RACE, LANGUAGE AND IDEOLOGY IN AN URBAN
TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM

By

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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The current racial homogeneity in the United States K-12 public school teacher workforce can be traced to the dismissal of Black teachers and administrators in the name of desegregation following the 1950s supreme court Brown vs. Board of Education ruling. The resulting racial demographic mismatch persists today, and determinations about the performance of a largely minoritized student population are filtered through texts, policies and instruction centered on the white middle-class monolingual women who predominate both K-12 and teacher preparation spaces. In recognition of the challenges this presents, the teacher preparation program at Franklin University, like many across the U.S., has recently shifted its mission and vision to center racial equity and social justice. Through two qualitative studies and a critical essay, this dissertation addresses the research question, how does an urban social justice teacher preparation program shape racial ideologies?

The first study, via raciolinguistic genealogy, traces racialized discourses of cultural and linguistic capital across policy and academic texts published approximately 30 years apart. Results suggest these texts, which undergird the teacher licensure exam both at Franklin and more broadly, brand Black cultures and languages as a subhuman deviant threat to U.S. society. In the second paper, I conduct a critical analysis of a canonical teacher preparation text, and through counterstorytelling as method, reveal flattened
class-centric representations of Black communities as devoid of culture rather than as
drawing from community-knowledge both to affirm their humanity and to navigate white
institutions. The final paper is a critical case study investigating the understandings of
and practical approaches towards teaching about culture and identity on behalf of three
language educators at Franklin. Results suggest implicitly racialized understandings of
culture and a largely theoretical understanding of race and power which fails to translate
to the preparation of language educators in a practical sense.
As explored through the conceptual framework of culturelessness, the findings from these
studies suggest that antiBlackness is maintained rather than disrupted at Franklin largely
through the euphemization of race principally as capital, class or culture. Implications for
race-visibility and critical race-reflexivity are offered.

Keywords: Language, Culture, Teacher Education, AntiBlackness, linguistic justice,

raciolinguistics
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my beloved family who sacrificed time with me so that I could produce this initial research in a way and of a quality in which I could take pride. To my beloved husband, Shamyr, thank you. It has and will always be us against the world, and clearly the world ain’t got nothin’ on us. To my son-shine, Lucas, thank you. This text pales in comparison to your genius and curiosity, and I commit with all that I am to your continued ability to play and discover so that whatever you decide to explore, you can do so, without limitations. To my sister and other half, Resa – we did it! You summoned so much of this from me through conversation, videochats and love. Your patience and beauty are unparalleled -thank you. To my parents who in distinct ways, raised me to be self-sufficient, critical and strategic, and of course to acknowledge my power (daddy), and God’s omnipotence (ma). I’m indebted to y’all forever. To my brilliant siblings Terrence, Mark and MeLissa, who continue to make me proud through their parenting of my incredible nieces and nephew, and through their general badassery – love y’all!

To God and my ancestors – my guides:

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Finally, this dissertation work is dedicated to the silenced. It is in schools that so many brilliant Black children first learn that they are not enough and/or that they are a supposed obstruction to the learning of their non-Black peers. Their voices slowly torn from them, they learn to see themselves differently, if at all, and traverse the world a lesser version of themselves never knowing that their silence fuels the very systems that seek to snuff out their communities. In your laughter, your wit, and in the fullness of the cultures passed on to and through you from many millennia of ancestors who know and guide you, may you insist that your stories, voices and dopeness be acknowledged wherever you go.
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CHAPTER 1: CONTEXTUALIZING LANGUAGE AND TEACHER PREPARATION

