

UNITY VS. PLURALITY: AN INVESTIGATION OF TENSIONS AND PARADOXES
IN EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND PRACTICE

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation presents three manuscripts that examine how present unity policies in education conflict with an increasingly pluralistic student population. Using a nuanced theoretical grounding and multifaceted research methodology, I deconstruct this tension to uncover a paradox in educational policymaking and practice, wherein policies and structures that claim to create ‘equality’ essentially lead to inequitable outcomes. Two empirical examples from Arizona schools illustrate the challenges of multicultural education amidst demands for unity; the first paper draws on a study of the enactment of Arizona’s language policy within one low-performing high school with a high population of multilingual and immigrant students, and illustrates how the policy restricts both educators and students. The second study examines the leadership and curricular structures in a high-performing school with shifting demographics, and how those structures lead to misrecognition of culturally diverse students. In response to the challenges posed in the two empirical pieces, I present a paper in which I draw from both studies to illustrate the unity/plurality paradox in education, and then present an educational response to the challenges of that paradox in an increasingly global world, which focuses on forming a new, reflective approach to understanding policy and curriculum beyond normative binaries.

INTRODUCTION

Recent policy changes (e.g., increasingly national curriculum standards, evaluation, privatization) and societal changes (e.g., globalization) have illuminated complex changes for schools; these changes include neoliberal values, which entail free market competition among schools with parents as customers and individual students/subjects as human capital (Apple, 2005; Lipman, 2011). At the same time, increasingly dominant neoconservative groups reject differences in their desire to uphold a romanticized ideal of education based on institutionalized morality and stable uniformity (Apple, 2005). Regardless of circulating neoliberal and neoconservative discourses, U. S. student demographics do not reflect uniformity: Latino/a populations are increasing considerably, and many countries have experienced changing migration/immigration patterns. The population of immigrants in the U.S. has risen dramatically over the past generation; immigrant children and children of immigrants exceed 30 million and are, by far, the fastest growing component of America's youth population (Portes & Fernández-Kelly, 2008). Impacts of these global populations flows, along with neoliberal and neoconservative policies, are visible in schools across the U.S.

Concurrent with these internal and external shifts in education, the policy and institutional environments around schooling have become increasingly restrictive and volatile. Apple (2005) described this shift when he argued that a *conservative modernization* is taking place within education; conservative modernization is the reintegration of education into an economic agenda while legitimizing knowledge for the ideal type of learning that must take place within schools. Conservative modernization has led to school accountability regimes centered on high-stakes testing, the

marketization of schooling, and curricular mandates (Gulson & Pedroni, 2011), most notable in policies such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB; 2001) and Race to the Top (2009). Today's increasingly centralized results-driven curricula and competitive school structures conflict with increasingly multicultural student populations. In other words, conservative modernization creates a trend toward unity policies (i.e., policies that favor neoliberal values for free market competition and promote neoconservative ideals of stable uniformity) in education, while student demographics trend toward more and more plurality. Furthermore, unity and plurality come into contention as today's so-called democratic policies are created and enacted.

The unity/plurality tension within educational policy problematizes democracy as a foundation for policy creation/implementation (Apple, 2013; Ball, Maguire, & Braun, 2012, 1999; Miller, 1999; Pharr, 2013). The premise of democracy is that through representation, people can achieve equitable status in society; however this assumption negates ruptures in equity that result from many unity policies (Patel, 2016). While educational policies, specifically those related to 'leveling the playing field', are assumed to resolve inequities in society, educational, economic, and racial stratification persist, and this stratification is highly evident in our increasingly pluralistic schools (Kozol, 1991; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Patel, 2016; Wright, 2005; Wiley, 2002). These educational policies are *unitary* in that they ignore the particularities of student backgrounds, thus assuming that schools and communities are steady, closed environments wherein neoliberal principles such as competition and meritocracy are inherently democratic structures (Patel, 2013). Moreover, a critical tension between unity/plurality is played out in schools, thus causing a critical tension between policy

creation and policy enactment (i.e., between policy and practice). The results of this unity/plurality conflict are notable, as they tend to systematically neglect students' needs, thus leading to the misrecognition of multicultural student populations. This dissertation examines educational paradoxes and tensions between unity/plurality and policy/practice that are emerging from recent globalization, related neoliberal policies, and increasing multiculturalism. In order to accomplish this, I take on a newer, less normative view of educational policy and practice research, as most extant approaches have not fully encapsulated the interactions and effects of the milieus that encompass policy and practice.

Some educational scholars have examined the experiences of educators and multicultural students on a micro-level in various educational contexts (e.g., Alcaraz, 2011; Lillie, Markos, Arias, & Wiley, 2012; López, 2010; Marschall, Rigby, & Jenkins, 2011; Helmer, 2013; Koyama & Bartlett, 2011; Portes & Fernández-Kelly, 2008; Ríos-Aguilar, González Cache, & Moll, 2012; Smardon, 2008), yet research that connects these interactions with macrostructures (policy itself) is sparse, though albeit a growing field (e.g., Johnson & Freeman, 2010; Menken & Garcia, 2010; Sutton & Levinson, 2001). Further, much of the research on policy and practice has been either descriptive of actions and results (e.g., achievement, language acquisition, student experiences), or critical in nature, promoting more radical changes (based on social justice tenets) in policy and practice. Scant research exists that examines the real-life processes associated with policy enactment in education (Menken & Garcia, 2010), thus perpetuating top-down (or normative, cause-and-effect) perspectives of policy and practice, which tend to undermine human agency (Johnson & Freeman, 2010). Educational actors respond to

policies (and structures) in various ways, and these responses determine the means by which such policies (and curricula) are executed at the school-level. Hence, the consequences of policies depend upon the interpretations and resultant actions of key actors.

As I assert that policy is an object that is shaped by interpretations and interactions, it is necessary to explore the minutiae of social structures and interactions through a multifaceted theoretical grounding. Henceforth, this study draws from various poststructuralist philosophers/sociologists' (e.g., Bourdieu, 1986; Foucault, 1976; Mead, 1934) tenets, which describe social structures as predicated on interactions, discourses, and interpretations. I posit that an essential connection between these theories and educational policy research is underexplored. Educational policies are depicted in text, and educators interpret those texts and then deliver leadership/curriculum to students and other educators who, then, interpret those actions and translate them into other actions (practice, structures, resistance, acquiescence, etc.).

Within Arizona, the increased multicultural, immigrant, and refugee population inspires political (e.g., neo-nationalist) discourse around addressing shifting demographics. Concurrently, a unity/plurality-policy/practice tension heavily dominates the state's educational institutions, most notable in Arizona's recent ranking in the bottom tier of U.S. in quality of public education¹. Since policy is generated by policy actors (i.e., educators, students), it is imperative that educational research examines the processes that take place within the conduit that connects policy to practice and vice

¹ E.g., CNBC (<http://www.cnbc.com/id/100824779>), *Education Week's* "State of the States" 2012 (<http://www.edweek.org/ew/qc/2012/16src.h31.html?intc=EW-QC12-LFTNAV> and also <http://cronkitenewsonline.com/2012/01/arizona-schools-finish-near-bottom-in-national-ranking/>)

versa. At the same time, this multilayered view of policy and practice is critical within today's increasingly multicultural and increasingly (neo)conservative schooling context. The purpose of this dissertation is to analyze this contemporary political and curricular paradox in the wake of today's shifting sociocultural and sociopolitical contexts, and to illustrate how this paradox creates and perpetuates educational and social consequences for educators and underrepresented students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Educational Practice Amidst Policy and Demographic Shifts

Many scholars have examined tensions surrounding unity policies and increasing student plurality. Empirical (and some theoretical) literature, though, has tended to be descriptive and oftentimes normative in arguments for positivistic approaches and “best practices” for teaching and leadership (e.g., Edmonds, 1979; Heck, 1992; López, 2010; Slavin, Madden, Calderón, Chamberlain, & Hennesy, 2011), culturally responsive pedagogy/curricula/leadership (e.g., Johnson, 2007; Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992; Nelson & Guerra, 2014; Yosso, 2005), or more radical, critical theories and approaches (e.g., Apple, 2005, 2013; Gándara & Gómez, 2009; Freire, 1970; Miller, 1999; Paris, 2012; Portes & Fernández-Kelly, 2008). In essence, much of the past research and literature on educational policy, practice (i.e., curriculum, pedagogy, leadership), and multiculturalism tend to neglect the micro-macro connection that I previously discussed. In this review of literature I discuss empirical and theoretical works that have remained more or less normative, in that they are either purely descriptive or purely critical in nature, and then describe some scholarship that has begun to break down the tensions, thus eliciting the theoretical grounding for this study.

Descriptive Views of Policy, Practice, and Leadership

Policy and leadership. Previous research has looked at the effects of educational policy structures as an empirical phenomenon; in other words, policy has been described as a cause of certain structures and results within schools. For example, Ylimaki (2012) discussed how the neoliberal shift in educational policy has led to more competitive, business-like structures within schools, as well as a restoration of conservative

ideologies, which led to the implementation of standardized curricula, high standards, discipline, accountability, and competition. In her analysis of political speeches about education, Lambert (2007) found that political discourse around education creates “a new public-sector professionalism based on neo-liberal values and the new managerial skills required by contemporary capitalism” (p. 150), and this incursion of capitalist values on education creates a relationship of fair exchange between the government and education workers. Ylimaki (2012) also described how recent unity policies, such as Race to the Top (2009), permeate school discourses and structures today, as it emphasizes neoliberal values of competition in both the policy’s wording as well as its implementation. She posited that when school leaders communicate current policy requirements that stress the attainment of high performance labels, “they can unwittingly circulate a particular set of discourses associated with the conservative restoration in their schools” (p. 306). Hence, school leaders must work diligently to foster student achievement in order to attain labels that categorize their schools as successful and, therefore, desirable. These scholars concluded that the “conservative restoration” (Ylimaki, 2012) of schools beneath unity policy structures has created school leadership structures that mirror past, rationalist approaches to school leadership and practice. In essence, ‘color-blind’, closed-systems perspectives predominate, like those outlined by functionalists such as Edmonds (1979) and Heck (1992).

Edmonds (1979) argued that schools can be effective at teaching all children regardless of their socioeconomic status (SES) and other student characteristics, based on his seminal cross-sectional survey of high-performing schools located in low SES contexts. He further concluded that the internal school culture and climate ultimately

affect student learning. Heck's (1992) study of teachers and principals within high achieving, low SES elementary schools in California yielded results supporting Edmonds's conclusions; he found that effective principals understood and acted upon their responsibilities to manipulate school variables and cause reform from within. These researchers conceived of an effective leader as an *instructional leader*: somebody who controls the direction of the school regardless of the school's environmental circumstances.

However, as Reitzug and Peck (2011) described, this 'instructional leadership' line of thinking "essentializes" the effects of the environment on students' individual needs, as they argued that by precluding environmental influences, schools function like businesses (in the way described by Ylimaki). Within this business-like model, the principal is placed in an "iconic position as the individual fundamentally responsible for school success or failure" (p. 17), yet lack of attention to students and heavy attention on instructional leaders shows a critical oversight of the students (the core of the institution). Essentially, the conservative restoration of schools beneath neoliberal mandates and ideologies has created structures that systematically misrecognize increasingly multicultural student populations. Some scholars have suggested multicultural leadership and pedagogical practices to mitigate such misrecognition.

Multiculturalism, multilingualism, and educational practice. A major area of debate around the education of multicultural students has related to best practices with English Learners (ELs). For instance, mixed methods studies of the efficacy of language acquisition models have attempted to prove one model's success over the other in enhancing student achievement. Slavin et al. (2011) examined the effects of bilingual

programs and English immersion programs on Spanish and English reading achievement scores for Hispanic ELs, and they found that students in both programs scored similarly in English and Spanish reading skills. From these data, the authors concluded that language of instruction for Hispanic ELs does not affect reading in either Spanish or English; rather, quality of instruction affects reading achievement. Nevertheless, this study failed to provide significant support for their arguments, and it also failed to encompass the processes taking place at the school level that led to their results.

Given the lack of significant results related to student achievement, as well as the high rate of school failure and dropout among ELs (Martínez-Wenzl, Perez, & Gándara, 2012; Theoharis & O'Toole, 2011), López (2010) investigated the effects of two state-mandated language acquisition programs (Arizona's English Immersion and Texas's Bilingual) on Hispanic ELs' perceptions of scholastic competence, motivation, and acculturative stress. Her cross-sectional study showed that the Texas participants showed moderately higher levels of scholastic competence while the Arizona participants showed moderately higher levels of acculturative stress, perceived discrimination, and adaptive motivation. López concluded that language acquisition models needed to incorporate students' native languages and cultures in order to improve students' self-concept, motivation, and then decrease stress.

The above views of best practices for ELs have expanded into the leadership realm, in which some (albeit slightly) critically oriented scholars have argued for social justice and culturally responsive leadership practices to address increasingly pluralistic student populations. Theoharis and O'Toole (2011) asserted that multicultural students have been "marginalized with respect to the curriculum, the achievement of the

curriculum, and their social standing within public schools in the United States” (p. 648), thus inciting their argument that school leaders must advocate for the needs of marginalized (i.e., minority) students within their schools and communities. These scholars contended that truly just educational results and practices for multicultural and multilingual student communities are achieved through the implementation of inclusive leadership practices, which requires making students’ languages and cultures central and integral aspects of the school community. The authors also suggested culturally responsive curricula must be designed locally to reflect the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the learners; this suggestion emphasizes previous arguments related to incorporating students’ backgrounds into educational practices.

Tara Yosso (2005) illuminated the need to incorporate the *cultural community wealth* (the various skills, abilities, knowledge, and contacts possessed by Students of Color) that multicultural students bring to classrooms. She argued that the cultures of Students of Color could nurture and empower them in school, and this view is supported by Moll, Amanti, Neff, and González (1992) who claimed that, “by capitalizing on...community resources, we can organize classroom instruction that far exceeds in quality...[minority] children commonly encounter in schools” (p. 132). Moll and colleagues’ (1992) concept *funds of knowledge*, which refers to the historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge student possess, undergirds Yosso’s conclusion. The incorporation of cultural wealth/funds of knowledge in curriculum and pedagogy is emphasized in recent literature on culturally responsive leadership and pedagogy.

Nelson and Guerra (2014) described culturally responsive educators as those who express pluralistic beliefs, demonstrate a high degree of knowledge about culture, and provide a number of culturally responsive or additive solutions to day-to-day situations. The authors described culturally responsive, or additive practices as those that advocate the use of students' and parents' funds of knowledge, which oppose subtractive practices—subtractive practices relate to unity policy discourses, in that they suggest diverse students and parents should assimilate to the culture of the school (Nelson & Guerra, 2014). The researchers' conclusions arose from their study of educators' beliefs on diverse students and families, in which data showed that the majority of educators had a general awareness of culture, yet expressed deficit beliefs about diverse students and families. From these findings, the authors argued that preparation and professional development courses must encompass cultural consciousness work, which takes educators beyond a basic awareness of culture “to a place where deficit beliefs and practices can be explored, challenged, and changed” by critically assessing “her or his own beliefs about diversity, cultural knowledge, and commitment to equity and then obtain the necessary knowledge and skills to facilitate” the transformation of their pluralistic schools (pp. 90-91).

Johnson (2007) defined culturally responsive *leadership* similarly to the above authors, though she included the leaders' responsibility to support academic achievement, empower parents, and act as social activists who advocate for social change. In her case study of three principals enacting the researcher's definition of culturally responsive leadership, she concluded that leaders must work to create trusting environments in their schools where parents and community members feel welcome and comfortable and hold

high expectations for student achievement. Like Nelson and Guerra (2014), and the aforementioned seminal scholarship on multicultural education (e.g., Moll et al., 1992), Johnson (2007) argued that leaders must incorporate students' and parents' funds of knowledge in the day-to-day curriculum of their schools. She suggested that district officials should support principals in creating a context conducive to culturally responsive leadership, and this support involves "guidance about how they might implement a multicultural curriculum which maintains high standards for student achievement but does not produce a narrow and standardized curriculum" (p. 55). In other words, culturally responsive leadership also entails some components of instructional leadership (Edmonds, 1979) amidst multicultural education foundations (e.g., funds of knowledge).

Although scholarship on multiculturalism and multilingualism in today's schools has (more or less) opposed positivistic/functionalist views of educational practice, it maintains normativity in seeing educational practices alone as the source of change, thus remaining in a cause-and-effect paradigm. In addition, the macro-micro interaction of policy and practice is missing in the aforementioned multicultural approaches. Critical scholars have examined these connections and suggested radical perspectives and actions to policy and practice (and research) as means to militate against neoliberal policy regimes.

Critical Approaches to Policy and Practice

Critical policy perspectives. Critical policy theorists and scholars have argued that educational policy is fraught with ideology, conflict, and even xenophobia. For instance, Wiley (2002) described how certain political actions (on school, local, and

federal levels) have undermined cultural and linguistic pluralism in favor of a neoconservative, stable uniformity (Apple, 2005). The key implication here is how restrictive educational policies create structures that marginalize language and ethnic minority students, thus leading to further stratification and, hence, these students ending up left behind. Wilson (2011) referred to such “colorblind” unity policies as examples of ‘laissez faire racism’ as they mirror the fallacious “post-racial” mindset by using language that transcends race. Miller (1999) described an institutional commitment, or ethos, to stable uniformity and the needs of the dominant group. As such, policymakers lack what Miller (1999) called a “robust sense of social justice” (p. 260); instead, they are moved by a normative, institutionalized idea of what schools and communities look like, and should continue to look like in service of the dominant ‘majority’ (Anglo, middle class). Miller (1999) argued that “The real challenge of multiculturalism...[is] that it makes it harder for people to see themselves as members of an inclusive community” (p. 263), which cogently summarizes the unity/plurality tension, especially in Arizona: The more multicultural the state becomes, the more policies push against racial/cultural difference, and the less inclusive the state becomes.

Many critical scholars have empirically and theoretically shown the deleterious effects of Arizona’s policies (notably the state’s language policy) within schools. Wiley (2002) conveyed how the history of language policy has coincided with anti-immigration sentiments, and Marschall, et al. (2011) concurred that language policies such as Arizona’s seek to “isolate, alienate, and stigmatize immigrants and their children” (p. 590). Portes and Fernández-Kelly (2008) conveyed the negative consequences of policymakers’ assimilationist goals in their study on the segmented assimilation of

immigrant children, and that a hostile reception by some educators and the public oftentimes results from structural racism in which immigrant students are placed on the margins and fall victim to assimilation discourses and lack of understanding (and prejudice) from the rest of the school community.

Wiley (2002) also argued that assimilationist sentiments were enacted in policies that upheld English as an official language, thus identifying non-English speaking as deficient. He argued that these political actions were rooted in motivations to impose an official English language and to restrict native languages in schools, thus resulting in the general level of *hostility* of the dominant group towards various language minority groups. Combs and Nicholas (2011) acknowledged that a “phenomenon of unintended consequences” is taking place, and described Arizona’s recent educational policies as “coercive” as they seek to control the student population amidst state demographic shifts. The authors’ description here relates to the policymakers’ reactionary responses to an increasing Spanish-speaking (i.e., Mexican immigrant) population—yet the unintended consequences extend to Native American and non-Mexican immigrant students (e.g., refugees). Fitsimmons-Doolan (2009) also noted tensions between pluralist (promoting multilingualism) and assimilationist (promoting monolingualism) discussions of Arizona’s language policy, especially in the midst of the state’s contested immigration policy and the banning of Tucson Unified School District’s Mexican American Studies program. She analyzed Arizona newspaper discourse on the topics of language and immigration policies in order to lend empirical support to claims that discourses of language policy influence public perceptions about immigration.

Paris (2012) identified English-only policies as examples of how policymakers are not interested in sustaining the languages and cultures of longstanding and newcomer communities of color, as such policies reinforce normative and hostile climates for immigrants and communities of color: “This climate, and the policies and teaching practices resulting from it, has the quite explicit goal of creating a monocultural and monolingual society based on White, middle-class norms of language and cultural being” (p. 95). His position aligns with Gándara and Gómez’s (2009) discussion of monolingual discourse as linguistic hegemony, which is firmly rooted in an ideology that the use of any language aside from English threatens American nationhood. The authors declared that linguistic hegemony has become more pronounced as the population of immigrants has increased, as have Gándara and Orfield (2012), who stated that this linguistic hegemony “reached the pinnacle” (p. 9) in Arizona with its series of anti-immigrant and highly restrictive language policies. Michael Apple (2013), a radical structuralist, suggested collective action as the key to emancipating marginalized students from the binds of such neoliberal, unity policies.

Critical approaches to educational practice. Critical educational theorists (e.g., Apple, 2004, 2005, 2013; Freire, 1970; Leonardo, 2007) have seen schools as the source for emancipation, arguing that schools should operate in a distinct role apart from society to prepare individuals to transform existing society and social values. Zeus Leonardo (2007) claimed that amidst current educational reforms that are “driven by a white logic” (i.e., colorblind, or unity policies), “there is no hope for schools” (p. 273). Thus, he asserted that local or smaller-scale reforms can take place, which require a “radical shift” (p. 273) in perspectives on race. This radical shift requires reconceptualizing whiteness

along the lines of Freire's (1970) critical consciousness, which cultivates the awareness of oppression by both the oppressed and the oppressors (in Leonardo's view, the White, American hegemonic powers at various institutional levels). He also proposed some collective action around opposing colorblind (unity), oppressive national policies (e.g., NCLB) by protesting their implementation within schools. This collective consciousness (Freire, 1970) and action is echoed and emphasized by radical structuralists, such as Apple (2013).

Michael Apple (2013) also saw schools as the epicenter for the transformation of society, and recognized the oppression that takes place in the name of upholding institutionalized neoconservative and neoliberal ideologies within schools. In order to combat these hegemonic structures, he took on a more radical stance in arguing that all educational actors must organize movements that not only critically examine oppressive forces in education, but also conquer them through collective action. Apple (2013) called for "radical democratic egalitarianism" in which barriers that limit individual freedom and collectively empowered democracy are removed. Like Gramsci's (1971) *catharsis* for social action, this emancipatory context "is guided by a critical impulse, one that seeks to challenge the social, economic, and cultural policies and practices that generate inequalities in the material and social conditions of...people's lives" (Apple, 2013, p. 151). Hence, educators must work as activists to overcome and even overthrow oppressive institutionalized policies and practices.

The above critical approaches to studying policy and practice and/or unity/plurality tensions are valuable and staggering; however, they tend to reify a top-down perspective of policy thus underestimating human agency (Johnson & Freeman,

2010) and the dynamic, interactive, and real-life processes associated with policy enactment (Menken & García, 2010). As Johnson and Johnson (2015) explicated, critical approaches alone tend to underestimate the power of policy agents who “interpret and appropriate [policies]” thus ignoring “policy processes that play out in communities and schools” (p. 94). Therefore, as these authors assert, a balance between a critical focus on educational policy power and understanding the power held by policy agents (i.e., educational actors) must be met. In other words, the macro-micro connection has been scant in extant literature, as “research has tended to fall short of fully accounting for precisely how microlevel interaction relates to the macrolevels of social organization” (Johnson & Freeman, 2010, p. 15). Nonetheless, some scholars (e.g., Johnson & Freeman, 2010; Johnson & Johnson, 2015; Menken & García, 2010) have begun to make these connections in studying policy enactment through multifaceted theoretical groundings and empirical approaches.

Understanding Macro/Micro Tensions between Policies and Realities

Johnson and Johnson (2015) answered the call to making macro-micro connections in their research on the appropriation of state language policies within Arizona and Washington school districts; specifically, they investigated how different types of policy appropriation impact educators’ and students’ perceptions and experiences. The researchers used ethnographic research in demographically similar school districts in both states and compared the voices of students and faculty; they demonstrated that these juxtaposed voices showed how language policy appropriation contrasts with predictions and assumptions based in the policies alone. Johnson and Freeman (2010) also made the micro-macro connection in their ethnographic and

discourse analytic research in a linguistically/culturally diverse Philadelphia school district. The researchers saw educators as key players in multilayered and dynamic language policy enactment, predicated on the idea that policy is not a static thing, but rather a process under constant negotiation and reconstruction. Based on Ball's (1991) concept of policy as discourse, they took on an "action-oriented approach to language policy" (p. 15): they examined how educational actors, as policy agents, resisted and negotiated district language policies in their classrooms.

Other scholars have examined multiculturalism and policy as linguistic phenomena, thus conveying the human agency involved in policy enactment. Sutton and Levinson (2001) presented a collection of case studies that analyzed the sociocultural articulations of education policies as curriculum. This collection contained the following key studies: Murtadha-Watts's research examined African American women leaders navigating and negotiating accountability policies, Mantilla's study investigated teacher perceptions of and participation in school reforms in Guatemala, and Quiroz's investigation illustrated bilingual math and science teachers' shaping of policies through their practices. These studies illustrated *how* educators (as policy actors) shape their practices (actions), and *how* those actions are generated (through interpretations, perceptions, experiences).

Educational policy, especially amidst today's increasingly neoliberal political context, is a multilayered phenomenon; thus in order to fully understand how policy works we must understand its many levels and layers (Ball, Maguire, & Braun, 2013; Johnson & Johnson, 2015). For instance, Ricento and Hornberger (1996) compared policy and curriculum/practice to an onion: that they contain multiple layers, and that by

slicing through the onion the various layers of policy actors' perceptions and agency come to light (Hornberger & Johnson, 2007). From this view, the multiple layers of the onion are characterized as processes: creation, interpretation, and appropriation (Johnson, 2009); therefore, what I call policy *enactment* occurs across all levels. Johnson and Johnson (2015) called for scholarship that looks at how language policies are “put into action,” or “defined and applied by agents across subsequent levels” (p. 93) of the ‘onion’ in order to call attention to the social, political, and cultural influences that are implicated in policy enactment.

In sum, the connection between the study of educational policy, institutional structures, and school-level realities is not fully explored, and I intend to contribute to this burgeoning area of policy research in this paper. The research mentioned above that has begun to make the micro-macro connection utilized nuanced conceptual groundings in order fully understand the tensions between policies and school-level realities. Henceforth, in the following theoretical framework I follow suit in a discussion of sociological and philosophical concepts; this theoretical grounding will illustrate how I make the macro-micro connections in examining the paradoxical nature of unitary policies amidst increasing pluralism.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A Multifaceted Conceptual Grounding

As I am examining political and practical tensions in education, the primary concepts underlying this research derive from theories surrounding democracy (i.e., individualism, pluralism, unity, recognition), identity, structure, and agency. Hence, my research is grounded in the interplay of theorizing from multiple disciplines and fields: political philosophy, poststructuralist philosophy and sociological theories, and some curriculum/educational theories. While these theoretical perspectives have been widely used in educational research, few studies have incorporated these varying views into one conceptual framework. Since policy and practice are functions of structure and discourse, we must begin to analyze them by understanding key tenets from the aforementioned disciplines.

Democracy and Recognition

Political philosophers, such as Taylor (1994) and Fraser (1990, 2000) elucidated the unity/plurality tension in policy, and how this tension relates to political (or social) actors' interpretations and actions. Charles Taylor (1994) provides a cogent overview of the unity/plurality tension, thus setting up theories surrounding identity and recognition amidst such political paradoxes.

The politics of universalism vs. the politics of difference. According to Taylor (1994), the politics of universalism and the politics of difference, both with their own principles of equal respect, create a paradox within modern society. Proponents of the politics of universalism fought for forms of nondiscrimination that were quite "blind" to the ways in which citizens differ, and the politics of difference redefined

nondiscrimination in terms of distinctions and differential treatment (e.g., affirmative action policies). The politics of universalism emphasizes the equal dignity of all citizens through the equalization of rights and entitlements. In the second change toward the politics of difference, we are asked to recognize the unique identity of the individual or group and their distinctness from everyone else. The idea is that this distinctness has been ignored or assimilated to the dominant or majority identity, and this assimilation challenges authenticity.

Whereas proponents of the politics of universalism fought for forms of nondiscrimination that were quite ‘blind’ to the ways in which citizens differ, the politics of difference redefined nondiscrimination in terms of distinctions and differential treatment. These two modes of politics, both based on the notion of equal respect, come into conflict. For one, the principle of equal respect requires that we treat people in a difference-blind fashion; while for the other, we have to recognize and even foster particularity. Proponents of the politics of difference also argue that “blind” liberalism are themselves a reflection of particular, dominant cultures. Rather, in the politics of difference, the struggle for recognition can only find one solution: reciprocal recognition among equals in a society with a common purpose. The further demand we are looking at here is that we all *recognize* the equal value of different cultures; that we not only let them survive, but acknowledge their worth.

