INVESTIGATING ACCOUNTABILITY:
Languages Ideologies & Internalization at a New Mexican High School

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“Of course they needed to care. It was the meaning of everything.”
- Lois Lowry, *The Giver*
ABSTRACT

Keywords: language ideology, educational linguistics, bilingualism, public education system

This thesis considers the extent to which dominant language ideologies have become internalized in the attitudes of students and teachers at a New Mexican high school. Due to New Mexico’s multicultural past, its student population is linguistically and racially diverse, making it a prime location for this study. While past literature has thoroughly documented how language ideologies affect students, this study places particular emphasis on how teachers’ abilities to instigate meaningful change are compromised as a result of internalized thoughts and beliefs.

Through a demographic survey and informal interviews with two students and six educators, this paper highlights the ‘standard’ English (Flores & Rosa, 2015), English-only (Piller, 2016), and bilingual ideologies (Wright, 2005; Han, 2013) present among students and teachers at the high school of study. In doing so, it considers (1) the linguistic atmosphere of the high school, (2) how aware students and teachers seem to be of any subsisting language ideologies, and (3) how these ideologies impact students’ and teachers’ daily lives.

Study findings show that, despite the significant linguistic diversity at the high school, students and teachers were no less impacted by dominant language ideologies. In particular, students and teachers repeatedly described how the English-only environment of the high school created barriers for non-native English speaking students. Interestingly, members of both groups were keenly aware of the ideologies present, despite at the same time being influenced by them. Lastly, this thesis found that educational issues such as perceptions of fluency, diverse curricula, and miscommunication were exacerbated due to the language ideologies present at the school.

In emphasizing the lasting impact of dominant language ideologies on students and teachers alike, this thesis attempts to ascertain where accountability for addressing language-related injustices lies: with students, teachers, school administrators, all of the above, or somewhere else entirely.
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## REFERENCES
1. INTRODUCTION

Amidst decreasing funding, low teacher pay, and instructional time cut short due to testing, the United States public education system is under scrutiny. Headlines frequently lament the drastic conditions in which students and teachers often find themselves. In September 2018, *Time* ran a feature that focused on 13 teachers across the country who are unable to consistently take care of basic necessities: “I Work 3 Jobs And Donate Blood Plasma to Pay the Bills.’ This Is What It’s Like to Be a Teacher in America.” A quick Google search for standardized testing reveals countless articles detailing the consequences of high-stakes testing measures. Most of them come to the same conclusion: mandated testing requirements, as well as salary constraints, greatly impact educators’ ability to be present for their students. This, in turn, threatens K-12 students’ ability to demonstrate their full potential at school.

Compounding these major issues are several additional factors that contribute to determine students’ success in the classroom. In particular, students’ academic prospects have been found to directly correlate with race (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Michaels, 1981), socioeconomic status (Farooq, et. al., 2011; Caldas & Bankston, 1997), and citizenship status (Covarrubias & Lara, 2014; Frank, et. al, 2011). Middle- and upper-class white students with attentive parents more often than not succeed in the American schooling environment, while students of color from working-class families face excessive challenges. For one thing, the former group of students have greater access to well-funded schools and extracurricular programming. Moreover, these privileged students do not need to worry about taking on a part time job outside of school, or other responsibilities that may arise such as having to take care of younger siblings. On the other hand, students from less-fortunate populations—especially those who come from
immigrant and refugee backgrounds—may not even have the support of parents with the ability to keep an eye on their children’s education. Consequently, students with less access to educational environments and more external pressures experience greater physical, systematic, and emotional challenges in academia. Circumstances like these make thriving in a rigid and demanding public school system extremely difficult.

In particular, students from disadvantaged populations are frequently inhibited by language ability. Much of the time, this occurs because the students and their parents are non-native English speakers. Clearly, this presents a significant roadblock in navigating a predominantly English school environment. However, even native English speakers can struggle in the classroom due to the formal, academic style of English that is expected of them in that space. As such, language ability is one of the main indicators of the increasingly large gap between high- and low-achieving students. Language ability is an important factor in the context of United States schooling because it relates to so many of the aforementioned problems plaguing public schools. For example, students who are not fluent in English have greater difficulties with standardized testing (Menken, 2006), and are more likely to have parents who are unaware of the workings of the school system (Frank, et. al, 2011). Additionally, students who speak minority languages may face various levels of discrimination from their teachers and classmates in social circles (Benner & Graham, 2011). The intersection of language-based difficulties with race and socioeconomic factors only adds to the troubles many students face in the public education system.

Although the United States has in the past prided itself on being a diverse melting pot, current policies and procedures both explicitly and implicitly demonstrate a preference toward
standard English in institutions like the courtroom (Rickford & King, 2016) and hospitals (Davidson, 2002). The public education system is no exception. In fact, public high schools are prime locations for the reinforcement of persistent ideologies related to language and race, as it is through education that such attitudes are unconsciously adopted (Piller, 2016). There are three major unspoken assumptions that exist in the United States public education system: (1) standard English is the only ‘correct’ form of English (Flores & Rosa, 2015), (2) English is the default, and therefore dominant, language used in academic contexts (Piller, 2016), and (3) bilingualism is a marketable talent that enhances career prospects, but only for individuals from certain backgrounds (Han, 2013). These language ideologies play a monumental role in disadvantaging non-native English speakers and speakers of non-standard English varieties. Though scholars have been increasingly pointing out the harmful effects of these pressures, greater awareness is still necessary in order to actualize viable solutions for helping language-minoritized students.

This thesis considers the extent to which dominant language ideologies have become internalized in the attitudes of students and teachers at a New Mexican high school. Due to New Mexico’s multicultural past, its student population is linguistically and racially diverse, making it a prime location for this study. While past literature has thoroughly documented how language ideologies affect students, this study places particular emphasis on how teachers’ abilities to instigate meaningful change are compromised as a result of internalized thoughts and beliefs. Through a demographic survey and informal interviews with two students and six educators, this paper highlights the ‘standard’ English (Flores & Rosa, 2015), English-only (Piller, 2016), and bilingual ideologies (Wright, 2005; Han, 2013) present among students and teachers at the high school of study. In doing so, it considers (1) the linguistic atmosphere of the high school, (2) how
aware students and teachers seem to be of any subsisting language ideologies, and (3) how these ideologies impact students’ and teachers’ daily lives. In emphasizing the lasting impact of dominant language ideologies on students and teachers alike, this thesis attempts to ascertain where accountability for addressing language-related injustices lies: with students, teachers, school administrators, all of the above, or somewhere else entirely.

Following this introduction, Section 2 provides an overview of relevant literature that is necessary for understanding the importance of this study. Section 2.1 shines light on previous research on language ideology and goes into greater detail about the language ideologies relevant to this thesis. Section 2.2 introduces a brief history of the United States public education system and current issues in education today. Section 2.3 concludes by applying the past literature to New Mexico specifically.

Section 3 focuses on the data and methodology of the thesis. Section 3.1 provides background about the study locale. Section 3.2 summarizes the study’s research questions, while Section 3.3 presents the data acquired and explains the study’s methodology. Section 3.4 introduces the study participants in greater detail.

Section 4 contains the analysis of the data. Section 4.1 illuminates the dominant language ideologies present within the survey and interview findings. Next, Section 4.2 considers how aware students and teachers seem to be of the aforementioned ideologies—and to what extent they appear to have become internalized—by discussing some of the major consequences the ideologies have had at the high school. Lastly, Section 4.3 considers the solutions suggested by teachers themselves for improving the public education system, and highlights how the impact of language ideologies might hinder the implementation of the proposed solutions.
Section 5 wraps up the discussion on internalization of language ideologies. Section 5.1 sums up the study findings. Section 5.2 offers concrete recommendations for teachers and school administrators to consider. Section 5.3 acknowledges the limitations of this study, and concludes by proposing avenues for further related research.

2. REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

2.1 Language Ideology

Language ideologies have been widely described, not just in the field of linguistics, but in many closely-related disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, and psychology. Consequently, various scholars have devised their own definitions (Errington, 2001; Silverstein, 1979; Irvine, 1989) to account for their significant impact on interdisciplinary fields. Kroskrity (2005) offers a succinct overview of language ideologies, explaining that they are “thoughts about language” (p. 496). In essence, then, language ideologies are at their core simply ideas and beliefs about languages, language varieties, and the speakers of those languages. What makes language ideology a particularly nuanced subject is that there are various ways to interpret them. According to Kroskrity (2005), these range from strictly linguistic definitions (i.e., Errington, 2001) to broader definitions that draw in sociocultural aspects. While language ideologies are predominantly focused on language, it is nevertheless necessary to consider the larger ways that they impact society.

Irvine’s (1989) and Silverstein’s (1979) takes on language ideology point to a few of these methods. Irvine’s (1989) definition especially embraces the sociocultural approach in noting that a language ideology is a “cultural system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships, together with their loading of moral and political interests” (p. 255). This
acknowledgement of the ties between culture, society, and political leanings is essential to understanding the underpinnings of this thesis. Silverstein’s (1979) definition—language ideologies as “sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use” (p. 193)—also gives insight into a theme that is explored readily in this study: that people undergo internal processes of reconciling language ideologies with their notions of the world. Though these two key aspects of language ideology—that they are socially and politically informed, and also internalized—are by no means a comprehensive overview of the concept, they do embody the main ideas central to the context of this body of work.

Language ideologies manifest simultaneously at the individual and the collective level, informed by external influences. Though people may not consciously recognize where their opinions about the way people speak originate, the stereotypes they take for granted are undoubtedly formed as a result of implicit and indirect messages that are repeated throughout society. Ideologies about language are everywhere—from mass media to educational instruction—and cannot be avoided. As a result, these ‘thoughts about language’ can become almost second nature. Bourdieu (1977a, 1977b) discusses this internalization in his work on habitus. He writes that the language habitus, which is a “permanent disposition towards language and interactions which is objectively adjusted” (1977a, p. 655), becomes “the basis of perception and appreciation of all subsequent experience” (1977b, p. 78). In other words, people’s entire outlook on the world can be affected as a result of commonly held language ideologies. As such, language ideologies impact not just an individual person’s perspective, but that of the larger society he or she is a part of.
Language ideologies are especially impactful when they mobilize into concrete actions that eventually become common practice. The language ideologies of those in power are especially able to shape mainstream society to the determinant of groups with less influence. Many scholars have focused on this inequality. For example, Hymes (1973) argues that speakers of languages with greater “adaptive” resources, such as political recognition, are the ones who are most privileged (p. 78). The end result of this is that everyone who does not belong to the in-group is then delegitimized for failing to adhere to the norm. Hymes (1973) emphasizes that such “social patterning” can play out across various demographics such as race, gender, and social class (p. 79). Those who have historically been in privileged positions tend to remain there, while those who have been marginalized in the past—such as women and people of color—remain stigmatized. Lastly, the capacity of institutions to exert influence is a major factor in contributing to the inequality among different language speakers (Hymes, 1973). Major institutions, such as the courtroom (Rickford & King, 2016) and the medical practice (Davidson, 2000) are able to regulate and perpetuate new norms through unbalanced power dynamics. This leads to serious consequences, as in the latter example, where a shortage of translators trained in medical discourse makes it hard for non-native English speakers to understand their diagnoses (Davidson, 2000). Thus, it is imperative to consider dominant language ideologies as inherently unequitable because of their potential to marginalise specific groups, especially in institutional settings.

