tracing patterns across these new codes. For example, I created emergent

codes for ESL placement, assimilation, and implicit English policy. While there were other codes that emerged, such as the impact of involvement in student organizations, I did not use them in my research going forward because they did not align with or help answer the research question.

Next, in the third stage, I identified relationships among the emergent codes by grouping, sorting, and assigning axial codes according to recurring categories (Saldaña, 2021). Finally, in the fourth stage, the axial codes helped integrate categories to identify broader themes within each research question (see Table 3). As pointed out by Creswell and Poth (2016), these broader themes are like “families” of themes that have sub-themes and sub-subthemes representing different segments of data. Once I established the broad themes within each case, I completed a cross-case analysis to explore how the experiences of the six participants converged and diverged. During the four stages of data analysis, I maintained a list of all pre-defined and emergent codes that led to creating a codebook- a compilation of codes, their brief description of definition, and an example.

Presenting and Visualizing Data

The last phase of the data analysis spiral focuses on visualizing and representing data. In this stage, I visually presented the data in themes and patterns for clarity. Creswell and Poth (2016) discuss this stage as a way to compare raw data collected for a study visually. I took the data I had gathered, analyzed it, and represented it visually using a table to present themes generated through codes and categories. To illustrate, in Table 3, I have provided an example of the four stages of coding that I conducted. The process involved deductive coding with three predefined codes, followed by inductive coding to create emergent codes. Then, I used axial coding to identify themes that emerged in the previous coding cycle.

Table 3

Example of Multi-Level Analysis

Stage 1 Deductive Coding (Predefined Code)	Stage 2 Inductive Coding (Emergent Code)	Stage 3 Inductive Coding (Axial Codes)	Stage 4 Inductive Coding (Themes)
Raciolinguistic Ideologies in Policy and Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Non-Standard English ● ESL Placement ● Questioning Language practices ● Otherness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ESL Experiences & Impact ○ Deficit Perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Perceived Language Deficiency
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Language Hierarchy ● Bilingualism ● Implicit English only policy ● Assimilation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pressure for language & cultural assimilation ○ English Dominance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Push for Assimilation & English Dominance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Accent: Debate Experience ● Accent: ESL Experience ● Accent: TA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Accent Judgement ○ Accent Correction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ “Appropriate” Accent

Note. The above table is one example of multi-level coding created and implemented by the researcher for data analysis of this study.

Researcher’s Positionality

Given that fieldwork is relational, I aimed to be mindful of how my positionality informs the representations of research participants. Banks (1998) highlighted that researchers embody a

range of positionalities that color how they interpret reality and engage in knowledge production. I am an Indian, multilingual, middle-class Hindu woman who is a researcher, educator, and international student at a university in the United States. My identity and interests have been developed through my personal history and experiences of working as an educator in India and now working and studying at a university in the Midwest. These experiences and roles have shaped how I think about language and the problems in teaching and learning. These factors also influence the ways participants in the study perceive me.

My transnational experiences are fundamental to my research. I grew up in Delhi, located in northern India, where Hindi and English are the dominant languages. Being from a Punjabi Hindu family, with Punjab being the region my ancestors belonged to and Hinduism being our practiced religion, I grew up speaking a mixture of Punjabi, Hindi, and English. I first moved out of Delhi to pursue my master's degree at a university in southern India. The student population at the university was ethnically and linguistically diverse, with students and faculty coming from different parts of the country. Studying in an ethnically and linguistically diverse context made me realize how closely my heritage language, Punjabi, was associated with my identity. In addition to having a broader cultural perspective, my program, Masters in Education, made me reflect on the importance and status given to the English language in the education system in India.

I had opportunities to visit urban and rural schools in various parts of India as part of my master's program and the nonprofit organizations I worked for after graduation. During my visits, I noticed the negative impacts of various language ideologies on students' educational outcomes. For example, I heard teachers say that their students do not speak "properly" because instead of using the standard form of Hindi (which is dominant in North India), they used

Haryanvi (considered a dialect of Hindi). In a different school in South India, a child was believed to have a “minor cognitive impairment.” Further investigations revealed that language was a key barrier. She was a migrant from a northern state and had limited proficiency in English and Kannada (the dominant language in the state of Karnataka). For me, these observations highlighted the ideologies that are deeply embedded in the education system, which favor one language over the other and place them in power structures that position them hierarchically and the people who speak these languages.

Being from India, which has more than 22 recognized languages, I also understand that such observations across different states are indicative of India’s language politics. For example, English and Hindi are more than just official languages of India; they are tied to the country’s colonial past, Hindu nationalism, religion, and caste. In this context, some languages are constructed as “standard,” while others are not recognized as languages but as dialects. Such instances led me to pursue doctoral studies, sparking my interest in education responsive to students’ ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, specifically, how language, ethnicity, and education intersect to impact students’ learning.

Since moving to the United States for my doctoral studies, I have seen parallels between my prior experiences in India, especially concerning language ideologies and politics. As a multilingual South Asian in the United States, I have received “compliments” that I speak “good English,” which surprised me, considering all my education has been in English. There have also been instances where my pronunciation differed from the U.S. pronunciation, and sometimes I have used words that are perceived differently in U.S. English compared to Indian English. In these encounters, I have questioned the proficiency of my English language skills, primarily

because I also had, at some level, internalized the raciolinguistic ideologies (considering the White English monolingual-speaking subject's language as "standard").

My transnational experiences as a student and an educator have sharpened my awareness of the role of language in racial and ethnic relations across different contexts. Such observations made me inquisitive about the experiences of Indian American students in the U.S. education system, which I have explored in my dissertation research.

Throughout the study, it was vital for me as the researcher to navigate my role carefully to steer the direction of data collection and gain a clear understanding of the individuals and situations being examined. During the process of collecting and analyzing data, I kept a reflective journal (Ortlipp, 2008) to build self-awareness as a researcher and reflect on how I shape the research process. As an Indian International student, my cultural background enhanced my sensitivity to the experiences of Indian American students and their encounters with raciolinguistic ideologies. Additionally, I brought an insider perspective of understanding the cultural and linguistic experiences of the participants, which helped me look beyond stereotypes. However, I also had an outsider's perspective on the American culture and the K-12 education system. This unique perspective allowed me to examine the data closely without the influence of my own experiences. Instead, I consciously listened to the participants' experiences on their own terms, which helped me gain a deeper understanding of their perspectives and insights. It was also important to be aware of my own biases and assumptions, which stem from my upbringing in India as well as my own cultural background and experiences. I tried to be mindful of my positionality and humble in how I approached participants. Keeping a reflective journal helped me reflect on the limitations of my experience and point of view and what I may be missing or misrepresenting.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has provided a detailed overview of the research methodology employed in this qualitative multiple-case study. The choice of a qualitative approach, particularly the multiple-case study design, was rooted in need for an in-depth exploration and analysis of the experiences of Indian American undergraduate students within the U.S. education system using a raciolinguistic perspective. The chapter outlined the research site and participants, emphasizing the selection criteria and sampling methods used to recruit six Indian American undergraduate students from a midwestern university. The introduction of participants served to contextualize the diversity within the sample. The data collection methods, including pre-interview questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, were explained in detail, underscoring their role in capturing the complexities of raciolinguistic ideologies. The subsequent sections of the chapter describe the process of data analysis, the study's limitations, and the researcher's positionality.

I recognize that in any analytical endeavor, "There is no such thing as getting it right" (Richardson & St. Pierre, 1989 p. 962), and the aim instead should be to present findings in an adequately "nuanced" and "contoured" way (p. 962). Therefore, the methods and tools described here were used to ensure accuracy, integrity, and validity and to facilitate an adequately complex, nuanced interpretation of racial and linguistic experiences of Indian American students in the U.S. education system. Overall, this chapter sets the stage for the subsequent presentation and discussion of findings, offering a comprehensive understanding of the methodological foundations underpinning the exploration of raciolinguistic ideologies in the U.S. education system experienced by Indian American students.

Chapter 5: Uncovering Raciolinguistic Ideologies Impacting Indian American Students

In the complex tapestry of the U.S. education system, the experiences of Indian American students reveal profound insights into the intricate interplay of raciolinguistic ideologies. This findings chapter aims to answer the first question of the research study: What raciolinguistic ideologies do Indian American students encounter in structures and policies that shape education and interpersonal interactions within schools, including with personnel and peers?

The findings of this multiple-case study conducted with six Indian American students revealed the raciolinguistic ideologies they encountered. During my conversations with the participants, I discovered that they all faced challenges and systemic biases as a result of raciolinguistic ideologies that led to their marginalization within educational policies, structures, and interpersonal interactions. The participants shared their own experiences and those of their siblings who were placed in ESL programs despite English being their dominant language. They also recounted instances where their English language proficiency and accent were questioned and commented on. The participants also felt pressured to conform to the “appropriate” way of speaking within and outside the school. These incidents highlighted the deep-seated raciolinguistic ideologies that continue to portray the language practices of racialized communities—including Indian Americans—as deficient.

To illustrate these findings further, I present representative examples from the dataset demonstrating the various raciolinguistic ideologies they encountered within the structures and policies of the education system and in their interpersonal interactions within and outside the school. There are three overarching themes that emerged from participants’ responses. The first theme, *Perceived English Language Deficiency in Indian American Students*, highlights the pervasive perception of language deficiency among Indian American students due to racial

biases, leading to perpetuating negative stereotypes and marginalization. The second theme, *Push for Assimilation and English Dominance*, highlights the historical and contemporary push for assimilation and conforming to English-dominant norms, resulting in the erasure of linguistic and cultural identities among Indian American students. Finally, the third theme, “*Appropriate Accent*,” highlights the influence of accent bias leading to impacting Indian American student’s academic opportunities and their cultural identities.

Perceived Language Deficiency in Indian American Students

Raciolinguistic ideologies have historically framed and continue to frame racialized communities’ language practices as deficient and in need of remediation (Flores, 2020). Racialized communities’ language practices are perpetually constructed and perceived as deficient regardless of how closely they follow the “standardized” norms, which are determined by the White English-speaking subjects (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Participants in this study also shared incidents where they felt that their or their siblings’ language practices were seen as “inappropriate” in the educational institutions they attended. For example, Rahul², born and raised in the United States and attended private school throughout K-12, shared his experiences of teachers questioning his and his twin sister’s English language proficiency. He shared:

When I was in kindergarten preschool, my teachers were skeptical about me and my sister coming in because we are Indian, “Can they even speak English?”... I remember that after 3rd grade, we moved to a new school, and we had to take a placement test for that school. I remember talking to this teacher who said, “You guys did really well in the math section, but English. Do you guys speak any other languages?” I was in 4th grade, and I was like, yeah, my parents speak this to me, but I do not speak that.

²All the participants mentioned are given pseudonyms for anonymity purposes.

Rahul's experience illustrated that teachers were skeptical and questioned their English skills based on their Indian ethnicity. This reflects the structural assumption that racialized students' language practices are perceived as linguistically deficient, which for many also leads to them being labeled as EL and placed in ESL classes. For example, Amrita shared her sister's experience, who was born and raised in the United States and only spoke English but was placed in ESL classes for four years.

I needed ESL, my sister was put in ESL for literally no reason. She was born and raised in the U.S. I think it was because she was a little shy growing up, so she would not speak much. Then, the school made the assumption that she just did not know how to speak English, which is not true. She did, but they put her in ESL longer than I was in ESL. She was in ESL for four years. I was in ESL for two and a half.

According to Amrita, the school made assumptions about her sister's linguistic abilities. This example illustrates how students can be placed in ESL programs without a valid reason, perpetuating the perception of language deficiency. Similarly, Kiran shared that her sister was placed in ESL classes despite being fluent in English and engaging in activities similar to her peers.

