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Abstract

This qualitative study examines how language ideologies shape the implementation of the New York State Education Department (NYSED) Blueprint for English Language Learners (ELL) and Multilingual Learners (ML) Success, with a specific focus on Latinx multilingual students. Through policy analysis and interviews with two teachers and two administrators, findings reveal that monoglossic and raciolinguistic ideologies continue to prioritize English proficiency over multilingualism, limiting the Blueprint's intended support for linguistic diversity. High-stakes testing, resource inequities, and rigid curricular requirements create systemic barriers that hinder educators' efforts to implement inclusive multilingual practices. While some teachers leverage translanguaging strategies and community resources to support students, institutional policies largely remain English-dominant, reinforcing linguistic hierarchies. These findings highlight the disconnect between policy ideals and classroom realities, emphasizing the need for context-driven professional development, investment in multilingual resources, and assessment reform to achieve equitable multilingual education.

Key words

language ideologies, language policy, Latinx multilingual learners, raciolinguistic ideology, multilingual education, linguistic diversity, educational equity.

From policy to practice: addressing language ideologies in the education of Latinx multilingual learners

Resumen

Este estudio cualitativo examina cómo las ideologías lingüísticas influyen en la implementación del Marco para el Éxito (Blueprint) de los Estudiantes de Inglés (English Language Learners, ELLs) y Estudiantes Multilingües (Multilingual Learners, MLs) del Departamento de Educación del Estado de Nueva York (NYSED), con un enfoque específico en estudiantes multilingües latinx. A través del análisis de políticas y entrevistas con dos docentes y dos administradores, los hallazgos revelan que las ideologías monoglósicas y raciolingüísticas siguen favoreciendo la supremacía del inglés sobre el multilingüismo, limitando la visión inclusiva del Blueprint. Las evaluaciones estandarizadas, la inequidad en el acceso a recursos y la presión institucional por el dominio del inglés crean barreras sistémicas que dificultan la aplicación de prácticas pedagógicas multilingües. Aunque algunos docentes emplean prácticas de translenguaje y colaboraciones con la comunidad para apoyar a sus estudiantes, las políticas institucionales siguen siendo dominadas por el inglés, reforzando jerarquías lingüísticas. Estos hallazgos subrayan la desconexión entre las políticas y la práctica docente y enfatizan la necesidad de formación profesional contextualizada, mayor inversión en recursos multilingües y reformas en los sistemas de evaluación para garantizar una educación equitativa para estudiantes multilingües.

Palabras claves

ideologías lingüísticas, políticas lingüísticas, estudiantes multilingües latinos, ideología raciolingüística, educación multilingüe, diversidad lingüística, equidad educativa.

I. Introduction

New York City is home to one of the most linguistically diverse student populations in the world, with over 800 languages spoken across its communities (Roberts, 2010). This diversity is particularly evident in public schools, where a growing number of students are classified as English Language Learners (ELLs) or Multilingual Learners (MLs)—many of whom are Latinx, one of the fastest-growing linguistic groups in the U.S. (Benson, 2004). Recognizing this demographic shift, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) has introduced policies like the Blueprint for ELL/ML Success to promote multilingual education and equity (NYSED, 2024). These efforts reflect a broader commitment to acknowledging and incorporating multiculturalism and linguistic diversity into educational policy, underscoring the need for instructional approaches that value and support students' linguistic repertoires in the classroom.

Despite this policy shift, the implementation of multilingual education in New York's schools remains a complex and contested process. While policies like the Blueprint advocate for linguistic inclusivity, their effectiveness depends on how they are interpreted and enacted within school systems shaped by longstanding language ideologies (Cummins, 2000). Scholars have argued that nationalist language ideologies often reinforce English hegemony (dominance) even when promoting multilingualism in theory (Phillipson, 1992). This creates tensions in educational spaces, where Latinx multilingual students experience both institutional acknowledgment of their languages and systemic pressures favoring English as

the dominant medium of instruction. Gándara and Contreras (2009) emphasize that these contradictions arise from a combination of structural and ideological barriers, underscoring the need for educational models that go beyond symbolic inclusion to foster genuine linguistic and cultural equity.