There are three related language ideologies that highlight power imbalances within United States institutions as they relate to this study. In the next two paragraphs, I briefly summarize these ideologies—henceforth collectively referred to as dominant language
ideologies—as they emerge in various institutions, ending with their relation to the public education system specifically. The first dominant language ideology relates to the superiority of ‘standard’ English: the assumption that there is only one correct variety of the English language. This, of course, deemphasizes all varieties of English except for the mainstream one. Rickford & King (2016) describe at length the extent to which this ideology is intrinsic in courtroom practices. They examine how Rachel Jeantel, the primarily witness to the murder of Trayvon Martin, ultimately had her testimony invalidated due to the prosecutors’ constant attacks on her use of African American Vernacular English (AAVE). Because AAVE is widely considered to be an incomplete and incorrect form of English, it is not received positively in formal settings such as a court of law. AAVE fares equally poorly in educational settings. In fact, the stigma of AAVE is so great that all African Americans—even those who do not speak AAVE—are assumed to be uneducated speakers in academic contexts (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Flores & Rosa (2015) reveal that, even when Black students speak the standard variety of English during class, teachers consistently ask them to improve their speaking or think of them as lesser than their white peers. The ‘standard’ English ideology encapsulates perfectly how the relationship between language and race cannot be disregarded. Flores & Rosa (2015) even coin the term ‘raciolinguistics’ to emphasize this important connection. Though the present study does not consider AAVE in particular, it nevertheless analyzes how ‘standard’ English ideology plays out in school settings with diverse populations.

The second main language ideology refers to the idea of English dominance, which applies to all opinions that English should be the preferred language of choice (and that all other languages should be minimized). Though closely related to the attitudes toward ‘standard’
English, proponents of English-only thought usually have a larger scope in mind and target a different audience. The idea that English should be the only official language in the United States, as well as the de facto language in everyday practice, gained popularity during the late 1800s to the early 1900s (Ricento, 1995). This ideology is correlated with xenophobic tendencies, as English-only attitudes tend to spike during periods of heightened immigration (Ricento, 1995). Thus, English-only ideologies are particularly evident in immigration court and asylum procedures. Maryns (2017) reveals how English-only ideologies are present even in countries where English is the minority language, such as Belgium. In her case studies, she shows how English is consistently used as a lingua franca between the asylum officers and asylum seekers, despite English being neither groups’ first language (Maryns, 2017). This demonstrates the extent to which English is seen as prestigious over other languages. As with the ideology of ‘standard’ English, English-only ideology is also clearly seen in the public school system. Despite efforts to address linguistic diversity in schools, Piller (2016) writes that there is nevertheless still a ‘monolingual habitus’ that permeates the American school system. This is carried out through a wide range of institutionalized procedures, including the structure of standardized tests and implementation of rigid categories of linguistic proficiency (Piller, 2016). These harmful practices lead to non-native English speakers feeling otherized.

The last language ideology that features in this body of work refers to the differences between two kinds of bilingualism. As previously noted, the ideologies of ‘standard’ English and English-only work together to penalize students who do not grow up speaking a standard form of English at home. This leads naturally into the third language ideology, which separates bilingual students into two categories: those who are praised for their language skills and those who are
treated poorly for them. Han (2013) refers to the first category as ‘elite bilingualism,’ which usually emphasizes mainstream varieties of languages and assumes English as the native language of these speakers. He refers to the second category as ‘grassroots bilingualism,’ in which bilinguals are usually competent in one or more regional varieties of a language, and are assumed to pick up English as the second learned language (Han, 2013). This division in the treatments of bilinguals is readily seen in the job market and in education. Employers and schools alike often promote the benefits of bilingualism, such as being more competitive in the job search and getting pay raises or incentives. These perks, however, are almost always only directed toward ‘elite’ bilinguals who do not necessarily need any extra assistance. ‘Grassroots’ bilinguals, on the other hand, are universally expected to learn English and to suppress their other languages in order to gain employment (Piller, 2016). However, even when these individuals do learn English, studies suggest that they do not fare much better on the job market despite their new bilingual abilities (Subtirelu, 2017). Time and time again, non-native English speakers are treated less favourably because of their backgrounds despite their equally competent bilingual skills. This is reflected in the school system through the varying successes of bilingual education programs. Although such programs are ostensibly directed at students from all language backgrounds, the specific demographics of each program can greatly affect their outcomes. Flores & Chaparro (2018) reveal that bilingual programs in Philadelphia comprised of mostly native English speaking white students are repeatedly funded and given media attention, while programs with a majority of immigrant students at times fail to meet school standards of success. This clearly shows how ideologies surrounding bilingualism have deep ramifications for minoritized groups.
This section gave an overview of the primary definitions of language ideology relevant to the current study. It briefly summarized how ideologies are formed and ultimately internalized, and then described why they are so powerful: namely, language ideologies are used to entrench unequitable circumstances. The literature review then demonstrated how this is particularly evident in institutions, most prominently the public school system. Lastly, this section concluded with a review of the dominant language ideologies that will be examined in this study: (1) ‘standard’ English, (2) English-only, and (3) unequal bilingualism.

2.2. Public Education Trends in the United States

Dominant language ideologies have been woven into the American public education system almost since its inception. Many scholars, such as Wiley (2013), claim that educational practices during colonial times and the early revolutionary period were relatively linguistically diverse compared to the current day. Wiley (2013) points to the sheer amount of bilingual education programs during the 1700s to mid-1800s, many of which taught German alongside English, as proof. This alone stands out from the explicitly anti-immigrant and English-only rhetoric that snowballed during the late 1880s (Ricento, 1995; Totten, 2008). Totten (2008) illustrates how heightened pro-American sentiments strengthened during the great wave of migration, and only grew deeper during the World Wars, when they were combined with anti-foreign attitudes. During the early 1900s, knowledge of the English language became directly tied to a sense of nationalism (Totten, 2008). This sharp contrast from America’s early beginnings corresponds with the view that America was originally welcoming of numerous languages, but only changed due to the external pressures of massive immigration and war.
However, recent scholars have begun to contest the claim that early America was a linguistically tolerant place. Instead, Flores (2014) argues it is better to think about early America in terms of “linguistic ambivalence” (p. 3). Though there did seem to be more attempts in early schooling to implement bilingual education practices, Ovando (2003) notes that these were ‘inconsistent’ and ‘contradictory’ at best. More importantly, descriptions that praise the early United States for being linguistically diverse ignore the fact that African dialects and Indigenous languages were considered uncivilized (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002). European languages were given preferential status over these so-called ‘primitive’ languages, yet they were still not considered as prestigious as English. Thus, a hierarchy of languages was implicit in early American society, as well as the education system of the time. From this, it seems that early America had a lot more in common with the current day, at least in terms of treatment of other languages, than some might initially think.

Over the last fifty years, the United States has attempted to make up for its English-only policies of the past with middling success. In 1903, 14 states mandated English as the language of school instruction (Wiley, 1998). Between 1913 and 1923, this number rose from 17 to 34 (Wiley, 1998). However, starting in the 1960s—at the height of the Civil Rights movement—language policies began to form at the other end of the spectrum. The 1968 Bilingual Education Act, which for the first time acknowledged the specific needs of non-native English speakers, was a particularly groundbreaking policy (McCarty et. al., 2015). This was followed four years later with the 1972 Indian Education Act, focused specifically on Native Americans, and then finally the 1992 Native American Languages Act (NALA). According to McCarty, et. al. (2015), NALA was the first piece of legislation that explicitly affirmed that the
United States should “preserve, protect, and promote the rights and freedoms of Native Americans to use, practice, and develop Native American languages” (p. 232). The fact that this law was enacted only a hundred years after the last of the Indian boarding schools shows just how far the United States has gone in trying to remedy its past actions through policy. Despite the persistence of harmful language ideologies in the public education system, the United States government has at least taken meaningful strides in acknowledging them.

On the other hand, the government has also passed legislation that has effectively contradicted some of the recent progress made in terms of language diversity in education. In particular, the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) caused substantial damage due to its stipulation that schools use high-stakes standardized testing to measure academic growth (Menken, 2006). Menken (2006) argues that the implementation of NCLB has turned testing into a formalized school language policy across the country. NCLB has had devastating effects on non-English speaking students. Not only are standardized tests exclusively written in English, but they often presuppose knowledge that immigrant students would not necessarily have (Solorzano, 2008). English language learners (ELLs) are unreasonably challenged as a result. Though Solorzano (2008) recognizes the need for gauging students’ progress over the years, he questions whether a focus on standardized tests, which detract from classroom learning, is really the best solution.

Along with the increase in standardized testing, recent issues in public education have included teacher burnout, student disinterest, and lack of parental involvement. Every year, teachers are more and more overworked: their time away from school is spent grading papers or purchasing supplies for their classrooms. Abel & Sewell (1999) correlated this added
responsibility to increasing feelings of depression, emotional distress, and lower work productivity, especially among teachers in rural areas with lower-than-average salaries. Consequently, teachers often report being unable to do as much as they would like to help their students. At the same time, students are also growing wary of the public school system. Legault & Green-Demers (2006) report that students are collectively appearing less motivated in class according to the perceptions of their teachers. They summarize Pelletier, et. al. (1999) in ascribing this change to two taxonomies: ability beliefs and effort beliefs. In essence, students might be unmotivated because they do not think they have the ability to succeed, or because they do not think they can put in the required effort to do so (Legault & Green-Demers, 2006). One more possibility to explain disinterest is that students are disassociating themselves from curricula that do not reflect their own lived experiences. This is especially true for students of color, who are not usually reflected in the books read for English classes or in the perspectives discussed during history lessons (Bernal, 2002). Lastly, the role of parents in shaping their children’s education must be acknowledged. The less a parent is able to look after their children’s progress in school, the more likely it is that students stop caring (Frank, et. al, 2011). However, some parents are unable to be present in the lives of their children due to work or citizenship status (Frank, et. al, 2011). In summary, teachers, students, and parents all have parts to play in making the best of the public education system, but must overcome structural barriers to do so.

This section summarized a few major themes present in United States public education from colonial times to the present day. It focused specifically on legislation related to educational matters, which have slowly become more accommodating of linguistic diversity.
Despite this, the section emphasized that there are still many setbacks, such as NCLB, that continue to impede progress. Finally, this section considered the individual challenges that (1) teachers, (2) students, and (3) parents face in navigating the public education system as it is today. Though these problems do not have to do with language in and of themselves, it is important to consider how they might exacerbate inequalities relating to language, race, and social class.

2.3 The New Mexican Context

While dominant language ideologies and structural challenges are present in public schools across the United States, they have a disproportionate effect in certain areas. For example, schools in rural areas are more likely to cater to students experiencing poverty (Schaefer, Mattingly, & Johnson, 2016), especially students from linguistically minoritized populations. In particular, Hispanic and Native American/Indian Native students are more likely to attend impoverished rural schools than their white counterparts (Farrigan, 2017). New Mexico is a predominantly rural state, and also happens to be home to the largest Hispanic population as a percentage of the total population in the United States, as well as a sizeable indigenous population (United States Census Bureau, 2018). As a result, its school system is often plagued with challenges stemming from poverty and language discrimination. These additional difficulties lead to New Mexico consistently ranking as one of the worst states in terms of education in the United States (Nott, 2018; Burgess, 2017). However, such lists do nothing more than illuminate educational issues. In order to assess the overarching problems affecting the New Mexican public school system, particularly those that relate to language, it is necessary to consider New Mexico’s complex history.
New Mexico has been controlled by various countries, including the Spanish Empire, Mexico, and the United States. Its cultural history is similarly diverse: a mixture of Spanish, Indigenous, and American influences. For this reason, Jenkins & Schroeder (1974) describe New Mexico as having a “unique tricultural position” (vi). Yet it is important to emphasize that New Mexico’s multiculturalism is not balanced. Its Spanish influence is perhaps most dominant, exceedingly visible in nearly all aspects of society: geography, law, art, and language. Meanwhile, New Mexico’s indigenous populations, collectively referred to as the Puebloans or Pueblo Peoples, have had much less of an impact, especially politically. This is a direct result of Spanish colonization; the indigenous peoples of New Mexico suffered immensely under Spanish rule, and continued to be treated as inferior under Mexican and United States control. The infamous Indian boarding schools set up by the United States in the 1800s need not be described at length, but can be characterized as having had a near-genocidal impact on indigenous culture and language that has lingered to this day (Winstead, et. al., 2008). To make matters more complicated, New Mexico has become increasingly Americanized since acquiring statehood in 1912. The inevitable rise of English dominance has affected both Spanish and indigenous culture. Thus, although New Mexico is ‘tricultural,’ there is an implicit linguistic and cultural hierarchy in place that places English first, with Spanish underneath it and indigenous languages last.