She was in ESL class, and I think it was first and second grade. I did not know this actually until recently, my mom was like, "Oh, yeah, she was in ESL." And I was like, "How come?" And she said to me that it is something that they do for kids that grow up in different backgrounds.

Kiran expressed her confusion about the school's decision to place her sister in ESL classes solely based on her background. Her sister was born and raised in the United States and primarily spoke English. Kiran shared that she found it odd that her sister was in ESL since she

engaged in activities similar to those of her peers. “I was like, that is so odd to me because I feel at home, she speaks English all the time and watches the same shows as everyone else. Like, I did not fully understand; I still quite honestly do not really understand. She reads books like the same books everyone else reads.” This example highlights how schools and the education system perpetuate stereotypes about students from diverse backgrounds. They are assumed to be linguistically deficient regardless of their actual language skills.

Ria’s sister faced a similar situation when she was asked to take an English test in eighth grade, despite having been at the school since kindergarten and not being in ESL classes. Ria shared that her sister was born and raised in the United States. She added that her sister is bilingual and speaks Tamil; however, she has only recently started learning Tamil, and English is her primary language. “She speaks Tamil now, but she is not that great. She is really good at English.” Her sister’s experience exemplifies how racialized students can be subjected to language testing without a clear justification, highlighting how racialized students’ practices are perceived as “inappropriate.” It also raises questions about why certain students are subject to such tests while others are not and how the school determines the need for language assessment.

When I asked Ria if her parents knew why her sister was asked to take the test, she said, “I think it is just because maybe my mom said she was bilingual. No, I do not even think that was it. I think maybe she said she is bilingual. Or maybe they kind of just looked at her.” This highlights how schools can misconstrue a student’s bilingualism as a language deficiency, even when they are proficient in the primary language of instruction. Additionally, her remark, “..maybe my mom said she was bilingual,” suggests that the school’s decision may have been based on a vague assumption or perception of bilingualism as a language deficiency rather than a valuable asset.

The examples of Rahul, Amrita, Kiran, and Ria illustrate how the language practices of racialized students are perceived from a deficit perspective in the education system, highlighting deeply ingrained raciolinguistic ideologies. These ideologies have historically and persistently portrayed the language practices of racialized communities as intrinsically deficit. Rahul's experience demonstrates how the teacher questioned his and his sister's English abilities based on their Indian ethnicity. Similarly, Amrita, Kiran, and Ria shared their siblings' experiences of being subjected to English tests and placed in ESL because they came from a "different background" or "were bilingual," which exemplifies the arbitrariness of language assessments. Unjust assumptions have inaccurately labeled them as linguistically deficient, perpetuating the notion of language deficiency.

Push for Assimilation and English Dominance

Throughout the history of U.S. state-sanctioned education, the goal of schooling has often been to advance assimilation into the dominant culture, with students and families being urged to lose or deny languages, literacies, cultures, and histories to succeed in school (Paris & Alim, 2014; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008). Participants in this study also highlight instances where, in the U.S. education system, they were implicitly or explicitly encouraged to assimilate into English-speaking norms, thus reinforcing the dominance of the English language in their education. For instance, Amrita shared how she felt that attending ESL classes was an assimilating program, which reflects how racialized students often feel compelled to adopt English-speaking norms and suppress their native languages. "I think that ESL, in a weird way, tends to be a very assimilating program. ... I never was given opportunities to express my language or to speak in my language."

In discussing her experiences with the school district, she attended and where her sister is currently enrolled, Amrita highlighted a significant disparity in language offerings. She shared that the school district predominantly focuses on European languages such as French, German, and Latin, except for Mandarin, which is exclusively available at the high school level, leaving middle school students with even more limited language choices. Amrita expressed her belief that South Asian languages, such as Hindi, should be integrated into the curriculum, given the notable presence of South Asian students in her sister's generation within the community, "especially considering that my younger sister's generation demographic in the school is half Asian students, like half of her elementary school was East Asian and South Asian students. So, I am really hoping that they start offering Hindi at least."

Amrita further shared her experiences of attending classes where they learned how to read and write Punjabi in a nearby Gurudwara (Sikh Temple), which she referred to as "Punjabi school." However, despite the focus being on learning Punjabi, most conversations during the classes in Punjabi school would still take place in English, highlighting the pervasive and dominant nature of the English language in daily interactions. English continues to dominate even in settings where other languages are being taught or promoted.

I know that even in Punjabi school, we would usually speak in English most of the time, despite the fact that we were learning Punjabi like we would read and write in Punjabi, but the conversations would be in English because everyone was accustomed to having to speak English all the time.

Kabir, who is bilingual in English and Hindi, acknowledged the prevalent implicit English policies, especially in educational spaces.

I think there are implicit English policies everywhere, I think, education, like, lectures, obviously, if I go to a lecture here, it is not going to be French, you know, unless it is a French lecture. English is the common language that's spoken.

While Kabir did not express the same concern about English monolingual ideologies and lack of opportunities to use his heritage language that others expressed —saying, in fact, “I have never been in a spot where I really want to speak Hindi, and I am not able to”—his comments nonetheless reflect the implicit English policies in education tend to reinforce the idea that English is the standard and the norm. This can cause racialized students to assimilate and adapt to English dominance, which may result in limited opportunities for them to develop and maintain their heritage languages and cultural backgrounds.

In conversation with the participants, they shared their experiences of feeling assimilated and encountering implicit English language dominance in various educational settings. They also recounted instances where they felt the same way in their everyday surroundings and interpersonal interactions. For example, Amrita reveals a significant transformation in her language use as she navigated through different stages of her education.

Amrita: In elementary school, I would sometimes still use Hindi and Punjabi with the Indian friends I did have at school. But by the time I got into middle school and high school, it was purely English and only English.

Interviewer: Did you switch to speaking only English based on your surroundings, or did someone tell you to do so?

Amrita: Yeah, I think it was just like an implicit. As I said earlier, I do not think anyone ever really told me to speak only in English or speak only with a U.S. English accent. I

think it was just everyone did. And I just assimilated to it, it just felt comfortable because it is what I was used to. It was like a habit in some way.

In the above example, what is particularly noteworthy is that Amrita's language transition was not explicitly enforced by any authority figure or individual. Instead, it occurred organically, influenced by the linguistic and cultural environment surrounding her. Amrita characterizes this shift as "implicit," emphasizing that English dominance and the assimilation into English-speaking norms were unspoken yet powerful aspects of her daily life. She also admits to assimilating naturally, citing comfort and habituation as the driving forces, effectively illustrating the pervasive influence of English in her everyday surroundings and interpersonal interactions.

Amrita also reflected on the implicit pressure she felt to constantly conform by maintaining an English accent, even when pronouncing her name.

The whitewashing of my name in a weird way was also something that was implicit, like keeping the English accent on 24/7. Even when you say your name, keep the English accent on because that is what keeps other people comfortable, and looking back at that, it is odd.

Amrita reflects on her experience of feeling the subtle pressure to whitewash her name by constantly maintaining an English accent. She suggested this practice was implicitly tied to the notion that an English accent is necessary to make others comfortable. Similarly, Maitri shared how she has always shortened her name to make it easier for people to say. "Even just like Indian names, like really shortening the name to make it easier for people to say. My name is Maitri. No one has ever said it like that... I go by Mai."

Kiran also shared a similar narrative. She candidly discussed that she introduced herself as “Kai” or sometimes “Karen” to make her name more accessible to others, highlighting the subtle pressure to conform to English-speaking norms for the convenience of others.

When I introduce myself, I say Kai or sometimes say Karen, not that I do not know my own name... And then most people would call me Kai... And then I was like, at some point, why am I making it easier for other people to say my name? It is not that difficult. I mean, I like being called Kai; that is just what I have always gone by, but this switch to Karen is, like, it was never my real name. It was a convenience to other people almost, and I have noticed, that many of my friends will do that too... Yeah, so out of convenience for everyone else, which is an interesting thing.

In the above example, Kiran’s realization that she is making it “easier for other people to say my name” prompts her to question the motivation behind this choice. Her statement, “It is not that difficult,” underscores the awareness that her given name is not inherently challenging but may be perceived as such in an English-dominant environment. She further adds that many of her friends similarly accommodate English speakers: “My friend’s name is Aami, but she goes by Ami or Amy. Oh, that is because that is easier, or my friend Munsha goes by Man-sha, but it is really Munsha, and I have noticed that a lot.” Kiran’s observation that many of her friends adopt a similar strategy highlights the prevalence of this assimilation tactic among many racialized students.

On the other hand, Maitri offers her perspective on how people perceive language in public spaces. She points out her observation of the differential reactions people receive when speaking their native languages loudly in public.

That honestly is something that I have thought about. I have had a lot more international friends in college who are from Europe, Italy, and France. And I feel I hear them oftentimes around me speaking super loudly in the library in their native tongue or just anywhere. I feel like people do not pay attention to that as much as when it is from people who are speaking Spanish or speaking in any Indian language or any other language. So I just thought about that recently and how that plays a role in how people think you should speak English or about your native language.

Maitri observed that when her international friends from Europe, Italy, and France do so, their actions often go unnoticed and face minimal scrutiny. In contrast, she perceived that individuals conversing in Spanish or Indian languages attract more attention and, at times, negative judgment. This observation underscores a double standard in how language is viewed based on the speaker's racial or ethnic background. It helps us highlight the impact of raciolinguistic ideologies that shape expectations and norms around language use. In this example, European languages are privileged, and their use is normalized in public spaces, while languages spoken by people of color may be perceived as "inappropriate." Maitri's observation highlights how raciolinguistic ideologies influence expectations regarding language use, reinforcing the idea that people should speak English, or their native language based on preconceived notions tied to their racial or ethnic background.

Similarly, Kiran shared her observation of the stigmatization of non-European languages and the preference for European languages in language learning. She notes a societal perception that learning European languages is considered desirable and views non-European languages with some degree of stigma.

When I speak in Telugu, my friends are like, “Oh, wow, very nice,” but it is more common, I think, to learn European languages because there is some sort of, I do not know, like some sort of stigma that is, Yeah.

Experiences of Amrita, Kabir, Maitri, and Kiran provide valuable insights into the experiences and perceptions of Indian American students as they navigate the dynamics of assimilation and the dominance of English in their everyday surroundings and interpersonal interactions. The interviews reveal how English, as the dominant language, influences various aspects of their lives, from educational settings to social interactions, ultimately shedding light on the raciolinguistic ideologies faced by Indian American students.

“Appropriate” Accents

Racialized students often face discrimination in the education system, not only based on their language but also based on their accents. This accent bias reflects and reinforces raciolinguistic ideologies that stereotype and perpetuates bias associated with speech patterns of particular racial or ethnic communities. It is not limited to students who speak English as a second language but also those who speak English varieties other than U.S. English (Chin, 2010; Kutlu, 2023). Accent bias leads to unequal educational opportunities for racialized students, including being denied access to high-track classes and full classroom participation. It also puts significant pressure on them to lose their heritage language and accent, depriving them of an essential part of their identity (Val & Vinogradova, 2010; Zhou & Liu, 2023). Participants in this study shared their experiences of encountering accent bias related to raciolinguistic ideologies, both implicit and explicit, in the education system. For example, Amrita shared her experience of participating in speech competitions at school, where she addressed Sikh discrimination, unveiling a disconcerting phenomenon tied to accent bias and raciolinguistic ideologies. She

noticed a notable correlation between modifying her Punjabi accent to align with English pronunciation and achieving higher rankings in the competition.

I did a speech related to Sikh discrimination. In that speech, there were times when I had to speak words in Punjabi, and I would speak with my regular Punjabi accent. But I realized that I started ranking higher in competition when I spoke the Punjabi lines with an English accent. No one said it or outwardly wrote it like that in my comments, like you are saying it wrong or like you are saying it in a way we do not understand. But I realized that people found it a little unsettling how quickly I could make that switch.