Recognition, dispossession, and identity politics. Recognition, according to theorists such as Rousseau and Hegel, is inextricably linked with identity. Accordingly, identity is not solely a monological phenomenon, but also a dialogic phenomenon as it arises through recognition of a significant other (Mead, 1934). Since identity is partly

shaped by recognition, misrecognition of a person or group can cause suffering, especially if the misrecognition takes the form of providing a demeaning picture of that person or group (Taylor, 1994). Within modern politics, the struggle between recognition and misrecognition materializes in a critical paradox: democracy calls for a unifying set of rules or standards for society, and these unifying laws (or policies) work to equalize all rights and entitlements, emphasizing the equal dignity of all citizens, yet the unifying set of principles comes into conflict with our increasingly multicultural society, as it is a set of 'blind liberalisms' that recognize a dominant culture and misrecognize others (i.e., minorities). Furthermore, as articulated by Ladson-Billings (1998):

This notion of equal opportunity was associated with the idea that students of color should have access to the same school opportunities, i.e. curriculum, instruction, funding, facilities as White students. This emphasis on 'sameness' was important because it helped boost the arguments for 'equal treatment under the law' that were important for moving [students of color] from their second-class status...[but] The race-neutral or colorblind perspective, evident in the way the curriculum presents people of color, presumes a homogenized 'we' in a celebration of diversity. (pp. 17-18)

Indeed, democracy in action has created policies predicated in 'equality,' but this notion of 'equality' is conflated with 'sameness,' thus converting diversity into something to either ignore or 'celebrate.' And so, the policies that seek to create equality in fact do the opposite in their systematic misrecognition of the identities of today's (and tomorrow's) society.

The misrecognition that results from the above unity/plurality tensions is a phenomenon of *dispossession*, which, according to Butler and Anthansiou (1989), entails the processes and ideologies by which persons are disowned and objectified by normative and normalizing powers that define cultural intelligibility and regulate the distribution of vulnerability. Simply put, being dispossessed involves an individual being viewed as “other” without a legitimized identity according to a society’s dominant norm. In order to obtain legitimacy, that individual must fully assimilate to the dominant, favored identity (or majority). Dispossession can be either overt (e.g., via slavery, violence, sectarian regimes) or covert (e.g., via neoliberal governmentality, liberal possessive individualism, precaritization). Many minority and immigrant students arrive in U.S. schools experiencing a form of overt dispossession, and unity policies exacerbate that dispossession covertly.

Davis (2004), in her theories on democracy in increasingly multicultural schools, warned that unity policies create de facto segregation because desired stable uniformity implicated in their meritocratic structures marginalize students who deviate from the legitimized ‘norm’. These ‘norms’ are legitimized within what Linville (2009) called *identity politics*, which enforce the types of identities that are acceptable and necessary for an individual’s survival within society. Thus, the accepted identity is rewarded and reinforced, which in turn reifies what types of identities are considered legitimate by society. Koyama and Bartlett (2011) supported this view when they stated that policies that favor universal, normative ideals convey a “drive for cultural uniformity,” which are outward “productions” that “veil xenophobic and linguistic discrimination directed at those who do not speak English as their native language” (p. 172). These “productions”

become institutionalized discourses that circulate through macro- and micro-level processes; so multicultural students may choose to mute their cultural, ethnic, or linguistic identity in order to gain the political rewards of assimilation. Poststructuralist sociological thought, then, explains how these discourses and interpretations become embedded in the identities of social actors and in the structures of institutions at the macro and micro levels of education and policy.

Identity, Structure, and Social Action

Bourdieu's *habitus* illustrates how unity policy discourses are enacted and implicated in the beliefs (practices, perspectives, actions) of institutions (i.e., schools) (Johnson & Johnson, 2015). Habitus is a pattern of perceptions formed through social structures, and provides schema from which members of social groups enact interpretations and practices. As such, "the habitus implies a 'sense of one's place' but also a 'sense of the other's place'" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 131) and provides a "world of common sense, a social world which seems self-evident" (p. 132). In other words, structures are so embedded in our minds through our constant exposure to shared perceptions (through interactions), that the social world the habitus provides us becomes normal and more or less taken for granted. According to Harker (1984), schools play a central role in reproducing taken-for-granted social and cultural structural inequalities from one generation to the next, which is a result of an embedded and perpetuated habitus.

Bourdieu's theories relate to Bastedo's (2009) explanation of *institutional logics*, which he described as the belief system(s) that predominate in an organizational field (in this case, school), and provide a framework for the policymaking process. Institutional

ideals function simultaneously as organizing principles so that the organizations (or schools) easily shape and reshape practices consistent with them (Bastedo, 2009). Oftentimes, these institutional logics are consistent with neoliberal/unitary ideals of cultural uniformity, individualism, and free market competition. Institutional logics, then, represent an archetype, which favors a particular ideology and, thus, particular organizational actions, because “an archetype is...the result of a process where advantaged individuals and groups have consolidated their political position and gained control over organizational resources” (p. 211). In other words, individuals/groups (in power, typically) make decisions based on archetypical, institutionalized ideologies that favor the perpetuation of unity structures. These institutional logics, then, gain legitimacy among organizational actors, and when this occurs, institutional logics are *convergent*. When institutional logics are convergent, policies become institutionalized at both the macro (political) and micro (school) levels.

The abovementioned sociological tenets are key to this study, as this research takes a dialectical look at culture, structure, and agency as mutually constitutive properties of social life (Mehan, 2012). In sum, as Mehan (2012) cogently explained, “relations between social structures and social actions are shaped by cultural processes, which include taken-for-granted beliefs, values, and understandings” (p. 7). These taken-for-granted structures, then, are reflected in policies in education (macro-level), as well as the processes that take place within schools (micro-level) (Blommaert, Collins, & Slembrouck, 2005). Thus arise key implications for examining policy: in recognizing that social structures are constituted in social actions and interactions, we can then observe the ways in which policy arises from the interactions of real people in concrete

social settings (Mehan, 2012). Thus, policy enactment is a byproduct as well as producer of habitus; for in everyday contexts (e.g., schools), social (educational) actors respond in a variety of ways to the structural and cultural features of school and society (Mehan, 2012). Moreover, policy enactment relates to human agency, which Foucault outlined in his theories on identity, structure, and circulating power.

Power and agency. According to Foucault (1976), while power is dispersed among all individuals, the legitimized and institutionalized ideals of who possess power create and perpetuate inequity. These power inequities become embedded as “truth,” which is produced and reproduced through discourse. Foucault (1976) further expounded on this phenomenon: “There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourse of truth...Power never ceases its interrogation, its inquisition, its registration of truth: it institutionalizes, professionalizes and rewards its pursuit” (p. 93). In other words, our society’s *functionality* depends upon fitting ourselves into the preexisting structures for what is ‘right’ and ‘true.’ The inequitable functions of these discourses are oftentimes hidden from our view, as social actors indifferently accept these norms. Foucault claimed that through dialogue we could become *conscious* of these ‘truths’, thus creating agency for creating new definitions of ‘truth’, which then carry power when they become embedded as institutional norms. This dialogue is reflective nature, and involves social actors (in this case, teachers, students, school leaders) to engage in what Ladson-Billings (1998) called “provocative thinking about the contradictions of U.S. ideals and lived realities” (p. 22).

The above sociologists, philosophers, and theorists emphasized the processes within and results of unity/plurality tensions, and even suggested potential ruptures

through reflective dialogue. Curriculum (and educational) theorists probe deeper into how the unity/plurality tension manifests in schooling processes, and provide well-defined accesses for tapping into human agency specifically within education.

Curriculum/Educational Theories

Modern curriculum theories. In order to illustrate how curriculum relates to agency, and how the unity/plurality tension has played out specifically within schools, we must highlight previous (classic/modern) curriculum theories as conceptual foundations for many current educational structures. Modern theoretical and philosophical perspectives on relationships among society, education, and the individual have informed classical and contemporary curriculum theorizing and leadership studies as disparate fields over time. Like the politics of universalism and the politics of difference (Taylor, 1994), the role of education (i.e., curriculum) has focused on similarly disparate, modernist perspectives: sociocultural reproduction and sociocultural transformation, both of which have inherent normativity problems.

The term sociocultural reproduction is used to refer to the processes (including curriculum) that reproduce the underlying structure of social relations and institutions (e.g., Cohen, 1968; Durkheim 1893/1997; Parsons, 1963). For instance, Durkheim's emphasis on values and cohesion set the tone for how present-day functionalists approach the study of education; functionalists tend to assume that consensus is the normal state in society and that conflict represents a breakdown of shared values. In a highly integrated, well-functioning society, schools socialize students into the appropriate values and sort and select students according to their abilities. In other words, education is subordinated to existing societal norms and values with more consideration for uniformity than

plurality. From this perspective, curriculum serves a preparatory function, preparing all students to become good citizens in existing society with its knowledge, values, and norms. This task is normative in character, meaning that through curriculum in the context of institutionalized schooling, children are socialized into existing norms and values. From a critical standpoint, the sociocultural reproduction is then an exercise of power, in that it emphasizes dominance and compliance to a prescribed norm.

Nonetheless, here curriculum is seen as a technological/rational problem, thus neglecting cultural plurality and schools' (including students' and educators') diverse needs and resources.

Social transformation theories critique the status quo and seek to explain, either through 'subjective' (e.g., Lukacs; Frankfurt School) or 'objective' (e.g., Marxist) ontologies, how radical change occurs in society. Some scholars emphasize the importance of developing individual consciousness to transcend the limitations of existing social arrangements (e.g., Leonardo, 2007), while others view sociocultural change almost inevitably involving a transformation of observable structures (oftentimes through revolutionary action) (e.g., Apple, 2013). In contrast to reproduction-oriented curriculum theories, sociocultural transformation-oriented theorists (e.g., Freire, 1970; McLaren, 1998) conceptualized curriculum as a revolutionary force with respect to societal practices. Here curriculum functions in a superordinate position to society with plans, content, and methods functioning to liberate citizens from existing, oppressive social norms and values. The role of education, then, is to develop something more socially just, teaching students to work toward an ideal that does not yet exist. Critical curriculum scholarship has gained popularity in recent decades through various

approached to critical pedagogy (e.g., Giroux, 1983; McLaren, 1998), critical views of ‘official knowledge’ (Apple, 2004), and Freire’s (1970) teachings aimed at developing critical consciousness. Regardless of ontological differences, the role of curriculum is to prepare children in idealized, more socially just norms and values that they will apply as citizens who transform society.

When applied to education, sociocultural transformation theorists argue that education is disconnected, ever superordinate, to society, while sociocultural reproduction theorists argue that education is subordinate to society. As such, these modernist views of curriculum and education are predicated on a predetermined set of *idealized* values to guide practice. In the critical disconnect from society inherent to both views, they discount human agency, thus leaving little room to rupture unity/plurality tensions (Johnson & Freeman, 2010). Furthermore, these modernist perspectives reify the politics of universalism and the politics of difference, with little opportunity to break free of the binary. A third, postmodern perspective based in recent curriculum, educational, and political theories, provides an account of human agency and liberation from unity/plurality tensions in educational practice.

Postmodern educational/curriculum theory. As opposed to the sociocultural reproduction and sociocultural transformation views of curriculum described above, contemporary curriculum theorists have pointed to an alternate view as a rupture from modernist perspectives/approaches: *reflective education for sociocultural change*. This perspective explicitly minimizes inherent problems of normativity in modernist perspectives by considering the future as an open question that is not already conceived by the past or a future ideal. In reflective education, there is a focus on subject formation

as a process in relation to the organic power of societal aims translated into content and educational experiences and methods (Benner, 1991 as adapted by Uljens, 2002). Pinar (2004) argued for curriculum as a complicated conversation among student/subject with content that includes historical voices as well as contemporary ones inclusive of difference according to gender, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, and so forth. In other words, Pinar's (2004) curriculum theorizing brings explicit attention to reflective education and student self-formation within an increasingly pluralistic society.

Reflective education for sociocultural change differs from sociocultural reproduction and sociocultural transformation perspectives in that it is non-hierarchical, meaning this position assumes a level relation among different societal forms and practices, including education, politics, working life/economy, and law (Uljens, 2006). In the same sense, education is partly subordinate to political influences but simultaneously superordinate with respect to politics. Education, then, prepares the subject for active citizenship and political democracy as well as for a working life *to be developed by the individual*. Importantly, in this tradition, the individual is prepared to transform the very same society or culture into which that person is educated, but how this is or should be done cannot be decided upon in advance (Uljens, 2002), thus avoiding the normativity problems associated with the two modernist perspectives. This view of curriculum and education in society is burgeoning and under researched in North American contexts; thus, I intend to utilize this conceptual grounding in this research and contribute to this developing field.

In sum, the theoretical framework underpinning my research draws from multiple disciplines and fields in order to uncover new modes of educational inquiry and practice,

while also opening up new possibilities for theorizing about educational tensions and paradoxes. As the unity/plurality conflict that I study emerges from recent policy trends toward restrictive centralized curriculum, language, and evaluation policies in the midst of demographic changes and policy migration trends, I draw on theories and philosophies that address these multifarious sociocultural and sociopolitical facets. Since my study involves two sites with two different articulations of the unity/plurality-policy/practice tensions, and I based my study on a vast, multidimensional theoretical grounding, my methodology is also nuanced and comprehensive.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Two Qualitative Studies

Arizona serves as an exemplar for the unity/plurality conflict, as its policies—especially those related to immigration and education—have been hotly contested for many years. Furthermore, Arizona is a site of struggle and hostility, with its history of colonized populations, inimical immigration policy, restrictive English language policy, and Tucson’s highly publicized Mexican American Studies program.

My research took place between 2013 and 2015 within two high-poverty, urban, public Arizona high schools serving increasingly multicultural student populations. While both schools had demographic similarities, there are key, opposing differences to note: The first case, Canyon High School (a pseudonym), has wavered between being labeled a “D” school and “C” school by the Arizona Department of Education’s (ADE) school report card scale² over the past five years, and as a result was put into a “soft turnaround” status in 2014. Canyon High School serves a substantial and unique EL population, as a large number of the students are refugees from all over the world. As a result, over 40 languages and dialects are spoken on campus. The second case, Desert Springs High School (also a pseudonym), is an award winning, “A” labeled school, which has consistently met or exceeded achievement measures for over 30 years. The school is located in a high-poverty neighborhood and represents a culturally diverse site in terms of student demographics; over the past 30 years, demographics have changed significantly from 95% White and 5% Hispanic students in the 1980s to 53% Hispanic

² According to ARS 15-746, a school is rewarded an A-F score based on trends in gain or loss in pupil achievement over time in reading, language arts and mathematics for all years in which pupils are enrolled in the school district for an entire school year (ADE, 2015).

students today. These schools were purposefully chosen as representative examples of the prevalent unity/plurality tensions; however, while both schools experience such tensions, the results (i.e., school ratings and student achievement) of the tensions are dissimilar.

Data collection at both sites involved qualitative methods grounded in poststructuralist, critical, and interpretive tenets. In the following subsections I provide detailed descriptions and justifications for the specific methods employed at each site. I also provide further information on the sites and participants, as well as the data analyses conducted.

Canyon High School

My research at Canyon High School involved a one-and-a-half year ethnographic investigation in which I sought to answer the following research questions: (1) How do educational actors perceive and enact functionalist, conservative policies (i.e., Arizona's language policy) in schools that serve increasingly diverse student populations? (2) What are the taken-for-granted institutional norms of schooling on a macro-level, and how are those norms challenged by and/or embedded into the micro-level institutional realities of schooling? (3) What are the macro-level discourses around democratic education, and how do they align and/or conflict with the micro-level discourses within educational institutions? My work at Canyon primarily involved an examination of the enactment of Arizona's language policy (Proposition 203; see Appendix A), as well as other neoliberal policies (e.g., school turnaround, testing policies, etc.).

This study expands the "newer wave of language policy education research," which is predicated on the idea that language policies cannot be fully understood without

studying actual practices (Menken & García, 2010, p. 3). This burgeoning field of language policy research creates a macro (policy) and micro (school) connection through ethnographic methods and critical discourse analysis; Hornberger and Johnson (2007) refer to this new approach as “ethnography of language education policy”, which offers unique insights into policy enactment through “thick descriptions of policy interpretation and implementation at the local level” (p. 511). Moreover, in this study I employed critical ethnography, because this approach requires precision about the many ways in which power and knowledge intermingle (Carspecken, 1996). The prolonged engagement with the site through critical ethnography allowed me to continuously observe and reflect upon the phenomena that occurred in relation to Proposition 203, as well as upon my own interpretations and conclusions that arose throughout the process, thus ensuring my proclamations of “truth” were substantiated. I complemented my ethnographic study with a critical analysis of Proposition 203’s text.

Sampling and description of site. Canyon High School (a pseudonym) is a public school in southern Arizona located in a metropolitan area, and is part of a large, urban school district. Canyon was chosen because of its substantial and unique EL population and its struggles with unity policy mandates: a multitude of languages and cultures are represented on campus, and the school faces mounting political and institutional pressure to perform under neoliberal mandates (seen in the turnaround mandate, consistent low testing performance, and enforced compliance with the language policy). In 2013 Canyon had 1,153 students, with a large number of refugee students, and over 40 different languages and dialects were spoken on campus in 2013. At the end of the 2012-2013 school year, Canyon had a 20.67% EL reclassification rate (based on

the state ESL test [AZELLA]), 86.35% attendance rate, 82% promotion rate, 5.16% dropout rate, and 57.32% four-year graduation rate (70.5% five-year rate) (ADE, 2013). For the past three school years, ADE gave Canyon a “D” rating based on the state’s A-F school report card rating system. Although the school has made some noteworthy gains, its failure to meet the minimum passing scores resulted in its low rating and a “soft” school turnaround policy put in place in 2014 (resulting in the dismissal of the principal and resignation of 23 teachers).

I used purposeful sampling (Merriam, 2009) for selecting participants, with the following criterion: participants experience the effects of Arizona’s language policy (ELs, English Language Development [ELD] teachers, and administrators). During ethnographic visits I also engaged in informal dialogues with other school staff members (e.g., mainstream [non-ELD] teachers, custodial staff, resource officers, etc.) to get a clearer sense of the school’s culture, structures, and discourses around policy and practice. Data also include in-depth interviews with each ELD staff member (six total, including the ELD counselor) and school administrators (n=3; includes former principal and assistant principal, and current turnaround principal), observations during ELD classes (three hours per day, three days per week during the second half of the 2013-2014 school year and the full 2014-2015 school year), and field visits to school functions (e.g., Open House, pep assemblies, faculty meetings, summer meetings). Interviews used for this paper took place during the second semester of the 2013-2014 school year, the first semester of the 2014-2015 school year, and at the end of the 2014-2015 school year. In April 2014 the district terminated the contract of the principal due to consecutive years of not meeting adequate yearly progress, the assistant principal decided to retire, and one of

the two ELD co-department chairs resigned from her position after nine years at the school. These three faculty members were interviewed at the completion of the 2013-2014 school year, and the former ELD department chair was interviewed a second time in the summer of 2014.

Data sources. Since I took on a critical ethnographic approach with a poststructuralist lens, data collection occurrences took place in various instances that overlapped and intertwined based on the themes that arose. Four key processes occurred throughout the data collection, as suggested by Carspecken (1996): (1) Taking a thick record through multiple participant observations; (2) in-depth interviews with ELD teachers and the school leaders; (3); thick record of field notes during school visits; (4) textual analysis of political documents.

Participant observations and fieldwork. I conducted observations within Canyon's ELD department for three days per week, between three and four hours per day. During each day's observation I visited at least two ELD classrooms, and spent time in the classrooms between one and two hours (or for one or two class periods). While conducting visits to each ELD classroom I took on the role of both participant as observer and observer as participant (Merriam, 2009). In other words, I did not sit and observe the classrooms and events objectively; instead, I participated in lessons by interacting with students and teachers, and working with students on individual lessons (similar to an instructional aid). I also conducted multiple visits to the school site during regular day-to-day processes, as well as school events (during/after school, e.g., faculty meetings, pep assemblies, Open House). Since I gathered data pertaining to educational discourses, I gained greater opportunities to learn as a participant, but remained open to observing

interactions and gestures from a more objective standpoint. I kept a thick record of my own reflections throughout the data collection process, and I coded my observation/field notes inductively and deductively for common themes, and compared to codes/themes in interviews. Overall, I conducted approximately 300 individual observations and field visits.

Interviews. I conducted in-depth phenomenological face-to-face interviews with all participants; I interviewed each participant one time, and the former ELD co-department chair two times (during her tenure at Canyon and the summer following her choice to leave the school; this was completed to get a sense of her choices and reflections as she expressed social justice inclinations and desires). Interview questions focused on perceptions and reactions to language policy (and other district/state policies) and corresponding mandates, as well as school structures and curricula. Because the interviews encompassed a hermeneutic phenomenological structure (Heppner & Heppner, 2004), I created an “interview schedule” rather than a strict “question and answer” format—the interview schedule served as a prompt to help elicit and stimulate participants’ stories about prominent events and insights concerning their senses of self and identity within Arizona’s (and the U.S.’s) policy mandates (Heppner & Heppner, 2004). All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim, then coded inductively and then deductively for common themes.

Policy/document analysis. The data sources for my document analyses involved: Proposition 203’s text, email communiqués between school and district staff containing responses to neoliberal mandates and multicultural/multilingual students, posted announcements in the school, school communications (i.e., testing dates) to parents, and

standardized assessment rubrics. I provide a detailed description of the analysis process in the following section.

Data analysis. I adhered to three of Carspecken's (1996) five recommended stages for analyzing critical ethnographic data. The first stage primarily required compiling the primary record (or collection) of my data. During the second stage, preliminary reconstructive analysis, I noted underlying meanings in the primary data records. These meanings came from pragmatic, semantic, and linguistic structures that arose, and were coded for common themes, key issues, and preliminary patterns that emerged, and compared those to findings in my critical analysis of policy texts (see next section). I also coded for where and what particular types of power surfaced (relating to institutional logics and neoliberal/neoconservative ideologies) in interactions. This type of analysis applied to the third stage, dialogical data generation, as I analyzed my records from classroom observations and field notes. Again, I looked for themes related to the location and articulation of power and cultural reproduction through institutional isomorphism. Ultimately, these stages of analysis relate to discourses and interactions, so critical discourse analysis (CDA) served as a compliment to the ethnography.

CDA. Critical discourse analysis aims to produce interpretations and explanations of areas of social life (micro-level), which both identify the causes of social structures (macro-level) and produce knowledge, which could contribute to mitigating any unjust or unequal consequences (Fairclough, 1995). Interview transcripts and field notes (which included images, text, gestures, and other semiotic elements) were inductively analyzed for common phenomena that arose; these phenomena were then coded and compared between texts. All semiotic elements were subject to examination for phenomena as I

looked to “make sense of the whole”: I clustered the themes and validated them by referring to previous notes and my research questions in order to ensure their actuality (Heppner & Heppner, 2004). I also analyzed the clustered themes against and compared those themes to other elements of social processes (Fairclough, 1995), such as elements of Bourdieu’s habitus. Ultimately, I uncovered norms that illustrate the articulation of unity policies amidst increasing multiculturalism.

I also examined the “metafunctions” of discourse and text through which social processes work (Jewitt, 2009). These metafunctions included: (1) the ideational function, which expresses the sign-maker’s experience of the external world; (2) the interpersonal function, which establishes and maintains the personal and social roles of interlocutors; and (3) the textual function, which deals with making text coherent and relevant for the situation (Jewitt, 2009). Overall, all aforementioned analytic mechanisms aided me in discerning the purpose of the language used.

I also employed critical policy analysis (CPA, Ball, 1991) for policy documents, which extends CDA to the political arena. CPA examines textual and dialectical discourses using linguistically based analyses. Since political language is “banal and strategic and generates emotional responses rather than critical responses or concrete actions” (Wright, 2005; p. 664), CPA examines how ambiguous symbolic language (Wright, 2005) incites an emotional response out of the reader, thus shielding its true meanings and intents.

Desert Springs High School

My research at Desert Springs followed qualitative methods, focusing on a successful high school (and its corresponding principal and district leadership) located in

a high-poverty, increasingly pluralistic community along the U.S.-Mexico border. Since this study began as research from the International Successful School Principals' Project (ISSPP)³, my research team and I⁴ first grounded our research in an interpretive paradigm using case study approaches. Nevertheless, throughout our research we found phenomena related to unity-plurality tensions arising in the data, so the focus of our research shifted from studying successful school leadership to studying leadership and school structures in the face of increasing student plurality.

To answer the research questions, our methods were interpretive in nature in order to understand the many complex sociocultural and political conditions that affect education for increasingly diverse individuals (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Stake, 2000). Following qualitative methods from an interpretive paradigm placed the perspectives of study participants at the center of the research (Glesne, 2011). We explored the following research questions: 1) How do past and current educational leaders of a successful district and high school narrate their perspectives on the relationships among society, curriculum, and increasingly diverse students/individuals? 2) How, if at all, do the leaders' narratives reflect one or more of the theoretical perspectives on society, education, and the individual? 3) How, if at all, do leaders' views of society, curriculum and the individual affect their curriculum work-leadership practices in relation to shifting demographics within the student population?

³ The ISSPP is a consortium of scholars from 14 countries conducting and publishing a collection of case studies examining successful school leaders. See <https://www.uv.uio.no/ils/english/research/projects/isspp/>

⁴ Data from Desert Springs, as part of the ISSPP, were collected and written up by the author (second author on article under review) and three colleagues (see Appendix C).

Sampling and description of site. We purposely selected a high school with a history of high academic performance (four years with an “A” label and a Blue Ribbon Award) located in a community with changing demographics. Desert Springs High School represents a culturally diverse site in terms of student demographics (53% Hispanic; 40% White; 2% African American; 2% American Indian; 2% Asian Pacific Islander; less than 1% two or more races, with a total of 1761 students overall). In the school, 70% of students qualify for free and/or reduced lunch. Staff demographics include 12% Hispanic, 81% White, and 7% who preferred not to self-identify in any race/ethnic category; all administrator participants were White males.

Beyond the principal, we purposely selected 20% of the teaching staff (22 teachers), 20% of support staff (n=8) and six parents as secondary participants. In selecting these secondary participants, we sought representation of gender, race/ethnicity (based on school personnel demographics) as well as a range of subjects taught in the case of teachers. More specifically, after we began our study of the leadership structures that contributed to the school’s continued success, we noticed other phenomena occurring that required further, more in-depth and theoretical examination. For instance, most of our participants talked at length about the close relationship among the school system for curriculum, teaching and learning and the larger district system. In particular, we noted the dynamics of cultural shifts in the midst of neoliberal reform and institutionalized structures coming into both harmony and conflict. Thus, we also recruited four superintendents from the past 30 years who could speak to the history of the district and sociocultural changes (a fifth superintendent was not available for an interview). The

superintendents enabled the gathering of rich descriptions of policy, economic, and demographic changes to the district and the school over time.

Data sources. Data were collected using multiple sources, including documents from central governing boards illustrating the school achievements and student attainment, mission statements, ethnographic notes made during visits by the research team (two visits, three hours per visit), local school documents (e.g., various school improvement committee meetings, strategic plans), and most importantly interviews with a variety of people, including four successive superintendents, the principal (interviewed twice), school council chairperson, assistant principals, and teachers (22 teachers and 8 support staff or 20% of each representative group purposely selected through a strategic process for an equal distribution of gender and content area). Six parents volunteered to participate in a focus group interview. In total, we conducted 42 interviews. Interviews were semi-structured with questions to all participants focused on a particular set of topics aligned with our research questions, including policy changes, technology changes, roles of education in society, the meaning and aim of curriculum, the border context, increasing competition among districts and schools, legitimate curriculum and instructional reforms or programs, changing demographics and economic pressures. Further, we probed for critical incidents and examples in order to support participants to talk about relationships among education, society, and students in their own words. Descriptive field notes were kept. These notes primarily focused on the observations of actions in and descriptions of school settings during site visits to conduct interviews.