Introduction

Vignette 1

My two colleagues and I sat together in a virtual meeting to co-plan the graduate level introductory inquiry-based teaching, learning and assessment course – one of the first mandatory courses those admitted into the teacher education program would take, in order to align it across our respective sections. Yet my targeted interest was in how we could replace the core text, “Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life” (Lareau, 2003), in the curriculum that was positioned as a window into the lives of students from various backgrounds – students that these preservice teachers (PSTs) might one day teach. For students entering the urban social justice teacher preparation program (TPP) at Franklin University, my predominantly white school within a historically white institution, this course was both foundational and mandatory. I use Franklin University as a pseudonym and will anonymize all identifying information related to the large public research university wherein this dissertation work was conducted. Despite the racial diversity of the northeast region of the U.S. where Franklin is located, I was also aware that I would be one of the few Black instructors they would encounter during their tenure in the program. Still, at this foundational juncture, I was armed with a text that highlighted the shortcomings of Black parenting and positioned all working-class students with comparable deficits in U.S. K-12 schools.
While it was very early in my life when I realized I was different than my counterparts, I had not always thought of myself as Black within the diverse context of the northeast U.S. wherein Franklin is located. However, it was in the first grade, when my Caribbean peers who were from working-class backgrounds like my own, let me know that they would have to disinvite me from our library group because I was “too dark,” that I first became curious about myself racially. The persistence of this exclusion has shifted in relation to my context but has always been most pronounced in school settings. By the time I arrived at Franklin University as a young undergraduate student pursuing a degree in Spanish, I had had a lifetime of navigating my differentness, and drew on it as a lens to anticipate challenges and navigate the institution in ways for which my white peers had no apparent need. Specifically, I saw a powerful opportunity in later years when I returned to Franklin as faculty, to instruct pre-service teachers at the outset of their studies within the teacher preparation program – an opportunity to disrupt potential beliefs in racial hierarchies through my lived experiences and my pedagogical expertise.

In my preparation to teach this four-week intensive summer course that all teacher education students would take, I reviewed recommended texts and resources that were predetermined by a white clinical faculty program member who was valued for her practical experience in K-12 classrooms and who, for that reason, had designed a number of courses in the program. This introductory course was foundational in the structure of the program, because unlike elective courses, all teacher education students would take it before continuing through the TPP in content-specific cohorts and eventually taking the teacher licensure test before graduating and entering the field as practicing teachers. The
three of us were assigned different cohorts (one Special Education, two cohorts of Elementary Education), and our meeting was to help us determine common threads that all PSTs should understand by the conclusion of the four weeks. I found that despite being provided with a required text meant to expose PSTs to different cultures and experiences of the students they would one day come to teach, the centrality of the text to the course design and the findings within the text which the author presents as neutral and objective may leave readers room only for pity particularly in reading the case of one of the prominently featured Black working class students. While the student in the text was never asked to make meaning of his own community and family life, the description of his upbringing was termed as ‘effortless,’ and ‘impromptu.’ According to the author, a white woman, this student’s working-class lifestyle positioned him as unprepared for the highly structured expectations in schools, and the disconnect was unrelated to race. It bothered me that a central text within a teacher preparation program overtly centered on social justice and urban education, Black students were being spoken for rather than spoken with, and that their portrayal within this mandated text portrayed them as victims of families who deprived them of attention and structure prior to entering school.

In this meeting I began to raise critical questions pertaining to why this core curricular text had been selected among alternatives from the perspectives of Black working-class scholars, and how the author’s presentation of the text as objective denied Black communities the opportunity to speak to their own experiences. In raising these questions about the text to my colleagues, I was reminded that not only was it foundational in this course, but that it was woven throughout the program at various points. As I understood it, even with pairing this text with others for a comparative
analysis, or decentering it as supplementary rather than central to the course in question, the text would still resurface again and again for the teacher education students. This fact drove home for me the unique responsibility that I, a representative of Black working-class communities, had to problematize the use of this work within Franklin’s TPP. The result of the meeting was that the text would remain as stipulated - central to the course design. In having just begun my position as a lecturer with a terminal contract, I felt that voicing my concerns in this context might have already been presumptuous on my part amidst my more senior colleagues. Still, there were many more questions I wished to pose, particularly in a program that demanded we as instructors prepare PSTs for teaching in urban settings: How might PSTs be guided to deconstruct the language used in the text? How might we as instructors challenge the presentation of the text as normative rather than as biased or incomplete? To what degree could I draw from my own identity or those of my students to offer complexity in how we critically read and interpret curriculum? In a course with an entire 25% of the content dedicated to culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) (Ladson-Billings, 1998) how could I reconcile a text with no sociopolitical critique as foundational in teacher preparation?

In this dissertation work, I engage in continued inquiry as an emerging scholar interested in how teacher preparation programs, through their curricula, existence in relation to larger policy demands, and pedagogical orientations shape beliefs about race for PSTs. The meeting with my colleagues was pivotal for me as my professional draw to Franklin’s TPP was its change in the mission and vision to directly challenge societal inequities through education. I recognized the potential disconnect between the goals of Franklin when compared with their programmatic texts that did not centrally focus on
social justice prior to the aforementioned transition. As an instructor, I realized my colleagues and I did not fully understand our work in the same ways. We all were charged with preparing the next generation of educators, but how would we navigate teacher licensure that centered on ostensibly objective norms while instructing from racialized research findings and implications presented as race-neutral? My time at and commitment to Franklin provided the local lens for this line of inquiry, but the state of U.S. teacher preparation writ large necessarily concerns itself with similar questions as well.