Clarity was also an issue for people. I remember that at one point, I even removed some of the Punjabi words, and I saw that my point started to increase, which I think is a little concerning, but that was the situation.

In the example mentioned above, Amrita shared that she sensed an underlying discomfort among the audience when she switched between her Punjabi and English accents, even though there were no overt comments criticizing her Punjabi accent. This unsettling shift in perception suggests the existence of implicit linguistic norms, raising questions about the expectations surrounding the “right” or “appropriate”³ accent and serving the perceptions of the White listening subject (Ramjattan, 2019; Flores & Rosa, 2015). Amrita also noticed that the audience had concerns with clarity when she maintained her Punjabi accent. As she removed some Punjabi words from her speech, her points increased, indicating a possible connection between the perception of clarity and adherence to a particular accent.

³ I have used both the terms “right” and “appropriate” interchangeably throughout the dissertation following the work of Ramajattan (2019) and Flores & Rosa (2015).

Similarly, Rahul shared his experience of participating in Speech and Debate competitions in elementary school and that it was a time that he specifically changed his way of speaking to sound “appropriate” and conform to what he perceived as an acceptable norm.

I remember that in fourth grade, I was like practicing a speech. A lot of essays, I would say, with an Indian enunciation, kind of like you. I would say certain things more with an Indian accent. I remember I was like, I have been talking in the mirror, and I was like, I got to change it. I just got to tone it down.

Rahul’s experience reveals an early awareness of accent bias, as he recalls practicing a speech with an Indian enunciation. Additionally, his conscious effort to alter his way of speaking was driven by a perceived need to conform to a more “appropriate” or widely accepted accent. This self-imposed pressure to tone down his natural way of speaking highlights the societal expectation that certain accents, particularly those associated with specific racial or ethnic backgrounds, are deemed less acceptable or clear (Kutlu et al., 2022). Further, he recalled instances from middle school where his teacher would deduct points and ask him to particularly enunciate those words better that he would say with an Indian accent.

We would have speech contests in middle school. So those ones, I remember my teacher was like, it was my final speech, and I remember she wrote on my card, “Make sure to enunciate these words better.” Those were all the words I would say more with an Indian accent, so those would sound a little off. I remember she had pointed that out, and I got points off for it. I mean, at the time, I would say, “Okay, I guess I need to pronounce it better because I respect your opinion.” She is just saying that because that is not how she is used to. So now, looking back on it, She is definitely being a little messed up because a lot of kids that would get a chip minus points were all Indians. And she was a White

teacher. I have actively done it and also seen repercussions from it. In this case, deducting points for no reason. Even though it is like saying English, it is not like I am speaking another language.

The feedback given by Rahul's teacher on his speech, specifically emphasizing the need for better enunciation of words with an Indian accent, highlights a potential linguistic bias.

Moreover, Rahul's observation that only Indian students had points deducted from their speeches revealed a systemic problem where racial and linguistic biases can negatively impact academic assessments. This accentuates the intersection of accent bias with broader raciolinguistic ideologies.

Further, Amrita shares her experience in ESL, where she had to unlearn the elements of her Indian English accent.

Oh yeah, I did unlearn the letter "zed." Yeah, I had to unlearn that. I had to start saying "zee" instead. That was one of those big things I still remember from ESL... Like I have been assimilated into the language since I was like 7- 8 years old. It has not really been an issue for me.

Amrita's mention of unlearning the Indian English pronunciation of the letter "zed" and adopting the U.S. English pronunciation "zee" instead reflects a conscious effort to conform to the dominant U.S. English accent. Her use of the term "assimilated" implies a deliberate alignment with the dominant linguistic and cultural standards, underlining the pressure that racialized students face to adopt what is considered the "appropriate" accent.

Amrita also shares her observation of how international Teaching Assistants (TAs) often face unfair judgments and negative perceptions about their communication abilities.

...Here in college, I had a TA who was from Eastern Europe. I do not know which country, but she has a strong Eastern European accent and is an international student. And people really did not like that they could not understand what the TA was saying because of her accent, which I do not really think is a fair judgment because it is not really her fault that she speaks in a certain way. It is the way she was raised and the way that she has been taught to speak.

Amrita's observations highlight the challenges international Teaching Assistants (TAs) face in academic environments and the impact of raciolinguistic ideologies on their experiences. These ideologies frequently dictate which accents are deemed "appropriate" and which are labeled "inappropriate" (Ramjattan, 2023b). This bias extends beyond communities of color and even within European White groups, where certain accents and languages are privileged over others (Tankosić, & Dovchin, 2023). This reflects dominant linguistic standards and racial hierarchies that favor the language practices and accents of certain groups over others.

During my discussions with the participants, a few of them opened up about their experiences in their daily conversations with friends. They expressed how they were "made fun of" because of their accents. In some cases, even their family members' accents were subjected to judgments and comments. For example, Ria shared her experience of learning English and how her pronunciation is different from what might be considered the "right" or "appropriate" accent.

Ria: I learned English like I would sound out the words. Like I would say, "Salmon" instead of "Samen." I would pronounce the words like as the letters and then my friends would be like, "What the hell?" They kind of laughed at me, not to be mean, but that was interesting... I would learn English more phonetically.

Interviewer: And where did you learn these pronunciations? Were you being taught in school like that or by your parents?

Ria: Because I just learned it from, like writing and reading. My parents were not—they spoke English to me, but not much, or they would pronounce the words that way. So, I would also pronounce those words that way.

In the above example, Ria mentioned that she learned English phonetically, pronouncing words as the letters suggest. She also mentioned that her parents had a similar way of pronouncing words, which also influenced her way of pronouncing the words. However, her friends' reactions, described as laughter, suggest that her pronunciation deviated from what they might have considered the norm.

Similarly, Kiran shared instances where, at times, she would be made fun of for the way she would say certain words, saying, "I feel like among my friends, yes, I was made fun of. You know, when I would like say things incorrectly." Kiran also shared instances where her friends commented on her parents' and sisters' accents, linking these linguistic features to perceptions of English proficiency and cultural belonging.

... A lot of times, my friends would come over, and my friends would talk to my parents, and they would say, "Oh, wow, your mom has a very strong accent" or "Your dad has a very strong accent," or when my sister was little, for a while, they were like, "Oh, your sister has a strong accent." I was like, "What do you mean?" I do not hear the accent. I do not know where you would be getting that from. I feel like, in some people's eyes, it is viewed as they do not understand English, or they do not know English that well. A lot of people will sometimes ask when they are talking to my mom, or my dad will be like, "Come again," and they will be speaking in English, but they do not fully understand.

And it is because they have an accent... Accent is what people perceive as another indicator that you are not from here or things like that.

Kiran shared how her friends would comment on her parents' and sisters' accents, viewing them as strong and potentially indicative of a lack of proficiency in English. She recounts situations where her parents are asked to repeat themselves, emphasizing the broader consequences of associating accents with a presumed lack of understanding. Kiran's response, expressing her lack of awareness of the accent and challenging the perception, underscores the subjective nature of what is considered an "appropriate" accent.

Kabir also shared similar ideas about how accents can affect perceptions of English proficiency.

... my dad speaks really good English, but because of his accent, you may not think it is like good English. He once told me about this guy who is an Indian colleague of his. He is like, "This guy speaks better English than some of our White colleagues. But the only difference is he has a little bit of an accent," but that does not take away from the actual language. Even like going to India, I found that a lot of people think that people in India do not speak good English, but you know, some people have even just as good English as people here. You know, the only difference is the accent that does not take away from the language.

In the above example, Kabir used his father's experience to highlight the idea that language proficiency is sometimes judged not solely based on linguistic competence but also on factors like accent, which can be influenced by one's racial or ethnic background. The notion that someone may be considered to speak "good English" as long as they have an "appropriate" accent that aligns with the perceived norm can contribute to linguistic discrimination. He also

shared his observation of how people in India face stereotypes regarding their English proficiency despite being equally proficient in the English language, reflecting how language and accent biases are often tied to racial or ethnic prejudices. This also highlights the broader negative perceptions that exist of South Asian Englishes by monolingual speakers of English (Lindemann, 2003, 2005).

The experiences of Amrita, Rahul, Ria, Kiran, and Kabir underscore the impact of accent-related judgments on racialized students, affecting their educational opportunities and shaping their interactions. The interviews reveal the persistence of accent bias—whether implicit or explicit—and its impact on Indian American students’ educational and everyday experiences. Notably, what is considered “appropriate” or “inappropriate” is inherently subjective; however, it is apparent that some groups are afforded more leniency than others. These narratives shed light on the arbitrariness of defining an “appropriate” accent, challenging stereotypes, and emphasizing the need for a more inclusive understanding of linguistic diversity.

Discussion

The findings of this multiple-case study provide valuable insights into raciolinguistic ideologies encountered by Indian American students in the U.S. education system. The participants shared experiences of marginalization within educational policies, structures, and interpersonal interactions, revealing three overarching themes: Perceived Language Deficiency in Indian American Students, Push for Assimilation and English Dominance, and “Appropriate” Accent.

Participants in this study shared instances that elucidate how raciolinguistic ideologies contribute to the marginalization of Indian American students within the U.S. education system. The participants shared their experiences where language practices of racialized students were

unjustly labeled from a deficit perspective, regardless of their alignment with prescribed norms (Cushing, 2023; Wang et al., 2021) For example, Rahul's encounter illustrates how the teachers' skepticism about his and his sister's English proficiency, based solely on their Indian ethnicity, suggests a bias that stereotypes the language practices of racialized students as deficient. The teachers' questioning implies a deficit perspective, assuming that being Indian is somehow linked to a lack of English proficiency. This is a clear example of how the language abilities of students are judged and questioned based on stereotypes associated with their racial or ethnic background. Flores (2020) acknowledges that teachers are often considered the "sources" of deficit perspective while suggesting that we identify the sources of discourses of languagelessness (Rosa, 2016) that teachers rely on in their understandings and evaluations of students. This call to action underscores the importance of examining the broader narratives shaping deficit perceptions of language proficiency within the educational landscape.

This tendency to question and assess the language abilities of racialized students was further evidenced in the narratives of Amrita, Kiran, and Ria, who shared instances of their siblings who were labeled and placed in ESL without conveying valid justification. Among racialized students, including Indian American students, this perceived language deficiency leads to social and academic marginalization of the students who are labeled as "English learners" and are placed in ESL classes (Olsen, 1997; Callahan et al., 2009; Dillion, 2014). This marginalization is caused by their status as "outsiders" and teachers' lowered expectations (Olsen, 1997). While ESL placement ensures that linguistic needs to improve English proficiency are at the forefront, students often lack access to rigorous academic curricula and struggle to achieve levels sufficient for acceptance to a four-year university (Callahan et al., 2009, 2010).

Amrita's sister, despite being a native English speaker, was placed in ESL for four years, echoing a troubling pattern where schools make unfounded assumptions about linguistic abilities, thereby perpetuating the perception of language deficiency. Moreover, Kiran's sister being placed in ESL classes due to perceived linguistic deficiency based on her background highlights the potential consequences of such stereotypes in education. It can lead to unwarranted educational decisions and reinforce raciolinguistic ideologies. Ria's sister, who was subjected to an English test in eighth grade, raises concerns about the inconsistent application of language assessments, prompting questions about the criteria and motivations behind such evaluations (Hernandez, 2017; Chávez-Moreno, 2022). The educational system can subject students to unwarranted language assessments or testing, reinforcing perceived language deficiency among racialized students (Chaparro, 2019; Siordia & Kim, 2022). This is often due to a misinterpretation of a student's bilingualism, lack of clear reasons for testing, and the perpetuation of stereotypes (Callahan et al., 2010). These interview segments collectively demonstrate how students from racialized communities can be unfairly labeled as linguistically deficient, which can lead to their placement in ESL programs or language assessments (Hernandez, 2017). These practices are rooted in raciolinguistic ideologies and often overlook the students' actual language abilities, perpetuating negative stereotypes and assumptions about their linguistic skills.