Since 2014, the Blueprint for ELL/ML Success has aimed to address educational disparities by adapting instruction to New York's evolving linguistic demographics. However, its implementation raises critical questions: Do these policies truly embrace multilingualism, or do they reinforce assimilationist practices under the guise of inclusivity? This study examines how language ideologies influence the interpretation and enactment of the Blueprint, revealing the challenges of promoting multilingualism within a system that structurally prioritizes English. In doing so, it sheds light on the ideological tensions that shape multilingual education and highlights the need for policies that go beyond symbolic inclusion to promote meaningful linguistic equity for Latinx multilingual learners.

To explore these issues, this study investigates how teachers and administrators conceptualize and implement the Blueprint for ELL/ML Success in relation to Latinx multilingual learners. The research is guided by the following questions:

1. How do teachers and administrators conceptualize and apply language ideologies (monoglossic, raciolinguistic, and heteroglossic) in their daily practices with Latinx multilingual learners?
2. In what ways do language ideologies influence teachers' and administrators' perceptions of Latinx multilingual

learners' linguistic abilities and academic potential?

3. How do teachers and administrators negotiate competing language ideologies (monoglossic, raciolinguistic, and heteroglossic) in their interpretation and enactment of the NYSED Blueprint for ELL/ML Success?

Understanding how educators navigate these tensions is crucial for assessing the impact of multilingual policies in practice. While previous research has examined the ideological foundations of language policies (e.g., García & Kleyn, 2016; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Zentella, 2005), less attention has been given to how teachers and administrators actively negotiate these competing ideologies in their daily work. By centering educators' perspectives, this study moves beyond policy analysis to explore how linguistic hierarchies shape classroom practices and impact Latinx multilingual learners' educational experiences.

The following sections provide the necessary background and analytical framework for this study. First, an overview of the NYSED 2014 Blueprint establishes the historical and policy context of multilingual education in New York. Next, a literature review explores the key language ideologies shaping this study. The methodology section outlines the research design and data collection process, followed by the findings and analysis, which examine the perspectives of teachers and administrators. Finally, the study concludes by addressing the research questions, summarizing key insights, and offering recommendations for policy and practice.

Overview of the adoption of the NYSED Blueprint for ELL/ML Success

For many years, the U.S. public school system has operated under an English-only model, reflecting linguistic nationalism—the belief that a common language is necessary for national unity. This ideology reinforced monoglossic policies, where English was positioned as the only legitimate language of instruction, and multilingualism was seen as a barrier rather than a resource. Students who spoke other languages were expected to transition to English as quickly as possible, often without structured support. Over time, legal and policy interventions began to challenge these assimilationist approaches (García & Kleifgen, 2010).

The first major case, *Meyer v. Nebraska* (1923), arose in the wake of World War I, when states like Nebraska banned foreign language instruction due to rising linguistic nationalism. The Supreme Court ruled that such restrictions violated personal liberties under the 14th Amendment, establishing language instruction as an individual right. However, the decision did not advocate for bilingual education, instead reinforcing the idea of language as a right rather than an educational necessity.

Decades later, *Diana v. California* (1970) directly addressed language discrimination in schools. The court ruled that Spanish-speaking students could not be misclassified as intellectually disabled based on English-language IQ tests, exposing how raciolinguistic bias—rooted in racialized perceptions—shaped student evaluations and limited educational opportunities.

The Bilingual Education Act of 1968 marked the first federal recognition of multilingual students' needs, providing funding for bilingual programs. However, it maintained a monoglossic perspective, viewing bilingualism as a temporary bridge to English rather than valuing heteroglossic linguistic diversity in its own right. This mindset persisted in educational policies that tolerated bilingual education only as a tool for assimilation.

A turning point came with *Lau v. Nichols* (1974), in which Chinese-speaking students in San Francisco argued that being placed in English-only classrooms without language support denied them equal educational access. The Supreme Court agreed, ruling that schools must take affirmative steps to assist English learners. However, the decision remained vague, requiring language support without specifying how it should be implemented, allowing English-dominant models to persist.

That same year, *Otero v. Mesa County Valley School District* (1974) reinforced this legal obligation, ruling that schools could not passively expect students to acquire English on their own. Instead, they had to provide structured language assistance, further challenging the assumption that English proficiency should be achieved without institutional support.