Data analysis. Concurrent data collection and analysis followed an iterative process (Patton, 1990). In the first stage of this method, interview transcripts,

ethnographic notes, and document analysis notes were reviewed, and a codebook developed for data incident codes. The 51 initial codes included, among others, cultural blindness, views of curriculum, views of society and societal changes, capacity, direction setting, developing people, decision-making processes, and perceptions of the community. We examined interview responses across participant groups (i.e., principals, teachers, and staff members) and in relation to other data sources (i.e., ethnographic notes and documents). Second, we analyzed the data as a group, substantiating, refining, and negating the initial inductive codes and deductive codes to 36 codes (e.g., sociocultural reproduction, preparation, habitus, sociocultural transformation, critique, consciousness, conflict, balance, situational leadership, reflection, recognition, provocation, interruption). Discriminate sampling was used to test incidents identified in phase two. In so doing, we reexamined transcripts and other data sources, testing our list of codes against multiple data sources, further refining our categories to 21 grouped into themes. In all stages, divergent codes were discussed and examined against multiple data sources. At points in discriminate sampling, we returned to the field to conduct member checking with key informants. Finally, data categories and subcategories were crystallized (Richardson, 2001). Data analysis continued into the fourth stage of writing.

Researcher Identity

As a former world language teacher (Spanish), language and culture have continuously piqued my interest. I understand the experience of learning a second language, as well as pedagogical methods in the teaching of languages (salient to my study in Canyon's ELD department). Further, my experiences with second languages opened up many opportunities to interact with a variety of people around the world, as

well as provided me with opportunities (i.e., career, travel) that have enhanced and enriched my life. Thus, I am shrewdly aware of the struggles and ultimate rewards of bilingualism and multilingualism. My passion for language and language learning fuels my interest in studying language learning practices and structures (i.e., policies) in schools, as well as my interest in the types of struggles and successes educators and students face. This interest in language also informs my research approach: since poststructuralism deals with how language shapes reality, I find this lens to be particularly useful in uncovering how our ‘words create our world.’ I see language as not only a mode of communication, but also as a powerful tool in shaping our thoughts and actions—therefore, I believe that poststructuralism provides the highest amount of agency for both participants and researchers to create opportunities to overcome structural barriers and institutional inequities.

Here it is also worth noting my researcher identity as an upper-middle class White woman who grew up as a U.S. citizen in a predominantly White, upper-middle class community. I have also taught in low-income, culturally diverse settings. Hence I was conscious of my class-lived positionality as I conducted interviews and fieldwork, and analyzed data. Also, while I was once a second language learner and a linguistic minority (living overseas for a period of time), I have little experience dealing with policies, I have not had experienced learning or teaching English, I have not been prevented from accessing certain rights and privilege because of my native language or second language abilities, and I have not experienced being marginalized based on my ethnicity or nationality. The poststructuralist approach I took on required constant reflection as I put my preconceptions aside throughout my research. I also had to

constantly reflect on my own positionality throughout the research process (see next section). In addition, the large amount of data sources and analysis procedures (within a critical ethnographic approach) ensured that my biases did not influence my findings.

Reflexivity and Bias

The above aspects of my identity could have led me to data that support my assumptions and hypotheses (Glesne, 2011), as my preexisting interpretation of reality could have imbued my data analyses with my meanings, rather than the meanings that educational actors produce. To address these potential biases, I took on the following processes: (1) prolonged engagement and persistent observation; (2) triangulation; (3) peer review; (4) clarification of researcher bias; and (5) rich, thick descriptions.

Prolonged engagement and persistent observation. In order to avoid reactivity, I engaged and observed my participants and processes within the school sites on multiple occasions. As such, I was able to learn the culture and check my own preconceived beliefs. At Canyon, in particular, this enabled the participants to get used to my presence—by increasing the participants' comfort with an outsider they were less encumbered or reactive to my presence.

Triangulation. Since multiple means of data development contribute to research trustworthiness (Glesne, 2011), my study involved active triangulation in data collection and analysis. I employed multiple sources (interviews with teachers and administrators, participant observations, textual analyses).

Peer review. Since I wanted to avoid the intrusion of my own meanings and interpretations, I debriefed with other researchers throughout the data collection and analysis processes (both my team at Desert Springs, other researchers at my institution,

and scholars at other institutions throughout the U.S.). This allowed me to continuously reflect on and then omit my own beliefs and ideals in relation to the types of phenomena that arose.

Clarification of researcher bias. Throughout data collection and analysis I reflected upon my own subjectivity through reflexivity (focusing on my position as an outside researcher and the interpretations of me that may arise) and constant reflection in a research journal (in which I recorded my own feelings and experiences while conducting field work). This reflexivity forced me to continuously acknowledge and address my own identity and interpretations so as to avoid their intrusion into the data.

Rich, thick descriptions. As I intended to uncover the processes, practices, and the expressions thereof that illustrate how policy is enacted, I wrote descriptions in a way that allows readers to enter the research context (Glesne, 2011). This process provided an unbiased, detailed picture of the environment and the sociocultural and sociopolitical milieu that exist within each site.

Limitations

Since this study examines the articulation of neoliberal and neoconservative policies and structures based on interpretations of educational actors, there are multiple data sources. However, given my limited period of time to conduct the research, it was too large an undertaking to examine all potential informants. For instance, a more robust CPA would include analyses of discourses at the district, State, and even Federal levels. I could amplify my data by investigating policy and court documents that encompass policies and mandates, as well as by interviewing additional district superintendents and policymaking agents. In addition, interviews with parents and community members (i.e.,

refugee services organizations) at/surrounding Canyon would enhance my study. Lastly, part of my data collection involved additional student interviews at both sites, but time and space constraints kept me from conducting analyses of those data. Nevertheless, following this dissertation study I will analyze the student data for future publications.

OVERVIEW OF ARTICLES

Findings for this dissertation are conveyed in three articles submitted for publication in academic journals (see Appendices B, C, and D). The three articles draw on the literature, theoretical grounding, and methodologies previously described. In essence, I illustrate the articulation of and ways to ameliorate the unity/plurality-policy/practice paradox as neoliberal state and district policies come into contention with today's burgeoning multicultural schooling contexts. The articles encompass various aspects of policy enactment/making, educational practice (leadership/curriculum), and perspectives on multiculturalism; and the articles also suggest new approaches for those processes/perspectives, as well as new approaches for theorizing about and researching education in today's pluralistic schooling context. All data analyses and discussions stem from poststructuralist foundation (and some critical) foundations; I chose these conceptual frameworks because I propose to connect the macro (policy) to the micro (practice) in tensions currently existing in education. My intention is that this type of research and analysis can extend beyond my work in Arizona—that it will make an overarching impact on how we do and study education.

In my first article I coin a new concept that serves as a framework for studying policy creation, implementation, and agency; I do so from a study of the enactment of Arizona's language policy within a multilingual/multicultural, low-performing school (Appendix B). In my second article, I examine the interpretation and enactment of neoliberal policies and resultant structures (i.e., school culture, leadership, curriculum) within a highly successful school and district, and how those aspects conflict with a growing Latino/a student population (Appendix C). My third article, then, serves as a

response to the first two articles: it uses a curriculum theory framework to analyze the shortcomings of unitary curricula and policies in the face of shifting student demographics. In this piece I compare data from both sites to underscore and illustrate my analyses, conclusions, and implications for new approaches to studying and implementing curriculum and policy (Appendix D).

Article 1**Fetman, L. J. Away the ‘Veneer of Democracy’ to expose the School-Level Effects of Arizona’s Language Policy**

Despite scant empirical support for the efficacy of Arizona’s sheltered English-only program model, Proposition 203 passed and remains as a result of the *veneer of democracy* (a political strategy that projects equitable inclinations while shielding inequitable ideologies). In order to wipe away the policy’s veneer of democracy and reveal its marginalizing effects, this paper compares findings from my ethnographic study of one linguistically and culturally diverse high school confronting mandates from Proposition 203 with findings from a critical analysis of the policy’s text. Findings show that the policy’s veneer of democracy exudes discourses of *morality*, *opportunity*, and *rationality*, and that these taken-for-granted macro-level political discourses conflict with and subjugate the micro-level realities of schools. The illustration of this tension implies a need to reexamine policymaking, policy enactment, and policy research using nuanced, multifaceted approaches.

Article 2

Ylimaki, R. M., Fetman, L., Matyjasik, E., & Brunderman, L. Shifting Populations, Shifting Practices? Curriculum Work-Leadership within an Evolving Sociocultural Context

Recent policy changes (increasingly national curriculum standards, evaluation, privatization) and societal changes (e.g., neoliberalism, globalization) have illuminated complex changes for schools, including free market competition among schools with parents as customers and individual students/subjects as human capital in a global economy (Apple, 2005; Lipman, 2011), changing demographics, and immigration patterns. Regardless of circulating neoliberal and neoconservative discourses, however, U. S. student demographics do not reflect uniformity. Amidst these conflicting realities, sociologists, philosophers, and curriculum theorists have long engaged in intellectual debates regarding the role of education in society, yet most of these discussions have remained dualistic and normative with little attention to culture and the role of curriculum work-leadership, reflecting the a more reflective, transformative view of societal relationships to education. This paper draws on findings from an illustrative case study and the literature to explore curriculum work-leadership in relation to recent changes in society and policy along with demographic and economic shifts. We illustrate empirical/theoretical gaps, normativity problems, and missed opportunities for reflective education with one case study of a high performing, culturally diverse high school and district.

Article 3

Fetman, L. J. The Paradoxical Nature of Unitary Curricula and Policies Amidst Increasing Multiculturalism in U.S. Schools

This paper examines educational paradoxes and tensions emerging from recent neoliberal policies and increasing multiculturalism. Modern educational tensions between unity and plurality are not new globally or in the U.S., including Arizona with a long history of educational responsibility for colonized populations. Such conditions point explicitly toward a paradox in which unity and plurality come into contention. Through a theoretical exploration of global dispossession, recognition, and multicultural education, this paper investigates unitary curriculum standards and related policies within the alienating dynamics of neoliberalism. Two empirical examples from Arizona schools illustrate the challenges of multicultural education, particularly for dispossessed students, amidst demands for unity and universalism. The first study's findings illustrate misrecognition of culturally diverse students in a high-performing school with shifting demographics. The second example draws on the study of the English Language Development program within one low-performing high school with a high population of refugee students. This paper ends with an educational response to the challenges of unity vs. plurality in an increasingly global world, focusing on forming a new, reflective approach to understanding policy and curriculum beyond normative binaries.

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APPENDIX A**ARIZONA'S LANGUAGE POLICY: BACKGROUND AND EFFECTS**

In 1968 the U.S. Congress passed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which included the Bilingual Education Act (BEA) (Gándara & Orfield, 2012). This policy initiative, which stemmed from Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (1964), thus associating bilingual education with educational equity and rights, charged states and school districts with addressing the particular needs of ELs (though no specified guidance around how to do so was given). The (albeit gradual) progress of bilingual education was halted in the midst of anti-immigration sentiments in the West when, in 1998, California enacted Proposition 227, which “created impediments” to bilingual instruction (Gándara & Orfield, 2012, p. 11). Ron Unz, a political aspirant at the source of California’s new policy, took his campaign for English-only instruction to Arizona where a very similar policy (Proposition 203) passed in 2000 (Gándara & Orfield, 2012). Of all three states (Massachusetts soon followed Arizona) enacting such policies, Arizona’s is the most restrictive (Leckie, Kaplan, & Rubinstein-Ávila, 2013; Martínez-Wenzl, Perez, & Gandara, 2012), which instituted the Structured English Immersion (SEI) model. Numerous research studies, many of which were funded by the U.S. Department of Education, found other, alternative language programs (e.g., bilingual education) to be significantly more effective and rigorous than SEI (see Krashen, Rolstad, & MacSwan, 2007; Slavin, Madden, Calderon, Chamberlain, & Hennesy, 2011).

In 2006 Arizona’s legislature passed House Bill 2064, thus creating the ELL Task Force charged with developing a program of English language development (ELD); this Task Force contained few members with language education experience (Gándara &

Orfield, 2012; Martínez-Wenzl et al, 2012). HB 2064 mandated that the ELD program include “a minimum of four hours per day of English development” and be the most “cost-efficient models that meet all state and federal laws” (ARS 15-756.01). Given these parameters, the ELD program must contain five components taught in a sheltered environment: phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicon, and semantics (Arizona Department of Education [ADE], 2007). The intention, then, is that with the extended time on task and discrete focus on English language development, ELs would be rapidly reclassified as English proficient within one year (Gándara & Orfield, 2012; Leckie et al., 2013; Lillie, Markos, Arias, & Wiley, 2012; Martínez-Wenzl et al., 2012). Nevertheless, these claims are problematic: they are not substantiated by SLA or educational research, nor do they account for content area instruction, thus leading to a widening achievement gap between ELs and English proficient (EP) students (Adamson & Long, 2012; Gándara & Orfield, 2012; Johnson & Johnson, 2015; Leckie et al., 2013).

Adamson and Long (2012) found that the majority of ELD programs in Arizona ‘objectified’ English language instruction by focusing on traditional grammatical forms and vocabulary items. The authors argued that this method does not provide ELs with the classroom linguistic environment that they need, as the program’s “focus on forms, not focus of form” (p. 6) approach negates current research in SLA, which calls for meaningful, task-based interactions in which learners use creativity and negotiation to fulfill authentic situational necessities (Crookes & Lehner, 1998). In essence, the ELD program mirrors foreign language programs, which involve a sheltered environment, formal setting, heavy focus on discrete grammatical skills, lack of multicultural engagement, and rigorous timeline for exiting the program (Martínez-Wenzl et al., 2012).

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APPENDIX B

**WIPING AWAY THE “VENEER OF DEMOCRACY” TO EXPOSE THE
SCHOOL-LEVEL EFFECTS OF ARIZONA’S LANGUAGE POLICY**

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Abstract

Despite scant empirical support, Arizona's restrictive language policy (Proposition 203, 2000) sustains as a result of the *vener of democracy* (a political strategy that projects equitable inclinations while shielding inequitable ideologies). This paper compares findings from an ethnographic study of one linguistically diverse Arizona high school with a critical analysis of the policy's text to show how the policy's veneer of democracy includes discourses of *morality*, *opportunity*, and *rationality*. These discourses conflict with and subjugate the micro-level realities of schools. The illustration of this tension implies a need to reexamine policymaking, policy enactment, and policy research using nuanced, multifaceted approaches.

Students speaking a first language other than English currently comprise more than 10% of all students in U.S. public schools (National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, 2010), and are the fastest growing segment of the K-12 student population (Niehaus & Adelson, 2014) as they are predicted to represent 25% of all public school students by 2025 (Kanno & Kangas, 2014; U.S. Department of Education, 2006). Some states, as a result, enact language policies intended to address the educational achievement of English learners (ELs). One such policy, Arizona's English-only policy as mandated by Proposition 203 (2000), is based on government agents' beliefs that complete immersion leads to language acquisition. This English immersion policy was punctuated by a mandated four-hour sheltered English pullout program, which, along with the English-only policy itself, remain unsupported by second language acquisition (SLA) and educational research (e.g., Adamson & Long, 2012; Gándara & Orfield, 2012; Johnson & Johnson, 2015; Leckie, Kaplan, & Rubinstein-Ávila, 2013; Lillie, Markos, Arias, & Wiley, 2012; Ríos-Aguilar & Gándara, 2012), which prove that the policy actually widens cultural, linguistic, and academic achievement gaps between ELs and their English-proficient (EP) peers.

The predominating rationale of educational policies is democracy (Apple, 2013; Ball, Maguire, & Braun, 2012, 1999; Miller, 1999; Pharr, 2013), and the premise of democracy is that through representation, people can achieve equitable status in society; however this assumption negates ruptures in equity that result from such policies (Patel, 2016). While educational policies, specifically those related to ‘leveling the playing field’, are assumed to resolve inequities in society, educational, economic, and racial stratification persist, and this stratification is highly evident in our increasingly pluralistic schools (Kozol, 1991; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Patel, 2016; Wright, 2005; Wiley, 2002). Hence, many educational policies do not create or sustain equity, rather they give off the appearance that they do through an attractive veneer.

This paper draws on empirical findings and a nuanced conceptual grounding to examine the tension between macro-level (policy) discourses and micro-level (school) realities. I present findings from an ethnographic study of one Arizona school confronting mandates from Proposition 203 in conjunction with an analysis of the policy’s text. I intend to uncover how the policy is enacted and/or resisted at the school-level within a school that is representative of the significant sociocultural and demographic shifts taking place in today’s classrooms. I begin by describing the central metaphor of this paper, the *veneer of democracy*, and then briefly summarize the trajectory of Arizona’s language policy. I follow with a discussion of empirical literature and SLA research that problematize the policy and a discussion of the theories that ground my study. I continue by presenting my ethnographic findings with results from a critical textual analysis of Proposition 203, and conclude with implications for educational practice and research.

The Veneer of Democracy

Presumably, democracy is a structure in which individuals have a voice and are seen as endowed with equal rights and freedoms (Taylor, 1994). Educational policy, as a function of democracy, is thus intended to create equity, establish justice, and uphold individual freedoms. However, when investigating the enactment of policy, as well as past literature that examines policy enactment, we see that the idealized democracy of political actors does not represent what occurs within institutions (i.e., schools).

Educational policies such as Proposition 203 lead to the marginalization of students who do not fit into the institutionalized, normative conceptions of American schools (Miller, 1999; Paris, 2012; Patel, 2013). Nevertheless, these policies are accepted and sustained as they surreptitiously disguise themselves in democratic discourse and text; I call this political/organizational masquerade the *veneer of democracy*. The veneer of democracy is a political and organizational strategy that projects moral/equitable inclinations while shielding ideologies that are not as such. The purpose of the veneer of democracy is to uphold institutional legitimacy—to enable and sustain political and bureaucratic systems via an acceptable, attractive façade. While some educational policies exude a veneer of democracy, their creation and resultant implementation frequently exert marginalizing effects on the individuals most influenced by the policies.

Physically and literally, a veneer conceals and protects the appearance and quality of the material beneath its bonded surface. The purpose of a veneer is to make something unappealing appealing, as well as protect an object from further damage or deterioration. The veneer of democracy fulfills the same purpose and accomplishes the same goals figuratively: It conceals deteriorating, unappealing structures through a synthetic,

attached surface. When we extend this metaphor to educational policy, we must imagine that the true materials beneath the surface material are marginalizing, inequitable school structures, which are the micro-level (or school-level) processes that create and exacerbate inequality (i.e., curriculum, assessments, discipline, resources).

The veneer itself is discourse: it is a manipulation of language that conceals what lies beneath, and these linguistic manipulations distract the public from perceiving the inequitable structures and practices within schools. This adornment also serves as a protective layer (like a veneer) in that by appearing attractive, stable, and appealing, the legitimacy of schools (and political structures) as institutions is not threatened. I assert that Proposition 203 is blanketed in a veneer of democracy, and so in order to expose its veneer, as well as reveal these structures/processes that lie beneath the veneer, I briefly discuss the key processes surrounding the creation and implementation of Proposition 203.

Creation and Trajectory of Arizona's Language Policy

In 1968 the U.S. Congress passed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which included the Bilingual Education Act (BEA) (Gándara & Orfield, 2012). This policy initiative, which stemmed from Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (1964), thus associating bilingual education with educational equity and rights, charged states and school districts with addressing the particular needs of ELs (though no specified guidance around how to do so was given). The (albeit gradual) progress of bilingual education was halted in the midst of anti-immigration sentiments in the West when, in 1998, California enacted Proposition 227, which “created impediments” to bilingual instruction (Gándara & Orfield, 2012, p. 11). Ron Unz, a political aspirant at the source of California's new

policy, took his campaign for English-only instruction to Arizona where a very similar policy (Proposition 203) passed in 2000 (Gándara & Orfield, 2012). Of all three states (Massachusetts soon followed Arizona) enacting such policies, Arizona's is the most restrictive (Leckie et al., 2013; Martínez-Wenzl, Perez, & Gandara, 2012), which instituted the Structured English Immersion (SEI) model. Numerous research studies, many of which were funded by the U.S. Department of Education, found other, alternative language programs (e.g., bilingual education) to be significantly more effective and rigorous than SEI (see Krashen, Rolstad, & MacSwan, 2007; Slavin, Madden, Calderon, Chamberlain, & Hennesy, 2011).

In 2006 Arizona's legislature passed House Bill 2064, thus creating the ELL Task Force charged with developing a program of English language development (ELD); this Task Force contained few members with language education experience (Gándara & Orfield, 2012; Martínez-Wenzl et al, 2012). HB 2064 mandated that the ELD program include "a minimum of four hours per day of English development" and be the most "cost-efficient models that meet all state and federal laws" (ARS 15-756.01). Given these parameters, the ELD program must contain five components taught in a sheltered environment: phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicon, and semantics (Arizona Department of Education [ADE], 2007). The intention, then, is that with the extended time on task and discrete focus on English language development, ELs would be rapidly reclassified as English proficient within one year (Gándara & Orfield, 2012; Leckie et al., 2013; Lillie et al., 2012; Martínez-Wenzl et al., 2012). Nevertheless, these claims are problematic: they are not substantiated by SLA or educational research, nor do they account for content area instruction, thus leading to a widening achievement gap between

ELs and EP students (Adamson & Long, 2012; Gándara & Orfield, 2012; Johnson & Johnson, 2015; Leckie et al., 2013).

Extant Literature on Language Policy and Programs

Many scholars (e.g., Adamson & Long, 2012; Krashen et al., 2007; Leckie et al., 2015; Wiley, 2002) argued that Arizona's SEI model and ELD program's strict emphasis on English-only instruction not only excludes immigrant students and their families from schooling, but also augments the cultural boundary between linguistically diverse students and monolingual students. Marschall, Rigby, & Jenkins (2011) concurred that language policies such as Arizona's seek to "isolate, alienate, and stigmatize immigrants and their children" (p. 590). Portes and Fernández-Kelly (2008) conveyed the negative consequences of policymakers' assimilationist goals in their study on the segmented assimilation of immigrant children; they found that the potential for immigrant students to thrive hinges on the context into which they are incorporated. Further, a hostile reception by some educators and the public oftentimes results from structural racism in which immigrant students are placed on the margins and fall victim to assimilation discourses and lack of understanding (and prejudice) from the rest of the school community (Portes & Fernández-Kelly, 2008).

Wiley (2002) also argued that assimilationist sentiments were enacted in policies that upheld English as an official language, thus identifying non-English speaking as deficient. He posited that these political actions were rooted in motivations to impose an official English language and to restrict native languages in schools, thus resulting in the general level of *hostility* of the dominant group towards various language minority groups. Indeed, Proposition 203's trajectory corresponded with widespread anti-

immigration sentiments and mounting controversy surrounding multicultural curricula (e.g., Tucson's Mexican American studies). Fitsimmons-Doolan (2009) also noted tensions between pluralist (promoting multilingualism) and assimilationist (promoting monolingualism) discussions of Arizona's language policy, especially in the midst of the state's contested immigration policy. She analyzed Arizona newspaper discourse on the topics of language and immigration policies in order to lend empirical support to claims that those of language policy influence public perceptions about immigration. Combs and Nicholas (2011) also acknowledged that a "phenomenon of unintended consequences" is taking place, and described Proposition 203 as "coercive" as it seeks to control the student population amidst state demographic shifts. Their description here relates to the policymakers' reactionary responses to an increasing Spanish-speaking (i.e., Mexican immigrant) population—yet the unintended consequences extend to Native American and non-Mexican immigrant students (e.g., refugees).

Paris (2012) identified English-only policies as examples of how policymakers are not interested in sustaining the languages and cultures of longstanding and newcomer communities of color, as such policies reinforce normative and hostile climates for immigrants and communities of color: "This climate, and the policies and teaching practices resulting from it, has the quite explicit goal of creating a monocultural and monolingual society based on White, middle-class norms of language and cultural being" (p. 95). His position aligns with Gándara and Gómez's (2009) discussion of monolingual discourse as linguistic hegemony, which is firmly rooted in an ideology that the use of any language aside from English threatens American nationhood. The authors declared that linguistic hegemony has become more pronounced as the population of immigrants

has increased, as have Gándara and Orfield (2012), who stated that this linguistic hegemony “reached the pinnacle” (p. 9) in Arizona with its series of anti-immigrant and highly restrictive language policies.

Other empirical studies underscore the above critical findings and stances in showing how Proposition 203 causes segregation and decreased opportunities for achievement. Ríos-Aguilar and colleagues’ (2012) cross-sectional analysis of Arizona teachers’ perceptions of ELD programs and practices showed that triple segregation occurred within the schools: segregation by students’ ethnicity, by students’ poverty level, and by students’ first languages. The majority of respondents did not think that the goals of the ELD program were being met because the methodology provided little acceleration of English proficiency (and did not meet the intended one-year reclassification). Lillie and colleagues (2012), in their ethnographic study of nine Arizona schools, found the effects of Proposition 203 on ELs’ education to be “devastating,” as a “generation of kids has been lost” (p. 27) due to the state’s failure to develop a coherent and equitable plan for ELs. The mentioned researchers also found that most teachers did not think that the four-hour ELD block provided access to the academic content needed to succeed in school; the majority of teachers stated that they were either “very concerned” or “extremely concerned” (Ríos-Aguilar et al., 2012, pp. 11-13) about pulling ELs out of regular classrooms, as the ELD four-hour block also limits students’ access to content curriculum led to high frequency of retention and dropout (Lillie et al., 2012).

The above empirical and critical approaches to studying language policies are valuable and staggering; however, they tend to reify a top-down perspective of policy

thus underestimating human agency (Johnson & Freeman, 2010) and the dynamic, interactive, and real-life processes associated with policy enactment (Menken & García, 2010). As Johnson and Johnson (2015) explicated, critical approaches alone tend to underestimate the power of language policy agents who “interpret and appropriate language policies” thus ignoring “language policy processes that play out in communities and schools” (p. 94). Therefore, as these authors assert, a balance between a critical focus on language policy power and understanding the power held by policy agents (i.e., educational actors) must be met. In other words, the macro-micro connection has been scant in extant literature, as “research has tended to fall short of fully accounting for precisely how microlevel interaction relates to the macrolevels of social organization” (Johnson & Freeman, 2010, p. 15). Nonetheless, some scholars (e.g., Johnson & Freeman, 2010; Johnson & Johnson, 2015; Menken & García, 2010) have begun to make these connections in studying policy enactment through multifaceted theoretical groundings and empirical approaches.

Johnson and Johnson (2015) answered the call to making macro-micro connections in their research on the appropriation of state language policies within Arizona and Washington school districts; specifically, they investigated how different types of policy appropriation impact educators’ and students’ perceptions and experiences. The researchers used ethnographic research in demographically similar school districts in both states and compared the voices of students and faculty; they demonstrated that these juxtaposed voices showed how language policy appropriation contrasts with predictions and assumptions based in the policies alone. Johnson and Freeman (2010) also made the micro-macro connection in their ethnographic and

discourse analytic research in a linguistically/culturally diverse Philadelphia school district. The researchers saw educators as key players in multilayered and dynamic language policy enactment, predicated on the idea that policy is not a static thing, but rather a process under constant negotiation and reconstruction. Based on Ball's (1991) concept of policy as discourse, they took on an "action-oriented approach to language policy" (p. 15). The researchers examined how educational actors, as policy agents, resisted and negotiated district language policies in their classrooms.

Language policy, especially amidst today's increasingly neoliberal political context, is a multilayered phenomenon and process, and thus in order to fully understand how policy works we must understand its many levels (Ball et al, 2013; Johnson & Johnson, 2015). For instance, Ricento and Hornberger (1996) compared language policy (and planning) to an onion: that it contains multiple layers, and that by slicing through the onion the various layers of policy actors' perceptions and agency come to light (Hornberger & Johnson, 2007). From this view, the multiple layers of the onion are characterized as processes: creation, interpretation, and appropriation (Johnson, 2009); therefore, what I call policy *enactment* occurs across all levels. Johnson and Johnson (2015) call for scholarship that looks at how language policies are "put into action," or "defined and applied by agents across subsequent levels" (p. 93) of the 'onion' in order to call attention to the social, political, and cultural influences that are implicated in policy enactment. The onion metaphor in many ways relates to the veneer of democracy in that it connotes a need to peel back the layers to fully comprehend policy in action. Unlike the onion metaphor, though, the veneer of democracy entails legitimized and normative

structures as discursive functions that conceal the actions of policymakers (i.e., ideology) and educational actors (i.e., resistance/acquiescence) that lie beneath.

In sum, the connection between the study of educational policy, institutional norms, and school-level realities is not fully explored, and I intend to contribute to this burgeoning area of policy research in this paper. In the following conceptual framework I discuss sociological and philosophical concepts that undergird my research in order to illustrate how I make these connections, thus laying the foundation for the veneer of democracy.

Theoretical Grounding

In order to expose what lies beneath the veneer of democracy, the primary concepts underlying this research derive from theories surrounding democracy (i.e., individualism, capitalism, meritocracy), identity, structure, and agency.