Participants' experiences also shed light on the implicit and explicit push for assimilation and English dominance within the education system, reflecting broader historical patterns aimed at erasing linguistic and cultural diversity (Paris & Alim, 2014). The experiences shared by participants align with the historical context outlined by Paris and Alim (2014) and Suárez-Orozco et al. (2008), illustrating the persistent goal of U.S. state-sanctioned education to

encourage assimilation into the dominant culture and conform to English-speaking norms. This phenomenon is vividly illustrated in Amrita's account of ESL classes, which she perceived as an assimilating program, limiting opportunities for expressing her native language (Hinton, 2001; Subtirelu, 2020). The limited availability of South Asian languages in the curriculum (Lee, 2019), as highlighted by the disparity in language offerings within Amrita's school district, further reinforces the dominance of European languages, leaving a gap in representing the linguistic diversity of the student population.

Further, Amrita's experiences in Punjabi school offer a poignant example of how, even in spaces designed for the teaching and preservation of heritage languages, the dominance of English remains entrenched. This phenomenon highlights not only the power dynamics at play but also the internalized expectations of assimilation, where racialized students experience the persistent pressure to conform to English-speaking norms, even in settings where the intention is to promote heritage language (Paris & Alim, 2014). Kabir also echoes the broader issue of linguistic assimilation by sharing his observation of the existence of implicit English policies in educational institutions (Park, 2013). As Kabir notes, the absence of linguistic diversity in educational settings limits the opportunities for students to use languages other than English, reinforcing the hegemony of English in academic spaces. This can result in the assimilation of racialized students, who, in adapting to the prevalent English dominance, may find their heritage languages marginalized and underdeveloped (Crawford, 1992; Krashen et al., 1998; Ashtari & Krashen, 2023).

The participant's narratives illuminate the push for assimilation and the impact of English dominance beyond the structures of the educational system, permeating everyday interactions outside the school. Amrita's organic transition to using only English in middle and high school

reflects the implicit influence of the linguistic and cultural environment, emphasizing the power of unspoken norms. The pressure to maintain an English accent, the practice of “Whitewashing” names, and the preference for English-friendly alternatives, as recounted by Amrita, Maitri, and Kiran, highlight the societal expectations contributing to the erasure of linguistic and cultural identities (Fillmore, 1996; Akhtar, 2023). These observations reflect broader raciolinguistic ideologies that are deeply ingrained in society and have far-reaching implications.

Maitri and Kiran’s observations on public reactions to different native languages further emphasize the privilege and acceptance of languages of certain groups over others (Veiga 2018; Wall 2016). Maitri’s contrast between the acceptance of loud conversations in European languages and the scrutiny faced by those speaking Spanish or Indian languages underscores raciolinguistic ideologies that favor certain languages over others. Kiran’s reflection on the stigma associated with non-European languages in language learning reinforces the societal preference for Eurocentric linguistic pursuits. These interpersonal dynamics contribute to raciolinguistic ideologies faced by Indian American students, where deviation from English-speaking norms is met with varying degrees of attention, judgment, and at times, stigmatization.

Finally, participants shared their experiences, highlighting the pervasive influence of raciolinguistic ideologies, especially in the form of accent bias. Accent bias, rooted in stereotypes associated with speech patterns of specific racial or ethnic communities, extends beyond English as a second language learners to include those who speak English varieties other than U.S. English (Grill, 2010). This bias, as evidenced by the narratives, has far-reaching implications for the educational opportunities and cultural identities of racialized students (Chin, 2010). Amrita’s account of her participation in speech competitions exposes a disconcerting reality where modifying her Punjabi accent to align with English pronunciation correlated with

higher rankings. Amrita's experience highlights the systemic biases that may disadvantage individuals whose linguistic practices deviate from established norms. The ethical concerns raised about compromising authentic linguistic expression to meet external expectations underscore the need for increased awareness and dialogue surrounding accent discrimination. This nuanced observation suggests that the expectations around accent may be implicit yet powerful. Similarly, Rahul's early awareness of accent bias, reflected in his deliberate effort to alter his way of speaking to sound "right" or "appropriate," underscores the societal pressure on racialized students to "sound right" and conform to perceived standards of linguistic acceptability that privileges Whiteness. His teacher's feedback, deducting points for certain words spoken with an Indian accent, suggests a systemic issue where linguistic biases influence academic assessments (Lorenz, 2024). The acknowledgment that only Indian students faced such deductions raises concerns about the intersectionality of racial and linguistic biases, with potential consequences for academic achievement. Rahul's narrative illuminates the intricate relationship between accent bias, raciolinguistic ideologies, and the systemic challenges that individuals from non-dominant linguistic backgrounds may face.

Amrita's experience in ESL classes, where she had to unlearn elements of her Indian English accent, sheds light on the pressure racialized students face to assimilate linguistically. Her use of the term "assimilated" indicates a conscious effort to align with the dominant U.S. English accent, reinforcing Kachru's (1986) notion that despite being spoken by native speakers, English varieties that came into existence primarily due to British colonization are not deemed as "native" or standard forms of English, and its speakers are often considered non-native English speakers. The experiences shared by Amrita regarding the perception of accents among international Teaching Assistants further expose the prevailing raciolinguistic ideologies that

favor certain accents as “right” or “appropriate” while stigmatizing others (Ballard, 2013; Subtirelu, 2015; Ramjattan, 2022, 2023a, 2023b).

In interpersonal interactions, the participants revealed instances of being made fun of due to their accents, illustrating experiences of Indian American students of accent bias beyond academic settings. Ria’s phonetic learning approach, leading to pronunciation differences, resulted in laughter from friends, emphasizing the subjective nature of what is considered the “appropriate” accent while also illustrating the challenges of linguistic assimilation and the subtle pressures individuals may face to conform to a specific accent associated with linguistic acceptability (Vishwanath, 2019). Kiran’s account of her family members’ accents being subjected to judgments exposes the stereotype that associates certain accents with a presumed limited understanding of English or foreignness (Anderson et al., 2007). The notion that people sometimes ask Kiran’s parents to repeat themselves, even when speaking English, due to their accents, exemplifies how accents become a marker of perceived linguistic competence or belonging. Lastly, Kabir’s mention of the judgments that his father and his father’s colleagues faced highlights the connection between accents and perceptions of English proficiency (Kutlu & Wiltshire, 2020; Kim et al., 2022). This example emphasizes a more extensive societal trend in which language skills are not only assessed based on linguistic ability but are also influenced by factors such as accent and one’s racial or ethnic background, thus perpetuating biases against racialized communities.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this findings chapter sheds light on the lived experiences of Indian American students and the raciolinguistic ideologies they encounter. This chapter answers the following question: What raciolinguistic ideologies do Indian American students encounter in

the structures and policies that shape education and interpersonal interactions within schools, including with personnel and peers?

Through the narratives, I identified three overarching themes— Perceived Language Deficiency in Indian American students, Push for Assimilation and English Dominance, and “Appropriate” Accent— that collectively contribute to the marginalization of Indian American students within the educational landscape. These themes provide insightful information about the challenges faced by Indian American students, which are usually masked under the model minority myth, highlighting the urgent need to acknowledge and address them in order to create equitable and inclusive educational spaces for racialized students.

The experiences shared by participants underscore the impact of raciolinguistic ideologies on educational policies and practices. The mislabeling of language abilities, as exemplified by the placement of students in ESL programs without valid justification, reveals a systemic issue rooted in stereotypes associated with racial and ethnic backgrounds. The tendency to question linguistic proficiency based on these stereotypes perpetuates negative assumptions and reinforces the perception of language deficiency among racialized students. The findings further unveil the historical patterns of assimilation and the dominance of English within the educational system, echoing broader societal expectations. The limited representation of South Asian languages in the curriculum and the pressure for assimilation in both educational and extracurricular settings contribute to the erasure of linguistic and cultural diversity.

Finally, this chapter brought forward accent bias as a significant facet of raciolinguistic ideologies, impacting academic assessments, cultural identity, and interpersonal interactions of Indian American students’ experiences. The pressure to conform to perceived standards of

linguistic acceptability is evident in instances where students modify their accents to align with dominant norms, with potential consequences for academic achievement.

Chapter 6: Navigating Raciolinguistic Ideologies

The previous chapter of the findings addressed the first question of the study by discussing raciolinguistic ideologies that Indian American students encounter in structures and policies that shape education and their interpersonal interactions. This chapter of the findings aims to answer the second question of the study: How do Indian American students navigate the raciolinguistic ideologies they experience in the U.S. education system and beyond?

This section presents two significant findings from this multiple-case study conducted with six Indian American students studying at a Midwestern university. First, in conversations with the participants, I found that they all had experienced accommodating and/or internalizing raciolinguistic ideologies at various points in their lives. Secondly, during the conversations, five out of six participants had also come to critically reflect on and question the ideologies that promote the idealized linguistic practices of Whiteness (e.g., “standard” English); additionally, the data analysis revealed that the participants were actively working to resist raciolinguistic ideologies in different ways. To further illustrate these findings, I present representative examples from the dataset demonstrating how the participants navigated raciolinguistic ideologies through 1) internalizing raciolinguistic ideologies and 2) questioning raciolinguistic ideologies.

Internalizing Raciolinguistic Ideologies

I theorize that communities of color are impacted by internalized raciolinguistic ideologies, similar to internalized racism (Bivens, 1995). Internalized raciolinguistic ideologies are often triggered by cumulative exposure to these ideologies, resulting in conscious or unconscious acceptance of racial and linguistic hierarchy where the dominant group’s language practices, attitudes, and ideologies are maintained, practiced, and prioritized, undergirding the

dominant group's power. All participants in this study encountered raciolinguistic ideologies throughout their lives and in different contexts, which they consciously or unconsciously internalized in different contexts, including the school. In this section, I will present examples of different ways the students internalized raciolinguistic ideologies. I will also present the role of schooling in participants' internalization of raciolinguistic ideologies.

Participants discussed adopting beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes about language variation and correctness, particularly concerning their and their family's linguistic backgrounds and experiences. For example, Kabir, who immigrated to the United States with his parents when he was six months old, shared:

My parents are fluent in English, but at the same time, they will say some words that are, you know, maybe not pronounced correctly ... And, put a Hindi twist to it. And I remember, growing up, sometimes, I would call them out on it and be like, No, that is not how you say, x.

Likewise, Maitri, born and raised in the United States, shared similar instances where she often found herself correcting her parents' English. "I am going to say it even comes to my own house. Sometimes, my parents would say something, an English word, and I would be like, that is not how you say it; this is how you say it."

Kiran, born and raised in the United States, remembers her beliefs and perceptions about "correct" accents and how that encouraged her to form judgments about her cousin's language and accent. She shared:

I feel like when I was growing up, and I would hear my cousins [in India] talk in English, I would be like, we can just speak in Telugu because it sounded very unnatural at the time for them to speak English. Because I mean, I know that sounds wrong, but it was just

because, I am sure that is how they felt when I spoke in Telugu, because of the accents and words they use.

The examples of Kabir, Maitri, and Kiran correcting and judging the language and accents of their family members demonstrate how they internalized the idea of what constitutes “correct,” “appropriate,” or “unnatural” language and accents. These ideas are rooted in raciolinguistic ideologies that validate certain linguistic practices as normative and others as deficient while also racializing and positioning language-minoritized communities as racial others.