At the local level, these legal battles shaped New York City's approach to bilingual education, particularly through the ASPIRA Consent Decree (1974). The Puerto Rican advocacy group ASPIRA sued the New York City Board of Education for

failing to provide Spanish-speaking students with adequate language support, leading to a court order that mandated bilingual education programs (Bartlett & García, 2011). While originally focused on Puerto Rican students, the ruling set a precedent for expanding bilingual education to serve NYC's growing multilingual population. The decree reflected a shift toward heteroglossic principles, recognizing the need for institutional support for multilingual students rather than expecting them to assimilate into English.

These legal and policy milestones laid the groundwork for the NYSED Blueprint for ELL/ML Success, which emerged as a strategic policy initiative informed by educational research, demographic shifts, and stakeholder engagement aimed at improving outcomes for ELLs and MLs (NYSED, 2014). The policy promotes multilingualism as an academic strength and responds to advocacy efforts calling for greater equity in language instruction (NYSED, 2014). As part of this broader commitment to valuing linguistic diversity, the New York State Seal of Biliteracy was introduced to formally recognize students' bilingual proficiency and reinforce the importance of multilingualism in academic and professional settings (NYSED, n.d.)

However, while the Blueprint signals a step toward multilingual inclusivity, its implementation may face challenges from competing language ideologies. These ongoing tensions make it essential to explore how these ideologies shape policy in practice, an issue examined in the following literature review.

II. Literature review

This literature review provides the theoretical foundation for analyzing how language ideologies shape the implementation of the NYSED Blueprint for ELL/ML Success. Specifically, it examines monoglossic, raciolinguistic, and heteroglossic ideologies and their influence on educational policy and practice. Drawing on Silverstein (1979), García & Kleyn (2016), Flores & Rosa (2015), and Zentella (2005), this review explores how these frameworks inform educators' perceptions of Latinx multilingual learners and their linguistic abilities, ultimately shaping classroom practices and policy decisions.

Language ideologies

Language ideologies are socially constructed beliefs about language, its use, and its speakers. These beliefs shape educational policies, dictating which languages are valued and which are marginalized. Silverstein (1979) defines language ideologies as "sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as rationalizations or justifications of perceived language structure and use" (p. 193). These ideologies influence language proficiency standards, the role of home languages, and educators' perceptions of multilingual students. To better understand the role of language ideologies in education, it is useful to examine the interplay between monoglossic ideology and linguistic imperialism, raciolinguistic ideology, and heteroglossic ideology.

Monoglossic ideology and linguistic imperialism

Monoglossic ideology upholds the dominance of a single, standardized

language as the only legitimate form of communication in formal educational settings. García and Kleyn (2016) argue that this ideology treats languages as separate, fixed systems, leading to the prioritization of English in U.S. schools while devaluing students' home languages. This perspective aligns with Phillipson's (1992) theory of linguistic imperialism, which describes how English is maintained as the dominant language through political, ideological, and educational systems.

Education policies such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) reflect monoglossic ideology by emphasizing English proficiency as a primary measure of academic success. While these policies aim to improve educational outcomes, they often marginalize multilingual students by reinforcing the expectation that English should replace or suppress home languages rather than coexist with them. This ideological stance continues to shape classroom practices, where English remains the default standard against which students' language abilities are judged.

Raciolinguistic ideology and cultural discontinuity

Raciolinguistic ideology shifts the focus from language itself to the racialization of its speakers. Flores and Rosa (2015) argue that raciolinguistic ideologies position racialized students—such as Latinx, Black, and Indigenous 15

Zentella (2005) further illustrates how linguistic discrimination manifests in educational spaces by examining the language and literacy practices of Latinx families and communities. Her

work challenges deficit-based views that portray bilingualism as an obstacle to academic success, demonstrating instead that students and families engage in dynamic multilingual practices, including code-switching, bilingual borrowing, and flexible language use, to navigate both educational and social spaces. However, these practices are often misinterpreted by educators, who mistakenly view them as evidence of linguistic confusion rather than cognitive flexibility and strategic linguistic adaptation.