Democracy Discourses and Educational Policy

The role of education is presently framed as economic in nature: that within the bounds of capitalism and neoliberalism, education has an implicit and explicit social contract of “being a mechanism for meritocracy” and thus serves as a “conduit for achieving national prestige on a global stage” (Patel, 2013, p. 310). Here Patel points to policy discourses that emphasize individualism and frame education and democracy with the values of capitalism. Indeed, as Ladson-Billings (1998) noted, “Conflated with democracy, capitalism slides into the background of our understanding of the way in which U.S. political and economic ideology are entangled and read as synonymous” (p. 15). As democracy becomes collapsed with capitalism, capitalism becomes collapsed with educational policy. Moreover, this “market-driven discourse” positions students as

workers (Patel, 2013, p. 310) and schools as private enterprises subject to economic pressures to perform (Apple, 2013). These neoliberal discourses become the vague, democratic discourses that are accepted and internalized in educational policy enactment as they weave themselves into the veneer of democracy. These internalized discourses then collide with educational actors' identities and actions.

Democracy Discourses and Identity

Davis (2004), in her theories on democracy in increasingly multicultural schools, warned that neoliberal policies create de facto segregation because desired stable uniformity implicated in their meritocratic structures marginalize students who deviate from the legitimized 'norm'. These 'norms' are legitimized within what Linville (2009) called *identity politics*, which enforce the types of identities that are acceptable and necessary for an individual's survival within society. Thus, the accepted identity is rewarded and reinforced, which in turn reifies what types of identities are considered legitimate by society. Koyama and Bartlett (2011) supported this view when they stated that policies that favor English-only structures convey a "drive for cultural uniformity," which are outward "productions" that "veil xenophobic and linguistic discrimination directed at those who do not speak English as their native language" (p. 172). These "productions" become institutionalized discourses that circulate through macro- and micro-level processes, so ELs may choose to mute their cultural, ethnic, or linguistic identity in order to gain the political rewards of assimilation. As language policy enactment entails not only 'democratic' discourses and internalized norms surrounding identity, we must further explore the layers wherein sociological phenomena collide with neoliberal ideologies.

Democracy Discourses and Agency

According to Foucault (1976), the internalization of taken-for-granted knowledge (or truth/norms) determines where power is located, and that *consciousness* leads to an equitable distribution of power among all. For while power is dispersed among all individuals, the legitimized and institutionalized ideals of who possess power create inequality and even oppression. These power inequities become embedded as truth, which is produced and reproduced through discourse. Foucault (1976) further explicated that “there can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourse of truth...Power never ceases its interrogation, its inquisition, its registration of truth: it institutionalizes, professionalizes and rewards its pursuit” (p. 93). In other words, our society’s functionality depends upon fitting into the preexisting structures for what is ‘right’ and ‘true.’ Oppressive processes are oftentimes hidden from our view, as social actors unwittingly accept these norms (as they are hidden beneath the veneer of democracy). Through dialogue, we become *conscious* of these ‘truths’, thus creating agency for creating new definitions of ‘truth’, which then carry power when they embedded as institutional norms. This dialogue is reflective nature, and involves social actors (in this case, teachers, students, school leaders) to engage in what Ladson-Billings (1998) called “provocative thinking about the contradictions of U.S. ideals and lived realities” (p. 22). Bourdieu (1984) extended these ideas of ‘truth’ when examining language as a function of legitimacy within a neoliberal, meritocratic context.

Democratic Discourse and Structure

Bourdieu (1984) argued about language itself—notably “official” languages—is bound up in nation creation, thus making the “state language” the “theoretical norm

against which all linguistic practices are objectively measured” (p. 45). In other words, the function of language becomes an ideological norm—that can derive from hegemonic sources—which social actors engender. In this sense, language becomes a “normalized product” (p. 46) that undergirds policy and practice (i.e., policy enactment) alike. The normalization of English through policy and practice (evident in curriculum and structures) creates English ‘proficiency’ as an institutionalized, “arbitrary boundary” (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 118) as it fosters a misrecognition of an “other”. Better said, the normativity of English becomes embedded into the *habitus* of policymaking and policy enactment (within schools), thus barring opportunities to recognize and respond to an increasingly multilingual and multicultural student demographic.

Bourdieu’s *habitus* illustrates how language policy discourses are enacted and implicated in the institutional beliefs (practices, perspectives, actions) of schools (Johnson & Johnson, 2013). *Habitus* is a pattern of perceptions formed through social structures, and provides schema from which members of social groups enact interpretations and practices. As such, “the *habitus* implies a ‘sense of one’s place’ but also a ‘sense of the other’s place’” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 131) and provides a “world of common sense, a social world which seems self-evident” (p. 132). In other words, structures are so embedded in our minds through our constant exposure to shared perceptions (through interactions), that the social world the *habitus* provides us becomes normal and more or less taken for granted. According to Harker (1984), schools play a central role in reproducing taken-for-granted social and cultural structural inequalities from one generation to the next, which is a result of an embedded and perpetuated *habitus*. This conveys the institutional interactions that form and are informed by

macrostructures—these, then, inform our collective actions (i.e., educational practices within policy enactment).

Bourdieu's theories relate to Bastedo's (2009) more structuralist explanation of institutional logics, which he described as the belief system(s) that predominate in an organizational field (in this case, school), and provide a framework for the policymaking process. Institutional ideals function simultaneously as organizing principles so that the organizations (or schools) easily shape and reshape practices consistent with them (Bastedo, 2009). Oftentimes, these institutional logics are consistent with neoliberal ideals of cultural uniformity, individualism, and free market competition. Institutional logics, then, represent an archetype, which, then, favors a particular ideology and, thus, particular organizational actions, because "an archetype is...the result of a process where advantaged individuals and groups have consolidated their political position and gained control over organizational resources" (p. 211). In other words, individuals/groups (in power, typically) make decisions based on archetypical, institutionalized ideologies that favor the perpetuation of neoliberal structures. These institutional logics, then, gain legitimacy among organizational actors (via the veneer of democracy)—when this occurs, institutional logics are *convergent*. When institutional logics are convergent, policies become institutionalized at both the macro (political) and micro (school) levels. This convergence was achieved when Unz successfully promoted Arizona's English-only policy, and voters subsequently approved it.

The above sociological theories are essential in researching language policy enactment as they help to "describe how language policy discourses institutionalize and legitimize" (Johnson & Johnson, 2015, p. 108) ideologies and norms. These tenets

illustrates the connection of the macro to the micro: that policy discourses can be enacted via acquiescence or resistance within institutions, but regardless of the form enactment, they are framed by institutionalized, normative forces. Henceforth, policy actors (in this case, educators and students) are active agents in the reproduction or contestation of such norms (Johnson & Johnson, 2015). Johnson and Johnson (2015) cogently sum up this phenomenon in their claim that these embedded norms rely:

on human agents who actively recontextualize (or not) dominant language policy discourses such that while some educators will be conscripted and therefore complicit in instantiating marginalizing discourses, others will endorse alternative discourses that promote educational and social opportunity for linguistic minorities. (p. 108).

Indeed, educational actors enact language policy in various ways, thus conveying their agency around embedded norms. In order to arrive at these actions, I wipe away the veneer of democracy using the above critical social theory framework.

Research Methodology and Design

The data in this paper derive from a one-and-a-half-year ethnographic study of one linguistically and culturally diverse urban high school in Arizona. In this study I intended to answer the following research questions: (1) How do educational actors perceive and enact functionalist, conservative policies in schools that serve increasingly diverse student populations? (2) What are the taken-for-granted institutional norms of schooling on a macro-level, and how are those norms challenged by and/or embedded into the micro-level institutional realities of schooling? (3) What are the macro-level

discourses around democratic education, and how do they align and/or conflict with the micro-level discourses within educational institutions?

This study expands the “newer wave of language policy education research,” which is predicated on the idea that language policies cannot be fully understood without studying actual practices (Menken & García, 2010, p. 3). This burgeoning field of language policy research creates a macro (policy) and micro (school) connection through ethnographic methods and critical discourse analysis; Hornberger and Johnson (2007) refer to this new approach as “ethnography of language education policy”, which offers unique insights into policy enactment through “thick descriptions of policy interpretation and implementation at the local level” (p. 511). The ethnography of language policy ultimately conceptualizes language policy as a *process* that begins with a text that is “interpreted and appropriated in unpredictable ways by agents who appropriate, resist, and/or change dominant and alternative policy discourses” (Johnson & Freeman, 2010, p. 15).

In this study I employed critical ethnography, because this approach requires precision about the many ways in which power and knowledge intermingle (Carspecken, 1996). The prolonged engagement with the site through critical ethnography allowed me to continuously observe and reflect upon the phenomena that occurred in relation to Proposition 203, as well as upon my own interpretations and conclusions that arose throughout the process, thus ensuring my proclamations of “truth” were substantiated. I complemented my ethnographic study with a critical analysis of Proposition 203’s text.

Sampling

I used purposeful sampling (Merriam, 2009) for selecting participants, with the following criterion: participants experience the effects of Arizona's language policy (ELLs, ELD teachers, and administrators). During ethnographic visits I also engaged in informal dialogues with other school staff members (e.g., mainstream [non-ELD] teachers, custodial staff, resource officers, etc.) to get a clearer sense of the school's culture, structures, and discourses around policy and practice. For this paper I include data from in-depth interviews with each ELD staff member (six total, including the ELD counselor) and school administrators (N=2), observations during ELD classes (three hours per day, three days per week), and field visits to school functions (e.g., Open House, pep assemblies, faculty meetings). Interviews used for this paper took place during the second semester of the 2013-2014 school year and during the first semester of the 2014-2015 school year. I interviewed the outgoing principal, assistant principal, and outgoing ELD co-department chair at the completion of the 2013-2014 school year. In April 2014 the district terminated the contract of the principal due to consecutive years of not meeting adequate yearly progress, the assistant principal decided to retire, and one of the two ELD co-department chairs resigned from her position after nine years at the school.

Canyon High School (a pseudonym) is a public school in southern Arizona located in a metropolitan area; it is part of a large, urban school district. Canyon was chosen because of its substantial and unique ELL population: a multitude of languages and cultures are represented on campus. In 2013 Canyon had 1,153 students, which contains a large number of refugee students. Students there spoke over 40 different languages and dialects in 2013. At the end of the 2012-2013 school year, Canyon had a

20.67% ELL reclassification rate, 86.35% attendance rate, 82% promotion rate, 5.16% dropout rate, and 57.32% four-year graduation rate (70.5% five-year rate) (ADE, 2013). For the past three school years, ADE gave Canyon a “D” rating based on the state’s A-F school report card rating system. Since the 2010-2011 school year, math, reading, writing, and language scores on standardized tests have increased moderately, although the median and mean scores have consistently remained below a passing score (ADE, 2013). Although the school has made some noteworthy gains, its failure to meet the minimum passing scores resulted in its low rating and a “soft” school turnaround policy put in place in 2014 (resulting in the dismissal of the principal and resignation of 23 teachers).

Data Collection and Analysis

Since I took on a critical ethnographic approach with a poststructuralist lens, data collection occurrences took place in various instances that overlapped and intertwined based on the themes that arose. Four key processes occurred throughout the data collection, as suggested by Carspecken (1996): (1) Taking a thick record through multiple participant observations; (2) in-depth interviews with ELD teachers and the school leaders; (3); thick record of field notes during school visits; (4) textual analysis of political documents.

Participant observations and fieldwork. I conducted observations within Canyon’s ELD department for three days per week, between three and four hours per day. During each day’s observation I visited at least two ELD classrooms, and spent time in the classrooms between one and two hours (or for one or two class periods). While conducting visits to each ELD classroom I took on the role of both participant as observer

and observer as participant (Merriam, 2009). In other words, I did not sit and observe the classrooms and events objectively; instead, I participated in lessons by interacting with students and working with students on individual lessons (similar to an instructional aid). I also conducted multiple visits to the school site during regular day-to-day processes, as well as school events (e.g., faculty meetings, pep assemblies, Open House). Since I gathered data pertaining to educational discourses, I gained greater opportunities to learn as a participant, but remained open to observing interactions and gestures from a more objective standpoint. I kept a thick record of my own reflections throughout the data collection process, and I coded my observation/field notes inductively and deductively for common themes, and compared to codes/themes in interviews.

Interviews. I conducted in-depth phenomenological face-to-face interviews with all participants. Interview questions focused on perceptions and reactions to language policy and its corresponding mandates, as well as school structures and curricula. Because the interviews encompassed a hermeneutic phenomenological structure (Heppner & Heppner, 2004), I created an “interview schedule” rather than a strict “question and answer” format—the interview schedule served as a prompt to help elicit and stimulate participants’ stories about prominent events and insights concerning their senses of self and identity within Arizona’s language policy mandates (Heppner & Heppner, 2004). All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim, then coded inductively and then deductively for common themes.

Critical ethnographic analysis. I adhered to three of Carspecken’s (1996) five recommended stages for analyzing critical ethnographic data. The first stage primarily required compiling the primary record (or collection) of my data (interview data). During

the second stage, preliminary reconstructive analysis, I noted phenomena that were apparent and recurrent in the primary data records. These phenomena incited meanings and interpretations that came from pragmatic, semantic, and linguistic structures that arose, which were noted for common themes, key issues, and preliminary patterns that emerged, and compared those to findings in my critical analysis of policy texts (see next section). I also coded for where and what particular types of power that surfaced (relating to institutional logics and neoliberal/neoconservative ideologies) in interactions. This type of analysis applied to the third stage, dialogical data generation, as I analyzed my records from classroom observations and field notes. Again, I looked for themes related to the location and articulation of power and cultural reproduction through institutional isomorphism. The remaining two of Carspecken's stages were omitted as they did not relate to my ontological and epistemological grounding. The preliminary themes included power, culture, agency, norms, isomorphism, rationality, "right," responsive, student center, sociocultural shifts, segregation/integration. Eventually, after completing the third stage and then the final stage of my analysis (CDA), I finalized my four themes: Morality, Rationality, Opportunity, and Ambivalence. Ultimately, the three stages of analysis that I employed relate to discourses and interactions—hence, critical discourse analysis (CDA) served as a compliment to the ethnography.

CDA. According to Fairclough (1995), discourses are "semiotic ways of construing aspects of the world (physical, social, or mental), which can generally be identified with different positions or perspectives of different groups of social actors" (p. 232). Hence, the *discourse* that arose in both spoken and textual modes (e.g., interviews, interactions, policy documents) served as the focus of my analyses. Critical discourse

analysis aims to produce interpretations and explanations of areas of social life (micro-level), which both identify the causes of social structures (macro-level) and produce knowledge, which could contribute to mitigating any unjust or unequal consequences (Fairclough, 1995). CDA is incredibly useful when conducting language policy research, because analyzing policy discourses help “shed light on language policy research questions that are embedded in the ideological frameworks of both participants and researchers” (Fitzsimmons-Doolan, 2009, p. 395). Additionally, it is “necessary” in the research of Arizona’s policy, in particular, because its “highly prescriptive model” impacts a “historically and frequently marginalized student population” (Leckie et al., 2013).

Interview transcripts, field/observation notes (which include images, text, gestures, and other semiotic elements), and policy texts were inductively analyzed for common phenomena that emerged (i.e., the final four themes); these phenomena were then coded and compared between texts. Many semiotic elements were subject to examination for phenomena as I looked to “make sense of the whole”: I clustered the themes and validated them by referring to previous notes and my research questions (Heppner & Heppner, 2004).

I also employed critical policy analysis (CPA, Ball, 1991) for policy documents, which extends CDA to the political arena. CPA examines textual and dialectical discourses using linguistically based analyses. Since political language is “banal and strategic and generates emotional responses rather than critical responses or concrete actions” (Wright, 2005; p. 664), CPA examines how ambiguous symbolic language (Wright, 2005) incites an emotional response out of the reader, thus shielding its true

meanings and intents. In other words, critical analyses of both discourse and text help to expose what lies beneath the veneer of democracy.

Reflexivity and Bias

While conducting critical research, I acknowledged potential biases that may have arisen. The potential for bias derives from my preexisting interpretations of reality as a former language teacher, which could have imbued my data analyses with my meanings, rather than the meanings that educational actors produced. To address these potential biases, I took on the following processes: (1) prolonged engagement and persistent observation; (2) multiple data sources; (3) peer review; (4) clarification of researcher bias and use of a research journal for my reflections as an ethnographer; (5) member checking with study participants; and (6) rich, thick descriptions.

As an ethnographer, I must note my researcher identity, which required constant reflection and checking throughout data collection and analysis processes, as a White woman and a U.S. citizen who grew up in a predominantly White, upper-middle class community. Throughout this research I was conscious of my class-lived positionality as I conducted interviews and fieldwork, and analyzed data. Also, while I was once a second language learner and a linguistic minority (living overseas for a period of time), I have not been prevented from accessing certain rights and privilege because of my language skills, and I have not experienced being marginalized based on my ethnicity or nationality.

Findings

In this section I highlight results from my critical textual analysis of the opening “Declarations and Findings” section of Proposition 203⁵, and compare and contrast those findings with the discourse of Canyon’s (past) administrators and ELD teachers. I show how Proposition 203 uses “symbolic language” (Fairclough, 1995) to mask an ideology that devalues ELLs. Specifically, I highlight the three discourses that comprise the veneer of democracy—morality, opportunity, and rationality—and how the policy text and the educators use them. In addition, I show how faculty participants experienced institutional and political tensions that inhibited their agency for change.

Morality Discourse

Policy (macro) level. Webster’s Dictionary (2003) defines morality as “rightness or wrongness, as of an action.” Hence, language that expresses morality values obedience to what is definitively “right.” The morality discourse within Proposition 203, then, implies that the English language is the “right” language, and that individuals who do not speak that language are ‘wrong,’ and individuals who speak the ‘wrong’ language, then, must be ‘righted.’ Proposition 203 opens with a description of *why* the English language is ‘right’ by saying that “the English language is the national public language of the United States of America and of the state of Arizona.” This sentence depicts English as the ‘right’ language because it is the norm in the United States and in Arizona. The statement that the “vast majority” speaks English is both exaggerated and vague—for this claim is unsubstantiated and arguably false. In 2000, 25.9% of Arizona’s population spoke a language other than English (U.S. Census Bureau); while this is not a majority,

⁵ Since policy texts tend to contain a large amount of normative jargon, I choose to only focus on this more robust section of the text. Also, this text was highlighted for Arizona voters, as a rationale used in everyday language to appeal to the masses. Its accessibility to voters and marketing tactics make this an ideal source for critically analyzing the policy itself.

the percentage is significant. Given that over one-quarter of the state's population speaks a language other than English, we must ask if it is morally 'right' to teach English only.

Nevertheless, the third passage of the Findings and Declarations uses the aforementioned rationale to validate the moral onus of the state to ameliorate the 'wrongs' of being a non-English speaker: "The government and the public schools of Arizona have a moral obligation and a constitutional duty to provide all of Arizona's children, regardless of their ethnicity or national origins, with the skills necessary to become productive members of our society." The government agents and the school personnel, as responsible and caring citizens, must do their 'civic duty' by providing non-English speaking students with the language skills needed to conform to societal norms. The phrase "our society" underscores this assimilationist ideology, as it creates an 'us/them' dichotomy. This value for conformity is complimented by wording that mutes student differences. The text stating that "regardless of ethnicity or national origins," provides a veneer of democracy (by stating that we value 'all individuals' regardless of difference) at the expense of the import of cultural and national diversity. These points are underscored by the next words, which state that English is a skill needed to become a "productive member" of society. What this phrase states, then, is that speaking a language other than English holds individuals back from becoming "productive members." Therefore, a non-English speaker is 'unproductive' and, in other words, 'useless' in society (I define this ideology further as the discourse of "opportunity" later). The policy's framing of morality contrasts greatly with ELD faculty and administrators' framing thereof, thus conveying a macro-micro disconnect around policy enactment.

School (micro) level. All faculty participants brought up issues with morality related to doing what is “right” for the students, namely being caring advocates for students. While the policy text uses morality as a context for creating uniformity, the participants discussed morality within a context of addressing individual student needs and transforming lives. The outgoing principal described how Canyon essentially transformed him into a more morally-inclined, empathetic leader: “I’m more caring, more culturally aware, certainly more invested with that sense of mission that you have as an educator, because so many of these kids, if they don’t get a diploma it’s another generation...consigned to poverty.” His work at Canyon provided him an opportunity to enact a democratic, moral purpose as an educational leader, but he was *punished* for not attaining prescribed, neoliberal ‘legitimacy,’ as the overall performance of the school took precedence over his more social justice leanings.

All participants discussed the morality tension arising around ELD students in the content-area classes (specifically math). Within the mandate of the four-hour block, Canyon students take two classes outside of the department: math and one elective. However, a number of Canyon’s refugee students never attended school before, and are placed in high school math classes. The ELD counselor described this math placement conflict as a moral issue when she worked to accommodate students so that they felt encouraged and rewarded for their hard work. She described how she suggested having students remain in their math classes, but enroll in a Response to Intervention (RTI) class, in which they receive alternative instruction in basic mathematics. However, this choice resulted in equity issues:

But if we do a pullout and label them an RTI class, then they're getting elective credit. They'll get a grade that reflects their progress; it won't be Algebra credit, which they need for graduation, but it helps the teacher to be in a morally acceptable place, and the student to feel like their work is being valued. I know that as a teacher, I see somebody working hard everyday I'm not going to fail them. I'm not going to give them an F, even if they haven't met any of the standards. As a human being I am not going to give a student, who works everyday, an F, because they've made progress.

As a result of the mandates surrounding Proposition 203 and the curriculum norms of U.S. high schools, there is no moral imperative that addresses the needs of individual students, specifically immigrant and refugee students. In this sense, the policy is not democratic.

While the policy appeals to voters by stating that the English-only program is moral, its structures are so restrictive that teachers are unable to properly accommodate the needs of their students *and* provide them the structures needed to achieve and become "productive members of our society." In addition, the policy's narrowness, layered on top of preexisting neoliberal structures (i.e., using test score metrics as "objective" indicators of legitimacy), leads to micro-level interruptions via school turnaround policies and mandates. Moreover, ELLs are left behind, not attaining the opportunities discussed so explicitly within Proposition 203.

Opportunity Discourse

Policy (macro) level. Phrases that associate English-speaking with the attainment of the "American Dream" and "economic and social advancement" as

“productive members” of society also accentuate the ‘wrongness’ of non-English-speaking. These words and phrases emphasize that in order to fit into the American ideal and reap the benefits of living in the U.S., one must not speak any language other than English. This ‘opportunity’ discourse is touted through imagery/metaphor (“American Dream”) and ambiguity (“economic and social advancement,” “productive members”), which contributes to the “political spectacle” of Proposition 203 (Wright, 2005).

School (micro) level. While Proposition 203 touts itself as a great equalizer that by providing English immersion in a four-hour block in order to give ELLs the requisite skills to succeed in society, the results of the policy are quite the opposite. Consistent with findings in previous literature, Canyon’s faculty members used terms such as “bridge,” “isolate,” and “disconnect” when describing the enactment of the ELD program. The assistant principal described how students are stuck in the four-hour blocks and thus lose out on opportunities to attain the credits in other content-area classes that they need for graduation: “You know, what other opportunities can we offer these kids to get them graduated and to make up those four hours that they’re losing to this crazy legislation?” One ELD teacher spoke of how many students who arrive at 18 years of age or older, many with no English or even educational backgrounds, about to “age out” in less than four years, still have four hours a day eaten up by ELD courses: “How can they graduate? Impossible.” The ELD counselor discussed one student who had been in ELD level 1 for three years, and finally passed into ELD 2. She wondered, then, “How will the student now get out of the four-hour block and accumulate the credits to graduate before turning 22?”

The counselor also brought up how state testing mandates further prevent the success and achievement of ELLs: “With the intense pressure of the state testing, with very little options for success, that has been very frustrating.” She shared how every year there are students who have all of the needed credits to graduate, but cannot pass the AIMS (the Arizona state standardized test), and therefore they do not graduate. “I think there have to be other options...Because what happens is that people don’t move on, the doors close to opportunities because they don’t have this high school diploma.”

The four-hour pullout model also creates barriers for students who came to the U.S. seeking an education in order to pursue a career in the ‘land of opportunity,’ and that they would receive the skills and training needed to attain those opportunities. Instead, they are denied their dreams via a restrictive policy. The former co-department chair described how the four-hour block keeps ELLs from attaining the content that “they need to be successful.” For instance, she stated, “I have all these kids who want to be in the medical field, and they’re not getting all of the science they need, and they’re not being pushed through their science...they’re denied those experiences.” Although the ELD teachers do as much as they can to include other content areas in their classes, they are not science content area experts, they do not have the resources to include many aspects of a science curriculum, and the policy disallows content-focused instruction.

In addition to the lost content areas, the four-hour model prevents students from gaining credits to pursue postsecondary opportunities. For example, the local state university does not accept ELD credits as English credits (the university has made some exceptions after the department chairs and counselor argued for certain students to enroll, though they described this process as “difficult”). The former co-chair shared that “that’s

been a point of tension for a lot of students, a real disappointment for a lot of students who are incredibly hardworking.” Students feel disheartened in their inability to be accepted at the state’s top university, despite their hard work and diligence.

In addition to postsecondary educational opportunities being taken away, the mandates of Proposition 203 also lessen career opportunities. Many of Canyon’s vocational track programs are offered off campus through the city’s Joint Technical Education District (JTED). ELD faculty members all stated how many students would like to pursue the vocational path, and that it may also provide more equitable opportunities for many of their students who struggle with literacy and gaining credits to graduate. The former co-chair described how the structures of Proposition 203 thwart the enrollment of ELD students into the vocational courses, because they have to shorten their school day to get to many of the JTED classes. The four-hour block does not permit these active experiences that prepare them for future success.

And so the veneer of democracy describes English ability as the ticket to opportunity and success, but the micro-level enactment of policy proves otherwise. The policy creates and perpetuates stratification and segregation, while also undermining teachers and their opportunities to succeed. These processes are further conveyed in the tensions surrounding the rationality discourses.

Rationality Discourse

Policy (macro) level. Rationality particularly appears within the claim that, “young immigrant children can easily acquire full fluency in a new language,” thus evincing why English must be taught as “rationally and efficiently as possible.” This point is further emphasized in the assertion that Arizona ‘wasted’ financial resources on

“costly experimental language programs” that were “failures,” which contributed to the “current high dropout rates and low English literacy levels of many immigrant children.” This passage shames and blames educators for not teaching in a ‘morally’, ‘financially’, and ‘rationally’ effective way. In other words, the student-centered bilingual programs of the past are not ‘right.’ However, as conveyed in the micro-level processes within Canyon, the policy and its mandates are intrinsically *irrational*.

School (micro) level. While the policy text describes past programs as, essentially, failures due to their irrationality, all faculty participants described how the results of the mandates of Proposition 203 have led to irrationality within the school. All participants described the mandated four-hour block as “frustrating,” “messy,” “confusing,” and even “crazy.” One ELD teacher noted how the demographics of the school (i.e., the multitude of languages spoken, the diversity of immigrants, the large number of newly arrived refugee students) are disregarded by the policy, thus causing the ‘messiness.’ She explained how the diverse educational and linguistic backgrounds create additional challenges for teachers, especially in beginner levels 1 and 2 classes. During visits I noticed some students finishing their work quickly during independent writing exercises, and those students were very demanding of the teacher; they asked her to come check their work often. At the same time, half of the students appeared withdrawn and lost, teachers had to work hard to engage them and address their needs while responding to the needs of the rest of the class. Also, nearly once a week a new student was introduced into the classroom, while other students had chronic absences due to home and work responsibilities (some refugee students live independently, care for sick family members, are married with children, or are in charge of communicating with

institutions on behalf of their families). Though these classes only contained about 18-20 students, the variation in abilities and preparedness made the teachers' jobs very difficult.

Also, the sheltered aspect of the ELD program causes ELLs to miss out on the necessary learning, communicative, and academic language abilities that are needed to be successful once they reclassify into the mainstream classes. The four-hour block creates what the outgoing co-chair called a "pocket" in which students become accustomed to the teachers' methods and approaches. As a result, "the [mainstream] teachers didn't know how to work with them...[because] the kids were used to working in different ways than in [the ELD] program." The counselor discussed how reclassified students spend so much time isolated taking classes with the same peers and teachers, that once they exit they are ill-equipped to succeed beyond their ELD classes. As a result, reclassified students are at a disadvantage, and continue to experience stratification after integrating into mainstream classes. The assistant principal noted this: "There's a big gap between those [reclassified] kids and kids who have always been native English speakers...they're struggling...[They] get kind of lost."