Role of schooling

While the above examples demonstrate the instances where Indian American students internalized raciolinguistic ideologies, it is imperative to also focus on the role of schools in perpetuating and shaping these ideologies, ultimately affecting how students internalize them. For instance, Rahul, born and raised in the United States, shared his experiences of encountering raciolinguistic ideologies while participating in the speech and debate team, during which he became acutely aware of his pronunciation and accent. He admitted to deliberately changing his ways of speaking to conform to dominant linguistic norms and not being considered deviant. He shared:

I remember that in fourth grade, I was practicing a speech. A lot of essays, I would say, with an Indian enunciation, kind of like you. I would say certain things more with an Indian accent, and I remember I have been talking in the mirror, and I was like, I got to change it. I just have to tone it down... I was just like, I am going to feel like an outcast. So it was just me and then two other Indian kids in our section. And the rest of them were White or Asian. I did not want to feel like an outcast or made fun of, so I actively thought of that.

Rahul further shared his frustration with the teacher deducting points because of his accent.

“Like, in this case, deducting points for no reason. Even though it is like saying English, it is not like I am speaking another language.” Instances like these motivated him to change his ways of speaking, also resulting in internalizing inadequacies about his language practices and creating perceptions of what constitutes “proper English.” This is reflected in his response when I asked him what is “proper English” according to him and if people in India speak “proper English,” to which Rahul shared:

I think they do it the way I feel about people who speak in another, I think it is just that it is considered like a broken proper English. I am able to understand what they are saying, but they are not; they will say a whole phrase, but they are missing certain adjectives, like the missing link. Conjunction here, adverb here, but that is the way I think about it because that is how I was literally taught, and it is like my brain just, Oh, they are missing a conjunction here and like an adverb there, I understand what they are saying. That is not an issue at all. I can converse with someone easily. But yeah, I would just say that it is not considered proper because it does not have certain things that add to the sentence style or how someone in America would speak proper English.

Rahul’s perspective on what constitutes “proper” English is influenced and tied to what is taught in formal schooling. For him, following the rules of grammar and sentence structure taught in formal schooling is the key to speaking “proper” English. However, many native speakers of “proper” American English may be unable to explain these rules. He equates deviations from the standard American English accent with a need for proper grammar and sentence structure, suggesting a strong connection between formal education and “proper” English for him. Rahul’s belief that individuals who speak differently are “missing certain adjectives” or “conjunctions”

reveals a deep-seated perception within the educational context that associates linguistic variation with inferior language skills. This perspective reinforces raciolinguistic ideologies and positions other racialized students and Indian American students like Rahul as outsiders if they do not adhere to these linguistic norms.

Amrita immigrated with her parents to the United States when she was five. She was labeled an EL and attended ESL classes for a short period. She shared why she thinks she had to attend ESL classes:

Specifically, I remember really being taught a lot about accents and how to speak with the correct accent (I: In ESL classes?) in ESL classes ... So no, um, they taught me a little bit about accents. They mostly just taught me how to speak in a way that was clear and understandable. Because I think the problem was never that I could not read in English; I could read it just fine. It was a matter of saying it in a way people can understand. So once I got that down, they kind of stopped putting me through ESL entirely because my reading comprehension was fine.

Amrita's narrative highlights the role of ESL classes in the school system. In these classes, students often receive instruction not only in language acquisition but also in accent reduction (Nair et al., 2017). Amrita recalls being taught how to speak with the "correct" accent in ESL classes, which reflects the school's emphasis on linguistic assimilation. Although ESL classes intend to assist students in acquiring English language skills, they can sometimes have the adverse effect of devaluing students' native languages and accents, either intentionally or unintentionally. This reinforces the belief that students need to adhere to a specific linguistic standard.

Ria, who was born and raised in the United States, often felt that her language practices were perceived as foreign and inferior by her teachers, requiring “leeway.”

Interviewer: Apart from your friends, did teachers ever say that? “Oh, that is the wrong way to say that.”

Ria: I do not think so. I do not think my teachers were super. I think they kind of knew, like, she is not from here. So, we will give her a little leeway.

Interviewer: But you said you were born and raised in the U.S.

Ria: Yeah, but like, maybe that is what they thought. I am not sure; they never really sent me. I am not sure if they think that might be. Yeah. I think they know I am bilingual, at least.

In the above example, Ria suggests that her teachers may have made assumptions about her language proficiency based on her racial or ethnic background. These assumptions reflect the broader issue of raciolinguistic ideologies, where language is often tied to racial or ethnic stereotypes and biases.

The examples of Rahul, Amrita, and Ria illustrate how schools in the U.S. education system play a significant role in perpetuating raciolinguistic ideologies. It is evident in the pressure on students to conform to a specific linguistic standard, the reinforcement of linguistic hierarchies, the approach to ESL classes, and teacher attitudes. In their attempts to support linguistic development, schools sometimes knowingly and sometimes unknowingly reinforce these ideologies by implicitly expecting linguistic assimilation and promoting conformity to standardized American English and accent. These factors can contribute to the erasure of linguistic diversity and the marginalization of racialized students who are bilingual or who speak non-standard varieties of English. Racialized students are also judged unfairly based on their

language proficiency rather than their intellectual capabilities, which can result in unequal access to educational opportunities.

Questioning Raciolinguistic Ideologies

In conversations with the participants, they shared instances of internalization of raciolinguistic ideologies. However, they also shared their reflections, ideas, and instances questioning raciolinguistic ideologies. In this section, I showcase instances where participants examined their biases and altered their perspectives on language. Furthermore, I explore how the students navigated the complex and nuanced landscape of language perceptions in the United States, revealing the biases against non-White languages and accents. Finally, I highlight how the students actively resisted and challenged raciolinguistic ideologies that marginalize their cultural identity and linguistic diversity, illustrating their complex language choices in various social contexts. To further illustrate these findings, I present representative examples of how Indian American students a) engaged in self-reflection, b) questioned dominant language norms, and c) showed resistance to raciolinguistic ideologies that position language-minoritized students as others and the language practices of racialized communities as inferior and deficient.

Self-Reflection

Although I found that participants accommodated and internalized raciolinguistic ideologies that privilege English monolingualism and a “standard” American accent, they also shared instances of self-reflection and questioning dominant language norms by critically examining their perceptions, actions, and biases concerning raciolinguistic ideologies.

For example, Kabir said he did not think there was “one specific, like, explicit, proper English.” However, Kabir had previously held beliefs and attitudes towards language that favored White English monolingualism. Over time, he described realizing:

There is no right way, I think as long as you understand what the person is saying, maybe there is thinking a little bit different or funny, but if you get the main idea, I think it is okay.

Similarly, Kiran reflected on when she used to feel that the English spoken by her cousin, who lived in India, sounded “unnatural.” She shared that she now realizes there is no one “appropriate” accent. “Yeah, now, looking back, there was no, right, like I probably I definitely have an accent to other people, like a Midwestern accent or whatever.” She acknowledged her possible bias and recognized the need for self-reflection when evaluating linguistic norms.

Questioning Racism in the Language Landscape

The interviews also highlighted how Indian American students navigated and questioned the nuanced landscape of language perceptions in the United States. For example, Amrita emphasized that languages from non-White groups are considered “inferior” and are often singled out for criticism, while languages associated with European cultures are more readily accepted.

I think it is funny because you will never hear them say that to someone who speaks in German or French ... And I know a lot of people who, like, will go to bars where all of this stuff is like written in Dutch or German ... and a lot of signs in there are written in German, but nobody questions it. They are not like, this is America; that should not be here. They only say that towards languages that they consider to be from “inferior” groups.

Similarly, Maitri highlighted how certain English language varieties and accents are perceived in the U.S. based on a person’s skin color, with the tendency to scrutinize the language and accents of people of color more critically. She shared:

Some accents are seen as better than other accents, and I feel there are also preconceptions about people based on their accents as well as color, speaking English, and their backgrounds. And further scrutiny of specific accents and how they say English words as opposed to others. And maybe even if it is different from standard dialect in some ways, like when someone like maybe like a more European accent says something and it is like seen as beautiful and different and valued in a better way than what someone in a different country's accent.

As Amrita and Maitri shared their thoughts on the language landscape, it became apparent that Indian American students are increasingly aware of the impact of raciolinguistic ideologies on language perceptions and practices in the United States. Their conversations shed light on the complexities of language and identity and how they intersect for marginalized communities.

In addition, Maitri also brought up the issue of standardized testing and how it is designed with the assumption that White mainstream English is the standard, which does not align with the language practices of students from diverse backgrounds, such as racialized or immigrant communities.

When you think that like you have to speak English to be able to succeed professionally or in schooling, and that was like when you were talking about the Black English versus American English; I took a communications class that was required was about... it was an African Studies class. And I had to read a lot about that and write my paper about it. All the standardized tests that we are taking are in the standard English dialect. And that is really hard when people who do not speak that at home and so being forced to like even when it comes to speaking a different language, but even just like a different type of

English, dialect is like such a big deal. It is hard because, maybe in some ways, that is how you are able to succeed, but also, it makes you lose a part of your culture.

Through the use of standardized testing as an example, Maitri brings attention to the systemic nature of raciolinguistic ideologies. The prioritization of certain linguistic norms in standardized testing often puts minoritized and marginalized racial groups at a disadvantage. This highlights a deeper issue of linguistic bias and prejudice that influences how people perceive and judge language usage.

Resistance

The interviews also highlighted how Indian American students resisted and actively made efforts to challenge and combat raciolinguistic ideologies that seek to marginalize or suppress their cultural identity and linguistic diversity. For example, Amrita shared her experiences of negotiating her accent choices while participating in debates in high school (similar to Rahul). While speaking on the topic of Sikh discrimination, she noticed an increase in her score when she said Punjabi lines in an English accent, and her scores further improved when she removed some of the Punjabi words from her speech. Amrita also mentioned, “I realized that people found it a little unsettling how quickly I can make that switch.”

In further conversations with Amrita, she shared her struggles with negotiating between her Indian and U.S. accents based on different social contexts and audiences. She revealed that she had not spoken in an Indian accent in public spaces, with American audiences, since second grade. Indeed, she has worked hard to unlearn her Indian accent. Nevertheless, she continued to use her Indian accent when speaking to her parents.

It is weird because when I am with my parents, even if we are in public or not, I will always use an accent that I think is more easy for them to understand. So, I always use

the Indian accent when speaking to my parents, regardless of where I am, but for everyone else in the world basically, it is the American accent.

On the other hand, Ria shares how she persistently speaks Tamil, her heritage language, in public places despite her parents' beliefs that it is impolite:

My parents, actually, I liked speaking to them in Tamil in public places. I am not saying anything like that, but it is like a little secret, and I just like practicing it ... But they will be like, no, that is rude. You cannot do that. So, I do not know; they told me it was a bad thing.

In further conversation, she mentioned that despite her parents insisting that speaking Tamil in public places is impolite, she continued to speak her heritage language, Tamil. "I used to dislike it, but I kept speaking, and mostly they (her parents) would say, well, we cannot stop you."

Amrita and Ria's experiences shed light on how Indian American students select their language choices, accents, and linguistic identities in different contexts within the U.S. education system. These excerpts underscore the intricate dynamics of language choices and practices among Indian American students. It explores the students' experiences of using their heritage languages in different spaces, the motivations behind these choices, and the impact of external judgments or societal attitudes on their language behaviors.

Discussion

The findings presented in this chapter shed light on how Indian American students navigate and respond to raciolinguistic ideologies. The data analysis highlighted two significant findings. The first major finding highlights how Indian American students internalized raciolinguistic ideologies. These ideologies often manifest through cumulative exposure, leading to conscious or unconscious acceptance of racial and linguistic hierarchies.