Although Zentella does not explicitly use the term "translanguaging," her work aligns with later research by García (2009) and García & Wei (2014), who expand on the idea that multilingual speakers fluidly draw from their full linguistic repertoires rather than switching between separate language systems. Translanguaging challenges the traditional boundaries between languages, arguing instead that bilingualism should be seen as an integrated practice rather than a divided skill set. This perspective builds on Zentella's findings, reinforcing the idea that Latinx students' bilingual practices are not deficits but evidence of linguistic agency and adaptability.

While raciolinguistic ideologies reinforce rigid linguistic hierarchies that marginalize multilingual students, alternative perspectives challenge these constraints by recognizing the legitimacy and value of diverse linguistic practices. Heteroglossic ideology offers a counterpoint by reframing multilingualism as an asset rather than a deficiency.

Heteroglossic ideology and translanguaging

Heteroglossic ideology challenges the idea that languages exist as separate, bounded systems and instead views them as fluid, dynamic, and interconnected. Bakhtin (1981) describes heteroglossia as the coexistence of multiple voices and linguistic varieties within a social space. García (2009) extends this concept to education, emphasizing that multilingual students naturally draw on their full linguistic repertoire to engage with academic content rather than compartmentalizing languages.

As part of this perspective, translanguaging emerges as a pedagogical approach that challenges restrictive language norms (García & Wei, 2014). Rather than seeing multilingualism as a barrier, translanguaging recognizes the cognitive and communicative strengths of students who fluidly navigate multiple languages. This approach not only legitimizes their linguistic practices but also provides a pedagogical tool for fostering deeper engagement and comprehension in diverse learning environments.

Despite its potential, translanguaging is not always easily implemented in educational spaces. Institutional constraints—such as standardized assessments and curriculum policies that prioritize English—often limit its use in classrooms. Understanding how educators navigate these tensions is key to assessing how heteroglossic pedagogy can be effectively integrated into schools and how it may help shift the linguistic landscape toward greater inclusivity.

While extensive research has examined monoglossic, raciolinguistic, and heteroglossic ideologies (García & Kleyn,

2016; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Bakhtin, 1981), little is known about how these ideological frameworks shape educators' decision-making in multilingual classrooms. Existing studies tend to focus on theoretical constructs rather than how teachers and administrators interpret and implement language policies like the NYSED Blueprint in practice.

This gap is particularly significant given that language policies often promote multilingualism at a theoretical level while reinforcing monolingual practices in real-world educational settings. The NYSED Blueprint for ELL/ML Success provides a unique opportunity to investigate these tensions by examining how educators navigate and negotiate competing language ideologies. By centering educators' experiences, this study aims to bridge the gap between policy and practice, offering deeper insight into how linguistic hierarchies shape instructional decisions and multilingual education practices. The following section outlines the research design and methodology used to explore these issues in depth.

III. Methodology

Research design and data collection

This study follows a qualitative research design, using policy analysis and semi-structured interviews to examine stakeholders' perspectives on the NYSED Blueprint for ELL/ML Success (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Semi-structured interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015) allowed for in-depth

discussions on how participants interpret the Blueprint, the challenges they face in its implementation, and how they navigate competing language ideologies. To do so, an interview protocol was used, to covered perceptions of multilingual learners, the role of language ideologies in academic trajectories, and tensions in policy enactment (Brinkmann, 2013). Interviews were conducted remotely via video conferencing, lasted 45–60 minutes, and were recorded, transcribed, and anonymized with participants' informed consent.

Participant selection

Participants were selected through purposive sampling (Patton, 2015) based on their expertise, involvement with the Blueprint, and willingness to participate. The final sample included two NYSED administrators (one retired) and two teachers engaged in Blueprint implementation. Administrators provided insight into policy development, while teachers offered firsthand classroom perspectives. Participants represented different NYSED bureaus, ensuring a range of viewpoints. The inclusion of a retired administrator was particularly valuable, as this participant had been actively involved in the early stages of the policy's formulation and could offer historical insights into its evolution over time.

Data analysis

Interview transcripts were analyzed using thematic coding to identify key patterns and themes. Findings were triangulated with policy analysis and

existing literature on language ideologies to provide a broader understanding of how these ideologies influence multilingual education practices.