The tension between these three broad cultural influences—American, Spanish, and Indigenous—is at the core of the educational issues New Mexico is facing today. New Mexico’s language hierarchy is perpetuated through a public school system that reinforces the dominant language ideologies discussed in Section 2.1 This is most evident in students’ attitudes toward
their mother tongues and the impact of monolingual testing. Indigenous language loss has been documented for years. Although there have been numerous revitalization efforts since the early 1900s (White, 2006), these are hindered by struggles such as a lack of qualified teachers (McCarty, 2008). The Spanish language has also begun to decline among heritage speakers. Over recent decades, a language shift from Spanish to English has been noticed, despite Spanish being the second-most spoken and taught language in the United States (Villa & Villa, 2005). This may have to do with the social and academic pressures to assimilate to the dominant language ideologies of the education system. New Mexico’s rigid testing requirements are one of the main contributors to the entrenchment of English-only attitudes. Since at least 2005, New Mexico public schools used the PARCC exam, a standardized test administered by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers consortium (New Mexico Public Education Department). However, in January 2019, recently-elected governor Michelle Grisham ended New Mexico’s use of PARCC through an executive order (Strauss, 2019). The PARCC exam was extremely controversial due to its ‘high-stakes’ nature and because it detracted from valuable classroom time (Strauss, 2019). While it will no longer be used in New Mexico, its legacy may very well continue to perpetuate linguistic discrimination. Understanding the cultural and structural challenges that language-minoritized students face—particularly those of Hispanic and Native American ancestry—is an important first step in implementing feasible solutions to improve educational experiences.

This section discussed how language ideologies and public education trends apply specifically to the New Mexican context. It gave a very brief overview of the three main cultures present in New Mexico—Spanish, Indigenous, and American—and then discussed how the
inequities between them play out in public schools. Specifically, the issues of heritage language loss and standardized testing were highlighted.

3. DATA & METHODOLOGY

3.1. Background

New Mexico has a very diverse student population, which makes it especially prone to experiencing conflict as a result of the structural inequities within the public school system. As such, a rural Northern New Mexican high school was chosen as the focus of this study. The high school, henceforth referred to by the pseudonym Land of Enchantment High, is located in a small town of around 5500 residents. There is a Native American reservation nearby that has a population of around 1900 residents. The indigenous language spoken at the reservation is Tiwa. Land of Enchantment High is the primary high school for the town and the reservation, although students have the option of attending a few charter or alternative schools instead. The high school has a total student population of approximately 700 students. It also employs around 40 permanent faculty members.

Like many New Mexican schools, Land of Enchantment High operates in a town with sizeable Hispanic and Native American populations. According to the United States Census Bureau (2018), 45.6% of town residents consider themselves to be Hispanic or Latino. 4.5% of residents consider themselves to be American Indian or Alaska Native. These figures are much higher than the national percentages, which are 18.1% Hispanic/Latino and 1.3% American Indian respectively. Additionally, 37.3% of town residents reported that a language other than English was spoken in their homes from 2013-2017, compared to 21.3% nationwide. (See Figure 1 on page 19 for a summary of this data.) This racial and linguistic diversity makes it very likely
that dominant language ideologies have had a great impact on Land of Enchantment High students and teachers.

It should also be noted that I, the researcher, have a personal connection to Land of Enchantment High. This is the high school that I attended, from 2011-2015. I moved to New Mexico in 2009, after having been raised predominately in Indianapolis, Indiana. As a result of this cross-country move, I began to notice many social, academic, and cultural differences. Most prominently, I had to leave behind a private Catholic school and enroll in a public school in rural New Mexico. Due to this change, I became very perceptive to how one’s environment and varying access can greatly alter life trajectories. Although I moved away from New Mexico in 2015, the time I spent as a student in its public schools gave me a deep understanding of the challenges students and teachers regularly face. Being a student at Land of Enchantment High inspired me to think critically about the power dynamics and language ideologies at play in the
public school system. Consequently, I am committed to studying the impact of language ideologies, both in New Mexico and across the country.

3.2 Research Questions

This thesis attempts to better understand the various ways that dominant language ideologies at a public high school may impact the school’s students and teachers. Specifically, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. How are student and teacher recollections of their experiences at the high school of study indicative of the dominant language ideologies subsisting in the public school system?

2. How aware are students and teachers of any ideological leanings inherent in their responses?

3. How do the dominant language ideologies noted impact students’ and teachers’ experiences in school settings?

3.3 Data & Methodology

The primary data for this thesis is an online survey and eight informal interviews. To gain a better understanding of the students and teachers at Land of Enchantment High, I created an online survey using Qualtrics that was sent out via email to all Land of Enchantment High teachers at the end of August 2018. Teachers were asked to fill out the survey and to instruct their students to fill it out as well. The survey required about 10 minutes to complete, and comprised of three sections: demographic data, a student section, and a teacher section. The student section asked students to rate their levels of agreement with several sentences focused on school diversity, class curriculum, and social interaction. The teachers received a corresponding set of sentences in their section. These last sections were rated on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being
strongly agree. (A full list of questions can be found in Appendix A.) Ultimately, 133 students, representing approximately 19% of the school population, took the survey. 16 teachers, representing about 40% of the high school stuff, took the survey. Not all of the survey respondents answered every question, with questions at the end of the survey receiving fewer responses. The data from the survey is used throughout this paper to provide additional context about the high school of study, as well as provide further data points for themes that arise in the interviews.

At the end of the survey, respondents were asked if they would be interested in participating in the study further through one-on-one informal interviews. Throughout September and October 2018, I reached out to all interested survey respondents who provided an email address. In late October 2018, I travelled to the town of study where I conducted interviews with all the people that ultimately responded to my interview request: six teachers and two students. Interviewees were compensated for their time with either a $5 gift card to the location of their choice or $5 cash. The informal interviews lasted between 12 and 44 minutes. To start off, interviewees were asked a few questions from a set of pre-planned questions. Various follow-up questions then came up organically. (The guiding interview questions can be found in Appendix B.) One of the student interviewees, participant Emilia, gave a significantly shorter interview than the other participants; as a result, none of this interview data is included in the analysis. Every interview was audio recorded and then subsequently transcribed using an online program.¹ Next, interviews were coded for relevant themes using a multi-step process. First, excerpts were organized into three overlapping and corresponding categories: (1) present language ideologies,
(2) awareness, internalization, and impact of ideologies, and (3) the manifestation of ideologies in school challenges and solutions. Interview excerpts that fit into these categories were then further classified into various subcategories within each major theme. Finally, selected excerpts from each subcategory were chosen for deeper analysis within this study.

Most of the interview data collected for this study is fairly straightforward and does not need additional explanation to understand. However, I should note a few key points about how the analysis of the interviews is structured. In identifying excerpts that contained ‘standard’ English, English-only, and bilingual ideologies, I considered both personal reflections of students and teachers that had ideological leanings, as well as explicit mentions of structural barriers within the public school system that are ideological in nature. It is important to acknowledge the difference between the self-professed language ideologies—whether consciously or subconsciously made—and the ideologies merely noted by interviewees as existing in the public school system. While both types of language ideologies are found to be internalized, and therefore pertinent to this study, recognizing the different types of ideologies (as well as their sources) is something that should be emphasized throughout this study’s analysis. It is also necessary to point out that there is a lack of interactional sociolinguistic data within the interviews collected. As such, most of the analysis focuses on the surface level: what the interviewees said, word for word. The only linguistic phenomena discussed are features such as hesitation and repetition, which can indicate subtle emotional responses than are not directly stated. These are explained further in context of their respective occurrences. All other analysis focuses on explicit mentions of language ideology as told by student and teacher interviewees.
3.4 The Participants

The survey respondents were a diverse group of both students and teachers. Among the 133 students, all four class years were represented: 33 freshman (25%), 55 sophomores (41%), 16 juniors (12%), and 29 seniors (22%). When asked to self-report their race, 102 students (63%) identified as white, with 36 of them (22%) identifying as “other,” 12 (7%) identifying as American Indian/Alaska Native, and a very small portion identifying as Black (5 students, 3%) or Asian (3 students, 1.8%). 80 students (60%) identified as Hispanic or Latino. The students reported being able to speak a total of 13 languages, with English (129 students) and Spanish (60 students) being the most common. English was the dominant language of a majority of the students (123), with Spanish (6) and Tiwa (1) following.

The teachers who took the survey teach a wide range of subjects, both core classes and electives, including English, history, government, foreign languages, economics, culinary arts, music, and debate. The teachers who responded to the survey have been at Land of Enchantment High for as little as one year and as much as 21 years. The average amount of time that the teacher respondents have worked at the high school is 9.93 years. All but three of the teachers self-identified as white (80%), with one identifying as American Indian/Alaska Native and two identifying as “other.” 6 (37.5%) out of 16 teachers reported their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino. The teachers’ language repertoires consisted of four total languages. All teachers reported speaking English, while six reported knowledge of Spanish. English was the dominant language of every teacher who responded to the survey. (For a comparison of student and teacher racial and ethnic demographics, see Figure 2 on page 24; for a comparison of spoken languages, see Figure 3 on page 24.)
The eight student and teacher interviewees, who were selected from the greater pool of survey respondents, are as follows (see Figure 4 on page 26 for a summary):

Emilia is a white female student at Land of Enchantment High in her freshman year. She reports being able to speak fluently only in English, though is currently taking a Spanish class. Like all freshmen, she participated in the school’s annual Emotional Intelligence (EQ) retreat, which focuses on integrating freshmen into the high school and emphasizes emotional growth.

Lorenzo is a white male student in his senior year at Land of Enchantment High. He also reports only being able to speak English, even though he has taken Spanish classes all through high school. Lorenzo volunteered to be a group facilitator in the school’s EQ retreat.

David is a white male teacher at Land of Enchantment High. He has been at the high school for four years, and a teacher for 11. In addition to teaching a wide range of history classes, he also teaches AP Government and EQ. David reports being able to understand Spanish, though he does not speak it fluently.

Harry is a white male teacher at the high school. He teaches English to sophomores and juniors, AP Literature to seniors, and a poetry writing elective. He has been a teacher for 13 years, and has spent all of those years at Land of Enchantment High. Harry reports being able to understand some Spanish.

Wendy is a white female teacher of history and economics. She has been teaching for 24 years, but only started at Land of Enchantment High a few years ago. She reports being able to understand a little Spanish and Italian.

Magdalena is a Hispanic female teacher with various roles at Land of Enchantment High. She is a Spanish teacher, as well as the overseer of the school’s ESL, Gifted, and College
Success programs. Magdalena has been a teacher for about 22 years, and has a PhD in Language, Literacy, and Sociocultural Studies. Magdalena’s first language was Spanish, although she now considers English to be her dominant language because she uses it more often.