Participants in the study shared instances where they had adopted beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions about language variation and correctness, particularly in relation to their own linguistic backgrounds. For instance, Kabir's and Maitri's experiences of correcting their parents' English and Kiran's initial judgment of her cousin's English demonstrate how they internalized notions of "correct" or "appropriate" language and accents. These notions are deeply rooted in raciolinguistic ideologies prioritizing certain linguistic practices and accents as the norm. This norm is based on an idealized White monolingual-speaking subject who speaks a perfect "standard" language (Lippi-Greene, 2012; Rosa & Flores, 2017). Consequently, others are considered deficient based on their racial positioning in society rather than any objective characteristics of their language use. These ideologies position language-minoritized communities as racial others, further racializing them and wrongly justifying race-based marginalization (Flores & Rosa, 2015).

Moreover, the role of schools in perpetuating these ideologies was evident in the participants' narratives. Schools and other educational institutions often believe that the solution to inequity is to modify individual students' language practices and accents so that they conform to the benchmarks set by White-listening subjects. However, this approach, which is based on the idea that conforming to White standards will eliminate inequality, is a core tenet of raciolinguistic ideology (Cushing & Snell, 2023). The problem is that even if students modify their language practices and accents to meet these standards, White-listening subjects will continue to perceive their language as inadequate (Flores & Rosa, 2015). By focusing solely on standardizing language practices and accents, schools ignore the important social role that language plays in effective teaching, classroom management, and social relationships (Cushing & Snell, 2023).

Rahul, Ria, and Amrita all shared their experiences of encountering raciolinguistic ideologies in schools. Rahul recalled altering his way of speaking to conform to dominant linguistic norms due to fears of being an outcast and facing point deductions from teachers. This reflects how schools, in their efforts to support linguistic development, may inadvertently reinforce raciolinguistic ideologies by promoting conformity to a standardized American English accent (Ramjattan, 2023a). Ria's experience with her teachers shows how teachers' beliefs and attitudes toward racialized students can have a significant impact on their educational experience. It suggests that teachers may have lower expectations for bilingual students or come from a different racial background, assuming they need more leniency or that they are not "from here." These attitudes create educational disparities and reinforce biases. Teachers may also make assumptions about a student's language proficiency based on their ethnic and racial background. This is due to the historical and ongoing raciolinguistic ideologies that frame the language practices of racialized communities as deficient. Amrita's experience of being labeled as an English Learner due to her Indian accent is a prime example of how schools misperceive students with a non-US accent as English deficient, reinforcing accent bias and deficit language ideologies (Chin, 2010). The rubrics, as part of standardized assessments, are used to test the language proficiency of ELs and are created with the assumption of White mainstream English as the standard. The rubrics that assess students' speaking proficiency can penalize those, like Amrita, who speak with a non-standard accent. This positions the language practices of racialized and immigrant students from diverse linguistic backgrounds as inherently deficient (Rosa & Flores, 2017). In the U.S. education system, both standardized assessment and testing reflect the assumptions of the White listening/reading subject and not the actual experiences of heritage language speakers and their "fluid bilingualism" (Siordia & Kim, 2022).

Rahul, Ria, and Amrita's experiences highlight how raciolinguistic ideologies have historically framed and continue to frame racialized communities' language practices as deficient and in need of remediation (Flores, 2020). Racialized communities' standardized language practices are perpetually constructed and perceived as deficient regardless of how closely they follow the "standardized" norms because they are determined by the White English-speaking subjects (Flores & Rosa, 2015).

The second major finding centers on the participants' efforts to question and resist raciolinguistic ideologies. They engaged in self-reflection, critically examining their biases and evolving their perspectives on language. This process highlighted the need for critical reflection in evaluating linguistic norms and challenging existing biases. Amrita and Maitri questioned the unequal treatment of languages from non-White groups compared to languages associated with European cultures (Rosa & Flores, 2017). They recognized the biases against accents and language varieties based on a person's skin color and ethnicity. Amrita's and Maitri's responses show awareness of the impact of raciolinguistic ideologies that draw our attention to the hierarchy created by European colonizers to position non-European colonized groups and their languages as inferior. Additionally, it highlights how these ideologies continue to shape the post-colonial world and the experiences of racialized students in the U.S. education system (Rosa & Flores, 2017).

In conversation with Maitri, she questioned and brought up an issue concerning standardized testing in the U.S. education system. The deficient discourse is closely tied to standardized testing, as test scores are assumed to be objective indicators of language and literacy skills (Shapiro, 2014). Maitri pointed out how, in schools, standardized tests are created with the understanding of White mainstream English as the standard, which is not aligned with

the language practices of racialized or immigrant students and also marginalizes students who speak another language or another variety of English. Additionally, she highlighted how when racialized students do not perform well on standardized tests, these students' language practices are considered deficient and further limit their educational opportunities. Standardized tests often employ a narrow construction of what it means to be literate and overlook literacy resources that do not fit neatly within that construction. Thus, many students perform poorly on these decontextualized assessments that do not align with the dynamic bilingualism of their lived experiences (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Furthermore, standardized testing represents a monolithic understanding of progress and achievement, often resulting in a one-size-fits-all approach to language and literacy development. Highlighting this disconnect between students' lived experiences and standardized testing.

Resistance against these ideologies was evident in the participants deliberate choices related to language and accent. Amrita's experiences in debate showed how she strategically altered her accent to gain higher scores. While these choices could be seen as adaptations to navigate a biased system, they also signify resistance against the imposition of linguistic norms. On the other hand, Ria's persistence in speaking her heritage language demonstrates her agency and active resistance to raciolinguistic ideologies that marginalize or stigmatize certain languages and language choices based on racial or ethnic background. Furthermore, Amrita and Ria's narratives about using different accents and language in different contexts highlighted the complexities of identity and language choices within the U.S. education system. Their experiences underscore the intricate dynamics of language practices and the role of external judgments and societal attitudes in shaping language behaviors and ideologies among Indian American students.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this findings chapter discusses the experiences of Indian American students within the U.S. education system and their navigation of raciolinguistic ideologies. This chapter answers the following question: How do Indian American students navigate the raciolinguistic ideologies they experience in the U.S. education system and beyond?

The findings reveal a complex interplay between the internalization of these ideologies and active resistance against them. The experiences of Indian American students present internalized raciolinguistic ideologies reflect which is the result of cumulative exposure to these ideologies, which often leads to the unconscious acceptance of linguistic hierarchies and biases. Schools play a pivotal role in shaping and perpetuating these ideologies, which intertwine notions of race, racism, and linguistic practices. Indian American students often experience pressure to conform to a specific linguistic standard, reinforcing linguistic hierarchies and biases. The research also highlights the positive agency of Indian American students who question and resist these ideologies, contributing towards creating a more inclusive linguistic landscape. The questioning and resistance demonstrated by the participants in this study challenge the dominant narrative that Asian Americans are docile and obedient.

Chapter 7: Implications and Conclusion

This study was designed and conducted to explore the racial and linguistic experiences of Indian American students in the U.S. education system. I employed a raciolinguistic perspective (Flores & Rosa, 2015) that theorizes the relationship between race and language to understand how their convergence affects Indian American students and their educational experiences in the U.S. education system. This study answers the following questions:

1. What raciolinguistic ideologies do Indian American students encounter in structures, policies, and interpersonal interactions within schools, including with personnel and peers?
2. How do Indian American students navigate the raciolinguistic ideologies they experience in the U.S. education system?

In this last chapter of the dissertation, I begin by summarizing the key findings from the research study, followed by a discussion on the implications of this study and some avenues for future research and investigation.

Summary of Key Findings

To answer the first question, I shed light on the experiences of Indian American students and the raciolinguistic ideologies they encounter. Through conversations with the participants, I learned that they all had challenges and systemic biases as a result of raciolinguistic ideologies that led to their marginalization within educational policies, structures, and interpersonal interactions. Additionally, none of the participants described any structures, policies, or interactions that honor multilingualism or affirm Indian or Indian American language practices. From the narratives, I identified three overarching themes. The first theme delves into the issue of perceived language deficiency among Indian American students, a perception that arises due

to racial biases. This bias, in turn, leads to negative stereotypes and marginalization of the students. The second theme focuses on the historical and ongoing pressure on Indian American students to assimilate and conform to English-dominant norms. This pressure results in the loss of students' linguistic and cultural identities. Finally, the third theme explores the impact of accent bias on the academic opportunities and cultural identities of Indian American students. These themes provide insightful information about the challenges faced by Indian American students, which are often masked under the model minority myth, highlighting the urgent need to acknowledge and address them in order to create equitable and inclusive educational spaces for all racialized students.

The first theme sheds light on a concerning pattern of assumed language deficiency that is being perpetuated by educators and institutional structures. The language abilities of Indian American students, particularly their proficiency in English, have often been viewed from a deficit perspective rooted in raciolinguistic ideologies. This perspective has led to students being placed in ESL programs without any valid justification. For example, Amrita, Kiran, and Ria's siblings were subjected to an English test and placed in an ESL program as a result of these ideologies. These assumptions reflect raciolinguistic ideologies that associate certain racialized bodies with linguistic deficiencies, despite engaging in linguistic practices that are considered "normative" or "appropriate" by the White-listening subject (Flores & Rosa, 2015). This highlights a systemic issue that is rooted in these prejudices. While ESL programs are intended to provide language support, they can also lead to social and academic marginalization for students who are denied access to the rigorous curriculum required for university admission (Callahan et al., 2009, 2010). The tendency to question linguistic proficiency on the basis of existing stereotypes reinforces negative assumptions and exacerbates the perception of language

inadequacy among racialized students. Additionally, none of the participants recounted any incidents when their teachers affirmed their home language practices, emphasizing the absence of affirmation for home language practices, suggesting a gap in support for linguistic diversity within educational environments.

The second theme offers valuable insights into the assimilation patterns and the dominance of English monolingualism in the education system. The findings reveal a broader societal expectation for Indian American students to conform to English-speaking norms. These patterns highlight the raciolinguistic ideologies that promote expectations to conform to dominant linguistic norms, particularly “standard English” (Flores & Rosa, 2015). These ideologies perpetuate systems of White supremacy by privileging English monolingualism and positioning it as the norm within educational and societal contexts while devaluing the languages and cultural practices of racialized students (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Chávez-Moreno, 2022; Cushing, 2023). The participants’ stories highlight the implicit and explicit pressure on the students to assimilate. This pressure is evident in their experiences in ESL classes, the limited representation of South Asian languages in the curriculum, and the pressure to assimilate in educational and extracurricular settings and interpersonal interactions. For example, Amrita felt that ESL was an assimilating experience. She also shared the implicit pressure she felt to constantly conform by maintaining an English accent. Kiran and Maitri shared about whitewashing their names. All of these factors contribute to the loss of linguistic and cultural diversity and shed light on raciolinguistic ideologies faced by Indian American students.

Finally, the third theme underscores accent bias as a significant obstacle faced by participants, impacting their academic evaluations, cultural identity, and social interactions. Through interviews, the persistence of accent bias—whether implicit or explicit—and its effect

on the educational and interpersonal interactions of Indian American students became evident. Accent bias is intricately linked to raciolinguistic ideologies and perspectives, wherein certain accents are privileged over others. What constitutes an “appropriate” or “inappropriate” accent is inherently subjective, yet it is clear that certain groups receive deference over others. The pressure to conform to perceived standards of linguistic acceptability or “sounding right” by the White listening subject, which privileges Whiteness, is evident in instances where participants modify their accents to align with dominant norms, with potential consequences for academic achievement (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Ramjattan, 2019; Kutlu & Wiltshire, 2020). For example, when Rahul and Amrita felt pressure to change their accents to get better scores in debate.