IV. Findings

1. Contradictions in the implementation of the NYSED Blueprint for ELL/ML Success

A recurrent theme from the interviews is the dissonance between the ideals presented in the NYSED Blueprint for ELL/ML Success and its practical implementation in schools. While the Blueprint emphasizes the celebration of linguistic diversity as a "strength," teachers and administrators consistently noted the pressure to prioritize English language acquisition above all else. One teacher highlighted this contradiction by saying "We constantly hear linguistic diversity is a strength ... but everything still revolves around getting kids to pass the English tests. Everything is about aligning with the standards; students must meet the standards. If they don't, we are not doing our job, and we will be seen as bad. This viewpoint shows the tension between the objectives of the states about multilingualism and inclusion and the reality of high-stakes testing, where English proficiency remains the central measure of success.

Teachers also described the "one-size-fits-all" approach of the Blueprint as a significant challenge. Many felt that the trainings and workshops provided by the state were too generic. They didn't cater to the specific needs of students from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. As one teacher stated, "They give us these

workshops on culturally responsive teaching, but they're always so general... My students speak four different languages, and what works for one doesn't always work for the others." This reveals a gap between the Blueprint's commitment to culturally responsive teaching and the on-the-ground reality of limited support for multilingual classrooms.

2. Resource inequities and access to multilingual materials

Another important issue raised by teachers and administrators is the lack of access to multilingual instructional materials. Teachers mentioned the shortage of classroom libraries and school resources to support students who speak less commonly spoken languages, such as Mixtec, K'iche', and Haitian Creole. One of the teachers shared, "If you walk into our school library, you'll see shelves of English books for every subject, but good luck finding books in Mixtec, K'iche', or even Haitian Creole." The absence of such materials not only hinders academic engagement but also undermines the Blueprint's call to "value students' home languages."

Teachers are often forced to fill this gap through personal initiative. One teacher described creating a classroom library with books in Haitian Creole and Spanish by reaching out to community organizations and families for donations. Another teacher explained that they had to search online and seek help from parents to obtain books in Mixtec and Mam. This dependency on individual efforts echoes systemic deficiencies in the provision of resources for linguistic equity. While the Blueprint recognizes lin-

guistic diversity as a strength, the necessary resources to support that vision remain lacking.

3. Tension between language ideologies and educator practices

The influence of language ideologies on teachers' practices was a key point of discussion among the participants of the research. Many teachers and administrators expressed how linguistic hierarchies - shaped by both policy and perception, - affect how Latinx and multilingual learners are treated. An administrator mentioned that students are often judged not only on their linguistic abilities but also on their perceived identity "Our kids get boxed in by stereotypes, ... about how they speak, you know. It's complicated, it's not just about language; it's about how their identity is perceived and valued." This observation underscores how raciolinguistic ideologies are linked with linguistic expectations, creating biased judgments of student abilities.

Students' use of home language, slang and/or non-standard pronunciation is another issue in NY schools that is linked to raciolinguistic. One teacher reported that students were marked down in oral participation for using "too much slang" or "unclear pronunciation," even when those students had passed their English proficiency tests; another one mentioned that a student was placed as a non-English speaker, even though she was a native English and Swahili speaker, due to her accent.

In contrast, some teachers expressed the importance of balancing the need for "clear communication" and respecting students' linguistic identities. One of the

teachers mentioned, "I understand that accents are part of themselves, of their identity, but we gotta be honest; students still need to be understood to do well in life, in school and everywhere. My goal, as a teacher, is to... to... to help, to prepare them for the real world; and for me clear communication is key in any job." This statement really shows how tricky it can be to balance encouraging students to take pride in their language while also getting them ready for what's expected in the wider world.

4. Efforts toward linguistic inclusivity and the role of the seal of biliteracy

Even with the difficulties faced, teachers pointed out some encouraging progress in fostering linguistic inclusivity. Several participants mentioned the positive impact of the New York State Seal of Biliteracy, which formally recognizes students' proficiency in multiple languages. One administrator noted, "We've made real progress with the Seal of Biliteracy. Students now have a concrete way to prove their skills in two languages, and that means something." This statement points out why the Seal is so important, both symbolically and practically. It gives students real recognition for their language skills—something they can actually hold in their hands. Teachers see this as a step toward the Blueprint's aim of valuing students' home languages. Plus, it helps students stand out when applying for colleges and jobs.