Kristina is a white female educator at the high school working as a dyslexia therapist. She has worked in educational contexts for 25 years, and as a dyslexia therapist for nine. She works at Land of Enchantment High three days a week, and at other schools in the district on the other two days. Kristina reports only being proficient in English.

Brooke is a white female who works as a speech language pathologist. She has been a therapist for 16 years, five of which have been at Land of Enchantment High. She reports being able to understand a little Spanish and French.

<table>
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<th>Figure 4 (all names are pseudonyms)</th>
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<td><strong>Students</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Name</strong></td>
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<td>Emilia</td>
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<td>Lorenzo</td>
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| **Teachers**                        |
| **Name**                            |
| David | White Male | US History, NM History, History of Film, AP Government, EQ (Emotional Intelligence) | English (dominant language), limited Spanish | 32 mins |
| Harry | White Male | Honors English II, AP Literature, Poetry Writing | English (dominant language), can understand some Spanish | 45 mins |
| Wendy | White Female | NM History, World History, Economics | English (dominant language), limited understanding of Spanish and Italian | 27 mins |
| Magdalena | Hispanic Female | Spanish I, ESL, College Success, Gifted Program Overseer | English (current dominant language), Spanish (first language) | 36 mins |
| Kristina | White Female | Dyslexia Therapist | English only | 30 mins |
| Brooke | White Female | Speech Language Pathologist | English (dominant language), limited understanding of Spanish and French | 26 mins |
4. ANALYSIS

4.1. The Linguistic Atmosphere Land of Enchantment High

“*The language of school is English.*”

-Magdalena

To some extent, there was evidence of all three dominant language ideologies discussed in Section 2.1—‘standard’ English, English-only, and unequal bilingualism—in the student and teacher survey responses and interviews. Although there were only a few instances of the ‘standard’ English ideology, these cases show how teachers can be simultaneously aware of linguistic prejudices and yet perpetuate them nevertheless. This is a pattern that emerges throughout the interviews and survey responses.

203 David: then, I would argue just generally, and this is why I teach the way I do with like open-note quizzes and tests, like just generally we have a low literacy rate in our community so, I don’t mean to say that- I mean, I do need more training in working with ELL students, but also like I just assume that everybody’s literacy levels are pretty low, um, and then I- I offer challenge texts for the

In the first example, history teacher David admits that, due to the “low literacy rate in [the] community” (lines 204-205), he has a negative assumption of his students’ abilities: “I just assume that everybody’s literacy levels are pretty low” (lines 206-207). Even though David acknowledges his own shortcomings at the same time (“I do need more training in working with ELL students,” lines 205-206), he nevertheless maintains that all his students have low literacy levels. This assumption is undoubtedly formed as a result of years of experience and observation; however, such a blanket statement furthers a raciolinguistic ideology about the types of students most likely to have ‘low’ literacy levels. Though David emphasizes that he uses alternative
methods such as open-note quizzes (line 203) in order to accommodate for students who struggle in his classroom, such attempts at promoting equality are not enough to negate dominant language ideologies.

On a related note, Spanish and ESL teacher Magdalena, who is also in charge of the Gifted Program, reveals how teachers in particular tend to wrongly assume too much about a student’s language abilities based off of what they hear in school hallways.

She mentions having to remind other teachers that “conversational English is very different from the academic level of English” (lines 115-116). While conflating these two types of English is not the typical way the ‘standard’ English ideology plays out, this situation nevertheless shows how ideas about the ‘right’ way to speak English can affect non-native English-speaking students. Due to a combination of both language and racial ideologies, teachers may form an inaccurate characterization of their students’ abilities that leads to two extremes: treating their lower-performing students differently in an attempt to make instruction easier, as in the case of David, or assuming too much of their students on the basis of their conversational language abilities rather than their academic ones. Neither of these tendencies is inherently wrong, but they can easily lead to harmful practices if teachers are not catering to students’ individualized needs. Thus, one way that the ‘standard’ English ideology is damaging is that it encourages teachers to speculate, often incorrectly, where their students are in terms of language ability without asking the students themselves.
Such ‘standard’ English ideologies complement more explicit English-only and bilingual ideologies, which were discussed at length by students and teachers at Land of Enchantment High. Occasionally, the interviewed teachers discussed the structural language ideologies of the school system; at other times, they expressed English-only rhetoric themselves. Again, this shows how teachers may be aware of dominant language ideologies, yet also impacted by them nevertheless. Magdalena was especially keen to share examples of language ideologies she has noticed during her time at Land of Enchantment High. Overall, she seemed to be more adept at noticing such injustices than the other teachers interviewed, perhaps due to her position as a Spanish and ESL teacher, and because she was the only educator interviewed whose mother language was Spanish. Magdalena briefly discussed her language background at the beginning of her interview, explicitly referring to the English-only policies of many schools.

29  Magdalena: Well, my first language was Spanish. That’s the language that I first learned, that I came to school with. And then because the language of school is English, then I had to learn, I was forced to learn English. And so, um that has since become my dominant language, um maybe because that’s what I use most often.

She stated upfront that, “because the language of school is English” (line 30) she “had to learn, [] was forced to learn English” (line 31). Here, she clearly shows her awareness of the dominant language ideologies that thrive in the public school system. Later on in the conversation, Magdalena again emphasizes the English-only nature of schools, which inevitably gets ingrained in the institutional setting and affects the behaviours of teachers.

198  Magdalena: Well there’s a lot of different things. And part of this has to do with a lot of the- my old research that I conducted. And one of them was in looking at the invisible culture that occurs. Um, and in the invisible culture, I think a lot of times, teachers (. ..) prefer to have students who are English only. And the reason for that is because, then they don’t have to make an effort. They don’t have to deal with those students who don’t have a strong English background.
She calls this the “invisible culture” (line 200), in which she feels “teachers … prefer to have students who are English only […] because then they don’t have to make an effort” (lines 201-202). From this, Magdalena paints a stark picture of how teachers can favour certain students—namely, English-speaking ones—just because they are easier to handle.

On the surface, however, the teachers at Land of Enchantment High seem to be accommodating of linguistic diversity at school. It is only through a deeper analysis of the informal interviews that this surface tolerance begins to break down. For example, at first, teachers seem to imply that the school atmosphere is one that encourages Spanish language use.

216  Interviewer: Do you think that speaking Spanish in the hallways- does that happen often?
217  Brooke: Yes.
218  Interviewer: and how do the teachers react to that?
219  Brooke: I don’t think the teachers really react to it. They um, we kind of expect it. It’s just it’s kind of accepted here, because we’re in [Town of Study], and it’s such a huge Hispanic population.

According to Brooke, a speech language pathologist, teachers do not react to students speaking Spanish in the hallways because they “kind of expect it” (line 219). She further noted that speaking Spanish is “kind of accepted here [at Land of Enchantment High]” (line 220) because of the demographics of the town: “it’s such a huge Hispanic population” (line 221).

262  Interviewer: Yeah. And do you know how many students in your classes have trouble with English or are Spanish speakers predominately?
264  David: Um, I’d say in my classes, anywhere from 5-15% of the students, so it’s not a ton.
265  Interviewer: Do you ever hear them speak Spanish in your classes?
266  David: Yes. yeah, with each other, doing directions and things, yeah. And I encourage that.

This sentiment of acceptance at the high school is echoed by David, who says that he has several Spanish-speaking students in his classes, and that he “encourages” them to use their language when completing assignments (line 266). From this, it can be summarized that teachers are
generally tolerant of Spanish speakers in the classrooms and allow them to use their language. As Brooke stated, this makes sense, due to the significant amount of Hispanic students at Land of Enchantment High. However, English teacher Harry’s perspective provides a broader overview of language diversity at the high school that conflicts with the Brooke’s and David’s experiences.

Unlike David, he does not often hear Spanish being spoken in his classes. Harry clarifies that this is not because of any policy he has in his classrooms (“I don’t tell them not to,” line 270), but rather because students are “so conditioned to what’s expected of them” (lines 270-271).

Because he teaches upperclassmen, Harry believes that his students have already been discouraged against speaking their native languages: “they’ve already had all of those formative language experiences where… a teacher you know told them ‘speak English’” (lines 272-274).

Thus, while neither of these three educators personally exhibited English-only ideologies, Harry seems to think that they definitely exist and have affected his students. He also brings up an interesting point regarding length of time and the gradual internalization of language ideologies, not just in teachers, but in students, who eventually may stop using their heritage languages at school altogether. This is another long-lasting consequence of the structural ideologies of the public school system.

Further discussions with teachers reveal that language diversity at Land of Enchantment High is also inhibited through social barriers. For example, Brooke discusses the isolation and stigma that many English language learner (ELL) students face.
In describing a few of the students who have come to Land of Enchantment High from international backgrounds, Brooke reveals that “they don’t even have a group of kids who are like them” (lines 121-122). In fact, she recalls one student from Vietnam who has a name “so complicated I couldn’t even repeat it correctly to be able to say his name,” to say hello to him. So he smiled and looked at me and said “just call me Ken.” So he has changed his name and has Americanized himself, so that people can communicate that much with him.

In describing a few of the students who have come to Land of Enchantment High from international backgrounds, Brooke reveals that “they don’t even have a group of kids who are like them” (lines 121-122). In fact, she recalls one student from Vietnam who has a name “so complicated” (line 123) that she could not “repeat it correctly to be able to say his name” (lines 123-124). Throughout her interview, it is clear that Brooke cares for her caseload of students and wants them to succeed. Yet it is important to highlight that she too struggles with an English-only mindset, accepting the Vietnamese student’s offer to call him “Ken,” an Americanized name (lines 125-126). This treatment, which many foreign students encounter in the United States, is yet another an example of both linguistic and racial discrimination.

Americans are so used to hearing stereotypical ‘white-sounding’ names that they consider anything else as foreign. However, ‘foreign-sounding’ names are disproportionately ones given to students of color. Students who must change their names or adopt new ones to fit in better do so at a great cost to their cultural identities, which may very well impact their school life as well.

Brooke’s story also brings up the intense social pressures ELL students face because of other students at school. As high school senior Lorenzo affirmed, Land of Enchantment High is highly socially and academically segregated. He reveals that the divisions appear based on both class and racial lines, and are especially evident when it comes to lunchtime.
According to Lorenzo, there’s a “cool kid crowd in the lobby” (line 127), particularly a “cool white kid crowd” (lines 127-128). Lorenzo specifically contrasts this with the Hispanic community, noting that it is a “dividing line” (line 129) at the school. Lorenzo’s conversation also highlights the intersecting identities and challenges students can face, mixing both race and socioeconomic status. In particular, he notes that the Hispanic community in general is “not in as fortuitous a place” (lines 131-132), which leads them to have more academic challenges than their peers. Though Lorenzo makes sure to emphasize this is not true of “all of them” [members of the Hispanic community] (line 133), the stereotype that such stigma brings is significant. Thus, social distancing both results in and reinforces the separation of rich, white, and English-speaking students from low-income students, students of color and ELLs.

From these excerpts, it is clear that the linguistic environment at Land of Enchantment High is exceedingly complex. This section summarized the present language ideologies at the high school of study through several excerpts. It revealed that, despite individual teachers maintaining a tolerant and open-minded perspective on minority language use in classrooms, they showed signs of subscribing to dominant language ideologies at the same time. In addition, this section described how the environment at Land of Enchantment High is very socially and academically segregated, leading to the perpetuation of dominant language and racial ideologies by both students and teachers. This emphasizes the extent that structural language ideologies are
deeply ingrained within the public education system, leading to consequences for ELL students in classroom settings but also in social encounters.