To answer the second question, I described how Indian American students navigate and respond to raciolinguistic ideologies that they encounter. The findings reveal a complex interplay between the internalization of these ideologies and active resistance against them. Through the conversations, I found that they all had experienced accommodating and/or internalizing raciolinguistic ideologies at various points in their lives. During the conversations, most participants also came to critically reflect on, question, and resist the raciolinguistic ideologies that promote the idealized linguistic practices of Whiteness (e.g., “standard” English).

The experiences of Indian American students present internalized raciolinguistic ideologies, similar to internalized racism (Bivens, 1995), which were a result of cumulative exposure to these ideologies, often leading to the unconscious acceptance of linguistic hierarchies and biases. Participants talked about how they have adopted beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes about language variation and the correctness of their own and their family’s language practices and accents. They discussed how they came to internalize notions of “correct” or “appropriate” language practices and accents, which are deeply rooted in raciolinguistic

ideologies that prioritize certain linguistic practices and accents as the norm. This norm is based on an idealized White monolingual-speaking subject who speaks a perfect “standard” language (Lippi-Greene, 2012; Rosa & Flores, 2017). For example, Kabir, Maitri, and Kiran shared correcting and judging the language practices and accents of their family members.

This chapter also highlighted the role of schooling in perpetuating and shaping raciolinguistic ideologies, ultimately affecting how students internalize them. It is evident in the pressure on students to conform to a specific linguistic standard, the reinforcement of linguistic hierarchies, the approach to ESL classes, and teacher attitudes (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Cushing & Snell, 2023). For example, Rahul recalled altering his way of speaking to conform to dominant linguistic norms due to fears of being an outcast and facing point deductions from teachers; Ria experienced her teachers making assumptions about her language proficiency based on her race or ethnicity, and Amrita being labeled as an English Learner due to her Indian accent.

Additionally, the research findings shed light on the positive agency of Indian American students who question and resist raciolinguistic ideologies. Through self-reflection and deliberate choices related to language and accent, students challenge existing biases and contribute towards creating a more inclusive linguistic landscape. For example, Kabir and Kiran reflected on their beliefs and attitudes about their family’s language practices and accents. Their recognition of biases against accents and language varieties based on race and ethnicity highlights the enduring impact of raciolinguistic ideologies stemming from colonial hierarchies. Furthermore, students’ critique of standardized testing in the U.S. education system highlighted the systemic marginalization of racialized and immigrant students, whose language practices are often deemed deficient and disregarded in assessments that fail to align with their lived experiences of dynamic bilingualism (Shapiro, 2014). The participants’ resistance to these ideologies was evident in their

deliberate language and accent choices. For example, Amrita and Maitri questioned the unequal treatment of languages from non-White groups compared to languages associated with European cultures; Maitri questioned and brought up an issue concerning standardized testing in the U.S. education system and Ria's persistence in speaking her heritage language demonstrates her agency and active resistance to raciolinguistic ideologies. The questioning and resistance demonstrated by the participants in this study is especially noteworthy as it challenges the dominant narrative that Asian Americans are docile and obedient.

In conclusion, the findings of this study illuminate the multifaceted challenges Indian American students encounter within the U.S. education system due to pervasive raciolinguistic ideologies. These ideologies manifest in perceptions of language deficiency, pressure to assimilate to English-dominant norms, and the impact of accent bias on academic opportunities and cultural identities. The narratives shared by participants underscore systemic issues rooted in prejudiced assumptions about linguistic proficiency. Furthermore, the study highlights the broader societal expectation for linguistic assimilation resulting in the loss of linguistic and cultural identity experienced by Indian American students. Moreover, the findings underscore the pivotal role of schools in shaping and perpetuating raciolinguistic ideologies among Indian American students. These ideologies, which intertwine notions of race and language, have far-reaching implications for the lives of the students, their families, and their peers. In their attempts to support linguistic development, schools sometimes knowingly and sometimes unknowingly reinforce these ideologies by implicitly expecting linguistic assimilation and promoting conformity to standardized American English and accent. Despite these challenges, the research also reveals the resilience and agency of students who actively resist these ideologies, advocating

for a more inclusive linguistic landscape and challenging the dominant narrative of Asian American passivity.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

This exploratory case study research delves into the complex and multifaceted experiences of Indian American students in the U.S. education system using a raciolinguistic perspective. The findings shed new light on how raciolinguistic ideologies function and how they affect Indian American students. This study has significant theoretical and practical implications for raciolinguistic perspectives and research on Indian and Asian American students.

Raciolinguistic Perspectives

Based on the findings of this dissertation study, I introduce the concept of “internalized raciolinguistic ideologies,” which parallels the notion of internalized racism discussed by Bivens (1995). Much like internalized racism, internalized raciolinguistic ideologies are a result of cumulative exposure to ideologies surrounding race and language, leading to their conscious or unconscious acceptance of hierarchical structures where dominant language practices, attitudes, and ideologies prevail. All participants in this study encountered raciolinguistic ideologies throughout their lives and in various contexts, including educational spaces. The narratives shared by participants vividly illustrate how they internalized beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes regarding language variation and correctness, particularly concerning their and their families’ linguistic backgrounds and experiences. For instance, instances where participants corrected or judged the language and accents of their family members exemplify the internalization of notions regarding what constitutes “correct,” “appropriate,” or “unnatural” language and accents rooted in raciolinguistic ideologies. Thus, for future research, understanding internalized raciolinguistic ideologies is crucial for comprehending the experiences of racialized communities encountering

raciolinguistic ideologies and addressing the systemic inequities perpetuated within educational institutions.

Additionally, previous studies have examined the impact of raciolinguistic ideologies on African American and Latine youth. There has been a noticeable gap in our understanding of how these ideologies affect Asian students, particularly Indian American students. By exploring the impact of these ideologies on Indian American students, this study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of how raciolinguistic ideologies operate and impact different racial and ethnic groups. This research addresses this gap in the literature and seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of a raciolinguistic perspective.

Examining Indian American students' experiences through a raciolinguistic perspective illuminates the profound impact of accent bias. In this study, participants shared narratives reflecting instances of accent-based discrimination and bias, spanning institutional practices to interpersonal dynamics. From being unfairly categorized as English learners and consequently placed in ESL programs solely based on their accents to encountering point deductions in speech competitions owing to their Indian accents, these accounts underscore the tangible repercussions of raciolinguistic ideologies on academic trajectories.

The findings of this study suggest accent bias as a crucial dimension within a raciolinguistic perspective. Accent bias negatively impacts Indian American students and other racialized students, specifically those who speak other varieties of Englishes (For example, Kenyan English, Nigerian English, Malaysian English, and others), in different aspects of their educational journey, including academic evaluations to cultural self-perceptions, and social interactions. Ramjattan's (2019, 2022, 2023) work in labor research elucidates accent bias as an integral aspect of raciolinguistic ideologies that shape the experiences of racialized individuals.

This study shows that his findings extend to the lived experiences of Indian American students in the U.S. education system. Thus, future research should focus on exploring how raciolinguistic ideologies influence the perceptions around accents to impact the educational experiences of racialized students within K-12 education.

Indian American Students

This research study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of Indian American students' linguistic and racial struggles shaping their educational experiences, which is often masked under the model minority myth. This study fills a crucial gap in the research on Indian American students by exploring raciolinguistic ideologies they encounter and the ways in which they navigate and negotiate these ideologies. By documenting their experiences of internalization and resistance to raciolinguistic ideologies that promote the idealized linguistic practices of Whiteness (e.g., "standard" English), this research offers valuable insights into the lived realities of Indian American students within the educational context. The participants' active resistance to raciolinguistic ideologies challenges dominant narratives that portray Indian American and broadly Asian American students as passive and compliant. Their agency in questioning and resisting these ideologies disrupts prevailing stereotypes and underscores the complexities of identity formation and language use among Asian American students. This highlights the importance of centering marginalized voices in academic discourse and recognizing the diverse ways in which individuals navigate systems of power and oppression. This research paves the way for future research to delve deeper into this understudied population.

Expanding on Shalini Shankar's (2004) critical work, this study reveals the detrimental impact of raciolinguistic ideologies on the educational trajectories of Indian American students. It highlights the systemic devaluation of their bilingualism within academic settings. In her book

Desi Land, Shalini Shankar (2004) highlighted the complex intersection of race, class, and language for South Asian students, emphasizing the pressures to conform to model minority expectations and navigate linguistic biases. Building on Shankar's (2004) work, this study presents how Indian American students encounter raciolinguistic ideologies that shape their schooling experiences. This study underscores how Indian American students' bilingualism is often devalued, leading to misplacement in ESL classes and missed educational opportunities. Through a raciolinguistic perspective, the research exposes the deficit perspective imposed on Indian American students' linguistic practices, contributing to their marginalization in educational spaces.

The findings of this research highlight critical information for educators working with Indian American students. As highlighted in this study, Indian American students often encounter biases and stereotypes based on their language deficiency, accents, and multilingual abilities. Teachers must examine their own biases and be cognizant of these dynamics to avoid reinforcing harmful stereotypes or stigmatizing students' language practices. By developing a deeper understanding of the raciolinguistic ideologies and the challenges faced by Indian American students, teachers can adopt more culturally responsive teaching approaches. When teachers acknowledge and validate the linguistic and cultural identities of Indian American students, it can help create more inclusive and affirming learning environments. This, in turn, empowers the students to fully engage in their education without fear of marginalization or discrimination due to their racial or linguistic backgrounds.

It is important to note that all the participants in this study were enrolled in an undergraduate program at a prestigious R1 university. Despite their academic success and ability to navigate the gatekeepers of higher education, this study revealed that they still experienced the

detrimental impacts of raciolinguistic ideologies. The current study highlights how even well-resourced students encountered and negotiated raciolinguistic ideologies. Their struggles persisted despite their academic achievements. This raises an important question: If these high-achieving students faced such challenges, how much more difficult might it be for students with fewer economic resources and less cultural capital to overcome raciolinguistic barriers?

This finding underscores the pervasive and deeply rooted nature of raciolinguistic ideologies in the U.S. education system. Even students who have attained a high level of academic success are not immune to the detrimental effects of these ideologies. This suggests that educational institutes, including schools, must redouble their efforts to address systemic inequities and create more inclusive environments for students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Schools must combat the pressures of conformity faced by racialized students is underscored by this research, emphasizing the critical need for educational institutions to cultivate inclusive spaces that celebrate linguistic diversity, empower student voices, and foster critical consciousness to dismantle raciolinguistic ideologies, and promote cultural pride among all students, including Indian Americans. This may involve providing support mechanisms for students to critically examine and challenge their biases, establishing safe spaces for discussions about linguistic diversity, and making available resources for self-reflection and advocacy. Additionally, empowering student voices through platforms for advocacy and fostering critical pedagogy approaches can equip students to play an active role in dismantling raciolinguistic ideologies. This can help students, including Indian American students, feel confident and proud of their cultural identity. By embracing these proactive measures, schools and educators can advance toward creating more equitable and inclusive educational environments that uplift and empower all students.

The far-reaching implications of this research extend beyond Indian American students to encompass all racially and linguistically marginalized students. When students are supported in challenging biased ideas about language, they can also influence their families. This advocacy, in turn, can contribute to a more inclusive and supportive environment for native languages and dialects. Consequently, this can lead to a stronger connection with cultural heritage and a greater sense of pride in language identity. Ultimately, this research aims to empower individual students and contribute to broader societal changes that embrace language diversity and promote inclusivity.