Educators also described efforts to create classroom environments that reflect the linguistic diversity of their students. One teacher shared how they encourage

students to use their home languages during group work, stating that "They explain concepts to each other in Spanish and then work together to write in English." Other teachers pointed out that these practices often rely on them rather than being fully backed by the school system.

These findings reveal a clear gap in how multilingual education is implemented at an institutional level; there are different perspectives on the way of approaching multilingualism and the reasons behind it. Also the findings showed there is a need for more support from the school system to make sure multilingual education practices, like those used by individual teachers, become long-term and school-wide efforts.

5. Perceptions of progress and remaining challenges

The interviewees expressed a mix of optimism and caution regarding the future of multilingual education under the NYSED Blueprint for ELL/ML Success. One administrator acknowledged that "The Blueprint... has been a positive step toward recognizing the value of linguistic diversity," but added that full realization of its goals is "still a long process." Teachers described their day-to-day efforts to create inclusive classroom environments, but also shared feelings of frustration. One of the teachers expressed "We're doing our best, but there are days that we wanna give up... I don't... I don't know if you understand, but sometimes I feel like I'm just scratching the surface." This teacher here expresses the limitations of individual effort in the face of systemic challenges related to training, resources, and competing language ideologies.

In sum, teachers and administrators see the NYSED Blueprint for ELL/ML Success as a way to promote linguistic inclusion, but interviews show they face challenges in putting it into practice. The Blueprint advocates for equity and inclusion, but sadly, its impact is limited by a lack of support, training, and resources. On the other hand, language ideologies also affect how students' language use is valued, often reinforcing existing power structures. These findings show how complex the implementation of language policy is and the need for stronger support for Latinx multilingual learners.

V. Discussion and analysis of results

1. Reconciling policy ideals with classroom realities

The findings reveal a significant gap between the ideological aspirations of the NYSED Blueprint for ELL/ML Success and its actual implementation in schools. While the Blueprint promotes linguistic diversity, teachers and administrators often prioritize English language acquisition due to the pressures of high-stakes testing. This disconnect between policy rhetoric and classroom practice reflects the enduring influence of monoglossic ideology (García & Kleyn, 2016; Phillipson, 1992), as English remains the primary measure of academic success. Cummins (2000) critiques this tendency in bilingual education, highlighting how well-intentioned initiatives may inadvertently reinforce linguistic hierarchies instead of dismantling them.

Zentella's (2005) ethnographic research in East Harlem provides a case

study that mirrors these findings. Her work on Puerto Rican and Dominican families reveals that despite growing up in rich bilingual environments, many children were placed into remedial English instruction programs due to biased assessments that failed to recognize bilingual proficiency. Teachers often interpreted their bilingualism as a deficit, assuming that code-switching signified confusion rather than cognitive flexibility. This aligns with the experiences reported in this study, where educators' misinterpretations of bilingualism reinforce monolingual norms despite official policies promoting multilingualism.

This disconnect between policy ideals and classroom implementation is further reflected in teacher training workshops, which follow a "one-size-fits-all" approach. Educators described these workshops as too generalized to address the unique needs of linguistically diverse classrooms. García (2009) argues that culturally responsive pedagogy must be context-specific, yet the Blueprint's standardized training model fails to provide teachers with the localized and nuanced preparation necessary to navigate complex multilingual learning environments.

Zentella's (2005) study also sheds light on this gap in teacher preparation, documenting how teachers who lacked formal training in bilingual education relied on deficit perspectives when evaluating students' language skills. Similar to the Blueprint's lack of context-driven professional development, Zentella found that teachers frequently misunderstood bilingual students' linguistic practices, leading to inconsistent and inequitable learning experiences. These parallels highlight the

need for professional development (PD) that equips educators with the knowledge and skills to support multilingual students, moving beyond superficial diversity rhetoric to meaningful pedagogical change.

These findings highlight the ongoing disconnect between multilingual policy goals and what actually happens in classrooms. While the NYSED Blueprint for ELL/ML Success promotes multilingualism, teachers often face structural barriers—such as rigid training programs and monolingual assessments—that make full implementation difficult. This study moves beyond theoretical critiques of monoglossic ideology (García & Kleyn, 2016; Flores & Rosa, 2015) to show how educators actively navigate these contradictions. Their experiences reveal the limits of top-down policies and the urgent need for real institutional support, not just symbolic commitments, to make multilingual education truly effective.