4.2 Awareness, Internalization, & Impact of Ideologies

“It’s gotta be awful for a student like that…”
- David

With this understanding of the linguistic and social atmosphere at Land of Enchantment High, a continued analysis on the internalization and impact of language ideologies can commence. Clearly, many of the teachers are aware of the language disparities at the high school and in the public system overall. Magdalena was particularly knowledgeable about them, but even white teachers with limited or no Spanish abilities understood the impact of language accessibility on their students. This awareness is important because it shows that teachers are willing to learn and change. However, despite this, the long-standing ideologies prevailing in the public school system continue to be internalized in the actions of students and teachers. This section delves further into the consequences of the language ideologies mentioned in Section 4.1 by focusing on the main ways that ideologies impact students and teachers at Land of Enchantment High, and how aware they seem to be of these issues.

Perhaps the prime effect of the ‘standard’ English, English-only, and bilingual ideologies that exist at Land of Enchantment High is the entrenchment of a language hierarchy that gives a preference to English, then Spanish, and lastly Tiwa, the local indigenous language. David explicitly summarizes this in his discussion of the differences between Spanish speaking students and students from the Native American reservation.
David: the students who are immigrants or migrants? We don’t really do a good job of what’s happening in the Pueblo, because what we have available to our curricula or our assessments don’t really match Tiwa, so we spend a lot more time helping those Spanish students, and largely, not (those from) [Town of Study] who are English language learners, but people who are new to our community, migrants or immigrants, what have you. Um, so our focus is largely on Spanish English language learners and oftentimes not Tiwa English language learners, and that’s problematic, um cause (...) and then, I would argue just

He states that the high school doesn’t “do a good job of what’s happening in the Pueblo” (lines 195-196) due to a lack of resources and assessment. Based on this, David concludes that the school’s focus is “largely on Spanish English language learners and oftentimes not Tiwa English language learners, and that’s problematic” (lines 200-202). Here, he directly shows his awareness of the language hierarchy present at Land of Enchantment High. Most importantly, he evaluates this ideology through saying that it is “problematic” (line 202). This shows that David is realizing the harmful effects of such an ideology, even while it continues to be perpetuated.

The significant, and frequently unspoken, distinctions between the treatment of ELL students from various backgrounds—as well as students who speak a different language generally—are the most visible effects of the internalization of language ideologies.

It is also important to highlight that ELL students are not discriminated against equally; rather, intersecting identities including race and ethnicity factor into one’s language background to add on to other structural barriers and discriminations. David shows his awareness of this component by naming his own identity and how he fits into the diverse community.

David: community like this. And oftentimes, white- especially white males that move here, they don’t endear themselves or engage with the community, um, and so I didn’t want to live that kind of lifestyle where I was working at the ski valley bartending, doing the river thing, and never really (.) participating in (.) who we are as a people here. So, I think I wanted to be purposeful in using my career as a means of connecting people and contributing to something meaningful. Yeah,
He notes that “oftentimes… white males that move here [town of study], they don’t endear themselves or engage with the community” (lines 75-76), but adds that he “didn’t want to live that kind of lifestyle” (line 77), instead choosing to “be purposeful” in his career (line 79). Here, David’s acknowledgement of his own identity also shows that he is very aware of the things he can do to impact his students. In this, he emphasizes his commitment to help his students—from all backgrounds—despite the many challenges of doing so. David’s emphasis that it is “especially white males” (line 75) who do not connect with the community at large shows he has a general understanding of how language and race play an impact in the public school system.

The structural ideologies stemming from the de facto language hierarchy have wide-reaching effects which are also clearly evident in classroom activities. Shortly after introducing the concept of the hierarchy, David provides an example of how Spanish students are disincentivized in the classroom, despite his allowance of accommodations.

```
281  David: Yeah I mean, for like History of Film, I put on the subtitles for my ELL students for any movie that we’re watching. It’s not the same, because I’m not offering them any like- any of the pre-viewing work or the post-viewing work that we do, that’s all me talking and facilitating like a conversation with the students so they’re completely removed from that, um, and then they can take a quiz in Spanish, but that- that assumes so much of their ability at 8 am to like, follow along with the subtitles, understand the context I gave them by which to watch the movie, so it’s gotta be awful for a student like that in the classrooms. It’s gotta be such a like, banging your head against the wall experience every day.
```

Though David reports that, in his History of Film class, he will “put on the subtitles for [his] ELL students” (lines 281-282), he immediately acknowledges that this is “not the same” (line 282) experience his other students receive. He belabours all of the additional tasks his Spanish-speaking students must do before they can take a quiz (“that assumes so much of their ability at 8 am,” line 286), then concludes that it must be “awful for a student like that in the classrooms… a like, banging your head against the wall experience at school everyday” (lines
In other words, the subtle (and at times, not so subtle) favouring of native English-speaking students is prominent even in typical classroom exercises, which undoubtedly affect students’ academic performances.

Brooke also seems very aware of the correlation between language, race, and culture, specifically noting that the school system is geared to a certain group of privileged individuals. She mentions how much of academia is “driven toward the mainstream society” (lines 87-88), clarifying that ‘mainstream’ does not “always mean white… that’s pretty much how it divides out” (lines 89-90). Here, Brooke reiterates that the public school system usually caters to white students, while also linking this academic trend to societal trends at large. In doing this, Brooke touches upon something crucial: that while language ideologies are being discussed in this study through a school context, they appear everywhere in American society. As a result, addressing language inequalities in the public school system is necessary, but not enough to dismantle them on a large scale.

A second consequence of the dominant language ideologies at Land of Enchantment High is the interviewees’ overreliance on fluency and their skewed perceptions of what fluency is. All interviewees were asked about their current language ability during their one-on-one conversations with me, and all except Magdalena took great lengths to say that they were not fluent in Spanish. However, most of them described themselves as ‘conversational’ in Spanish, or competent in the language to varying degrees. Because these teachers were not fluent, they did
not consider themselves ‘bilingual.’ This line of thinking—where bilingualism is a dichotomy instead of a spectrum—corresponds to the perception that most of the general public has as well. Yet, as Han (2013) discusses, this is a harmful way of thinking about bilingualism.

For example, social studies teacher Wendy states that she is “working at getting better at the language [Spanish]” (lines 117-118) in order to be of more help to her Spanish-speaking students. She described her lack of Spanish competency as a “weakness” (line 119), reporting that she is “not fluent” (line 119). While being able to communicate fully with her Spanish-speaking students would definitely aid her in teaching them more effectively, this focus on fluency is perhaps over-emphasized. Instead of relying on this lack of fluency, teachers who are not competent in the Spanish language should focus on what they can do to help their ELL students.

This is not to say native fluency in a language is not a valuable asset; of course, hiring teachers who are able to fully communicate with ELL students in their native language would be extremely beneficial. Magdalena gives an example of a bilingual math teacher at Land of Enchantment High who was able to explain algebra to Spanish-speaking students as proof.

Due to the fact that he was “able to explain everything to them in Spanish… the students were able to do very well” (lines 235-236). However, fluency in a language is itself not enough to help
ELL students succeed academically, and should not be a prerequisite to providing assistance in the first place. Teachers who are not bilingual should not have to learn another language in order to cater to their multilingual and multicultural students. While bilingual teachers should be encouraged, lessons in cultural understanding, racial equity, and dismantling of structural language ideologies should be an equal, if not greater, priority.

It should also be noted that teachers were not the only ones adhering to an either/or assumption of fluency: the student interviewees had also adopted this mentality. When high school senior Lorenzo discussed his Spanish background, he did so in a conflicting manner.

Initially, Lorenzo reported that he “can speak English and nothing else” (line 8). However, a few minutes into the interview, Lorenzo stated that his least favourite class is AP Spanish, which is taught entirely in Spanish. When prompted about this Spanish background, Lorenzo subsequently clarifies that he would describe his Spanish ability as “pretty poor” (line 48), despite having taken Spanish for all four years of high school (lines 51-52). Here, Lorenzo makes it clear that he is not able to have fluent conversations in Spanish. In fact, his belief that he is not ‘fluent’ makes it so that he initially states that he is not familiar with Spanish at all. This misunderstanding regarding fluency and familiarity is reiterated in the survey responses of other students and teachers at Land of Enchantment High. A plurality of the student respondents (63
out of 133; 47%) reported being familiar with 2 languages. Most of these respondents were familiar with English and Spanish. Several of them, however, choose to frame their responses in a way that highlighted their perceived lack of Spanish ability as compared to their English. For example, one respondent wrote “English and some Spanish” (Figure 5, left, page 40). This was not an isolated incident, but rather occurred repeatedly; another survey respondent reported being familiar with “English, Spanish, Korean (still learning)” (Figure 6, right, page 40).

Furthermore, the interview findings cast doubt on whether the many survey respondents who reported speaking English only are only familiar with English, or if they, like Lorenzo, simply do not consider themselves to be able to speak other languages that they have a background in. This focus on fluency (or lack thereof) seems to be persistent among the student and teacher interviewees. Interestingly, it does not seem like any of the interviewees were aware of this, which suggests that the concept of bilingualism as a spectrum should be shared widely.

In addition to the focus on fluency, teachers noted a general lack of interest in heritage language learning completely, which is perhaps connected to the obsession with ‘fluency.’

Kristina: fluently. Um, not Mexicans, but Hispanic, local Hispanic kids, a lot of them are not speaking Spanish in the homes much anymore. So that’s something that we’re finding very interesting.
Dyslexia therapist Kristina reports that she and many other teachers have noticed that a lot of students are “not speaking Spanish in the homes much anymore” (line 249), and that this is “something that we’re [the teachers are] finding very interesting” (line 250). The ambivalent linguistic atmosphere at Land of Enchantment High suggests that there could be many reasons for this, such as the social and academic pressures already mentioned. However, the previously-mentioned inaccurate definition of fluency can also be a factor. Brooke focuses on a few external influences that may be leading to widespread language loss.

She believes that, because immigrant students “try to become Americanized, they don’t want to speak Spanish. They don’t understand the importance of having a second language” (lines 27-28). As evidenced in Section 4.1, the determinants of Americanization can be truly severe. However, Brooke’s argument that there is a lack of understanding about the importance of language learning should be questioned. Certainly, this may be true of many students. Yet it could also be that the severe social stigma of speaking a foreign language may affect students to a degree that they do not want to speak their mother languages, despite recognizing their cultural importance. Whatever the case, it is evident that the shallow notions of bilingualism—and related bilingual ideologies—harm students in two major ways: by making them believe that they have to be ‘fluent’ in order to speak a language, and by causing them to not even want to try in the first place.
The third and final major consequence of the dominant language ideologies, touched upon in numerous interviews, was the demoralizing effects of standardized testing. As noted in the literature review, standardized testing is ‘high stakes’ for students, teachers, and school districts alike. Thus, testing is a subject that many are knowledgeable about.

Kristina displays her knowledge of the New Mexico testing regime, recounting how the standardized PARCC exam is both impersonalized and an inaccurate assessment of student potential. She argues that “tests are killing our kids… emotionally, spiritually, educationally” (lines 142-143). She also reveals how the PARCC used to only allow 3% of the high school to receive the Read To accommodation (lines 146-148). This alone shows how the test is not designed with the best interests of students, as only a set percentage of accommodations are granted. Part of what makes the test so powerful is that passing it is a requirement for graduation.