As a result of the "messiness" of the policy, as well as how it inconspicuously functions to hold back students who are not the "norm", teachers have to work to keep students (and themselves) motivated and positive. One teacher described how with the four-hour block she has to work extra hard to come up with engaging lessons, "or else [students] get bored." The outgoing co-chair aligned with that, saying that since the policy was implemented she had to work extra hard in her planning "because ...it's really important that those four hours [of ELD] are positive, and meaningful, and engaging. And that's really a challenge...how do you make four hours interesting and meaningful?"

As one teacher described, the structure of the four-hour block also leads to issues with behavior as students are stuck with each other for the majority of the school day: “They go from one class to another class to another class all of them together. So if something happened starting in first period it carries on to the second, the third, and it becomes a behavior issue.” Challenges such as these were observed during visits to all ELD classrooms: teachers stopped to deal with behavior issues at least three times per class period.

The faculty members’ irrationality discourses completely contradict the rationality discourse of the policy, for, as shown here, the structure of the program is not efficient as the policy states. The policy’s discourse of rationality is a form of “political spectacle” used to create convergence between the public (voters) and the institutional logics (which are neoliberal and neoconservative in nature) and, hence, legitimacy. The political spectacle and resultant institutional convergence are key aspects of the veneer of democracy, because beneath the shield of legitimacy (rationality discourse) is an array of irrational, dysfunctional mandates that create further difficulties and challenges for teachers and students. As a result, many faculty participants feel both frustrated and disempowered, thus enabling a complacent and even ambivalent attitude toward educational policies. Thus, they have no agency to cause change.

Disempowerment and Ambivalence

Macro-level structures, such as educational policies and institutionalized norms, disregard micro-level realities, thus diminishing any opening for change. The faculty participants felt a loss of agency in the face of strong institutional and political norms. One ELD teacher said in relation to district and state educational politics, “I don’t pay

much attention. I don't know about political things. I don't know all the political situations behind that. My job is just teaching." The counselor also separated herself from political, state, and district issues:

I'm really not one to be focused on things that I feel like I can't have any control over. It takes so much energy to do the job and work with my students that I have not been an activist, if you will, at the state or district level. Politics is not my interest.

She did express irritation with inequitable values placed on schools without regarding what takes place internally:

I really can't speak to that much about the district or the state...I don't spend a lot of energy there, because it's frustrating. I think there's a lack of understanding about what's really happening, that we need to provide some other options for this population...I just don't have patience for politics and people who have different agendas that are really not about the students. And so I don't go there. I don't feel like I have any power in that regard, so I just don't go there. Maybe that's an easy way out, or whatever, but, it's just, I don't go there.

And so the macro-level pressures lead to disempowerment and avoidance.

One ELD teacher described how instead of resisting district and state mandates/structures, she chooses to maintain compliance. When discussing the state directives, she commented, "The state says, 'Jump,' and I say, 'How high?'" This attitude was apparent during one ELD faculty meeting, in which they discussed ADE's upcoming visit to the ELD classrooms to monitor their compliance with the policy. They

agreed to alter their lesson plans to show their adherence to teaching English discretely because, as one teacher stated that afternoon, “you have to play the game.”

Some ELD teachers put in efforts to combat political barriers, but consistently felt encumbered in their capacity to do so. The former co-department chair pushed against political forces by creating a club in which immigrant students created projects that gave them a voice in the school and community. She stated that the club created a “space” that responded to individual students and served as, “a reflection of...what’s happening and what they want to say.” In this club, students used different artistic mediums to express their experiences as immigrants and voice their concerns surrounding state policies (e.g., immigration) and school policies. After her departure from the school the other teachers were unsure how to continue the class/club due to institutional pressures (i.e., the school turnaround policy emphasizing increased discipline and student achievement). Before the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year, The current department chair stated, “I just don’t know in this [turnaround] model how much room there’s going to be for things like that, or how much personal space people will have and energy, with all of the navigating a new reality.”

The former co-chair described all of these institutional and political factors as the sources of her frustration and choice to leave Canyon:

I cannot create something new and better while I’m doing something that *is* the best I can do. I do believe that what we’re doing here at Canyon is the best within these constraints, and within this particular school and district, that is possible. And yet I’m not satisfied with this work...because honestly these kids deserve better than what this policy currently provides and what teachers are currently

able to do within the constraints of their job...It's the best it can be, and it's not good enough.

After nine years she left to work with refugees in a non-profit organization. The assistant principal also chose to leave as a result of his discouragement with the political norms of the state. However, he had a less optimistic vision for the future—he was too disillusioned and beaten down by the system to see his role as a change agent: “Education has become almost impossible: the assessment piece, the reporting pieces, the district is more and more toward the national trend...I don't know that I'll continue in education.” He did not recognize his change agency because he saw the issues in schools as extending to a level beyond his reach. He continued: “I don't know, it's hard to be optimistic at this point...I leave here kind of jaded.”

The participants accepted the status quo in their lack of change agency—this lack of agency derived from both political pressure and pushback from the state. As the former co-chair explained, “I think that's just the nature of education right now,” she conceded, “everybody just keeps pushing, and we keep pushing as hard as we can and as far as we can, and everybody just seems to get pushed back.” As a result, teachers and administrators compromise their democratic imperatives and surrender to the policy's mandates, regardless of how much it frustrates them and continues to stratify students.

Discussion

Smith (2004) stated that educational policies “serve the special interests of the few” and often “stratify and segregate” as they “hide behind a mask of common sense and the common good” (in Wright, 2005; p. 663), which cogently explains the phenomenon of Proposition 203's text. The Findings and Declarations section of the

policy conceals the inequitable results of the policy outlined in extant literature and in my research at Canyon High School. This concealment is achieved by conveying a veneer of democracy, which is expressed through discourses of morality, opportunity, and rationality. These discourses frame English as the norm and the meritocratic key to achieving success; hence, any deviation from said norm is problematic—it's immoral, it's inopportune, and it's irrational. As such, the veneer of democracy is a function of habitus: it is created by and perpetuates embedded structures and norms around what is valuable in education (i.e., neoliberalism and capitalist ideology). Since these normative structures and perceptions of democracy are so embedded in the habitus, the veneer of democracy creates *convergence* between the institutional logics (Bastedo, 2009) of policy and practice. The cost of this convergence, though, is the invalidation and even obstruction of educational actors' agency for and desire to create change. Since the veneer of democracy is an embedded political structure, the veneer must be peeled back by exposing the micro-level processes and discourses that occur around the policy's structures. As I have shown, critical analyses of political texts, in conjunction with ethnographic investigation within schools, provide tangible evidence of stratification and segregation, thus making the oppression conspicuous (Wright, 2005); this analytical/empirical approach leads to the consciousness (within academia, and then in schools and the policymaking realm) of taken-for-granted "knowledge" that Foucault (1976) entreated.

At Canyon, a school greatly affected by Proposition 203 with its substantial EL population, the participants' discourses contrast with those of the policy. The faculty members framed *morality* as employing caring, individualized, and even socially just

advocate approaches with students. Instead of seeing teaching English as a ‘civic duty’, they saw the individualized attention and responses to students as their moral imperatives. Nevertheless, the mandates of the policy, as well as other neoliberal policies (e.g., school report cards), hindered educators’ abilities to fully serve the students’ needs. These educators, then, felt an internal conflict in their hard work as they were continuously scrutinized and unacknowledged by the district and state. As a result, their agency for causing a shift was squandered and, eventually, lost.

These tensions also illustrate the conflicts within the *opportunity* discourses: Proposition 203 frames English acquisition as the ticket to opportunity and success, while the micro-processes at Canyon show how the four-hour block *prevents* ELs’ attainment of future opportunity and success. The students are barred from opportunities to gain the credits needed for graduation in an efficient manner, and they are barred from opportunities to pursue courses that will benefit their academic, professional, and personal growth. While the participants at Canyon recognized this tension and worked hard to ameliorate it, the macro-level pressures eroded their agency for change.

These hindrances derive from the irrationality of the four-hour block. The inefficient structures and isolation of the ELD program creates inhibiting structures in which ELs cannot attain the credits they need to graduate, cannot integrate with their EP peers, and cannot obtain the academic/communicative language needed to succeed in their mainstream classes (when/if they reclassify). In addition, the segregation of students leads to continuous conflicts between ELs, which cause difficulties for ELD teachers with classroom management. Thus, the political and institutional tensions result

in a lack of legitimized success from the school as a whole, despite the hard work of the faculty.

Ironically, the ELD department is widely regarded as highly functioning on a micro-level (by colleagues, administrators, and district personnel), although on a macro-level, as a result of political mandates, the department is considered the source of the school's dysfunction. Within the embedded neoliberal structures and norms around educational legitimacy, Canyon must prove its legitimacy via standardized test scores, graduating nearly all students in four years, and a significant EL reclassification rate. The narrowness of these institutionalized policies and structures do not allow this to happen, so the school's push for 'legitimacy' is leading to the school's 'illegitimacy' and potential downfall. Organizations seek legitimacy in order to 'survive', since Canyon does not meet the prescribed legitimacy metrics, it suffers great losses (i.e., otherwise dedicated faculty and staff as a result of the turnaround). This is a political paradox: the policies are intended to push schools to improve, but in their disregard for the internal realities of today's public schools, especially those in urban, multicultural contexts, they push such schools to decline.

Moreover, the significant gap between micro- and macrostructures produces both micro- and macro-level conflicts and challenges. Educational policies, such as Proposition 203, uphold assimilationist ideologies of stable uniformity and neoliberal ideologies of free market competition and students as human capital (Apple, 2005), and institutionalized norms (resulting from convergent institutional logics and habitus) perpetuate these ideals and hinder educational actors' motivation and/or desire to combat oppressive political structures. Therefore, educational actors enact policy within a

functional, compliance framework instead of an emancipatory, activist framework, and the veneer of democracy allows for marginalizing structures to continue and even strengthen. In order for such schools to attain external legitimacy, they must be reimagined from the inside out instead of from the outside in. These reimagined realities carry implications for creating a new paradigm for policy enactment.

Conclusions

The force of macro-level political structures, shielded by the veneer of democracy in the form of morality, opportunity, and rationality discourses, may seem overwhelming and inescapable, as evidenced in this study. Educators with an embedded drive to truly make a difference with today's increasingly diverse public school students may experience hopelessness in the face of neoliberal policies. Nevertheless, by way of probing, reflective practices (e.g., as described by Foucault and Ladson-Billings) and multifaceted approaches to research, agency for change (by scholars, educators, and policymakers) can take precedence over the propensity for compliance.

Implications for Educators

To illustrate the implications for educators, I highlight aspects of a conversation with the former co-department chair after her departure. After doing outreach work at other schools, she realized how normative structures, as well as a lack of consciousness from faculty members, create unworkable environments to address their students' needs. This realization caused her to reframe her idea of advocacy as not a normative type of outreach, but as a mechanism for pushing against the status quo through reflection. In referencing her work in one school, she described the following:

I brought up the issue of student voice, and how do you really engage students in the design of school in terms of curricula, instruction, everything...and it became somewhat clear to me that nobody really knows very well how to do that...I started thinking about advocacy in a new way, in terms of how do I get the students to really take ownership...go beyond just talking about voice, and advocacy, and engagement, about these people over here, and actually engage them in that advocacy work?

This educator recognized how she did not give the students enough agency in her work at Canyon, and understood that as an educational leader she plays a pivotal role in fostering that agency. As such, a truly reimagined school would require removing the onus from educators as either ‘heroes from’ or ‘victims of’ embedded policy structures, which leads to further ambivalence and exhaustion. In pursuing a more reflective approach, educators must look beyond their roles as advocates and see themselves as the conduit through which students can reflect and create. While the educators in this study felt powerless in their fight against restrictive political and institutional structures, they did not consider *including* students in their fight. Students (and their families), especially with their various funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992), are an untapped resource. Educators must come together and figure how they can reimagine their schools *with* their students while functioning within neoliberal policies.

This reflective, creative approach will awaken human agency, as it negates normative, top-down views of policy and practice. When we reimagine all school players as policy actors instead of policy recipients, real *consciousness* (Foucault, 1976) and change can occur. As Menken and García (2010) stated, a policy statement can open up

or restrict ideological spaces regarding multilingualism, and so too can educational actors “carve out or close off these spaces” (p. 4). These processes would open up the opportunities to enact changes that reach all the way up to the highest policymaking levels as new, reflective educational structures become embedded into the habitus and cancel out connected to neoliberalism.. Furthermore, educators need scholars to provide insight into how to pursue these new processes, practices, and future norms.

Implications for Researchers

Just as educators must create a partnership with students, educational researchers must create partnerships with educators and policymakers in order to enact change. Scholars must conduct more studies that compare macro-level structures/policies with the micro-level realities of schooling; for as this study showed, many educators feel overwhelmed and discouraged by policy, and chose to ignore it and focus on compliance. It is essential that scholars take on the multifaceted approach to studying language policy “so that we can offer theoretical constructs that will help educators negotiate this complex terrain when faced with their own policy decisions” (Menken & García, 2010, p. 4). As I contribute to the growing body of research on macro/micro connections in language policy, I assert that further research should be done as such. As Johnson and Freeman (2010) proclaimed, extant critical perspectives on language policy “should be tempered with a focus on local agency” (p. 27); for if we continue to conceptualize language policy as a “monolithic mechanism for educational hegemony,” (p. 28), then we risk reifying disempowering realities. Thus, we must reimagine how we theorize about and research language (and other educational) policies predicated on and emphasizing local actions and contexts (i.e., agency).

Furthermore, researchers need to utilize their scholarly toolbox in analyzing policy and structure, while also working *with* educators in exposing openings for causing political shifts. In essence, researchers must take the role of micro/macro liaison, creating a bridge between policy and practice. Scholars should begin by merging sociological, philosophical, and political thought when conceptualizing policies and their enactment. Then, ethnographic approaches mixed with policy analyses, such as this study, are a good start. Of course, quantitative analyses (of school- and state-level metrics) and deeper political analyses (of other documents, court proceedings, district mandates, etc.) are needed in achieving this mission, as well. This paper is a call to researchers to take on this project of bridging macro- and micro-level structures in order to cause a paradigm shift in the education of today's increasingly diverse student population.

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APPENDIX C

**SHIFTING POPULATIONS, SHIFTING PRACTICES? CURRICULUM WORK-
LEADERSHIP WITHIN AN EVOLVING SOCIOCULTURAL CONTEXT**

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper purpose is to examine the contributions, gaps, and normativity problems in mainstream sociocultural theories, curriculum theory, and educational leadership studies, and to consider reflective education theories that provide a less normative alternative. Our framework features four sociological perspectives, including social reproduction, social transformation, centrist views (a mixture of both), and reflective education for social change. Within each of these perspectives, we consider consonant curriculum theories and educational leadership studies. This study utilized qualitative research methods to examine a high-performing high school and district in a working class, increasingly diverse community, and we found that participants primarily considered the role of education as preparatory for existing social norms and values through their long-standing curriculum system. Reliance on neoliberal policy discourses contributed to an institutionalized “culturally neutral” curriculum system that, perhaps unconsciously, reinforced deficit views of increasingly diverse students. Leaders had awareness of social changes but often missed opportunities for interruption and reflection. Thus, a fourth perspective, reflective education for social change, may be useful to move beyond the social reproduction vs. transformation binary frequently utilized in education literature.

Recent policy (increasingly national curriculum standards, evaluation, privatization) and societal changes (e.g., neoliberalism, globalization) have illuminated complex changes for schools, including free market competition among schools with parents as customers and individual students/subjects as human capital in a global economy (Apple, 2005; Lipman, 2011), changing demographics, and immigration patterns. At the same time, dominant neoconservative groups reject differences in their desire to uphold a romanticized ideal of education (including curriculum) based on institutionalized morality and stable uniformity (Apple, 2005). Neoliberals and neoconservatives, thus, have clear differences in philosophies and priorities; however, they have created tenuous compromises regarding the need for externalized evaluation of a common curriculum with performance labels that allow students and parents as customers to choose schools in an educational marketplace. Regardless of circulating neoliberal and neoconservative discourses, however, U. S. student demographics do not

reflect uniformity. Latino(a)/Hispanic populations are increasing dramatically, and many countries have experienced changing immigration patterns. Impacts of these global population flows along with neoliberal and neoconservative policies are visible in schools across the U.S. and many other countries.

Amidst these conflicting realities, sociologists, philosophers, and curriculum theorists have long engaged in vigorous intellectual debates regarding the role of education in society, the needs of society versus the individual, and ways to balance uniformity and plurality, most often arguing either for: (a) *social reproduction* - schools should operate within society to transmit uniform knowledge and values to future generations who will inherit a largely unchanged society (e.g., Durkheim, 1893/1997; Parsons, 1963) or (b) *social transformation* - schools should operate in a distinct role apart from society to prepare individuals to transform existing society and social values, particularly for marginalized, pluralistic populations (e.g., Freire, 2000; Apple, 2004). Some scholars combine the first two perspectives in third a more centrist view (e.g., Merton, 1968; Dewey, 1916). A fourth perspective—*reflective education for social change*⁶—offers a less normative perspective wherein the future is considered reflectively as an open question (e.g., Pinar, 2004; Uljens, 2002). In large part, however, discussions about the role of education in society have remained dualistic and normative (sociocultural reproduction vs. sociocultural transformation) with little attention to culture and the role of curriculum work-leadership, reflecting the latter view of societal

⁶ The term reflective education for sociocultural change encompasses Nordic and German traditions of *Bildung*, the process and product of personal development guided by reason (Gundem & Hopmann, 2002). *Bildung* is at the center of Nordic and German versions of curriculum theory known as *Didaktik*, with its inter-related focus on action, reflection, practice, and theory.

relationships to education. In our work, we use the phrase *curriculum work-leadership* (Ylimaki, 2012) because we argue that curriculum is a broader term that considers societal and cultural aims that are translated into content and methods, and any mediation work among societal aims/trends/policies and curriculum content/methods must be leadership. More specifically, we conceptualize curriculum work-leadership as a mediational process among societal changes/aims translated into academic subjects, educational experiences for increasingly pluralistic individuals/subjects, and social interactions around these in educational institutions.

This paper draws on findings from an illustrative case study and the literature to explore curriculum work-leadership in relation to recent changes in society (e.g., neoliberalism, globalization) and policy (e.g., more centralized curriculum, evaluation) along with demographic and economic shifts. More specifically, our purpose is threefold: 1) to examine the contributions, gaps, and normativity problems in mainstream North American sociocultural theories, curriculum theory, and educational leadership studies; 2) to consider reflective education theories, including *Bildung*, that are more prevalent in European/Nordic general education; and 3) to illustrate these gaps, normativity problems, and missed opportunities for reflective education with one case study of a high performing, culturally diverse high school and district. To convey these gaps and a new call for action, this paper is divided into four main sections: (a) theoretical framework on society, education, and the individual, including applications to curriculum and leadership, (b) research methods, (c) findings, and (d) discussion/conclusion.

Sociocultural Theories, Curriculum, and Leadership

In this section, we discuss modern theoretical and philosophical perspectives on

relationships among society, education, and the individual that have informed classical and contemporary curriculum theorizing and leadership studies as disparate fields over time. The four perspectives are: 1) sociocultural reproduction; 2) sociocultural transformation; 3) centrist; and 4) reflective education for sociocultural change.

Four Modern Sociocultural Theories on Society and Education

Sociocultural reproduction. We use the term sociocultural reproduction to refer to the processes (including curriculum) that reproduce the underlying structure of social relations and institutions (e.g., Durkheim 1893/1997; Cohen, 1968; Parsons, 1963). For instance, Durkheim argued that in virtually all societies, education was of critical importance in creating the moral unity necessary for social cohesion and harmony; in other words, moral values were the foundation of society. Durkheim's emphasis on values and cohesion set the tone for how present-day functionalists approach the study of education. Functionalists tend to assume that consensus is the normal state in society and that conflict represents a breakdown of shared values. In a highly integrated, well-functioning society, schools socialize students into the appropriate values and sort and select students according to their abilities. Such thinking understands education as located within the existing society, meaning that the task of education is reduced to socialization, preparing all individuals for an existing (largely uniform) society and dominant culture whereby societal practices and norms work as the guiding principles (Uljens, 2006). In other words, education is subordinated to existing societal norms and values with more consideration for uniformity than plurality.

Sociocultural transformation. Social transformation theories critique the status quo and seek to explain, either through 'subjective' (e.g., Lukacs; Frankfurt School) or

‘objective’ (e.g., Althusser) ontologies, how radical change occurs in society. From a subjectivist view of reality, some theorists consider how the individual creates the world in which the person lives, emphasizing the importance of developing individual consciousness to transcend the limitations of existing social arrangements. From an objective viewpoint, sociocultural change almost inevitably involves a transformation of observable structures, which, even given favorable circumstances, do not fall or change of their own accord without revolutionary action. Regardless of particular views of reality, when applied to education, sociocultural transformation theorists argue that education is disconnected, ever superordinate, to society. Therefore, as Rousseau (1762) argued, education should not replicate problematic aspects of a less than ideal society; rather, education should promote a new ideal that does not yet exist. Education would work toward this ideal, which may, in the future, become reality when, through the education, of a new generation of citizens—with idealized values—enters society. In our view, sociocultural transformation theories are also normative in that a predetermined set of *idealized* values guide practice.

Centrist. Scholars who take a centrist approach (e.g., Merton, 1968; Dewey, 1916) suggest that education should both reproduce and transform society/culture. These scholars argue that education should pass on productive dimensions of culture valued by society, and at the same time teach children/future citizens about ideals for the future. Education, then, builds upon the strength of sociocultural reproduction perspectives, values, and norms as well as the strength of sociocultural transformation perspectives that develop and improve society. Thus, from a centrist perspective, education should draw on both sociocultural reproduction and sociocultural transformation perspectives, using the

same set of norms and values. Yet, in combining sociocultural reproduction and sociocultural transformation perspectives, centrist theorists are also combining normative values and interests. In sum, the similarity among these three perspectives is their normativity. In addition, social norms and values (existing, ideal, or some combination) are predefined beyond educational leaders', teachers', and students' own interests and cultural experiences. Thus we look to reflective education for sociocultural change as an effective alternative to the aforementioned perspectives.

Reflective education for sociocultural change. Reflective education for sociocultural change differs from sociocultural reproduction, sociocultural transformation, and centrist perspectives in that it is non-hierarchical, meaning this position assumes a level relation among different societal forms and practices, including education, politics, working life/economy, and law (Uljens, 2006). As Uljens (2006) further explained, political processes establish the laws, while the laws simultaneously regulate political activity. In the same sense, education is partly subordinate to political influences but simultaneously superordinate with respect to politics. Education, then, prepares the subject for active citizenship and political democracy as well as for a working life *to be developed by the individual*. Importantly, in this tradition, the individual is prepared to transform the very same society or culture into which that person is educated, but how this is or should be done cannot be decided upon in advance (Uljens, 2002), thus avoiding the normativity problems associated with the first three perspectives.

In the next two sections, we discuss curriculum theory and leadership studies separately because they have developed historically as disparate fields with different

theoretical logics and research traditions. In the final section we argue for the need to bridge these two fields together based upon our empirical findings and analysis of literature.

Curriculum Theory and Studies

Curriculum theory and research traditionally start from one of the societal and philosophical perspectives explained above, considering questions of aims, content and methods of teaching – on a societal-collective and a school level. While leadership is not explicitly considered in curriculum theorizing, understandings of curriculum theory can provide the educational leadership field with a language and analytical tools to explain how curriculum work-leadership mediates among societal aims (translated into curriculum content, methods, planning), culture, and social interactions around these in schools.

Sociocultural reproduction. From a sociocultural reproduction perspective, curriculum serves a preparatory function, preparing all students to become good citizens in existing society with its knowledge, values, and norms. This task is normative in character, meaning that through curriculum in the context of institutionalized schooling, children are socialized into existing norms and values. Here curriculum is seen as a technological/rational problem, thus neglecting cultural plurality and schools' (including students' and educators') diverse needs and resources.

Bourdieu (1977) is one of the first scholars to explicitly focus on cultural plurality and the shadow side of sociocultural reproduction, using the term 'symbolic violence' to explain how particular groups retain dominance in a society (without resorting to physical means). Symbolic violence is "the power to impose instruments of knowledge and

expression, of social reality, which are arbitrary but not recognized as such” (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 13). Further, Bourdieu argued that when most members of a society accept its norms as “natural,” rather than arbitrary, then they also accept the outcomes of these norms as natural, even when the outcomes go against their own interests.

Symbolic violence is a particularly subtle and thus effective form of power, one that is not reducible to the imposition of force and disguises itself as ‘natural’ or ‘necessary,’ ultimately comprising the core of pedagogic authority in curriculum discourses (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990, p. 7). In other words, what is taught and how it is taught can either work to confirm the power and arbitrary nature of the various structures or challenge its authority and legitimacy. Further, today’s policy focus on the “learner” also tends to neglect cultural categories that signify individual identities and group memberships, such as class and race/ethnicity. As Yosso (2005) argued, today’s curriculum policies and pedagogical frameworks are limited for interpreting “how individual views about educational success are shaped by personal sociocultural and linguistic experiences” (p. 75).

Sociocultural transformation. In contrast to reproduction-oriented curriculum theories, sociocultural transformation-oriented theorists (Freire, 2000; McLaren, 1998) conceptualized curriculum as a revolutionary force with respect to societal practices. Here curriculum functions in a superordinate position to society with plans, content, and methods functioning to liberate citizens from existing, oppressive social norms and values. The role of education, then, is to develop something more socially just, teaching students to work toward an ideal that does not yet exist. Critical curriculum scholarship has gained popularity in recent decades through various approaches to critical pedagogy

(e.g., Giroux, 1983; McLaren, 1998), critical views of “official knowledge” (Apple, 2004), and Freire’s (2000) teachings aimed at developing critical consciousness.

Regardless of ontological differences, the role of curriculum is to prepare children in idealized, more socially just norms and values that they will apply as citizens who transform society.

Centrist. In recent years, some curriculum scholars (e.g., Pressley & Allington, 1998; Frey, Lee, Tollofson, Pass, & Massengill, 2005) have proposed centrist perspectives that incorporate both curriculum approaches aimed at socialization and more revolutionary approaches to education. At the same time, centrist-oriented curriculum scholars argue for a balanced perspective in which the underlying pre-determined norms and ideals of both dominant perspectives (sociocultural reproduction and sociocultural transformation) are emphasized. Further, such balanced curriculum scholars take a clear position about the relevance of the norms from both perspectives.

Reflective education for sociocultural change. Pinar (2012) offered a reflective education-oriented alternative to the normative approaches, arguing for learners/students/educators to engage curriculum content in ways that support new relations to the world, self, and others. According to Pinar (2004), public school curriculum is about “understanding the relations among academic knowledge, the state of society, the processes of self-formation, and the character of the historical moment in which we live, in which others have lived, and in which our descendants will someday live” (p. 30). In other words, curriculum is ‘a complicated conversation’ that prepares the subject for active citizenship and political democracy as well as for a working life *to be developed by the individual*. According to Pinar and colleagues (1995), “Curriculum,

then, is a provocation to reflect on and to think critically about ourselves, our families, our society” (Pinar, 2012, p. 267). European scholars have also proposed reflective educational perspectives on curriculum, including particularly Benner (1991), and Uljens (2002). It is important to note, however, that contemporary North American and European curriculum scholars do not explicitly consider the role of leadership and educational institutions in curriculum theorizing.

Some classical curriculum theories indirectly referenced to leaders as authoritative agents who direct curriculum planning and implementation (e.g., Bobbit, 1918; Tyler, 1949/2013); however they most often identified these leaders as curriculum specialists rather than principals or superintendents. Recent critically oriented curriculum scholars (e.g., Apple, 2004, 2005; Anyon, 2008) have written more explicitly and critically about formal leaders as agents of the system who direct teachers’ work and, perhaps unconsciously, circulate a particular set of (neoliberal and neoconservative) policy discourses that institutionalize official knowledge and create a hidden curriculum. Thus, curriculum theorists and scholars may consider and/or critique the role of leadership; however, they do not explicitly theorize leadership work with regards to curriculum and instruction or the social interactions around these in schools as societal institutions.