2. Addressing systemic resource inequities

The shortage of multilingual instructional materials remains a major barrier to implementing the Blueprint effectively. While the policy promotes linguistic diversity, the reality in classrooms tells a different story. Teachers often struggle to find resources for students who speak less dominant languages like Mixtec, K'iche', and Haitian Creole. As a result, they turn to their communities—asking for donations, searching for materials on their own, or even creating resources from scratch. This reflects what Moll et al. (2006) describe in their funds of knowledge framework: when institutions fall short, educators and families step in to fill the gaps. Zentella (1997)

observed a similar pattern in East Harlem, where Puerto Rican and Dominican parents had to "home-school" their children in Spanish because classrooms lacked bilingual books. Decades later, the burden of ensuring linguistic access still falls on teachers and families rather than the institutions meant to provide equitable education.

While these grassroots efforts highlight teachers' creativity and dedication, they also expose the deeper problem: policies that sound promising on paper but don't come with the necessary support to be fully realized. If multilingualism is truly valued, schools need more than just well-meaning guidelines—they need funding for materials, curriculum development, and professional training that reflects the realities of diverse classrooms. Without these changes, multilingual education risks remaining an abstract ideal rather than a lived reality.

This study adds to existing research on structural inequalities in bilingual education (Bartlett & García, 2011; Zentella, 1997) by shifting the focus to the everyday strategies teachers use to work around these systemic gaps. While policy discussions often frame institutional reforms as the key to educational equity, these findings suggest that real change often happens at the classroom level. Teachers—not policymakers—are the ones ensuring that multilingual learners get the resources they need. Recognizing and supporting their efforts is essential if multilingual education is to move beyond theory and become a meaningful,

sustainable practice.

3. Navigating competing language ideologies

A key takeaway from the analysis is the tension between monoglossic, raciolinguistic, and heteroglossic ideologies in how educators perceive and assess Latinx multilingual students. According to Flores and Rosa (2015), raciolinguistic ideologies shape judgments about students' language abilities, often in ways that reflect racial bias rather than actual proficiency. The findings show that Latinx multilingual learners are frequently seen as linguistically deficient, even when they demonstrate strong academic competence in English. As one administrator put it, students are often "boxed in by stereotypes about how they speak," illustrating how language and race intersect in educational assessment.

This bias extends beyond just English proficiency—it also affects how students' use of non-standard varieties of English is perceived. Teachers often penalize students for using slang, regional accents, or features of bilingual speech, reinforcing the monoglossic idea that there is only one "correct" way to speak English. García and Li Wei (2014) critique this mindset, arguing that it ignores how multilingual students naturally shift between linguistic resources depending on context. Zentella (2005) makes a similar observation in her study of Latinx students in NYC schools, where she found that they were frequently corrected more harshly than their white peers for pronunciation and code-switching, reinforcing an implicit hierarchy of whose

language is considered legitimate.

These conflicting expectations put teachers in a difficult position. On the one hand, many recognize the value of multilingualism; on the other, institutional pressures to enforce standardized language norms leave little room for approaches that embrace students' full linguistic repertoires. Providing teachers with training on translanguaging could help bridge this gap, offering strategies to balance high language expectations with respect for students' linguistic diversity. By equipping educators with tools to navigate these tensions, schools could foster a more inclusive approach that values multilingualism without compromising rigorous academic instruction.

4. Leveraging the seal of biliteracy for systemic change

The introduction of the New York State Seal of Biliteracy is a step toward recognizing multilingualism as an asset. Teachers described the Seal as a "concrete way" to promote students' linguistic proficiency, offering both material and symbolic benefits for their academic and job market future. This initiative reflects the principles of heteroglossic ideology (Bakhtin, 1981; García, 2009), which embraces the coexistence of multiple linguistic voices in educational spaces.

However, evidence suggests that implementation of the Seal relies heavily on teacher-driven efforts rather than systemic institutional support. Teachers' attempts to promote home language use during group work align with translanguaging pedagogy (García and Kleyn, 2016), but without consistent policy support, such

initiatives remain unevenly distributed across classrooms. Joseph (2004) warns that language policies—even those framed as inclusive—often reinforce national or institutional ideologies of linguistic legitimacy. While the Seal acknowledges bilingualism, it primarily rewards students who achieve proficiency in languages deemed "academically valuable," often privileging dominant bilingual forms over everyday multilingual practices. Ball's (1994) framework which contrasts "policy as text" with "policy as practice," highlights the difference between what policies claim to do and how they actually play out in real life. To truly harness the Seal's potential, solid institutional backing and a well-aligned system are needed, rather than just leaning on teachers to take the initiative on their own.