Although Kristina mentions there is “a loophole” (line 223) for certain students to get out of this requirement, she bemoans how frustrating it is for students who have “gone through 12 years of school … work really hard, but this one PARCC testing says, ‘oh, you canNOT graduate,’” because you didn’t pass our crazy level four testing um level. That’s, so thankfully the counselors did this a couple of years ago. Found this loophole.
students with dyslexia; however, her comments and concerns about the academic barriers are equally applicable to ELL students as well. The strict requirements of the test, in addition to society’s deep focus on testing as a means for proving success, is flawed because it burdens the students who are the most challenged.

Magdalena’s opinions on testing echo Kristina’s, with both shedding further light on the impact of testing and possible solutions that could help minoritized students.

Magdalena believes that school need to, among other things, “start looking at the growth students are making versus just an isolated test” (lines 355-356). She believes that seeing testing as a means of “monitoring growth over a sustained period of time” is one way of “making a difference” (lines 357-358). Magdalena concludes that teachers “need to be held accountable” (line 359) for this focus on growth, which is something that standardized tests do not emphasize.

Indeed, Kristina makes the impact of harsh standardized testing on students evidently clear, noting a rise in “depression, attempted suicide” (line 235), as well as “so many kids that are talking about dropping out of school right before testing” (lines 236-237). She reveals that it is “CRAZY how it [testing] impacts students and emotional wellbeing” (lines 238-239).
However, she too ends with a possible solution, describing how she is “constantly doing informal assessment” (line 240). Unlike with standardized testing, an informal method of collecting feedback does not negatively impact students. Furthermore, it treats them as individuals and gives them more autonomy concerning their educational paths. David’s and Wendy’s earlier discussions of their in-class tests are good examples of alternative testing methods: providing informal feedback or allowing for open note options. These should be emphasized, rather than the strict testing regimes that were unfortunately made commonplace as a result of the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act.

This section summarized three major consequences that dominant language ideologies have on students and teachers at Land of Enchantment High. Firstly, they reinforce a language hierarchy in which native English speakers are given preferential treatment, followed by Spanish speakers and then Tiwa (and other) language speakers. Next, bilingual language ideologies cause students and teachers to have very narrow views of fluency, making them believe that they need to be fully fluent in order to use their Spanish. This perception also seems to affect heritage language learning, as teachers have noted that students are gradually losing interest in their mother tongues. Lastly, structural language ideologies are shown to impact bureaucratic requirements, most notably standardized testing, which greatly exacerbates present language injustices. Students and teachers seem to be aware of the language hierarchy and the impact of testing, but not as aware about the issues regarding fluency. Regardless, all three consequences of language ideology were shown to be greatly ingrained in the system, despite substantial awareness.
4.3. Manifestation of Ideologies in School Challenges & Solutions

“They’re not going to bring the conversation up... because they don’t know what to say”

-Brooke

After considering both the dominant language ideologies at Land of Enchantment High and a sampling of concrete ways that they affect students and teachers, the logical next step is asking “so, what next?” As a result, considering the school challenges and potential solutions regarding language and racial inequalities is the last aspect of this analysis. All interviewees were asked what they thought the most pressing problems were at Land of Enchantment High, and what their proposed solutions are to tackling those issues. While there are many huge structural barriers, such as standardized testing, that cannot be easily fixed by students and teachers, there are many smaller-scale problems that can be changed at a school or even classroom level. These types of issues are by no means less consequential; in fact, it seems that they might even be more important to tackle in order to benefit students and teachers in their daily lives. In focusing on these problems and the bottom-up solutions suggested by students and teachers, several main themes emerged. Though these school challenges are not all directly related to language ideologies, they are impacted by dominant ideologies in one way or another. Most importantly, language ideologies are seen as playing a role in making student and teacher proposed solutions more difficult to enact.

The first issue repeatedly discussed in the interviews was that of relevant curricula. While teacher behaviour is important to consider, the actual material that is taught—and the various sources that the material comes from—can also have an impact on student motivation to learn.
In discussing methods for reigniting students’ motivation to learn, Wendy makes a connection between entertainment and a love of reading. She states that “when there’s a movie, they want to read the book. Harry Potter, Hunger Games, things like that” (lines 75-76).

This is in direct contrast to the typical books students may read in school, which do not have as popular a response. Wendy goes on to say that she believes “English teachers are going to have to stop reading Crime and Punishment and The Great Gatsby and change maybe the books they’re asking kids to read” (lines 77-78). In other words, she thinks focusing on what the students are interested in will be more of a benefit in the long run. Student motivation to read is something that should most definitely be considered, as should the history and backgrounds of the material being read. As discussed in the literature review, Bernal (2002) finds that many of the novels read in English classes are geared to the perspective of white students.

During his interview, Harry listed a few of the novels he assigns to his Honors English and AP Literature classes: “1984, Taming of the Shrew, Hamlet, Elizabeth Cook’s Achilles, The Odyssey, … Love in the Time of Cholera, The Great Gatsby, Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, The Crucible” (lines 221-223). Except for Love in the Time of Cholera, written by the Colombian author Gabriel García Márquez, all of the assigned readings are focused on the West and written by white authors. Two are Shakespearean plays, two are centered on Greek
mythology, and four are American-authored. Though these are all important works in their own rights, the above collection is not the most geographically or socially diverse one. Yet Bernal (2002) argues that being able to empathize with characters in a novel—which is often difficult to do for students of color—is integral to student motivation and success. This is something that teachers must consider further going forward.

According to the results of the demographic survey, teachers overwhelmingly agree that it is necessary to utilize diverse material. When asked how likely they are to agree that diverse material is important, on a scale of 1-5, their response averaged at 4.7. Students also reported thinking that curriculum diversity is important, with an average response of 4.1. Yet when asked if the actual material taught comes from diverse groups in practice, student and teacher responses were divergent. Interestingly, the teachers rated their material as being much more diverse than the students. Teachers collectively responded that their material was an average of 3.8 in terms of geographic diversity and 3.9 for social diversity. On the other hand, students rated the material they learned as being an average of 3.1 for geographic diversity and 2.9 for social diversity. (See Figure 7 on page 48 for a summary of these results.) Because of the nature of the survey data collection, it is possible that some students were responding about classes not represented by teachers who took the survey or vice versa. Yet the significant difference in responses surrounding the topic of diverse material suggests that educators at Land of Enchantment High do need to pay more attention to their curricula, as well as be more receptive to the feedback of their students.
However, making room for such diversity is challenging for many reasons, both structural and ideological. Harry touches upon these when describing his English curriculum. 

205  **Harry:** texts themselves. _And the rigidity of the curriculum has a lot to do with the fact that we just don’t get to buy books that often._ If I- if I had the opportunity to add some more stuff in, _it would be hard to know what to take out._ Because I enjoy the books I teach so much. I mean I love _The Catcher in the Rye,_ I love _Like Water for Chocolate,_ I love _Alice and Wonderland._ _I couldn’t get rid of Alice! Not in a million years could I get rid of Alice._ Um, and- and Alice fits so neatly with _Like Water for Chocolate,_ and with Kafka’s _Metamorphosis._ Um, that

Firstly, he discusses the structural: the “rigidity of the curriculum has a lot to do with the fact that we [the teachers] just don’t get to buy books that often” (lines 205-206). This primarily budgetary constraint is not something that teachers can easily change themselves. However, much of the rest of Harry’s explanation has more to do with ideological barriers: even if he _were_ able to add new material, “it would be hard to know what to take out” (line 207). He also shows
his own preference for specific novels that he teaches: “I couldn’t get rid of Alice! Not in a million years could I get rid of Alice” (lines 209-210). While all of the books Harry teaches as part of his set curriculum may be cherished classical novels, it is important to heavily consider the possibility of changing curricula nonetheless. Many English classes across the United States utilize the same material, despite the fact that the nation is very geographically diverse, and the its student population is increasingly moreso. Students and teachers alike may have an idea of what a standard English curriculum should look like, but this does not have to be permanently set in stone. Adding more diverse material—either from other countries or written by minority authors—would not detract from the caliber of current classroom readings, but simply make them more engaging and culturally appropriate to an increasingly diverse pool of students.

A second issue hinted at by teachers—and reflected in the discrepancy between student and teacher perceptions on curriculum diversity—is a problem with miscommunication. Throughout the interviews, I noticed various inconsistencies concerning pieces of information.

245 Interviewer: How many teachers do you think are proficient in Spanish at the high school?
246 Magdalena: Probably ( . . ) I would say, that are proficient, four. Out of the entire staff.
247 Interviewer: How many teachers are there? 30 or something?
248 Magdalena: Mmmh. So that doesn’t bode very well. I mean, not even 10%.

For example, when asked how many teachers at Land of Enchantment High are proficient in Spanish, Magdalena guesses that there are “four [] out of the entire staff” (line 246). She concludes that such a low number “doesn’t bode very well” (line 248).

120 Interviewer: Do you know how many teachers at the high school are proficient in Spanish or a different language?
122 Wendy: I think, actually quite a lot. Um, fluent or semi-fluent. I don’t know a number, but my- just on this hall, I know Mr. [Redacted] speaks 3 or 4 languages. And Ms. [Redacted] is fluent in Spanish. And Ms. [Redacted] is fluent in Spanish. And Ms. [Redacted]. So yeah, quite a few.
On the other hand, Wendy believes that there are “actually quite a lot [of teachers that are] fluent or semi-fluent” (line 122). While such inconsistencies could be due to the different perceptions of fluency that were discussed in Section 4.2, there does seem to be a very significant mismatch here with one teacher considering less than 10% of staff as fluent and another thinking that many are. Indeed, this suggests that there might be other inconsistencies stemming from a lack of communication between teachers. Another example surrounds a discussion of the types of classes currently offered at Land of Enchantment High, and their impact.

Magdalena: But I think that now that we’ve been able to offer the Spanish Language and Culture and AP Spanish Literature, we’ve been able to see a lot of our native Spanish speaker students rise, and thrive, and SOAR, and um. I’ve even been able to see their own personal confidence levels grow. And they’re much happier. They feel that they have, they really do have something to contribute.

In her interview, Magdalena spoke at length of the benefits of an AP Spanish class, which allows “a lot of our [the high school’s] native Spanish speaker students [to] rise, thrive, and SOAR” (lines 213-214). She also emphasizes how it has made her typically language-minoritized students feel like they “really do have something to contribute” (line 216). This recent initiative has, then, undoubtedly helped a substantial population of the high schoolers at Land of Enchantment High. However, it does not seem like the benefits of such a class are known to the greater high school population of students and teachers.

Interviewer: I know that now, there’s an AP Spanish class. Do you think that the students there- are they able to write at a similar level to your class there?

Harry: I don’t know much about it. I know that Mr. [Redacted] is teaching it. I don’t know what his expectations are. I also know that (. . . ) there aren’t the same expectations with regards to a foreign language class with regard to students’

When asked about the AP Spanish class, Harry responded with “I don’t know much about it” (line 289). Although he was able to identify the teacher in charge of the class, he had no
knowledge about what “his expectations are” regarding the course (line 290). Presumably, Harry also is not aware of the many benefits Magdalena discussed the AP Spanish class having on Spanish-speaking students. While it is perhaps unrealistic to ask that all students and teachers are aware of everything that goes on at the high school, it seems that these inconsistencies and gaps in knowledge sharing mean that a wealth of valuable information is not being utilized.