Leadership Studies

In educational leadership studies, the intention is to understand empirical relationships among leadership practice and student learning through the work of teachers. In other words, leadership with regards to curriculum, instruction, and learning is an empirical phenomenon. Scholars vary in how they conceptualize leadership, from

the individual principal or district leader who has formal positional authority (e.g., Edmonds, 1979; Elmore, 2000) to a shared capacity for instructional leadership (e.g., Hallinger, 2003; Marks & Printy, 2003). Scholars use terms like *instructional* and *distributed leadership* to describe indirect relationships between leadership practice and student learning. While these educational leadership scholars do not explicitly conceptualize the school as subordinate to society, they clearly suggest the leader's contribution to school effectiveness in preparing children for existing societal norms and values. In other words, this strand of leadership studies is grounded in normative views regarding the preparatory function of schools.

In another strand of studies known as leadership for social justice, leaders are identified as an important counter-hegemonic force in developing students through education, or critical pedagogy to critique and transform existing social structures and values (e.g., Theoharis, 2007; Johnson, 2007; McKenzie et al., 2008). Across this literature, scholars most often take a position on the role of leaders and schools in creating a future more equitable ideal. Thus, there is an interest in trying to understand how leadership activities influence and support pedagogical practice in revolutionary ways, creating a new more socially just society through education. Empirically, then, the intention is to look at the relation among leadership, critical pedagogy, and socially just aims, but is not necessarily framed by curriculum theory.

Some leadership scholars (e.g., Leithwood, Anderson, Mascal, & Strauss, 2010; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003) also use centrist perspectives, with practices varying according to particular situations and the inherent values and ideals within them. Examples include Hersey and Blanchard's (1985) classic and frequently cited situational

leadership model as well as more recent balanced leadership approaches (e.g., Leithwood, et al., 2010; Waters, Marzano and McNulty, 2003). Yet in combining leadership approaches, scholars are still using a pre-determined set of norms and values outside of leaders' interest, relations with others, or connections to the broader sociocultural sphere.

In sum, many theoretical and empirical studies of curriculum and leadership are limited in their normative foundations. Concurrently, there is a dearth of literature examining curriculum work-leadership (i.e., applying reflective education for sociocultural change to both curriculum and leadership study and practice), especially within the shifting sociocultural and complex political U.S. context. Given these gaps, we assert that this lack perpetuates normative practices in schools.

The Articulation of Reflective Education

A final primary view, which we refer to as *reflective education for sociocultural change*, explicitly minimizes inherent problems of normativity in the first three perspectives by considering the future as an open question that is not already conceived by the past or a future ideal. In reflective education, there is, thus, a focus on subject formation as a process (Bildung) in relation to the organic power of societal aims translated into content and educational experiences and methods (Benner, 1991 as adapted by Uljens, 2002). In a North American context, Pinar (2004) argues for curriculum as a complicated conversation among student/subject with content that includes historical voices as well as contemporary ones inclusive of difference according to gender, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity and so forth. In other words, Pinar's (2004)

curriculum theorizing brings explicit attention to reflective education and Bildung or student self-formation within an increasingly multicultural society.

Drawing on curriculum theories described above with their emphases on self-formation or being/becoming as well as content, methods and planning, strengths of leadership studies and their emphasis on social interactions and influence, and considering increasing cultural diversity, Ylimaki (2012) developed a curriculum work-leadership framework. Here curriculum work-leadership is understood as a mediated provocation into the other's (e.g., principal, teacher) relation to self, the world, and other educators. As a leadership process, mediation involves recognition of and reflective discussion with other educator(s) about beliefs, attitudes, and practices. Following from reflective education and its grounding in tradition of modern education theory and Bildung, this mediation process involves recognition as well as pedagogical influence.

The Fichtean (1794/2005) and Hegelian (2014) concept of recognition has been interpreted differently by different philosophers, and holds an important position in contemporary social philosophy through the work of Axel Honneth (2014), Nancy Fraser (1990, 2000), Charles Taylor (1992), and many others. Here recognition refers to how the Self is aware of the other and that individual's reality but also to a moral and ethical relation in terms of the Self's responsibility for the other's worth, dignity and inviolability as person and individual (Uljens & Ylimaki, 2015). When leaders *recognize* (Honneth, 1996; Taylor, 1992) another person with regard to a certain feature (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender) as a free or autonomous agent, the leader not only admits that the individual has this feature but also embraces a positive attitude toward the person for having that feature. Forms of recognition—respect, esteem, love, and friendship—

influence how people/subjects develop self-confidence, self-respect, and self-esteem (Honneth, 1996). Bourdieu (1977) further explained that if [a leader] recognizes the normative status of another person as a free and equal person, that recognition can transcend normativity.

Beyond modeling forms of recognition that transcend normativity—from a reflective education perspective—leaders apply pedagogical influence on all aspects of work related to academic subjects, methods, and planning. These constructs are: *summoning to self-activity* and *Bildsamkeit*. *Summoning to self-activity* explains how a principal/superintendent has a mediating role with respect to the other (e.g., principal, teacher) in the maintenance and development of the other's self-relations (Ylimaki, 2012). Closely related, *Bildsamkeit* refers to the individual's own conscious efforts aimed at making sense of the world and experiences (Uljen & Ylimaki, 2015). Thus, curriculum work-leadership involves a provocation in other's self-and social-relation as well as recognition of all learners in their care. Following a description of the methods, we present the following case to illustrate 1) the results of such empirical/theoretical gaps, and 2) the present necessity for curriculum work-leadership and reflective education amidst the changing policy, economic, and demographic contexts that impact U.S. schools today.

Qualitative Research Methods

This study followed qualitative methods, focusing on a successful high school (and its corresponding principal and district leadership) located in a high-poverty, increasingly pluralistic community along the U.S.-Mexico border. To answer the research questions, qualitative methods were interpretive in nature in order to understand the many

complex sociocultural and political conditions that affect education for increasingly diverse individuals (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Stake, 2000). Following qualitative methods from an interpretive paradigm placed the perspectives of study participants at the center of the research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). We explored the following research questions: 1) How do past and current educational leaders of a successful district and high school narrate their perspectives on the relationships among society, curriculum, and increasingly diverse students/individuals? 2) How, if at all, do the leaders' narratives reflect one or more of the theoretical perspectives on society, education, and the individual? 3) How, if at all, do leaders' views of society, curriculum and the individual affect their curriculum work-leadership practices in relation to shifting demographics within the student population?

Sampling and description of participants and site. We purposely selected a high school (and its corresponding principal) with a history of high academic performance (four years with an A label and a Blue Ribbon Award) located in a community with changing demographics. Desert Springs High School (a pseudonym) represents a culturally diverse site in terms of student demographics (53% Hispanic; 40% White; 2% African American; 2% American Indian; 2% Asian Pacific Islander; less than 1% two or more races, with a total of 1761 students overall). In the high school, 70% of students qualify for free and/or reduced lunch. Staff demographics include 12% Hispanic, 81% White, and 7% who preferred not to self-identify in any race/ethnic category; all administrator participants were White males. The current principal is in his early 50s with 8 years of experience as the principal at this site and a master's degree in educational administration.

Beyond the principal, we purposely selected 20% of the teaching staff (22 teachers), 20% of support staff (n=8) and six parents as secondary participants. In selecting these secondary participants, we sought representation of gender, race/ethnicity (based on school personnel demographics) as well as a range of subjects taught in the case of teachers. More specifically, after we began our study of the leadership structures that contributed to the school's continued success, we noticed other phenomena occurring that required further, more in-depth and theoretical examination. For instance, most of our participants talked at length about the close relationship among the school system for curriculum, teaching and learning and the larger district system. In particular, we noted the dynamics of cultural shifts in the midst of neoliberal reform and institutionalized structures coming into both harmony and conflict. Thus, we also recruited four superintendents from the past 30 years who could speak to the history of the district and sociocultural changes. A fifth superintendent was not available for an interview. See Table 1 for superintendent interview participants. The superintendents enabled the gathering of rich descriptions of policy, economic, and demographic changes to the district and the school over time.

Data sources, evidence, objects or materials. Data were collected using multiple sources, including documents from central governing boards illustrating the school achievements and student attainment, mission statements, ethnographic notes made during visits by the research team (two visits), local school documents (e.g., various school improvement committee meetings, strategic plans), and most importantly interviews with a variety of people, including four successive superintendents, the principal (interviewed twice), school council chairperson, assistant principals, teachers

(22 teachers and 8 support staff or 20% of each representative group purposely selected through a strategic process for an equal distribution of gender and content area). Six parents volunteered to participate in a focus group interview. Parent focus group members represented student demographics in the high school. In total, we conducted 42 interviews. Interviews were semi-structured with questions to all participant focused on a particular set of topics aligned with our research questions, including policy changes, technology changes, roles of education in society, the meaning and aim of curriculum, the border context, increasing competition among districts and schools, legitimate curriculum and instructional reforms or programs, changing demographics and economic pressures. Further, we probed for critical incidents and examples in order to support participants to talk about relationships among education, society, and students in their own words. Descriptive field notes were kept. These notes primarily focused on the observations of actions in and descriptions of school settings during site visits to conduct interviews.

Data analysis. Concurrent data collection and analysis followed an iterative process (Patton, 1990). In the first stage of this method, interview transcripts, ethnographic notes, and document analysis notes were reviewed, and a codebook developed for data incident codes. The 51 initial codes included, among others, cultural blindness, views of curriculum, views of society and societal changes, capacity, direction setting, developing people, decision-making processes, and perceptions of the community. Researchers (authors) examined interview responses across participant groups (i.e., principals, teachers, staff members, and parents) and in relation to other data sources (i.e., ethnographic notes and documents). Second, the researchers (authors) analyzed the data as a group, substantiating, refining, and negating the initial inductive

codes and deductive codes to 36 codes (e.g., sociocultural reproduction, preparation, habitus, sociocultural transformation, critique, consciousness, conflict, balance, situational leadership, reflection, recognition, provocation, interruption). Discriminate sampling was used to test incidents identified in phase two. In so doing, we reexamined transcripts and other data sources, testing our list of codes against multiple data sources, further refining our categories to 21 grouped into themes. In all stages, divergent codes were discussed and examined against multiple data sources. At points in discriminate sampling, we returned to the field to conduct member checking with key informants. Finally, data categories and subcategories were crystallized (Richardson, 2001). Data analysis continued into the fourth stage of writing.

It is important to note that all of the primary investigators are White females from working class through upper middle class backgrounds. Additionally, all primary investigators taught and/or served in leadership roles in low-income, culturally diverse settings. Interviews were available in Spanish should the need have arisen. At the same time, we were conscious of our class-lived positionalities as we conducted interviews and analyzed data.

Findings

The findings feature one case study with two main sections: (a) Contextual Factors (policy, economic, and demographic changes) and (b) Perspectives on Society, Education, and Increasingly Diverse Individual Students. Curriculum work-leadership findings are embedded in the second main section.

Contextual Factors

The Desert Springs case was framed by a context of policy and economic changes as well as demographic changes over time, changes that shaped participants' views of society, the individual, and the role of education/curriculum and leadership in these.

Policy and economic changes. Curriculum and accountability policy pressures increased dramatically since Superintendent 1 initiated a new curriculum system 30 years ago. Further, the economy declined sharply over the past two decades, leaving many families in poverty. All four superintendents commented on the impact of curriculum and instructional policies combined with external evaluation mandates on the district system. In each narrative, the superintendents clearly recognized the impact of the economy on students and the district curriculum work necessary to help increasingly low SES students be successful in a global marketplace. As Superintendent 2 explained, "Since I started in the district, the population has changed over from working class White to more Hispanic students. The constant is that more and more families are living in poverty." The high school principal and many teachers talked at length about how the growing number of students living in poverty needed services that are not provided by the state. The current superintendent identified "the economy" as the biggest challenge. The current superintendent also explained the relationship between accountability pressures and economic pressures when he said, "We don't have an issue with high expectations, and the new common core tests look much more rigorous. That's good. But our students have fewer and fewer resources coming into school. We have to make up for that."

Demographic changes. Superintendent 1 clearly recalled at the beginning of his tenure 30 years ago, "the majority...of demographics were Anglo," and that demographic did not really change significantly until he had left the superintendency with the

“minority becoming a majority.” Superintendent 3 recalled that when he began his teaching career at Desert Springs in the early 1980s, the district was “5% minority.” When Superintendent 4 assumed a teaching position a few years later, he observed that the population was somewhere “between 9 and 11% minority.” Other participants used the term “minority” to mean “predominantly Hispanic,” “Hispanic families,” or “families from Mexico.” Superintendent 4 further explained that “in the last 20-25 years, we have changed probably from 90% Anglo to 40% Anglo, and about 60% ethnic minority now, with a fairly large undocumented population.”

However, participants did not describe changes in ethnic diversity in positive terms; in the words of one superintendent, that is “the elephant in the room” especially when “all those kids come together” in “one high school.” Similarly teachers made comments about “challenges when you have a diverse student body”, meaning “student behavior and relationships or social problems on campus”. And while participants clearly recognized the impact of recent societal changes, they did not have the vocabulary—outside of policy language popularized in state and national workshops—to name the underlying social aims that had so dramatically affected their praxis.

Perspectives on Society, Education, and Increasingly Diverse Individual Students

This section considers participants’ expressed views about societal aims, the role of education, and the district’s (increasingly diverse) student population, using the four theories described above: 1) sociocultural reproduction, sociocultural transformation, centrist, and reflective education. In each section, we consider the nuanced perspectives evident in the curriculum leaders’ narratives. We will return to a discussion of these nuances in the following discussion section.

Sociocultural reproduction. In certain respects, superintendents, the current high school principal, and teachers recognized their responsibility in preparing students for their roles in an increasingly interdependent world. Participants implicitly articulated a preparatory role for education in a global society. In particular, superintendents set the tone, arguing that Desert Springs should establish, as Superintendent 1 put it, “an efficient and effective curriculum system with high expectations for all students.”

Although all superintendents and indeed most participants talked about their curriculum system with great pride, they all acknowledged that the economic downturn provided enormous challenges to their success. Across the narratives, we noted that participants often disagreed with some societal changes; they considered their curriculum system as subordinate to those changes. Superintendent 2 noted, “We may not agree with the ways the economy is set up and the ways society functions, but we know we need to help students function within the system and the culture supports them to do that... We work within social and economic expectations. Schools really cannot change social issues or try to change them outside.” And the current superintendent agreed with the importance of a curriculum and professional development system that helps students learn how to function in a society that increasingly puts responsibility on all individual citizens when he said, “We face more and more challenges related to helping these students learn how to get out of poverty. The economy makes it almost impossible, but students have to learn how to be responsible and access college or career to compete in a more global economy.” Further, he clearly noted his belief that “schools are not in a position to change society. We just have to prepare our students to thrive or at least survive in society.”

In these quotes, the superintendents recognize schools as subordinate to society, but at the same time, they articulate the importance of moral and ethical relations as well as a clear sense of hope that education can make a difference in the lives of children, particularly those living in poverty. In the last quote, the current superintendent acknowledges that schools must play a role in helping children consider how to be responsible in a changing global society. He does not, however, offer educational strategies to prepare children as free, autonomous human beings and reflective citizens who will determine a future that is an open question. In other words—perhaps due to a lack of preparation in reflective education strategies—he does not attempt to mediate between global societal trends and the impact of these on children’s lives in schools.

The current principal and a representative teacher, respectively, echoed previous superintendents’ understandings about the preparation role of education, arguing that they needed to “alter the long-standing curriculum system with content more reflective of Common Core policy standards and a global knowledge economy”. Further, participant narratives reflected existing policy-laden norms and values around “college and career readiness,” “hard work and responsibility,” and “flexible skills.”

At the same time, there is little evidence of recognition that increasingly diverse students bring diverse resources or cultural wealth to the system. To begin, Superintendent 1 simultaneously promoted a strong work ethic and high expectations among *all* faculty and students. He noted, “We treated all children the same with high expectations regardless of their address.” Superintendent 2 extended his view to express color or cultural blindness regarding race/ethnicity.

I don't consciously think of race....unless we are talking about ELL ... I say Mexican only because my sister-in-law is from Mexico and she is not from 'Hispania'; she says do not call me Hispanic. I certainly don't look at a kid and go, oh you're Mexican, oh you're Black, oh you're White...I guess I talk about ELL curriculum and I go into the ELL classroom. I might think, oh these are ELL kids. I say ELL kids; we do have some Vietnamese kids.

On the one hand, Desert Springs leaders treated all children the same regardless of class or race/ethnicity. On the other hand, their language shows misrecognition and a deficit view of students of color and second language learners. In other words, the symbolic power of language manages to mask the process, thus exemplifying Bourdieu and Passeron's (1990) symbolic violence. Leaders, however, are seemingly unaware of the subtle processes of misrecognition (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990) inherent in deficit thinking. Rather, perhaps echoing a traditional leadership preparation literature and using a politically safe language to describe the impact of changing demographics, these leaders are committed to the development of what they see as a positive learning culture and academic (academic subject-centered) environment that can help students through current and future class-based disparities.

When asked about the importance of cultural diversity to education, many teachers were acritical and openly acknowledged difficulties with changing demographics. As one teacher noted,

I think it's a challenge to have such a diverse student body. You know, different beliefs, different backgrounds, different languages, and...ideally the students

come here to learn, but that's not always the situation. So, we have a diverse population and not all the students are ready to learn.

Another teacher concurred and added the need to “manage student issues differently. And some of them get into other personal business, like, social problems at campus. And we have to try and manage that.” Here and in many other comments, cultural diversity challenges the equilibrium of the system, a challenge that needs to be managed. In other words, students must fit into “the system” or be managed through alternative education or some other process. Thus, from the perspective of four superintendents, the high school principal, and many teachers, poverty is a deficit—students’ working-class capital is not valued. In so doing, district and school leaders (perhaps unconsciously) use the curriculum as an artifact of symbolic violence whereby dominant knowledge, values, and norms can supersede working class knowledge, values, and norms in a system where legitimized sources of knowledge are natural (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990, p. 7). Leaders see the need to create a more equitable system in the midst of a harsh economy, but they also reproduce traditional roles in a color-blind system that they hope will make it easier for students of color and second language learners to compete in a global economy. Parents talked at length about how well the school prepared their students for college and career and how well the staff members took care of any problems, often identifying the school as “a safe place” and “a good school with good teachers.” The leaders, teachers and parents were unable to fully articulate the societal perspectives—they did not have the vocabulary and analysis tools – yet recognized these perspectives in practice. In other words, participants were acritical (in a sociocultural transformation sense) of the economic and social structures that created the situation. Moreover, leaders missed

opportunities to intervene and help teachers/students reflect upon these conditions and consider possible changes.

Superintendent 4 also clearly articulated a moral ethic to look beyond income disparities and change students' sources of knowledge from that of low SES (e.g. lack of work ethic), shifting the habitus of low SES students by teaching them more individualistic, utilitarian, and even neoliberal values. The principal and other district members talked at length about changes they made to accommodate the needs of increasing numbers of high-poverty students. As one teacher put it,

We set up a bank for students to draw clothing and to come in for food and other services. Ten years ago, we could manage staffing the bank for a few hours a week and now we are open during the evenings and on the weekends. It's a full time job.

Notice, across these quotes, there is no critique of social conditions or of the expectation that middle class staff and families are the ones to extend hospitality and charity characteristic of sociocultural transformation views. Superintendent 4 articulated his belief that education could separate issues of poverty from issues of race/ethnicity. Thus, he made sure individual teachers were responsible for teaching all children the most rigorous standards, a belief teachers clearly echoed. In some critical incidents, leaders and teachers used evidence to help others recognize cultural tensions and then attempted to provide "sensitivity training" and help "integrate" students into a positive family culture. The principal, for instance, used data-gathering strategies to help teachers realize what he perceived as racial/ethnic segregation in particular settings on campus. He videotaped a focus group of students in which he asked Mexican students if they

considered themselves “part of Desert Springs High School.” “Kids pretty much said they don’t feel a part of Desert Springs and they don’t feel like *the culture* (emphasis added) and they are adamantly convinced that the teachers hate them because they are Mexican.” He then went on to describe the teachers’ reactions.

...the teachers got angry with me and “How dare you?” and I said I am just presenting evidence...It doesn’t matter whether I agree with them or not. It doesn’t matter whether you hate them or not. It’s that is what they think. So we started working on that aspect. We started doing some sensitivity activities. And we picked very carefully, picked 15 teachers who we noticed were most vocal about the ELL kids and the teachers who came to me when we let the Spanish club do an announcement in Spanish and would say “how dare you this is the United States of America why are you allowing kids to speak Spanish over the loud speaker?” “You should force them to speak English.”...that is what the culture was back then. It was different.

He continued describing the implications.

And so today we have...*Little Mexico* is gone (laughs) it is gone. Not there anymore. We didn’t break it up. We didn’t go in there you know with water cannons and everything (laughs) Everybody...all the ELL kids dressed in blue and gold for pep assemblies and yeah you didn’t see a difference at the A+ assembly...you are able to see the family atmosphere and you know that the kids do that.

In other words, district leaders and the principal attempted to eliminate what they perceived as a segregation process (Little Mexico) through practices aimed at integrating

all staff and students into a hidden curriculum of a legitimized school culture. They also confronted teachers who misrecognized students' racial/ethnic and cultural backgrounds as something to be eliminated, ignoring increasing cultural plurality and its wealth. Responses expressed awareness of disparities but clearly did not reflect transformative (or idealized) norms and values consistent with previously mentioned sociocultural transformation authors.

When asked about how the curriculum has changed in relation to changing demographics, Superintendent 4 quickly deflected to comments about Common Core curriculum. Indeed, he critiqued the lack of diversity among new teachers, the racial/ethnic differences between students and staff, particularly in terms of class; he did not engage in social critique commensurate with sociocultural transformation theorists.

From a curricular standpoint, I don't think you'll see a specific initiative that is targeting cultural diversity. We are far more attuned to the reading selections we have, kinds of stories we tell in all in our schools, and the resources we have that are reflective of cultural diversity, but not like a specific radical program so critical of society...I am very concerned that our adults reflect our community; we don't have a very diversified teaching force; to be honest, the graduates coming out of the [local university] in my mind, are whiter and richer than ever.

Here the current superintendent clearly acknowledges increasing cultural diversity, but he also reifies culturally neutral practices, focusing on diversity as representation in reading material and in teaching staff.

Centrist. Participants conveyed a balanced approach to both pedagogy and leadership practices. Many participants talked about how the district curriculum system

maintained a balanced literacy perspective in the face of recent policy changes, such as NCLB, RTI, and Reading First.

Superintendent 4 also recognized how Common Core has again shifted a testing emphasis back toward higher-level thinking aimed at making students more globally competitive. As he explained, “Common Core emphasizes global competitiveness and higher level thinking. Common Core goes beyond what we had with higher order thinking skills. It means, however, that teachers need to shift again.” The principal and teachers also talked about recent policy-driven curriculum changes, emphasizing the need for balance. As the principal put it, [The Common Core] “is an enhancement of the district’s balanced approach, and I continually reinforce that message with teachers.” Teachers all articulated the balanced perspective on curriculum.

When asked about their leadership approaches, both the principal and Superintendent 4 talked at length about their preference for “situational leadership,” an approach they both learned in their preparation programs and in district mentoring programs. For these leaders, situational leadership meant, “adapting to needs of followers, students as well as teachers” in ways that helped them “move forward individually and in relation to district and school goals as well as changing policy needs.” In these examples, Desert Springs members attempted to build upon strengths of their curriculum system with its academic rigor and high expectations, strong work ethic, and family cultural norms that treat everyone the same. While Desert Springs participants advocated balance in terms of pedagogy and leadership, they did not explicitly consider which existing societal norms and values they support for education and which norms they want to change through education.

Gesturing toward reflective education. In another example, Superintendent 4 (who was the assistant superintendent for curriculum at the time) described a seminal moment when he asked all fourth grade teachers in the district to bring student science journals with names removed. He asked teachers to guess which school had the highest performance and which had the lowest performance.

I unveiled that it was our lowest performing school, and basically I had 3 teachers who said, these kids can do it. And I had higher performing socio-economically schools say, no they can't. They said, sure they can; you've just got to teach them and expect them to do it. And the north schools were kind of shocked by how much we were getting from some kids in *these places* [emphasis added]. So it was the moment at which we said we need to look at poverty a little differently and then we started doing things with DIBELS scores and reading assessment, and lo and behold it was not isolated to higher performing schools or lower performing schools. That's where we got into this whole idea that the community brings so many resources sometimes to bear that it masks good instruction, good things happening internally, and it was great. I mean we got a lot of leverage out of that.

In this example, Superintendent 4 created a situation where teachers had to recognize deficit thinking about students from certain (lowest income) neighborhoods. At the same time, he removed student names to remove any potential subjectivity and unconsciously misrecognized racial/ethnic features among increasingly diverse students. In the high school, the current principal echoed the district leaders' perspectives on the importance of creating a school culture characterized by relationships and strong academics.

I know we have to prepare kids for the new economic challenges and being able to have a career or go to college...For me, it all begins with relationships among teachers and students, and I knew the relationships were strained...I can't do it all at once so I decided that we had a culture problem. And the culture problem was that a lot of the teachers were under the assumption that they had really good relationships with kids when they really didn't.

From the beginning of his tenure, the principal highlighted ideological values of academic rigor, relationships, and family from policy discourse and popular leadership workshops.

The principal also led teachers in an activity at a faculty meeting prior to the start of his first year in which he listed each of 350 seniors' names on individual 5x8 note cards. He charged teachers to place "gold stars" on students whom they knew very well and with whom they had "a really strong connection." Where faculty could know the names but did not have these relationships, students received a "blue star." Teachers discovered that 110 cards (31%) did not receive any stars. He explained, "They looked around the room and they were like oh my God!" He further reflected, "And what made matters worse were a majority of those cards were kids with Spanish surnames. Mexican surnames." The principal concluded, "I knew we had a problem. I introduced the motto 'Building Connections, Building Relationships, Building Rigor' and 100% Initiative." He expected that 100% of his high school students graduate and move on to higher education. The principal began promoting the notion that the school motto could not be accomplished without the 100% initiative as the keystone.

While the principal clearly recognized inequities for students, he missed an opportunity to mediate between culturally neutral practices and cultural diversity. While he clearly noted that teachers did not know the students with “Mexican surnames” as well as others, his solution focused on building culturally neutral relationships rather than culturally responsive practices. In other words, the principal does not fully explain this disconnect to students with “Mexican” last names; he articulates cultural awareness but immediately balanced that awareness with ideological policy discourses around rigor and culturally neutral relationships, discourses that are arguably more familiar to district leaders and school members. In other words, he moved toward a center position rather than providing opportunities for teachers and students to reflect together on cultural diversity and changing demographics.

In the next section, we discuss how the fourth perspective, reflective education for sociocultural change may be useful to help leaders move beyond the dualities and normativity problems inherent in sociocultural reproduction and sociocultural transformation views.

Discussion

Through an illustrative case study, a purpose of this paper was to examine, through an analysis of the literature and an illustrative case, the gaps in sociocultural theories, curriculum theory, and leadership studies. Further, we considered the possibilities of reflective education theories more prevalent in European/Nordic general education studies. While not generalizable, four major findings emerged from the case. First, although participants clearly recognized societal changes occurring in their district/schools, they did not articulate, nor use analytical tools aligned with curriculum

theory and its underlying philosophies. For example, though participants clearly acknowledged the inequitable impact of socioeconomic disparities on diverse students, they did not explicitly consider how their school practices might support or transform social and economic inequities. Indeed, none of these leaders expressed thoughts about societal changes, such as the impact of neoliberalism and border migrations on changing demographics (e.g., Smith, 2012), and how educators might cultivate students' internal critical consciousness (e.g., Freire, 2000). Instead, the Desert Springs district and high school members worked to prepare students to thrive or at least survive in an increasingly competitive, capitalistic society. In other words, there is an underlying aim toward sociocultural reproduction, although not overtly stated. At Desert Springs, in an unconscious updated application of Durkheim, the superintendents, principal, and other teachers emphasized cohesion and unity in school/societal values and curriculum standards, considering treatment of cultural diversity as a breakdown to unity. Functionalist sociologists like Durkheim often assumed that consensus is the normal state in society and that conflict represented a breakdown of shared values.