Future Research

Future research should delve into and elucidate the intersections of social class with racial and linguistic intersections. This adds another layer of understanding how racialized students, like Indian Americans, experience raciolinguistic ideologies. The current study highlights how even well-resourced students encountered and negotiated raciolinguistic ideologies and how their struggles with identity persisted despite their success. This raises the question of how much more challenging it might be for students with fewer economic resources and more limited cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1985). For instance, among the participants in this study, only Amrita came from a low-income background and relied on a full scholarship. Amrita did not attend any private schools or out-of-school programs. She also shared that she attended a school in a good district. However, her parents struggled to afford living in that district but still wanted their children to receive the best education possible. Due to her family's financial situation, she spent extended hours in the public library. She shared that she did not have access to cable TV, or she "did not have things that popular children had, which were much easier to get when you are rich and when you are White." Her narrative underscores the disproportionate

impact of these ideologies on individuals with limited economic resources. Through her family's immigration history and economic disparities, Amrita's story illuminates the profound differences in opportunities available to Indian Americans based on their family's immigration timeline and socioeconomic status.

Social class is an essential dynamic that impacts child development and students' achievement outcomes and can be essential in understanding raciolinguistic ideologies. In the case of the South Asian and Indian diaspora, there can be a significant disparity between Indian Americans of different classes, which largely correlates with their immigration history. For example, there is a significant difference in the opportunities that will be afforded to South Asians based on the time when their families immigrated to the United States. The students whose families immigrated under the post-1965 immigration act or during the IT boom as professionals in high-paying jobs were economically well off as compared to families that immigrated as a result of the Diversity Visa lottery who may work in nonskilled jobs with limited educational degrees and English language proficiency.

Social class also shapes the types of social knowledge and resources parents can instill in their children and how these affect children's lives and outcomes as they enter adulthood. In the case of South Asian American students in the United States, just like other immigrant racialized students, their cultural capital is informed by their parents' educational background, occupations, English-language proficiency, and class status. The difference in cultural capital addresses how parents may not be able to instill in their children the type of cultural and linguistic knowledge that will impact if they will be viewed as a model minority or marginalized at school based on their language practices and cultural aspects. To continue investigating this interrelated and complex nature of language and race, we must incorporate class and immigration/migration in

our knowledge of raciolinguistic realities while also attending to other systems of social difference, such as class, religion, nationality, and immigrant status.

Future research could investigate the experiences with raciolinguistic ideologies of Indian American adults who were unable to attend college or university, as well as the experiences of Indian students in K-12 schools, with particular attention to the perspectives of students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. Additionally, future research should also explore accent bias as a crucial component in the intersection of race and language to understand better the experiences of first-, 1.5-, and second-generation racialized students.

Moreover, future research might fruitfully explore how raciolinguistic ideologies play out in particular times and spaces, revealing how social meanings and ideologies like racial ambiguity and raciolinguistic ideologies shift across time and space. Racial ambiguity and raciolinguistic ideologies are relational, and it may be understood by looking at how people and groups are positioned in relation to other groups and how that positioning changes through time (Kibria, 1996; Harpalani, 2015). For example, Amrita, who practices Sikhism, was the only participant who explicitly shared about a classmate making a comment related to 9/11 and a hate crime that her family was subjected to. She also talked about the impact of another hate crime that happened in her neighborhood, Gurudwara (Sikh temple), which resulted in the deaths of seven people. In contrast, Ria, who practices Islam, did not experience any hate crimes, nor did any member of her family. She did mention that her father was in the United States during 9/11, but he did not experience such incidents.

Lastly, future research should also expand its scope to explore how language ideologies intersect in a global context, considering the experiences of Indian American students who have connections to both the United States and India. Investigating the intersections of language ideologies in these two distinct cultural and linguistic contexts can provide valuable insights into

understanding how racialized students like Indian American students, who have connections to other countries, navigate linguistic identities, perceptions of correctness, and social hierarchies. Additionally, examining how these ideologies manifest and intersect in other countries where racialized students may have contact will further enhance our understanding of the complexities of language and identity. For example, how do hierarchical and exclusionary language ideologies across national contexts (e.g., English dominance in the U.S. and Hindi dominance in India, to the exclusion of other languages in both contexts) shape the ways that transnational students navigate their linguistic and cultural identities? By exploring how these ideologies manifest and intersect in other countries where racialized students may have contact, we can deepen our comprehension of the intricate relationship between language and identity on a global level. This avenue of research holds promise for shedding light on the multifaceted experiences of Indian American students and their negotiation of raciolinguistic ideologies across different cultural and linguistic landscapes.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this dissertation has undertaken a comprehensive exploration of the racial and linguistic experiences of Indian American students within the U.S. education system using a raciolinguistic perspective. By addressing the research questions concerning raciolinguistic ideologies encountered by Indian American students and the ways for navigating these ideologies, this study has uncovered valuable insights into the complex dynamics shaping the educational experiences of Indian American students in the U.S. education system.

Key findings from this research underscore the pervasive influence of raciolinguistic ideologies within educational structures and interpersonal interactions, highlighting systemic issues rooted in prejudice that perpetuate negative assumptions about linguistic proficiency and cultural identity. Moreover, this study elucidates the nuanced ways in which Indian American students internalize and resist raciolinguistic ideologies. Despite facing challenges, students demonstrate agency and resilience through deliberate language and accent choices, challenging existing biases, and advocating for a more inclusive linguistic landscape.

Theoretical and practical implications of this research extend to both raciolinguistic perspectives and the experiences of Indian American students. The concept of internalized raciolinguistic ideologies emerges as a crucial area for further exploration, shedding light on the ways in which racialized communities internalize hierarchical structures of language and identity. Additionally, this study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the intersectionality of race, language, and social class, emphasizing the need for nuanced examinations of raciolinguistic ideologies encompassing socioeconomic factors.

Ultimately, this dissertation underscores the importance of acknowledging and addressing raciolinguistic ideologies in educational settings to create spaces that celebrate linguistic diversity, promote cultural identity, and empower all students to thrive.

Appendix A: Pre-Interview Questionnaire

Family:

1. Which South Asian country did your family migrate from?
2. Which member of your family migrated to the U.S. first? In which year?
3. Were you born in the U.S.?
 - If not, at what age did you come to the U.S.?

Language:

4. Which language/s was spoken in your household when you were in a K12 school?
5. Do you speak or understand language/s other than English?
 - If yes, which languages do you speak or understand?
 - Where and with whom do you speak these languages? (for example- friends, family, siblings, cousins, extended family, etc.)
 - At what age did you start learning the language? How did you learn the language?

School:

6. Which state/s in the U.S. did you attend K-12 schools? Also, mention the grades.
7. Were you ever placed in ESL classes?
 - If yes, which grade were you in when you were placed in ESL?
 - And till which grade were you in ESL?

Appendix B: Interview 1 Protocol

Script:

Thank you for joining me today. My name is Anshika Bhasin, and I am from India. Currently, I am enrolled in a Ph.D. program in the Curriculum and Instruction Department at the School of Education. My work on the racial and linguistic experiences of the South Asian American community in the U.S. education system aims to gain insights that will inform educators about the diverse needs of South Asian American students, which are often masked by the various stereotypes associated with the community.

I want to create this space for you to share your experiences and stories from your time in K-12 schools and now at university. Before we begin, I would like to share a little about what to expect. This conversation will last for approximately 90 min. During this time, I will ask you a series of questions. All responses will be kept confidential, and any identifying information will be removed from the study's findings. If it is okay with you, I will audio-record this conversation so I know exactly what you have said. Do I have your permission to record this session? Before we begin, does have any questions for me? Well, let's begin.

Demographic:

1. Tell me about yourself (age, where you are from, which year you are in, and what you are studying).
2. How would you describe yourself racially/ethnically? (Example- American, Bangladesh/ Indian/ Pakistani origin, American of Indian origin, Desi, Brown, etc.)
3. Why did you choose this label?
 - (If says other than American) Can you recount specific incidents that made you realize your “distinctiveness” from other “Americans”?

Family:

4. Tell me about your family and parents. Who are all in your family? What do your parents do? What is the highest level of degree they have?
5. Was money ever something you had to think about growing up?

Language:

6. What do you think it takes to become and stay bilingual in a country like the U.S.?
(Based on Q 5 of the pre-interview form)
7. Could you share a story where your language and racial/ethnic identity were connected somehow?

Have you ever had an experience when people made assumptions about your language practices because of how you look (For example- I am often perceived as Latina, and people start speaking to me in Spanish)? How did that make you feel?
8. What do you think of the statement that gets thrown around, “If you are in America, speak English”? (*for probing example- if you are speaking Hindi/Punjabi etc in public and someone comes and tells you ‘you are in America you should speak English’ what would be your response? Or what would be your thoughts about that?*)
9. Have you experienced explicit or implicit English-only policies or attitudes in the U.S.? If you have, could you share a story about it and how you reacted/ responded? (For example, have you ever been asked only to speak English at school.)
10. What does “proper/ correct English” mean to you, and what is your opinion on it? Do you think the way you use English fits into that label? Why or why not?
11. What do you think is the role of an accent in U.S. society?
12. Do you know that many U.S.-based companies have their call centers situated in South

Asian countries like India and Pakistan? And do you know that the call center employees have to go through accent reduction or accent change training?

- Did language or accent play a role in who you chose to hang out with in school?

Does it play a role now?

- In your experiences, have you ever compromised your language or ways of speaking in some way for any purpose?

➤ If not, have you seen people around you compromise their language or ways of speaking in some way?

Closing:

13. Is there anything that we have left out related to your family and language practices?

14. Thank you..... for taking the time to answer my questions. Are there any other comments you would like to provide, or do you have any questions for me?

Appendix C: Interview 2 Protocol

School:

1. I would like you to think about your overall educational experience as a South Asian/Indian American. What is the first word/ phrase/moment that comes to your mind?
2. Which schools did you attend? Was there a specific reason your parents sent you to those schools?
3. Tell me about your friends at school. Did you have any South Asian friends or classmates?
4. Tell me about your schooling experience. How were your relationships with teachers? With other students? With school administration?
5. Which language/s did you use in school (e.g., with your friends, peers, teachers, or administrators)? Was your bi/multilingualism known or acknowledged in your K-12 school?
6. Do you think your teachers and other staff at school understood you, your cultural identity, and your background? Why?
7. Could teachers in your K-12 schools have supported you or your academic needs better? How?
8. “Mr. Lopez, a high school administrator, recalls his surprise when he realized that the group of South Asian kids in the school were not Latino: ‘where did they come from? Our population is so brown. And you were color-blind, let’s say. East Indians look like Hispanics. Some of them are really dark, they may look like African-Americans.’
 - Researchers refer to this as being ‘racially ambiguous’ (When your ethnic/racial identity is assumed based on how you look. This is also influenced by the context/

place you are in). Have you had experiences in an educational setting where you were seen as racially ambiguous? How did that make you feel? (Have you ever had an experience when people made assumptions about your language practices because of how you look (For example- I am often perceived as Latina, and people start speaking to me in Spanish)? How did that make you feel?)

- Has this racial ambiguity benefitted you or proven to be a disadvantage in any way?

9. Previous research has documented how SAAs are sometimes put into ESL despite being fluent in English. Have you had experiences like that or do you know who had experiences like that? Why do you think they are put into ESL despite being fluent in English?

10. If the participant writes “yes” in Q6 of the pre-interview form, I will ask the following:

- How was your experience attending ESL classes?
- How do you think ESL classes benefited or disadvantaged your academic trajectory?

11. What would it be if you could change one thing about your schooling experience?

12. What factor(s) did you consider for the college or universities you applied for?

University:

13. Did your experiences in school impact your decision to go to the university?

14. Why did you decide to attend UW- Madison?

15. How has your University experience been so far? Academics, social life, friendships, etc.

16. Tell me about your friends at the University. Do you have any South Asian friends? What are some ways you continue using your heritage language at the university?

17. Have you ever experienced differential treatment (positive or negative) based on your language practices and/or racial identity?
18. Which aspects of your South Asian cultural background do you think are/were generally understood or not understood in the educational institutions you have attended?

Closing:

19. Is there anything that we have left out related to your language and racial identity that you feel has impacted your educational experiences in the United States?

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