Consistent knowledge transferring among students and teachers is not just an important matter in terms of academic awareness, but also for information regarding self-care.

\[35\] Wendy: Um, I'm a reflective teacher. So I keep a little notebook right there, and at the end of every class, even during class, I'll- I make notes. What works, what doesn't work. What questions they ask. And then also, I keep the notebook

\[105\] David: I try to update it here and there every year. Every year, I don’t- I don’t embed enough time to reflect, and I don’t think any educator does, any student does, I don’t think we do that well as a culture to reflect on what worked well. And so I have all these ideas and I implement them, and I realize what doesn’t work and then I don’t write it down or actually change anything=

For example, in her interview Wendy discusses the importance of reflection, noting that she considers herself to be a “reflective teacher” (line 35). To do this, she “makes notes [on] what works, what doesn’t work” (lines 36-37). In his interview, David also recognized the importance of reflection, but noted a lack of reflection in his own life: “I don’t embed enough time to reflect, and I don’t think any educator does, any student does” (lines 105-106). Unlike Wendy, when David realizes that something doesn’t work, he does not often make notes: “I don’t write it down or actually change anything” (line 109). These two opposing perspectives on the same topic only further emphasize the need for greater discussion and collaboration, especially in regards to teachers at Land of Enchantment High. If there were more spaces for teachers to interact with each other outside of their many responsibilities, it may benefit their professional and personal
lives. Though this issue of inconsistent communication is not directly related to language ideologies, it could be one of many reasons why language ideologies (and other structural inequalities) are so prevalent. If teachers were given more opportunities to share what they know based on their own classroom experiences, this could lead to greater understanding in many areas.

One way that Land of Enchantment High could remedy a lack of knowledge sharing is through an expansion of its already-existing Emotional Intelligence (EQ) retreat. The EQ retreat, which focuses on freshmen students, takes place over the course of a few days every fall semester. In it, volunteer senior students guide freshmen into their transition to high school by leading various activities meant to encourage social bonding and sharing of past experiences.

David discussed in detail the impact EQ has had on students, concluding that one of its great impacts is that it encourages strong relationships between upperclassmen and underclassmen: “if you have a senior sitting right next to them … uh, the EQ program is amazing” (lines 314-315). Lorenzo, who was one of the senior mentors this year, also reiterated David’s response, saying that he thinks “it’s AMAZING” (line 189).

David: essay, they don’t do it. But if you have a senior sitting right next to them, (…) uh, the EQ program is amazing, it’s something that is different than any other

Interviewer: and I guess, two last things- a lot of people mentioned the EQ program. Could you talk more about your experience with that?

Lorenzo: I think it’s AMAZING. But, I’m also one of the kids who told a story, so.

Interviewer: Do you think you learned a lot from doing it?

Lorenzo: Yes. And for the seniors, the mentors, which is what I was, it was kind of (. ) eye-opening to an extent. It it- kind of, showed the mind of the freshmen, which aren’t really that- all that different from us. As well as, kind of how teaching works to an extent? And then of course- telling my story was just like getting a brick off my chest.
Lorenzo also affirmed that he learned a lot from participating in EQ, because it “kind of showed the mind of the freshmen, which aren’t really that different from us [seniors]” (lines 196-197). This show of empathy and understanding is a testament to the type of connections the EQ retreat attempts to—and seemingly has—created.

In fact, the only negative things students and teachers had to say about the EQ retreat was that it was not long enough, which limited its healing potential.

Kristina mentions that her daughter participated in the retreat this past fall and “she really enjoyed it” (line 261); however, she “wishes that they could continue EQ throughout the year, in various ways” (lines 262-263). Lorenzo agreed with this sentiment, saying that “one of the main problems [with EQ] … is that there’s not enough continuation after the week” (lines 209-210).

Such initiatives that focus on emotional well-being are clearly very positively favoured. They have the potential to help students bond, especially those who are otherwise stigmatized. While the EQ retreat is not likely to dismantle all of the language ideologies and segregation at Land of Enchantment High, it certainly seems to be very effective in making the school a friendlier, more supportive place. Consequently, based on the EQ retreat’s overwhelming feedback, it seems that a similar system for teachers to bond could be useful, in order to encourage more knowledge sharing and self-care techniques.
The last major challenge that students and teachers discuss facing at Land of Enchantment High is a problem with being comfortable being uncomfortable. This ties into both of the earlier related challenges related to curricula and miscommunication. Learning to be comfortable in uncomfortable situations, such as when discussing race and discrimination, gets at the core of all the related issues noted at Land of Enchantment High. Teachers repeatedly mentioned in the interviews that they wish they could help their ELL students more, but that they are not able to—or rather, feel unable to. It is this sense of helplessness, undoubtedly made stronger by the existence of structural dominant language ideologies, that needs to be addressed.

Brooke argues that teachers overwhelmingly fail to have frank, honest conversations about sensitive topics such as language and race, both with their students and with each other. She sums up the issue perfectly in saying that “if the teachers felt comfortable having that conversation, like if they were a Spanish speaker themselves, they might be more comfortable doing that” (lines 71-73). However, she conceives that “someone like myself, or someone who is maybe an Anglo… they’re not going to bring the conversation up at all because they don’t know what to say. They don’t know how to bring it up, and it’s a problem” (lines 74-76). This feeling precisely captures the dilemmas of many educators who want to help but feel like they cannot, or more accurately, do not know how to because of their racial or linguistic backgrounds. The internalization of the various ideologies in play here is so strong that Brooke both highlights that being uncomfortable is a problem, yet admits that she too is a part of the group that does not
bring up necessary conversations. As a result of dominant language ideologies, as well as prevailing ideologies surrounding race, teachers appear unable to fully address the problems they point out in the school system, despite truly wanting to instigate change.

This section focused on several school-specific challenges that students and teachers acknowledged experiencing at Land of Enchantment High. Firstly, it considered the factors involved in diversifying curricula, particularly the novels read in English classes. While students and teachers alike noted the benefits of reading diverse material, their perceptions of the diversity of the current material were at odds with each other. Moreover, there are many structural and ideological impediments to changing curricula that need to be considered. A second issue that was brought up was that of miscommunication among teachers. Based on a few inconsistencies found within the interviews, it seems that teachers may not be sharing what they know with each other as much as they should. This leads to a lack of institutional knowledge and awareness, but also makes it difficult for teachers to share helpful techniques with each other. Land of Enchantment High’s EQ retreat is a program that could be useful in addressing these challenges. Lastly, this section summarizes how the main issue at Land of Enchantment High is that teachers are, for the most part, not comfortable with uncomfortable situations. This lies at the core of all of the other challenges discussed, and is a problem that must be addressed in order for teachers to fully help their students to the greatest extent possible.

5. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

5.1 Overview of Findings

This thesis considered the extent to which the dominant ‘standard’ English, English-only, and bilingual language ideologies were present at a New Mexican high school, and how they
affected the students and teachers there. Findings showed that the linguistic atmosphere at Land of Enchantment High was ambivalent at best: though outwardly tolerant, many language ideologies continued to subsist nevertheless. Interestingly, students and teachers seemed to be aware of the language inequalities present. In particular, teachers like David, Wendy, and Harry noted the extent to which ELL students are disadvantaged during class. Meanwhile, Magdalena focused on the lasting English-only legacy of the public school system. Lastly, Brooke was able to discuss her observations of the social and academic segregation at Land of Enchantment High, which often divides out against linguistic and racial lines. In addition, students and teachers alike were cognizant of the fact that there is a very clear language hierarchy in place at Land of Enchantment High, with English being the de facto language used, followed by Spanish, and then by the indigenous Tiwa language. The fact that students and teachers are privy to this information means that they have, overall, taken an important step in understanding the ideological underpinnings of the public school system.

However, there were many consequences of the dominant language ideologies which students and teachers seemed for the most part unaware of—or unwilling to speak out against. The interviewees’ either/or understanding of fluency was one area where bilingual ideologies were overwhelming, and for the most part undetected. This led to both an obsession with ‘fluency,’ as well as aided to the many reasons why students may be choosing to not learn their heritage languages. Most importantly, despite the substantial awareness that students and teachers had on the nature of language ideologies, this paper concludes that they were nevertheless greatly impacted by them. For example, in the cases where teachers pointed out linguistic injustices, they oftentimes discussed not doing as much as possible to dismantle them
for lack of knowledge or inability to do so. Other issues noted by teachers at Land of Enchantment High, such as the difficulty in crafting relevant curricula and a lack of knowledge sharing, can all be seen as consequences of the one major issue brought up by Brooke: an unwillingness to partake in relevant and frank discussions about language and race.

5.2 Recommendations for Students, Teachers, & School Administrators

Early on in the analysis, both David and Magdalena separately brought up the issue of accountability for different reasons. David remarked that many teachers hold their students accountable for their particular language choices. Magdalena later argued that it should be teachers who need to be held accountable for using testing measures that are equitable. These statements inspired the final direction of this thesis, as well as its title. Accountability is absolutely an important concept to consider, especially in regards to the matter of dominant language ideologies. Throughout this thesis, various teachers shed light on their different points of view, calling for a mixture of students, teachers, and school administrators to be held accountable for doing what they can to improve the public education system. Based on the findings of this thesis, it does not seem like there is a single ‘right’ answer for who should be accountable. Instead, I argue that the focus should be on what everyone can do from their respective positions to make the public education system a more just place, particularly when language and race are concerned. Consequently, this section succinctly offers students, teachers, and school administrators some concrete recommendations on how each group can do their part in dismantling dominant language ideologies. Though these recommendations are made with the specific students, teachers, and school administrators of Land of Enchantment High in mind, it is
my hope that they can be applied in some fashion to many other schools across the country as well.

5.2.1 for students

Though it often seems like students do not have much agency as they navigate through the school system, there is a lot that they can do amongst themselves to make school a more welcoming place. If this goal is accomplished, then ELL students and other language-minoritized individuals may not feel as isolated. In particular, students can focus on being more supportive of each other by fostering an inclusive environment. This can happen through actions such as: (1) reaching out to new students and helping them get acquainted to the school system, (2) interacting with students from other social circles during lunch, and (3) joining clubs and extracurriculars with the particular goal of meeting students of other backgrounds. Such behaviours can greatly mitigate the social and academic segregation that occurs at many schools. Most importantly, students need to genuinely be interested in learning from and about students with identities that differ from their own.

5.2.2 for teachers

Teachers, like students, are often limited in what they can do on a systematic level by school policies and procedures. However, there are several changes they can implement that will better enable them to tackle linguistic injustices. As noted in Section 4.3, teachers need to learn to be comfortable having difficult conversations on language and race. In order to do this, teachers need to become better informed of these topics, especially if they do not have personal experience with linguistic or racial discrimination. A good way of doing this is by reading up on topics like racial equity and language accessibility. Furthermore, teachers should think critically
about their own identities and how this impacts their teaching styles and behaviours. Lastly, teachers should seriously consider their diverse students’ best interests when it comes to diversifying curricula. These measures, while just a start, would go a long way toward making teachers more knowledgeable about the relationships between language, race, and power, as well as how these impact their students.