Second, and closely related, we found that participants were socialized in the traditional language of educational administration (popular workshop language). This coupled with a lack of critical consciousness contributed to an institutionalized color-blind, "culturally neutral" curriculum system that, perhaps unconsciously, reinforced deficit views of cultural wealth and funds of knowledge. In certain regards, the Desert Springs curriculum system is very much like Freire's (2000) notion of "institutionalized banking" whereby educators fail to draw on the cultural capital/funds of knowledge of diverse individual students. Rather, educators see these students as 'capitally deficient'; it

is their ethical duty as educators to provide that ‘capital’ so students can survive and even thrive within institutionalized society (i.e., graduate, go to college, land a ‘legitimate’ career). In other words, educators’ habitus causes a myopic view of the community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005). Educators do not see these forms of capital—instead they see a lack of ‘legitimate’ capital that must be developed within a curriculum system. And while the current superintendent and principal are aware of the disconnect in certain regards, they have not embraced a sociocultural transformation view of the curriculum and culturally responsive practices. Moreover, leaders have not provided faculty and students with opportunities to reflect upon the positive aspects and problematics of a competitive economy and an increasingly pluralistic society. Thus, we suggest the importance of the fourth perspective.

We suggest that the fourth perspective, reflective education for sociocultural change, moves beyond these limitations. Here educational processes are not only aimed at pre-determined outcomes (academic) but also aimed at preparing the subject to transform the very same society (economy, culture) into which the subject is educated. Such transformation processes, however, are not decided upon in advance, thus avoiding the normativity issue of sociocultural transformation perspectives that participants (perhaps unconsciously) seek to avoid (Klafki, 1998; Uljens, 2002).

Our third finding extends from the second. Leadership preparation (and its content) can make a difference—both positively and negatively. Indeed, all four Superintendents were affected by their preparation/education programs and, in particular, the literature from experts in management, systems development, and empirically driven approaches like situational leadership. As with all educational processes, if leaders and teachers are

expected to prepare students for creative self-activity and future social change, leadership preparation programs must include literature on sociological perspectives (e.g., philosophy, curriculum theory) as well as educational leadership studies. Moreover, we argue that the use of theoretical and empirical literature outside of the North American context is helpful to understand other cultural possibilities as well as our own context.

Lastly, we found the use of an overarching theoretical framework on relationships among society, education, and the individual useful when thinking through the complexities of curriculum work-leadership in the midst of societal, policy, and demographic shifts. The ability to sort through the philosophical and theoretical roots of particular views draws attention to the subtle differences in relationships between assumptions about society and the role of education (curriculum) for increasingly pluralistic students. These four modern perspectives and this case were helpful for fleshing out the nuances of the complexities among society, education/curriculum, the (increasingly diverse) individual, and curriculum leadership practice.

Conclusions

The Desert Springs case illustrates more complex relationships among leaders' views of society, the role of the individual, and the curriculum as an institution than the dualistic distinctions that connect education with either sociocultural reproduction or sociocultural transformation. In Desert Springs, over a 30 year period, a series of superintendents instituted and sustained a unified curriculum system that addressed academic excellence for students living in poverty but did little to recognize and help increasingly pluralistic students reflect upon culturally relevant self-formations among their increasingly diverse students. While the Desert Springs way illustrates a compelling

case for sustained leadership of a curriculum system that has prepared many students for academic success over a time with changing demographics and an economic downturn, the system could not fully address changing needs of the individual and an increasingly pluralistic society. All of the district and school leaders clearly expressed some aims toward change but always balanced with the need for unified values, treatment of students, and pedagogical practices amidst growing diversity. Desert Springs superintendents, the high school principal, and teachers expressed *awareness* of changing demographics and culture, though they are not responsive to it.

Participants in all leadership positions openly acknowledged cultural diversity among individual students; however, they chose to focus on academic rigor in a culturally neutral way. That is, participants are blind to the cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) possessed by the growing Latino/a population in the surrounding community. Further, the curriculum system is culturally blind and perpetuates a view of individual students as ‘capitally’ deficient—that students of low SES and Hispanic culture are lacking the necessary capital to achieve institutional success in a knowledge economy. Educators express a moral purpose to provide students with legitimate capital (through academic rigor) to increase college enrollment rates, but they do not have the analytical tools to problematize these issues. In spite of transformative aims for equitable treatment for all students, education at Desert Springs, then, functions largely as a tool for socialization without recognition of increasingly pluralistic students.

The issues of cultural unity vs. plurality and society vs. the individual are not new problems. Indeed, modern philosophers and curriculum scholars have considered these issues for centuries and decades respectively, but they have not positioned themselves to

consider the role of leadership (Uljens & Ylimaki, 2015). This case illustrates the importance of leadership in these modern topics, particularly in leading educational institutions with increasingly culturally diverse students into a future that cannot yet be fully conceptualized. Here schools are not subordinate or super-ordinate to society, but rather schools exist in a non-hierarchical relationship to society. Much like the way in which political processes establish the laws while the laws simultaneously regulate political activity, education is partly subordinate to political influences but simultaneously superordinate with respect to politics (Uljens, 2006). Education, then, prepares the subject for active citizenship and political democracy as well as for a working life that is an open question, one that is *to be developed by the individual*. Importantly, in this tradition, the individual is prepared to transform the very same society or culture into which that person is educated, but how this is or should be done cannot be decided upon in advance (Uljens, 2002), thus avoiding the normativity problems associated with the dominant social reproduction and social transformation perspectives as well as centrist perspectives that balance both.

In drawing conclusions, we must also recognize some limitations of the empirical section of this article. First, methodologically, qualitative research can generalize to a theory, not populations (Merriam, 1988). The sample size is small; future research is needed to confirm these findings in other cases. Furthermore, the study is limited because of the primary focus on superintendent leadership over time, the principal and teachers and a lesser focus on members of the school and community, including particularly minority parents and students.

Nevertheless, one of the most interesting implications for these findings may lie in the need to bridge curriculum theory (including societal aims, changes, philosophy) and educational leadership approaches. Curriculum theorizing is grounded in philosophy and explicitly considers how sociocultural aims are translated into content, and educational leadership studies consider the micro social interactions around content and pedagogical work in schools. Drawing on societal perspectives from philosophy, curriculum theory, and educational leadership studies, we propose curriculum work-leadership as a meditational process between societal aims and educational experiences for increasingly pluralistic individuals. Here curriculum workers-leaders are learning subjects, continually cultivating their own development and supporting students / teachers in these processes. Such curriculum workers-leaders have agency and are able to transcend what is given, including neoliberal policies. At the same time, they do not propose closed, normative views of a future ideal society. Rather, curriculum workers-leaders create the conditions necessary for continuous learning and reflection about a future society yet to be conceptualized; they recognize increasingly diverse individuals without creating or reproducing normative social conditions. In order to develop such meditational curriculum work-leadership, aspiring leaders need opportunities to consider and reflect upon multiple perspectives, theories, and philosophies. Such preparation also requires both a dialogue across curriculum theory/didaktik (and underlying philosophy) and educational leadership/organizational studies as leaders could benefit from understandings developed in other fields (e.g. curriculum) and vice versa. This work may also support researchers in attaining a deeper understanding of the complex relationships among curriculum, leadership, policy, societal aims, and culture.

Findings from this study have implications for the educational leadership field. Specifically, there is a need for further theorizing leadership in relation to curriculum and general education as well as an empirical grounding. Empirically, additional ethnographic, longitudinal research is needed to examine the nuances and complexities among leaders' views of society, the individual, and curriculum as these develop over time. Further, there is a need to examine leadership at multiple levels, classrooms, schools, districts, states, nations, and transnational organizations (Uljen & Ylimaki, 2015). National and comparative research is needed on curriculum work-leadership in relation to policy changes over time, particularly the move toward increasingly centralized curricula in the midst of changing economic and demographic conditions. Findings from this study also raise questions about whether leadership preparation programs that emphasize multiple perspectives (classic functional, radical, reflective) may impact leaders' curriculum work in an increasingly pluralistic society. In closing, we hope that the research and literature presented in this paper provide researchers and practitioners with multiple theoretical perspectives to understand the subtleties and complexities of relationships among social needs, individual needs, and the role of curriculum work-leadership in culturally diverse settings. In the final analysis, we are not confronted with exclusive choices: sociocultural reproduction or transformation, unity vs. plurality. Through educational processes, students and curriculum workers-leaders of all kinds can work in a reflective space between the subject and society, between the past and a better future yet to be imagined.

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Tables

Table 1

Superintendent Tenure

Superintendent	Years Served	District Demographics
Superintendent 1	1983-1986	68% Anglo; 32% Students of Color
Superintendent 2	1998-2004	61% Anglo; 39% Students of Color
Superintendent 3	2004-2013	51% Anglo; 49 % Students of Color
Superintendent 4	2013-present	37% Anglo; 63% Students of Color

APPENDIX D

**THE PARADOXICAL NATURE OF UNITARY CURRICULA AND POLICIES
AMIDST INCREASING MULTICULTURALISM IN U.S. SCHOOLS**

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Author Note

This manuscript is based on data also used in a previously published report, collected and written by the author and three colleagues.

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Abstract

This paper examines educational paradoxes and tensions emerging from recent neoliberal policies and increasing multiculturalism. Modern educational tensions between unity and plurality are not new globally or in the U.S., including Arizona with a long history of educational responsibility for colonized populations. Such conditions point explicitly toward a paradox in which unity and plurality come into contention. Through a theoretical exploration of global dispossession, recognition, and multicultural education (Taylor, 1994), this paper investigates unitary curriculum standards and related policies within the alienating dynamics of neoliberalism. Two empirical examples from Arizona schools illustrate the challenges of multicultural education, particularly for dispossessed students, amidst demands for unity and universalism. The first study's findings illustrate misrecognition of culturally diverse students in a high-performing school with shifting demographics. The second example draws on a study of the ESL program within one low-performing high school with a high population of refugee students. This paper ends with an educational response to the challenges of unity vs. plurality in an increasingly global world, focusing on forming a new, reflective approach to understanding policy and curriculum beyond normative binaries.

This paper examines educational paradoxes and tensions emerging from recent globalization with related neoliberal policies and increasing multiculturalism. Modern educational tensions between unity and plurality are not new globally or in the United States, including Arizona with a long history of educational responsibility for colonized populations; however, these tensions have been enhanced by a new immigration wave⁷ of Mexican people and other immigrants (e.g., refugees), seeking better life conditions (i.e., economic wealth) in the wake of societal changes and neoliberal policies. Recent globalization and neoliberalism have reshaped the landscape of both local and global communities through competitive policies aimed at privatization and marketization of all resources (Smith, 2011). Negative effects of globalization and neoliberal policies are

⁸ Currently, over 20% of all Mexican-origin people in the world live in the United States; creating a very large population. The U.S Hispanic population was estimated at 50.5 million in 2010, which constitute the 16% of the total U.S. population, 20% of all elementary and high school students, and 47% of all the foreign-born population (U.S. Census, 2010).

increasingly evident in a mobile contract-based labor with constant needs for reskilling and unprecedented losses in indigenous language and culture (Sennett, 1998). Such conditions also point explicitly toward a new dilemma of educational unity, collective goals, and the unitary subject in the midst of increased multiculturalism and the need for cultural survival.

Apple (2005) argued that a “conservative modernization” is taking place within education, which involves a reintegration of education into an economic agenda while legitimizing knowledge for the ideal type of learning that must take place within schools. Hence, conservative modernization has led to school accountability regimes centered on high-stakes testing, the marketization of schooling, and curricular mandates (Gulson & Pedroni, 2011). Conservative policies such as No Child Left Behind (2001), Race to the Top (2009), and the Common Core Curriculum convey the prevalence of conservative modernization in educational discourse, policy, and practice. Today’s increasingly results-driven, competitive school structures conflict with increasingly multicultural student populations. In other words, conservative modernization creates a trend toward unitary policies in education, while concurrently student demographics trend toward more and more plurality.

Thus presents a critical paradox in schooling. The results of this unity/plurality conflict are notable, as they lead to systematic neglect of students’ needs, thus leading to dispossession (otherwise referred to as misrecognition or displacement [Fraser, 2000]), particularly among multicultural student populations. According to Butler and Anthansiou (1989), dispossession entails the processes and ideologies by which persons are disowned and objectified by normative and normalizing powers that define cultural

intelligibility and regulate the distribution of vulnerability. Simply put, being dispossessed involves an individual being viewed as “other” without a legitimized identity according to a society’s dominant norm. In order to obtain legitimacy, that individual must fully assimilate to the dominant, favored identity (or majority).

Dispossession can be either overt (e.g., via slavery, violence, sectarian regimes) or covert (e.g., via neoliberal governmentality, liberal possessive individualism, precaritization).

Many minority and immigrant (notably refugee and immigrants without documentation) students arrive in U.S. schools experiencing a form of overt dispossession, and unity policies exacerbate that dispossession covertly.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze this political and curricular paradox in the wake of today’s shifting sociocultural and sociopolitical contexts, and to illustrate how this paradox creates and perpetuates dispossession. To illustrate these trends and phenomena, I draw from two case studies conducted within urban, high-poverty, Arizona high schools. This theoretical and empirical exploration will entail a synthesis of two dichotomous approaches to policy and curriculum: The politics of universalism and the politics of difference. These two views will convey the tension between conservative modernization (i.e., unity policy/curriculum) and increasing multiculturalism. I begin by describing the two competing political views of equal respect, which underlie U.S. policy/curriculum, and how they lay the foundation for the paradox that I present. The paper proceeds with an exploration of how these competing views come into conflict in the two illustrative cases, and how this conflict is indicative of challenges in many U.S. schools. I conclude with implications for initiating new theoretical (and empirical) approaches to curriculum and policy change beyond the universalism/difference binary.

The Paradox: Politics of Universalism vs. Politics of Difference

Political paradoxes have plagued modern society since the termination of social hierarchies and the emergence of democracy, wherein discourses around providing equal recognition appeared in the form of demands for the equal status of cultures and genders (Taylor, 1994). Recognition, according to theorists such as Rousseau and Hegel, is inextricably linked with identity. Accordingly, identity is not solely a monological phenomenon, but also a dialogic phenomenon as it arises through recognition of a significant other (Mead, 1934). Since identity is partly shaped by recognition, misrecognition of a person or group can cause suffering, especially if the misrecognition takes the form of providing a demeaning picture of that person or group (Taylor, 1994). In other words, misrecognition is very much associated with dispossession.

Within modern politics, the struggle between recognition and misrecognition materializes in a critical paradox. Democracy calls for a unifying set of rules or standards for society, and these unifying laws (or policies) work to equalize all rights and entitlements, emphasizing the equal dignity of all citizens. Nevertheless, the unifying set of principles comes into conflict with our increasingly multicultural society, as it is a set of “blind liberalisms” that recognize a dominant culture and misrecognize others (i.e., minorities). Furthermore, as argued by Ladson-Billings (1998):

This notion of equal opportunity was associated with the idea that students of color should have access to the same school opportunities, i.e. curriculum, instruction, funding, facilities as White students. This emphasis on ‘sameness’ was important because it helped boost the arguments for ‘equal treatment under the law’ that were important for moving [students of color] from their second-

class status...[but] The race-neutral or colorblind perspective, evident in the way the curriculum presents people of color, presumes a homogenized 'we' in a celebration of diversity. (pp. 17-18)

Indeed, democracy in action has created policies predicated in 'equality,' but this notion of 'equality' is conflated with 'sameness,' thus converting diversity into something to either ignore or 'celebrate.' And so, the policies that seek to create equality in fact do the opposite in their systematic misrecognition of the identities of today's (and tomorrow's) society. Taylor (1994) articulated these phenomena when outlining the conflict between the politics of universalism and the politics of difference.

According to Taylor (1994), the politics of universalism and the politics of difference, both with their own principles of equal respect, create a paradox within modern society. Proponents of the politics of universalism fought for forms of nondiscrimination that were quite "blind" to the ways in which citizens differ, and the politics of difference redefined nondiscrimination in terms of distinctions and differential treatment (e.g., affirmative action policies). The politics of universalism emphasizes the equal dignity of all citizens through the equalization of rights and entitlements. Here, individuals have identical rights and immunities; these tenets are apparent in certain educational policies in Arizona, such as Common Core and Proposition 203 (2000, Arizona's English-only language policy). In the second change toward the politics of difference, we are asked to recognize the unique identity of the individual or group and their distinctness from everyone else. Some intervention programs, such as the Tucson

Mexican American Studies program, and the results of the *Lau v. Nichols* case⁸ are examples of the politics of difference and principle of equal respect put into policy contexts. The idea is that this distinctness has been ignored or assimilated to the dominant or majority identity, and this assimilation challenges authenticity.

Whereas proponents of the politics of universalism fought for forms of nondiscrimination that were quite “blind” to the ways in which citizens differ, the politics of difference redefined nondiscrimination in terms of distinctions and differential treatment. These two modes of politics, both based on the notion of equal respect, come into conflict. For one, the principle of equal respect requires that we treat people in a difference-blind fashion; while for the other, we have to recognize and even foster particularity. Proponents of the politics of difference also argue that “blind” liberalism are themselves a reflection of particular, dominant cultures. Rather, in the politics of difference, the struggle for recognition can only find one solution: reciprocal recognition among equals in a society with a common purpose. According to this conception of common good, a liberal society singles itself out as such by the way in which it treats minorities, including those who do not share public definitions of the good, and above all, by the rights it accords to all of its members. Liberalism cannot and should not claim complete cultural neutrality (Taylor, 1994). The further demand we are looking at here is

⁹ In California’s *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) case, the Court ruled that schools should provide ELLs with the appropriate tools (i.e., books, curriculum) to succeed in schools, instead of providing ELLs with identical resources/curricula as English proficient students. This framed language acquisition programs as a civil rights concern, ruling that equality does not mean equity.

that we all recognize the equal value of different cultures; that we not only let them survive, but acknowledge their worth.

Arizona: Ground Zero for the Unity/Plurality Paradox

Arizona serves as an exemplar for the unity/plurality conflict, as its policies—especially those related to immigration and education—have been hotly contested for many years. Furthermore, Arizona is a site of struggle and hostility, with its history of colonized populations, inimical immigration policy, restrictive English language policy, and Tucson’s highly publicized Mexican American Studies program. In this section I present findings from two Arizona cases to illustrate the effects of the paradox.

Two Illustrative Arizona Cases

My research took place within two high-poverty, urban, public Arizona high schools serving increasingly multicultural student populations. While both schools had demographic similarities, there are key, opposing differences to note: The first case, Desert Springs High School (a pseudonym), is an award-winning school that has been labeled an “A” school on the Arizona Department of Education’s (ADE) school report card scale⁹. Desert Springs has consistently met or exceeded achievement measures for over 30 years and has been recognized locally and nationally for its achievements. The school is located in a high-poverty neighborhood and represents a culturally diverse site in terms of student demographics (53% Hispanic; 40% White; 2% African American; 2% American Indian; 2% Asian Pacific Islander; less than 1% two or more races, with a total

¹⁰ According to ARS 15-746, a school is rewarded an A-F score based on trends in gain or loss in pupil achievement over time in reading, language arts and mathematics for all years in which pupils are enrolled in the school district for an entire school year (ADE, 2015).

of 1761 students overall). Between 2012 and 2014 my research team and I¹⁰ conducted interviews with teachers and administrators, as well as with four superintendents (all White males) who served and retired as district superintendent sequentially beginning in the 1980s. The principal is a White male in his early 50s. Over the past 30 years, demographics have changed significantly from 95% White and 5% Hispanic students in the 1980s to 53% Hispanic students today.

The second case, Canyon High School (also a pseudonym), has wavered between being a “D” school and “C” school over the past five years, and as a result was put into a “soft turnaround” status in 2014 (see following sections for further details). Canyon High School serves 1,153 students with a substantial and unique English learner (EL) population, as a large number of the students are refugees from all over the world; over 40 languages and dialects are spoken on campus. At the end of the 2012-2013 school year, Canyon had a 20.67% EL reclassification rate (based on the state ESL test [AZELLA]) (ADE, 2013). For this case, the outgoing principal, assistant principal (both White males in their 40s and 50s, respectively) were interviewed at the completion of the 2014 school year, and the turnaround principal (a White female in her early 60s) was interviewed at the completion of her first year as principal (2015). The English Language Development (ELD) teachers and counselors (including one outgoing and one current department chair, N=7) were interviewed between the 2014 and 2015 school years.

Data collection at both sites also involved observations (with ethnographic field notes), and policy document analyses. See Appendix for a detailed explanation of the

¹¹ A team of four researchers, including the author, collected data for the Desert Springs case.

research methodologies. These schools were purposefully chosen as representative examples of the prevalent unity/plurality dichotomy; however, while both schools experience these tensions, the results of such tensions (i.e., school ratings and student achievement) are dissimilar. In the following sections I present data from both sites to illustrate the effects of the unity/plurality paradox at the school level, and how educators' responses and actions either mitigate or perpetuate the paradox. I will present more data from the Canyon case, as this school presents a unique case with many layers of the politics of universalism (neoliberal policies and sanctions, such as the turnaround in 2014 and the palpable effects of Arizona's English language policy) and the politics of difference (the multilingual and multicultural student population, the high population of refugee students).

Desert Springs

The Desert Springs staff described perspectives and practices consistent with the principle of equal respect associated with the politics of universalism. In other words, participants reported treating students in a difference-blind fashion, and some even showed deficit views toward minority students. Instead of recognizing and fostering particularity (i.e., politics of difference), they described their school's "academic culture" as their approach to fostering educational equity.

Superintendents, the principal, and many teachers commented that they "treated all children the same." The third superintendent extended his view to express color or cultural blindness regarding race/ethnicity.

I don't consciously think of race...unless we are talking about ELL...I certainly don't look at a kid and go, oh you're Mexican, oh you're Black, oh you're

White...I guess I talk about ELL curriculum and I go into the ELL classroom I might think, oh these are ELL kids.

On the one hand, as a culture, Desert Springs leaders treated all children the same regardless of class or race/ethnicity. On the other hand, their language shows a deficit view of students of color and English language learners (noted the discursive misrecognition of students of color in the term “ELL kids”).

When asked about how the curriculum has changed in relation to changing demographics, the fourth superintendent quickly deflected to comments about Common Core curriculum. He also noted the chilling effect of a recent legal battle over a (much more critically oriented) Mexican American Studies program in another Arizona district:

From a curricular standpoint, I don't think you'll see a specific initiative, outside of a formative [assessment] that is targeting cultural diversity. We are far more attuned to the reading selections we have...and the resources we have that are reflective of cultural diversity, but not like a specific radical program so critical of society...I think of [neighboring district] just because it comes to mind, not like a Mexican American Studies Department as an entity of itself being kind of a cultural watchdog or an agent of change.

In many instances, while teachers expressed the need to build students' background knowledge or cultural capital, comments were often linked to the need for individuals to, as one teacher stated, “adapt to the demands of the Common Core, the Desert Springs academic culture, and growing demands for higher education as a means to economic security.” One math teacher, similar to many others, explained, “There is no discrimination here. We treat all students the same regardless of race or ethnicity. We

don't like to accentuate any differences like poverty or race in the curriculum." Like administrators, teachers were reluctant to acknowledge any notions of culturally responsive practices.

The principal recently used data-gathering strategies to help teachers realize what he perceived as racial/ethnic segregation in particular settings on campus. He videotaped a focus group of students in which he asked "Mexican" (quoted from principal) students if they considered themselves "part of Desert Springs High School:"

Kids pretty much said they don't feel a part of Desert Springs and they don't feel like [part of] the culture, and they are adamantly convinced that the teachers hate them because they are Mexican. And of course the teachers got angry with me and, "How dare you?" And I said I am just presenting evidence... Well, "you agree with them." It doesn't matter whether I agree with them or not. It doesn't matter whether you hate them or not. It's that is what they think.

He then continued to describe his attempts to ameliorate tensions and create a responsive atmosphere based on the politics of difference. Nevertheless, he was met with resistance.

We started doing some sensitivity activities. We...picked 15 teachers who we noticed were most vocal about the ELL kids, and the teachers who came to me when we let the Spanish club do an announcement in Spanish and would say, "How dare you this, this is the United States of America; why are you allowing kids to speak Spanish over the loud speaker? You should force them to speak English." That is what the culture was back then.

He then concluded by describing how the "Mexican" students, who felt detached (or dispossessed) from the Desert Springs community, and had become physically segregated

into what the participants called “Little Mexico,” were now incorporated into the Desert Springs “family”: “Today...*Little Mexico* is gone...all the ELL kids dressed in blue and gold for pep assemblies and you didn’t see a difference...You are able to see the family atmosphere and you know that the kids do that.” In spite of the promotion of “family atmosphere,” the system has not adapted to the changing cultural diversity of students in the surrounding neighborhood; instead it worked toward assimilating multicultural students into its legitimized “family” (or unity) culture—a practice that, according to Butler and Anthasiou (1989), perpetuates dispossession. This practice was also apparent in the district’s long-standing mission and professional development program.

On the face of it, the district philosophy statement advanced the importance of “supporting individuals to become responsible citizens and develop functional skills to be successful in society, particularly with a strong work ethic to overcome economic challenges.” However, in spite of these shifts in district demographics toward a majority of Latino students, the district leaders (including the high school principal) made little to no change in the mission statement or related curricular/instructional practices to reflect increasingly diverse languages and cultures. Further, when accountability policies were introduced, district leaders were required to disaggregate student achievement data according to race/ethnicity. Thus, societal problems related to disparities in cultural capital and student outcomes according to race/ethnicity could have been explicitly considered. However, the well-established district curriculum and staff development was difficult to shift toward culturally responsive practices or even changes to Common Core standards. The second superintendent pointed out that the curriculum design was much more flexible in terms of changing instructional method than the philosophy underlying

the method. The third superintendent acknowledged that the staff development system had been extremely effective but may not be flexible enough to adapt to these major shifts.

In spite of the clear economic connection and increasing cultural diversity, solutions focused on “providing staff development about critical thinking for all students” rather than on multicultural education and other culturally responsive practices. As the fourth superintendent described, “We’re transforming our professional development model to embed content at almost every opportunity; the vehicle by which I did it was I just started requiring teachers to bring student work...to look at the product.” Thus, the district curriculum system adapted to the growing policy focus on “product” rather than increasing cultural diversity among students. These budding tensions at Desert Springs were very much in full bloom at Canyon High School, thus pointing to threats to the stable, uniform, high-performing, academic and “family” culture at Desert Springs.

Canyon High School

Both high school cases are subject to the pressures of the politics of universalism while facing increasing plurality, yet unlike Desert Spring’s staff—who accept and perpetuate the politics of universalism—Canyon’s staff members tend to push against universalism in favor of the politics of difference. The teachers and (past) administrators discussed their desires to acknowledge and highlight the many cultures and languages within the school, yet they felt frustrated and hindered by policies that favor universalism. They insinuated that such policies create further dispossession for already dispossessed immigrant students.

Given Canyon's significant and diverse EL population, it is highly affected by neoconservative policy (Arizona's language policy, Proposition 203) and curriculum (the English Language Development [ELD] immersion four-hour pullout program, mandated by HB 2064¹¹). Arizona's Proposition 203 is the most restrictive language policy of all three states enacting such policies (Arizona, California, and Massachusetts) (Martínez-Wenzl, Perez, & Gandara, 2012), as it requires students who do not pass the Arizona English Language Learners Assessment (AZELLA) to be placed in sheltered environments to receive discrete English instruction. The sheltered four-hour ELD model not only isolates English skills (creating an academic achievement divide), but it also isolates English learning students, creating structural racism within increasingly diverse schools (Ríos-Aguilar et al., 2012).

Participants recognized these phenomena. The former principal discussed Proposition 203 and how it reflected policymakers' lack of understanding of what happens in schools and what students and teachers really need:

Because of Prop 203 [the education of ELs is] so extraordinarily restricted. And then you factor in the current reality that we're dealing with, with the mandated four-hour language learner block, it's ridiculous in terms of what it imposes on these kids. I think that when you take away one tool, and then you have a one-

¹¹ In 2006 Arizona's legislature passed HB 2064, which created the ELL Task Force charged with developing a research-based program of English language development (ELD). HB 2064 mandated that the ELD program include "a minimum of four hours per day of English development" and be the most "cost-efficient models that meet all state and federal laws" (ARS 15-756.01). Given these parameters, the ELD program must contain five components taught in a sheltered environment: phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicon, and semantics (Arizona Department of Education [ADE], 2007). The intention, then, is that with the extended time on task and discrete focus on English language development, ELLs would be rapidly reclassified as English proficient within one year (Martínez-Wenzl et al, 2012).

size-fits-all approach to dealing with English language learners...then that means that these kids aren't going to graduate on time—it's just to me, it's politicians and bureaucrats deciding what are the most educationally sound approaches. And the opinions of educators who have been doing this work for a long time is pretty much either dismissed or disdained.