5. Balancing optimism and critical reflection

Educators have some mixed feelings about how effective the Blueprint is. On the one hand, they see some progress, but on the other, they point out that there are still significant gaps in how it's being put into practice. Teachers have mentioned that "we're just scratching the surface," which really shows how slowly things are changing on a larger scale. Their frustrations also highlight the difficulties in aligning the Blueprint's ideology with what's actually happening in the classroom.

The findings reveal that even though the Blueprint's framework aligns with the heteroglossic perspective, its implementation is hampered by monoglossic and raciolinguistic forces. To really make a difference, we need more than

symbolic policy shifts are required; it is needed ongoing support for teacher training, better resource distribution, and a change in mindset. García and Wei's (2014) idea of translanguaging might help us bridge this gap. By training educators to recognize and leverage students' full linguistic repertoires, schools can more effectively meet the goals outlined in the Blueprint.

The discussion highlights critical areas where the NYSED Blueprint for ELL/ML Success both succeeds and falls short, particularly in addressing the needs of Latinx multilingual learners. These insights set the stage for the conclusion, where the implications of this study are synthesized, and recommendations for policy and practice are outlined.

VI. Conclusion

Despite policies promoting multilingualism, English remains the dominant instructional language, as high-stakes testing and resource limitations constrain educators' efforts. Teachers and administrators navigate these tensions in different ways—some advocate for translanguaging and seek out multilingual resources, while others feel pressured to adhere to English-only instruction. This negotiation underscores the contradictions embedded in the Blueprint: while it encourages linguistic diversity, systemic constraints make implementation inconsistent and heavily dependent on individual educators.

Raciolinguistic biases further complicate language instruction, influencing how students' linguistic abilities are

perceived. Bilingualism is sometimes misinterpreted as a deficiency, affecting academic placement and limiting access to enrichment opportunities. The Seal of Biliteracy counters these narratives by recognizing multilingualism as an asset, but its accessibility remains uneven, favoring students in formal bilingual programs over those with more fluid bilingual experiences.

Rather than focusing solely on structural critiques of bilingual education (Zentella, 2005; Bartlett & García, 2011), this study highlights how educators actively navigate policy constraints. Their agency in negotiating language ideologies reveals both the persistence of monoglossic norms and the potential for resistance. Addressing these challenges requires more than symbolic policy commitments—systemic reforms must provide educators with the tools and resources needed to implement multilingual pedagogies effectively.

To move toward equity in multilingual education, three key steps are necessary:

1. Professional development that equips teachers with translanguaging strategies and counters raciolinguistic biases.
2. Greater investment in multilingual resources, especially for less commonly taught languages like K'iche', Mixtec, and Haitian Creole.
3. Assessment reform to move beyond English-dominant testing and recognize students' full linguistic repertoires.

Sustainable multilingual education cannot rely solely on individual educators' efforts—it requires targeted funding, systemic policy changes, and institutional support. By amplifying teachers' voices,

this study challenges policymakers to move beyond aspirational frameworks and enact meaningful reforms. Future research should examine how these policies evolve across districts and explore the long-term impact of initiatives like the Seal of Biliteracy on students' academic and professional trajectories. Scope and limitations

Scope and limitations

This study draws on the perspectives of two teachers and two administrators, offering a focused snapshot of how the Blueprint operates within select classrooms. While these reflections provide rich insights, they are not necessarily representative of all NYSED schools or the full spectrum of multilingual education experiences. The findings highlight key systemic patterns, but a larger, more diverse sample—including educators across different school districts and student demographics—would strengthen the generalizability of these conclusions.

Additionally, this study does not include direct student perspectives, which limits the depth of understanding regarding how Latinx multilingual learners experience these policies firsthand. Future research should incorporate student interviews or secondary sources to provide a more comprehensive view of the impact of language ideologies on student learning, identity, and agency.

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