5.2.3 for school administrators

School administrators, unlike the other groups, are able to instigate school-wide policies that can significantly alter the structure of the school itself. Firstly, in order to support teachers, school administrators should provide time during already-scheduled faculty trainings for teachers to specifically engage in knowledge sharing. This would help increase the school’s institutional knowledge, but also allow for the transferring of valuable tips and advice regarding alternative teaching styles, relevant articles, and other useful topics. Secondly, school administrators should expand the EQ retreat so that it is available to all students and teachers, and so that it is continued throughout the school year. Some potential ways to do this are: (1) instead of a three-day event, making EQ a weekly activity or check in during a home room period or elective class or (2) allotting a few hours at the end of every month for a mini EQ retreat after the main event. In addition, the EQ retreat should focus more explicitly on topics such as language and race, in addition to emotional support in general. Though there are many other steps that schools and school administrators can take to make places of learning more equitable, these two changes would be very helpful.
5.3 Limitations of Study & Avenues for Future Research

This study has yielded a plethora of findings that may be interesting to the academic community and several concrete recommendations that may be helpful to students, teachers, and school administrators, both at Land of Enchantment High and at other public schools. However, it is important to note the limitations of this study. Firstly, this study was constrained by many factors. Due to my limited resources, I was only able to focus on one high school of study. While this narrow scope allowed for a deep analysis of one particular high school in New Mexico, it also means that I was not able to compare the results against other high schools nearby. Furthermore, because the participants in this study were all volunteers and selected through word of mouth, the survey respondents and interviewees were not necessarily the ones with the most relevant or diverse perspectives. A greater sampling of students at Land of Enchantment High, which may include a larger proportion of students from Hispanic and indigenous backgrounds, would have resulted in more comprehensive data. A final factor to consider was that there was not enough time to do follow-up interviews with the students and teachers in order to get more accurate data. Simply put, additional data sources would have made this a more well-rounded project.

A second, related limitation of this study was the lack of interactional sociolinguistic data. Due to a combination of time constraints and scheduling conflicts, no real-world data samples—such as classroom observations—were analyzed. This would have added an interesting perspective to the study, because it would have given me insight into whether what the students and teachers were saying in their interviews was actually what was reflected in the classrooms. Originally, I had also hoped to collect more self-contained narratives as part of the student and
teacher interviews in order to get more insight into their personalities and unique opinions. However, most of the interviewees tended to give their answers in a direct manner, typical of a more formal interview format. As a result, I was not able to utilize a discourse analysis framework as I had planned.

In order to compensate for and address these limitations, I hope to conduct related research in this area in the future. There are several potential avenues for future research, including (1) holding peer groups with students and teachers at the high school of study, (2) doing classroom observations to acquire more interactional data, and (3) repeating this study at more schools. The first possibility—creating peer groups—would specifically focus on the third aspect of this study: considering school challenges and how language ideologies might exacerbate them. The second option would allow for a different perspective on this research, which may support or complicate the findings in this thesis. Lastly, the third potential expansion of this study would also lead to more data, either from similar schools in New Mexico to use as a comparison, or from schools in other areas of the United States to contrast the findings from this study. Though it is not feasible—or useful, for that matter—to do all of these, further analysis on the impact of dominant language ideologies and how they lead to student and teacher inaction is needed in some form.

This thesis has highlighted the many ways that dominant language ideologies impact students’ and teachers’ school experiences. As people become more engaged with issues of social justice, there has been a surge in discussions surrounding language rights and racial equity. This thesis is my attempt at contributing to this growing literature. At the very beginning of this paper, I included an epigraph with a quote from the novel *The Giver* by Lois Lowry: “Of course
they needed to care. It was the meaning of everything.” I believe this passage perfectly encapsulates my concluding thoughts in wrapping up this thesis. While the study findings reveal that there is a long way to go in addressing linguistic injustices, they have also shown me that there is progress being made. There are people—students and teachers—who care. They care about the inequalities of the school system, even while at the same time playing a role in contributing to them. And while this caring is not enough to dismantle language and racial ideologies, it is a firm step forward. This, above all, gives me hope.
APPENDIX A — Transcription Conventions

Adapted from Sullivan-Buker (2017)

slashes enclose uncertain transcription
hyphen indicates shortened word or adjustment
question mark indicates rising intonation
period indicates falling intonation
comma indicates a continuing intonation
dots indicate silence (more dots indicate longer silence)
colon indicates elongation of a vowel
italics indicate emphasis
caps indicate great emphasis
brackets enclose descriptions of utterances (e.g. laughing, muttering, etc)
angled brackets enclose descriptions of the manner in which an utterance is spoken
square brackets indicate simultaneous talk
equal signs indicate latching
APPENDIX B — Interview Guiding Questions

Questionnaire for Student Interviews

1. Demographic Data
   a. Year in school?
   b. Years lived in Taos?
   c. Race/ethnicity/socioeconomic status?
   d. Languages spoken?
   e. Dominant language?

2. Indirect/Open Questions
   a. Describe a typical day at school, from arriving to the building to leaving.
   b. What is the most surprising thing that has happened during a class?
   c. What has been your favourite moment at high school so far?
   d. What is your favourite/least favourite class and why?
   e. What are your goals after graduating? How did you come up with these?
   f. Describe an assignment or class project that was particularly meaningful to you.

3. Language-Specific Questions
   a. Do you think having knowledge of a second language is useful? Why? Which ones?
   b. Do you think that being a speaker of a language other than English creates academic challenges? If so, what kind? How do you deal with these challenges?
   c. Can you think of a specific episode, something that happened in class, that highlights a challenge you have or someone else faced due to your language background?
   d. Do you often interact with classmates in a language other than English? How often? In what contexts?
   e. How do teachers react to the use of other languages in school? Can you give an example?
   f. Do you often use your home language at school? If not, why not? What is different about the way you talk at school?
Questionnaire for Teacher Interviews

4. Demographic Data
   a. How long have you been a teacher, both at school of study and overall?
   b. Subject(s) taught?
   c. Years lived in Taos?
   d. Race/ethnicity/socioeconomic status?
   e. Languages spoken?
   f. Dominant language?

5. Indirect/Open Questions
   a. Describe a typical day at school, from arriving to the building to leaving.
   b. What is the most surprising thing that has happened during a class?
   c. What are the most rewarding/least rewarding aspects of teaching and why?
   d. Why did you decide to become a teacher in the first place?
   e. Do you often change or update your curriculum from year to year? How?
   f. What are your professional goals? How does teaching relate to these?

6. Language-Specific Questions
   a. Do you think having knowledge of a second language is useful? Why? Which ones?
   b. Do you think that being a speaker of a language other than English creates academic challenges? If so, what kind? How do you deal with these challenges?
   c. Can you think of a specific episode, something that happened in class, that highlights a problem faced due to linguistic issues?
   d. Do you often interact with coworkers in a language other than English? How often? In what contexts?
   e. Are there students in your classes whose first language is not English? If so, how many/which ones/how proficient in English are they?
   f. Are languages other than English used in your classes (ie, students home languages)? If so, when? How does this affect the academic environment?
   g. Are there divisions in class due to differences in languages spoken by students? If so, how do you deal with them?
APPENDIX C — Demographic Survey Questions

Student Demographic Information
1. How long have you lived in Taos? (as a whole number, in years)
2. What year in school are you?
3. How many languages are you familiar with (have at least a conversational ability in)?
   Which ones?
4. What is your dominant language (the one you speak at home, the one you speak most)?
5. What is your self described race (please check all that apply)?
   a. White
   b. Black/African American
   c. Asian
   d. American Indian/Alaska Native,
   e. Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
   f. Other
6. What is your self described ethnicity?
   a. Hispanic or Latino
   b. Not Hispanic or Latino
7. What is your self described socioeconomic status?
   a. Working Class
   b. Lower Middle Class
   c. Middle Class
   d. Upper Middle Class
   e. Upper Class
8. Are there any other aspects of your identity that you would like to share? If so, please check all that apply. Remember that your answers are completely anonymous.
   a. I am an immigrant and/or refugee
   b. I am/was adopted
   c. I have a disability
   d. I consider myself a minority (in terms of race, sexual orientation, gender, or other aspect)
   e. I am from a single-parent household
   f. My parents did not go to college
   g. None
   h. Other (please provide details)

Questions for Students
1. Please rate, on a scale of 1-5, how likely you are to agree with the following statements.
   a. I enjoy high school
   b. I have a lot of friends at high school
   c. I have a lot of friends at high school who have backgrounds different than mine
   d. I am exposed to a lot of different perspectives (political, social, etc) at high school
2. Please rate, on a scale of 1-5, how likely you are to agree with the following statements.
   a. The student population at my high school is diverse
   b. My teachers are a diverse group of people
c. The material I learn in class comes from a diverse group of regions (Africa, Asia, Latin America, etc)
d. The material I learn in class comes from a diverse group of people (minorities, immigrants, LGBTQ, etc)
e. I think it is important for teachers to use material from a diverse group of regions/people when possible

3. Please rate, on a scale of 1-5, how likely you are to agree with the following statements.
   a. I speak a language that is NOT English in a FOREIGN LANGUAGE class
   b. I speak a language that is NOT English at school OUTSIDE of language classes
   c. I speak multiple dialects (types, i.e.slang) of English at school
   d. I have heard other students speak a language that is NOT English at school in a FOREIGN LANGUAGE class
   e. I have heard other students speak a language that is NOT English at school OUTSIDE of language classes
   f. I have heard other students speak multiple dialects (types, i.e.slang) of English at school
   g. I have heard teachers speak a language that is NOT English at school in a FOREIGN LANGUAGE class
   h. I have heard teachers speak a language that is NOT English at school OUTSIDE of language classes
   a. I have heard teachers speak multiple dialects (types, i.e. slang) of English at school

Teacher Demographic Information
1. How long have you lived in Taos? (as a whole number, in years)
2. How long have you worked at Taos High School? (as a whole number, in years)
3. What subject(s) do you teach at Taos High School?
4. How many languages are you familiar with (have at least a conversational ability in)? Which ones?
5. What is your dominant language (the one you speak at home, the one you speak most)?
6. What is your self described race (please check all that apply)?
   a. White
   b. Black/African American
   c. Asian
   d. American Indian/Alaska Native,
   e. Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
   f. Other
7. What is your self described ethnicity?
   a. Hispanic or Latino
   b. Not Hispanic or Latino
8. What is your self described socioeconomic status?
   a. Working Class
   b. Lower Middle Class
   c. Middle Class
   d. Upper Middle Class
9. Are there any other aspects of your identity that you would like to share? If so, please check all that apply. Remember that your answers are completely anonymous.
   a. I am an immigrant and/or refugee
   b. I am/was adopted
   c. I have a disability
   d. I consider myself a minority (in terms of race, sexual orientation, gender, or other aspect)
   e. I am from a single-parent household
   f. My parents did not go to college
   g. None
   h. Other (please provide details)

Questions for Teachers
1. Please rate, on a scale of 1-5, how likely you are to agree with the following statements.
   a. I enjoy teaching
   b. I often interact with my co-workers
   c. I often interact with co-workers who have backgrounds different than mine
   d. I am exposed to a lot of different perspectives (political, social, etc) at high school
2. Please rate, on a scale of 1-5, how likely you are to agree with the following statements.
   a. The student population at high school is diverse
   b. My co-workers are a diverse group of people
   c. The material I teach in class comes from a diverse group of regions (Africa, Asia, Latin America, etc)
   d. The material I teach in class comes from a diverse group of people (minorities, immigrants, LGBTQ, etc)
   e. I think it is important for teachers to use material from a diverse group of regions/people when possible
3. Please rate, on a scale of 1-5, how likely you are to agree with the following statements.
   a. I speak a language that is NOT English in a FOREIGN LANGUAGE class
   b. I speak a language that is NOT English at school OUTSIDE of language classes
   c. I speak multiple dialects (types, i.e. slang) of English at school
   d. I have heard students speak a language that is NOT English at school in a FOREIGN LANGUAGE class
   e. I have heard students speak a language that is NOT English at school OUTSIDE of language classes
   f. I have heard students speak multiple dialects (types, i.e. slang) of English at school
   g. I have heard other teachers speak a language that is NOT English at school in a FOREIGN LANGUAGE class
   h. I have heard other teachers speak a language that is NOT English at school OUTSIDE of language classes
   i. I have heard other teachers speak multiple dialects (types, i.e. slang) of English at school
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