Here the principal recognizes the shortsighted nature of the state's policymakers and the need to push on recognizing the needs of an increasingly pluralistic student population, and his reference to the language policy as a "one-size-fits-all" approach indicates its inherent politics of universalism. During an informal conversation with the counselor during a field visit, she echoed these sentiments while expressing her concern over the demise of schooling in general in the face of neoliberal mandates and pressures. She told me about how she came to education in order to make a difference and "bring fun and play to kids," but "The play is gone. It's rigorous and cutthroat. The landscape of education is not a one-size-fits-all, and the system is not flexible," thus conveying the overwhelming power of neoliberalism in education.

In addition to Arizona's one-size-fits-all language policy, the state's testing policy exacerbates the politics of universalism and politics of difference tensions at Canyon. In Arizona, students were required pass the state's standardized test (the AIMS) in order to graduate¹² from high school. This universal, neoliberal policy disregards the state's pluralistic student population, especially at Canyon: ELs, who are relegated to the ELD program, miss out on the content-area academic English skills needed to achieve success

¹² Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards. In 2015, an "emergency bill" suddenly terminated the use of the AIMS (pending the test's replacement with Common Core Standards). However, there is no indication of how this will affect students in past years who "aged out" and did not graduate due to not passing AIMS.

on the AIMS. In addition, many refugee students at Canyon arrive with disrupted formal educations; so passing the AIMS and graduating high school are nearly impossible. The ELD counselor explained how many students accumulate the right amount of credits to graduate, but still struggle to pass AIMS, so they “age out” at the age of 22 before graduating. She described one (refugee) student who aged out and moved out of state with her family: she returns to Arizona every spring just to take the AIMS, and she still has not passed. The counselor expressed concern over the way school is structured and the resultant lack of understanding (or recognition) of these issues from the rest of the school’s faculty and students.

The ELD counselor pointed to the school’s embedded structures—which are predicated on past, universal neoconservative “traditional” ideals—do not account for or respond to the school’s pluralism. For instance, the ELD department chair expressed frustration with how the norms of “traditional” schools dominate, and how as a result, ELs are left out because they are not “assimilating” properly:

It’s not an inclusive environment. And we hold onto things that don’t meet the needs of our students particularly...things that are sort of the traditional quote-unquote “high school experience” are valued and emphasized, and they don’t really find their way into our students’ lives and there isn’t really a pathway there...I think a lot of our students try to assimilate in many ways, [but] I don’t think they should have to assimilate completely, and that’s not their job. Some people probably think that they don’t assimilate enough, but I think that they have to be who they are and create their own way to go.

Since ELs do not fit what is valued to be the “norm”, they do not fit into the normative constructs of schooling. Students’ cultural identities are symbolically invalidated in the school’s lack of responsiveness. The cultural dispossession and abrogation are created and/or exacerbated by the unity curriculum and policy.

The “traditional” structures of schooling were also apparent as students and staff symbolically responded to the cultural diversity of the school—though they ultimately exacerbated the politics of universalism in so doing in what Ladson-Billings (1998) referred to as a “celebration of diversity” (p. 18). In my field notes from the first school pep assembly (9/5/14):

I walk into the gymnasium and see that the walls are adorned with a few signs with sports words on them, four signs indicating where each class should sit (freshman/sophomore/etc.), and multiple painted flags from all over the world displayed on the walls. [The ELD department chair] points to the flags and says to me that the student council asked her to say where students were from so that they can make the flags. I notice that the gym is...probably half full (if that). I ask [one ELD teacher] if that’s normal, and she says, “Relatively normal.” Throughout the assembly [ELD teacher] and [ELD department chair] discuss how the lack of turnout should be an indicator that this structure doesn’t work—it doesn’t appeal to the majority of students. According to their interaction, it’s modeled after assemblies that the faculty members in charge of student council have experienced in other schools such as [high performing, primarily Anglo middle class school in the district]. [ELD teacher] says that this is one of four assemblies like that that year, and [department chair] says that the format hasn’t changed. I ask if anything has been said to try to

change it, and [ELD teacher] tells me that [department chair] tried last year: but no change. They bring up the fact that if you look around the gym, very few ELs are there, and the ones that are there are completely disengaged.

[ELD teacher] then mentions how there are no ELs in student council. [Department chair] and [ELD teacher] then say how these things happening in the assembly (e.g., relay races, fight song) seem foreign to their students. [ELD teacher] says, “It’s like two worlds.” Both mention how the assembly is based on these “norms” to which the faculty are accustomed. They relate this to the prom; [department chair] talks about how in a recent meeting of department chairs and administration, the subject of students skipping school before prom to get hair and makeup done came up, and [the new principal] said that these students shouldn’t be punished for these big events that they look forward to. [Department chair] expresses her issue with that, that for most students in the school (ELs), prom is not a norm; that by allowing that day to be a ‘whatever’ day, these students that “are not the norm” are being punished. This makes no sense since “Prom and assemblies aren’t the norm, the norm is school.” (i.e., learning). She then says, “They are putting a norm on people when there doesn’t have to be. They should not be punishing students *in* the school that day.”

The former department chair pointed out similar frustrations with the “traditions” of high school during an interview: “It’s just those sort of disconnects, and no room to discuss or change some of those patterns was frustrating.” The significant population of ELs are highly visible in the school—the new turnaround principal remarked that, “We are the United Nations here!”—yet they are not incorporated into the fabric of the school: they remain as ‘outsiders’ and ‘others’ to the rest of the school community, as they do not fit

into the ‘norm,’ which is reified by the language policy that separates them and isolates them physically. Regarding certain everyday aspects of the school, such as events and clubs (e.g., student council, assemblies), one ELD teacher said that other students and faculty tend not to include them, and that “they need to include them.”

This implicit and explicit dispossession was also apparent during the school’s annual Spirit Week, during which the student council (made up of primarily Anglo students) had come up with dress-up day themes for each day of the week, one of which was “Culture Day”. During my visit that day I asked one ELD teacher about how Spirit Week in general related to the ELD students, and she said, “I don’t think the students know what that is about.” She told me about how ELs there are so separate from the rest of the school community, that they are “ghettoized” as there is “no bridge” to the rest of the school. “Culture Day” symbolically acknowledges and celebrates the school’s substantial diversity (similarly to the flags at the assembly), but the diverse students who were supposedly the target population of “Culture Day” were not involved in the planning or implementation of it. When I asked the teacher about her use of the word “ghettoize” she said, “I hate to use the words, but it’s true. We need to integrate. But it’s just not happening.”

To compensate for this institutional dispossession and lack of integration (i.e., ‘ghettoization’), the ELD teachers made an effort to reach out to other content-area teachers to create some cohesion and mend the preexisting disconnect. Part of their intention was to work cooperatively and share practices and curricula to see how they could “help make that bridge” (former department chair, 7/14) that was needed to help students integrate and succeed. The former department chair described this effort with

frustration, that their efforts made no difference, as teachers in other departments did not know how to work with ELs. She then indicated how this lack of knowledge and understanding (or recognition) led to further dispossession in “cultural clashes” at the school:

Some kids were leaving every Friday to go to the mosque...and teachers were upset because they were missing quizzes. Choices are being made, but there was no real safe space as a staff or student where you could talk about it. So those sorts of cultural clashes [affected students].

She continued to then point out how the lack of cultural recognition by faculty incited further dispossession:

And [these views] undermine the entire community: [the students] start to feel disconnected from everybody else, and feel like [they] don't want to connect. 'This assembly's stupid,' and so, 'all of those kids are stupid,' you know, and [they] start to make all these sort of assumptions that are not really healthy. And then you can't move, you can't get anywhere.

So the embedded school structures based on the politics of universalism create further disconnection and an overall unwillingness to engage in dialogue about multiculturalism. Concurrently, multicultural students feel ‘othered’ (i.e., dispossessed) since they do not fit into the legitimized culture of the school, which is so highly valued by student council and faculty members. As a result, they see the school as a hostile site instead of a welcoming one, thus decreasing their desire to participate.

The former department chair attributed this not only to embedded structures of schooling and the policy, but also to the leadership's historically hands-off approach that

enabled and perpetuated these structures. As the ELD department chair explained, these practices are prevalent at Canyon:

I think the administration has tried but they don't understand and don't try enough to understand exactly who our students are and what they really need...sometimes I feel like we've done our job well, and so things are taken care of, and there's part of it that doesn't need to be taken care of. But it's problematic, you know? Just because there's not the attention, or perhaps the pressing need to do something differently.

She continued by describing how in conversations with the incoming turnaround administration, the new principal shared some ideas that were more traditional schooling norms, such as 'freshman academies':

And I can't argue against that, except that it totally excludes our students because they hinge on...classes that our students are not in, that they're not going to be in. So it's frustrating to keep coming up against these great ideas and these great plans that aren't supposed to but they further separate and segregate our students. And it's something that I haven't seen an administrator really be able to fully grasp what that means or why it means, or why it can't work, or find an alternative. I guess that's what I would like: is to find an alternative or find something that works for everybody.

While administrators were supportive and caring and attempted to address (some) students' needs, they tended to overlook the needs of multicultural students that are not the same as the 'legitimate' American student.

The former department chair emphasized that within the neoliberal and neoconservative structures of schooling, educators feel “stuck” and “fearful” to make radical changes. She explained, “It’s like this fear of doing something radically different...Something radically different needs to happen...there’s all this fear and it’s like, why are people in these positions if they’re obsessed by anxiety and fear?” Here she described how educators (leaders, particularly) shut down in the face of radical change due to preexisting, embedded ideas of school norms, as well as neoliberal and neoconservative pressures. Thus, they are unable to see beyond what is considered to be “legitimate”. When I asked her why she thinks this occurs with educational leaders, she concurred with the above, that preserving legitimacy takes precedence over enacting the principle of equal respect under the politics of difference: “I think it’s protection of self-imposition, right? It’s like somebody suggesting...something that isn’t comfortable for you, and you couldn’t lead it...how uncomfortable it is to be asked to lead something that you don’t really understand.” She explained how despite her and her colleagues’ best efforts, restrictive political mandates and structures squander their optimism and motivation. “I think that’s just the nature of education right now,” she conceded. “Everybody just keeps pushing, and we keep pushing as hard as we can and as far as we can, and everybody just seems to get pushed back.” As a result, teachers and administrators compromise their democratic imperatives and surrender to the mandates of the state, and allow the politics of universalism to persist, regardless of how much they frustrate them and continue to stratify students.

Aforementioned tensions around the politics of universalism, the politics of difference, and the resultant dispossession of immigrant, refugee, and EL students

resulted in internal and external conflicts. In 2014, due to consistent low performance on the AIMS and low graduation rates the state put Canyon into a “soft” turnaround status; the administrators were released from the school and 23 teachers (outside of the ELD department) chose to leave Canyon in order to work at other schools in the district. The new, turnaround administration and the corresponding turnaround model went into effect in the 2014-2015 school year. The turnaround model created an even greater emphasis on neoliberal mandates and structures, thus amplifying the power of the politics of universalism as the key to ‘fixing’ a ‘failing’ school.

The turnaround principal leaned on neoliberalism and neoconservatism as the keys to improving the school:

I tried to make it a more academic environment: [For example, when] you walk in...the top ten seniors and their pictures [are posted on the wall]—that was amazing, I couldn’t believe how the kids gravitated to that. [We also posted] the ‘Canyon Goes To College’ [poster, which displays] how much scholarship money [students applying to college] earn.

This neoliberal, individualistic, meritocratic strategy does not serve pluralistic student populations. These posters are prominently displayed next to the ELD classrooms, so we are left to wonder how ELs feel as they pass these posters: Not only are they completely misrecognized culturally by these displays, but as described earlier, many students in the ELD program cannot gain the credits or academic English to graduate high school and apply to college.

The new principal also had an *awareness* of the multicultural students on campus and their value, but when it comes to recognition, she framed it more as how they contribute to the mainstream, Anglo students:

[They are] what makes the school the school. When you walk on this campus and you see all the kids interacting with each other, and the different languages spoken, it just really makes you feel like these kids are getting a real world experience... I think that if we were to lose our refugee/ELD population, it would be a big hurt, because I think that it is just such an amazing thing for all kids to see.

Her discussion of the pluralism of the school is scant and mostly framed around increasing academic rigor and standards. When she mentions diversity, as evidenced above, it is framed as a surface-level appreciation, not recognition.

The new principal framed her discussion of equity issues related to policy and curricular mandates for ELs around how they affect *her* as a turnaround leader. When asked about the challenges she has seen regarding Arizona's language policy and curriculum and how she has seen the tensions at Canyon, she replied:

The challenge with that for me as the principal is, I want them to learn English, but I have to bear the brunt. They're not going to graduate. When they come in like that [as immigrants and refugees with disrupted educations] at 19, they're not going to graduate, and they're going to get aged out at 22. But they count against my graduation rate.

The new principal of Canyon is faced with the new realities of globalization and public schooling: as socioeconomic and sociopolitical shifts continue to occur, students are not going to 'look like' they did in the past. Concurrently, her concern is over graduation

rates and how those rates affect her—she has no concern over what these shifts mean for the future of education. In addition, she expresses zero concern over the impact on those students who do not graduate; as such, she completely misrecognizes the deleterious effects of the politics of universalism and their corresponding structures within schools. The ELD faculty members recognize the risks of dispossession—both physical and emotional—that ELs face in their school, but the turnaround administrator, as an instrument of the state’s neoliberal machine, explicitly misrecognizes her multicultural students.

Canyon high school has encountered internal chaos due to policy changes and the realities of urban schooling (funding, demographics, politics, pressure), and the resultant low neoliberal performance indicators leading up to 2014 caused external forces to push on politics of universalism, which harmonize with the “traditional” schooling norms and structures valued internally. The Canyon example illustrates how unitary curricula and policies have pervasive effects that create micro-level symbolic consequences (segregating immigrant students) and macro-level political consequences (decreased efficacy of the school as a whole, leading to the turnaround). Multicultural students are placed on the margins of the school, and this marginalization (and misrecognition/dispossession) is both created by and perpetuated by policy, curricula, and normative frameworks for schooling held by teachers and leaders.

Discussion: Synthesizing Theory with Practice

At Canyon there is a political tension wherein the ELD teachers desire the politics of difference, but the administration and state call for politics of universalism; nevertheless the latter is not achieved as a result of the former being absent, thus resulting

in consistently low achievement and a turnaround policy. At Desert Springs, the faculty aligns in their push for the politics of universalism and disregard for the politics of difference (though the increasingly pluralistic students pushed for the politics of difference in actions such as “Little Mexico”). As a result, Desert Springs has attained continuously high achievement; although I assert that given the demographic shifts, the cultural blindness threatens its continued success, as the burgeoning multicultural student population will experience further dispossession (evidence by the past student acts of resistance, “Little Mexico”). When students are dispossessed, they lose the ability and desire to assimilate to the legitimized identity. At Canyon, ELD faculty members recognize the need to address the multicultural community, but there is a fear of making radical change, and the policies/curricula further prevent those changes. While at Desert Springs misrecognition/dispossession is a bit more covert (hidden beneath the stable curriculum, high performance metrics, and “family” culture), at Canyon dispossession is overt as the state’s language policy and the traditional structures of school literally marginalize and, in the words of one ELD teacher, “ghettoize” multicultural students. At Desert Springs, there is no recognized need to address a growing Latino student population; teachers and administrators have all bought into their policies and practices, which have been historically successful on a neoliberal level, but are leading to increased dispossession.

Nevertheless, at Canyon the constant pressures led to a systematic shift to a culture structured solely around the politics of universalism (the turnaround model). Hence, Canyon’s administration is pushing for the “academic culture” that has permeated Desert Springs for many years; moreover, the leaders at both sites have a culturally

neutral approach to leadership and curriculum. While Desert Springs has begun to experience unity/plurality tensions, Canyon—with its multilingual and multicultural students—has experienced historically detrimental tensions. Paradoxically, though, Canyon is shifting further toward universalism—toward Desert Springs’s approach—which, given the phenomena at Desert Springs, will exacerbate these tensions and problems.

Furthermore, the tension between the politics of universalism and the politics of difference is palpable and inescapable. Despite many educators’ desires to enact the politics of difference and its principle of equal respect, ultimately the politics of universalism take precedence amidst the power of today’s conservative modernization. As a result, growing multicultural student populations face increased dispossession, thus threatening the overall efficacy of schools. These tensions are created and perpetuated by neoliberal educational policies.

The issues surrounding the unity/plurality tensions within schools are not nuanced, as they have been widely discussed in previous theories and research on educational policy. Paris (2012), for instance, discussed how both educational policies and practices encompass “deficit approaches,” which view the languages and cultural practices of many students and communities of color as “deficiencies to be overcome in learning the demanded and legitimized dominant language...and cultural ways of schooling” (p. 93). This statement cogently describes the phenomena found in the two cases: many teachers and administrators ‘tolerate’ and sometimes ‘celebrate’ culture on a surface level, but they adhere to legitimized, dominant practices that favor neoliberal metrics and neoconservative uniformity (i.e., emphasizing high-stakes test achievement

and prescribed curricular models). Combs and Nicholas (2011) acknowledged that a “phenomenon of unintended consequences” is taking place. The authors described unity policies, such as Arizona’s language policy, as “coercive” as they seek to control the student population amidst state demographic shifts. Their description here relates to the policymakers’ reactionary responses to an increasing Spanish-speaking population—yet the unintended consequences extend to Native American and non-Mexican immigrant students (e.g., refugees). Despite these “unintended consequences” apparent in schools that serve non-Spanish-speaking ELs, the neoconservative ideology committed to halting the demographic shifts in Arizona is evident.

Paris (2012) identified neoliberal policies as shining examples of how policymakers (and, consequently, educators) are not interested in sustaining the languages and cultures of longstanding and newcomer communities of color. He further explained how such policies reinforce normative and hostile climates for immigrants and communities of color: “This climate, and the policies and teaching practices resulting from it, has the quite explicit goal of creating a monocultural and monolingual society based on White, middle-class norms of language and cultural being” (p. 95). His conclusions support the discourses of Canyon teachers, and the phenomena taking place at Desert Springs: that the policies favor structures and practices predicated on White, middle-class, “family” norms, and the resultant practices of educators echo them. Given these theoretical and empirical points, we must now ask: Since unity ultimately overthrows plurality in policies and curricula, how do we break free of this seeming entrapment?

Escaping the Paradox: Time for a New View

As briefly discussed above, many scholars have examined tensions surrounding unity policies and increasing student plurality. Empirical literature, though, has tended to be descriptive and oftentimes normative in arguments for critical pedagogy/social justice leadership (e.g., Crookes & Lehner, 1994; Furman, 2012; Hunt, 2011; Theoharis, 2007; Theoharis & O'Toole, 2011) or culturally-responsive pedagogy/leadership (e.g., Johnson, 2007; Moll et al., 1992; Paris, 2012; Nelson & Guerra, 2014), otherwise they have taken positivistic approaches arguing for “best practices” for teaching and leadership (e.g., Adamson & Long, 2012; Edmonds, 1979; Slavin et al., 2011). Meanwhile, theoretical arguments that underlie these studies, as well as those discussing neoliberal policy, educational shifts, and multiculturalism (e.g., Apple, 2005; Davis, 2004; Foster, 1986; Leonardo, 2007; Lipman, 2011; Yosso, 2005) do not fully touch on the many layers of the unity/plurality tension prevalent in the cases cited above (and, hence, in education today).

Some of the above authors (e.g., Davis, 2004; Moll, et al., 1992; Paris, 2012) have argued for multicultural curricula in schools, which build upon the principle of equal respect associated with the politics of difference. The logic behind multicultural curriculum depends upon a premise that we owe equal respect to all cultures; as Taylor (1994) argued, however, the presumption is problematic and involves an act of faith, as the validity of the claim has to be demonstrated concretely in the actual study of the culture. For a culture sufficiently different from our own, we may not know what may be valuable in its contribution. Such an argument resonates with defenders of traditional culture and can be homogenizing, using existing dominant standards to judge the worth of others. Hence, the politics of difference can end up making (or forcing) conformity.

According to Taylor (1994), there must be something midway between the inauthentic and homogenizing demand for recognition of equal worth on the one hand and judgment using Eurocentric standards, on the other:

There are other cultures, and we have to live together more and more both on a world scale and commingled in each individual society. Moreover, we are required to admit that we are very far away from that ultimate horizon from which the relative worth of different cultures might be evident. This would mean breaking with an illusion that holds many multiculturalists—as well as their most bitter opponents—in its grip. (p. 73)

Moreover, the multicultural and critical models function similarly to the unity policy approaches in that they stress the need to elaborate and display a collective identity to which individual members of a culture must conform (Fraser, 2000). As such, as Fraser (2005) argued, these normative conceptions further institutionalize hierarchies of cultural value that deny many populations from requisite standing and/or participating in social interactions and decision-making. Thus, we must reconsider how we discuss and work toward recognition (i.e., combat dispossession) within the unity/plurality paradox.

Nancy Fraser (2000, 2005) claimed that our normativity not only limits cultures, but it also creates further political tensions. She posited that the politics of universalism and politics of difference come into contention and drive many of the world's social conflicts, as both sides create a "hegemonic grammar of political contestation" (2000; p. 107). As a result, stratification is reified and more people become displaced (or dispossessed). This phenomenon was evident at Canyon wherein many educators argued and fought for the politics of difference, but further dispossession arose as the school

became polarized in its structures and processes, thus causing further disarray and eventual inner and outer turmoil in the turnaround model. The legitimized response to the turmoil was, then, the politics of universalism.

In order to cease these normative structures, Fraser (2000) recommended that we work to break the institutionalized strongholds of an idealized identity within policy and practice. To do this, we must move beyond a politics of difference alone, as globalization and the acceleration of conservative modernization amidst expanding capitalism create further dispossession and misrecognition. In order to remedy marginalization and stratification without encouraging displacement and reification, we must conceptualize struggles for recognition “in a way that can help to solve, or at least mitigate, the problems of displacement and reification” (Fraser, 2000; p. 109), which requires a macro-level reform of institutional structures and practice, which comes from theoretical approaches to policymaking and practice (i.e., curriculum).

As Fraser (2000) emphasized, we, as scholars, must promote real change to interaction-regulating values that impede the participation of all individuals at all relevant institutional sites. In other words, rectifying dispossession/misrecognition “means replacing institutionalized value patterns that impede parity of participation with ones that foster it” (Fraser, 2000; p. 115). This approach necessitates reflective approaches within the institutions that reify and perpetuate collective, idealized identities (i.e., schools and higher education institutions wherein we theorize about and study education). Furthermore, the unity/plurality paradox is not only present in policy and curriculum, but it is also present in theoretical discussions. In essence, like Canyon became polarized in the unity/plurality tension, and Desert Springs’s unity/plurality tension is beginning to

boil, theory and research have remained polarized in the appropriate responses to the unity/plurality paradox (i.e., instructional leadership vs. culturally-responsive/social justice leadership, academic rigor vs. multicultural education, etc.)

This reconceptualization requires us to rupture assertions of presumed universal norms in education and society; in so doing, we can redefine how we teach future school leaders to become educators who nurture students' and teachers' capacities to construct meaningful possibilities for themselves and their world beyond received standards, policies, norms, and traditions (Kirylo, Thirumurthy, & O'Malley, 2009). Ladson-Billings (1998) argued for a "transmutation of theory" in multicultural education (as multicultural education's purpose has been lost in normative theorizing and research over the years): that we must theorize and educate in a way that prepares students to reconstruct society by engaging students in "provocative thinking about the contradictions of U.S. ideals and lived realities" (p. 22). Ladson-Billings acknowledged that scholars, in the watering down of multicultural education, have inadvertently embraced universalism over particularity (in concert with Taylor's warning); so in order to move beyond the normativity risk, we need to engage in reflective, "provocative" thinking about what is and what is to be in education (and society).

We must move beyond the politics of universalism, which lead to increased dispossession among multicultural students; and yet we must also move beyond the politics of difference, which risk becoming normative in their definitions of cultures and the tendency to critique. If we do not move beyond this binary, we risk alienating students and policymakers. As shown by the two Arizona cases, when educators choose one side or the other, the result is resistance and, thus, inaction. The purpose of this

paper was to analyze this political and curricular paradox in the wake of today's shifting sociocultural and sociopolitical contexts, and to illustrate how this paradox creates and perpetuates dispossession. In so doing, I present a challenge to scholars to approach a new theoretical slant when examining curriculum/practice and policy.

Curriculum and policy are not fixed, unwavering structures that live in a cause-and-effect domain. Rather, they are multifaceted processes that are constantly subject to internal and external stimuli (e.g., demographic and economic shifts). As globalization continues to increase and the inputs into our educational systems continue to shift, we can no longer submit to theories and practices that favor embedded, legitimized approaches. In addition, the expansion of neoliberal policies and values reify legitimized values around participation in society. And so, we must work toward a new, reflective approach to understanding policy and curriculum that considers recognition as well as schooling and policy as mutually constitutive constructs. As educational scholars, we have the ability to access and study institutionalized schooling structures in a way that breaks free of prior approaches that do not serve increasingly multicultural student populations. This is the time to conquer new frontiers in educational theory, thus leading to a new paradigm for curriculum creation/execution, pedagogy, leadership, and policymaking.

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*Appendix D-1***Research Methodologies****Desert Springs**

Data were collected using multiple sources, including documents from central governing boards illustrating the school achievements and student attainment, mission statements, ethnographic notes made during visits by the research team (two visits), and most importantly interviews with a variety of people, including four successive superintendents, the principal (interviewed twice), assistant principals, and teachers (20% randomly selected through a strategic process for an equal distribution of gender and content area). Concurrent data collection and analysis followed an iterative process. In the first stage of this method, interview transcripts, ethnographic notes, and document analysis notes were reviewed, and a codebook developed for data incident codes. The 51 initial codes included, among others, cultural blindness, views of curriculum, views of society and societal changes, capacity, direction setting, developing people, decision-making processes, and perceptions of the community. Researchers examined interview responses across participant groups (i.e., principals, teachers, staff members) and in relation to other data sources (i.e., ethnographic notes and documents). Second, the researchers (authors) analyzed the data as a group, substantiating, refining, and negating the initial inductive codes and deductive codes to 36 codes (e.g., sociocultural reproduction, preparation, habitus, sociocultural transformation, critique, consciousness, conflict, balance, situational leadership, reflection, recognition, provocation, interruption). Discriminate sampling was used to test incidents identified in phase two. In so doing, we reexamined transcripts and other data sources, testing our list of codes

against multiple data sources, further refining our categories to 21 grouped into themes. In all stages, divergent codes were discussed and examined against multiple data sources. At points in discriminate sampling, we returned to the field to conduct member checking with key informants. Finally, data categories and subcategories were crystallized (Richardson, 2001). Data analysis continued into the fourth stage of writing.

Canyon

While I conducted visits to each ELD classroom I took on the role of both participant as observer and observer as participant (Merriam, 2009). I also conducted multiple visits to the school site during regular day-to-day processes, as well as school events. Since I gathered data pertaining to educational discourses, I gained greater opportunities to learn as a participant, but remained open to observing interactions and gestures from a more objective standpoint. I also kept a thick record of my own reflections throughout the data collection process. My recorded observation/field notes were coded inductively and deductively for common themes, and compared to codes/themes uncovered in field notes and interviews. I conducted in-depth phenomenological face-to-face interviews with all ELD teachers and the outgoing school principal and assistant principal, and turnaround principal. Interview questions focused on participants' perceptions and reactions to language policy and its corresponding mandates, as well as school structures and curricula. Because the interviews encompassed a hermeneutic phenomenological structure (Heppner & Heppner, 2004), I created an "interview schedule" rather than a strict "question and answer" format—the interview schedule served as a prompt to help elicit and stimulate participants' stories about prominent events and insights concerning their senses of self and identity (as

educators) within Arizona's language policy mandates (Heppner & Heppner, 2004). All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim, then coded inductively and then deductively for common themes.

I adhered to three of Carspecken's (1996) five recommended stages for analyzing critical ethnographic data. The first stage primarily required compiling the primary record (or collection) of my data (discussed in the previous section). During the second stage, preliminary reconstructive analysis, I noted underlying meanings in the primary data records. These meanings came from pragmatic, semantic, and linguistic structures that arose, and were coded for common themes, key issues, and preliminary patterns that emerged, and compared those to findings in my critical analysis of policy texts (see next section). I also coded for where and what particular types of power that surfaced (relating to institutional logics and neoliberal/neoconservative ideologies) in interactions. This type of analysis applied to the third stage, dialogical data generation, as I analyzed my records from classroom observations and field notes. Again, I looked for themes related to the location and articulation of power and cultural reproduction through institutional isomorphism.