**Context and Background**

Since the years following the 1950s supreme court Brown vs. Board of Education ruling (Aggarwal, 2016) that decided segregating school facilities based on race was unconstitutional, research shows that the ongoing cultural mismatch between educators and their students, which largely falls along racial lines (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020), influences student performance (Ladson-Billings, 1995; 2014; Gay, 2002) in various ways. The high attendance and literacy rates in segregated southern schools with all Black teachers and students plummeted as desegregation took the form of firing Black teachers (Siddle Walker, 1996) and administrators and sending Black students into previously all-white schools (Anderson, 2010). In the United States, we presently face an eighty-one percent white teacher force instructing a fifty-nine percent nonwhite public-school student population (Geiger, 2020) despite research calling for the increased diversity in the teacher workforce and its curriculum (Milner, 2011). While the majority of U.S. public schoolchildren will soon be made up of Black, Native American, Hispanic, Asian and Asian American and Pacific Islander students (Geiger, 2020), the
demographics of PSTs generally match practicing teacher demographics (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 2013), demonstrating a replication of consistent racial homogeneity across educational levels, settings and curricular texts (Bishop, 1990). The curriculum, pedagogy and assessment of minoritized students as instructed by the white middle-class monolingual women that are overwhelmingly represented in K-12 classrooms (Geiger, 2020), within teacher preparation faculty (Milner, 2012) and among PSTs (Sleeter, 2017), influences a restricted and reified conception of what PSTs need in order to lead their future students confidently towards what academic success looks like, sounds like, and how it is measured.

Chief among determinations of what is deemed ‘academic’ are the languaging practices (García, 2014; Flores, 2019) presumed desirable in classroom spaces. According to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) created in 2010 and currently adopted in 41 states in the nation, determinations about language in the form of English Language Arts and also through its use in other academic disciplines, are meant to ensure students are prepared for college, career and life (Common Core State Standards, 2021). In this way, teacher educators are all language teacher educators considering that discipline-specific expectations for language and literacy are present across all content areas. Considering the migration of language teacher education away from applied linguistics and towards educational theory, Crandall (2000) asserts the ubiquitous impact yet undefined nature of language teacher education truly outfits it as a “microcosm of teacher education” (p. 34). While disciplinary goals work in tandem with the broader scope of educational theory, standardized expectations of language across disciplines becomes indicative of the future civic engagement (Banks, 2017) and citizenry of
students (Ladson-Billings, 1995) through the use of particular linguistic conventions posited as essential for higher order thinking (Zwiers, 2007). Thus, the fundamental impact of language teaching is a central concern for language education practitioners who are charged with discerning between linguistic innovation and error (Flores & Rosa, 2019) despite the subjective and racialized nature of such determinations.

Historical and sociolinguistic implications of the institutional power that language teachers hold reflects a need in the field to contend with language as a site of colonization (Pennycook, 2004; Fanon, 1967) inseparable from antiBlack conceptions of humanity (Wynter, 2003). Both historically and contemporarily, language as constitutive of humanity (Fanon, 1967; Moten, 2013) renders Black language users within the context of U.S. schooling without personhood (Rosa, 2016) and language teacher educators with immense power to reinforce such conceptions. With the responsibility of confronting the way this power is wielded, the possibility of safe spaces (Leonardo, 2004; Leonardo & Porter, 2010) is eliminated in order to confront the legacies of colonization inclusive of the institutional devaluation of perceived particular language practices and those who enact them. This responsibility weighs heavily upon language teachers—inclusive of World Language (WL) and bilingual educators like those who teach English as a Second Language (ESL)—making them participants in cultural reproduction (Alim, 2007) sometimes unwittingly, by virtue of their credentialing. They become trusted experts in their districts and schools informing opinions and practices regarding language. This presumed authority amplifies their impact among their students, colleagues and administrators potentially sanctioning specific language practices while delegitimizing others and those who enact them.
Urban Social Justice Teacher Preparation at Franklin University

Franklin University is a U.S. institution of higher education located in the northeast that offers multiple pathways to teacher licensure and certification across content areas and ranging from primary to secondary education preparation. While the university is lauded specifically for its diversity with minoritized students accounting for sixty percent of the full population, the school of education more closely reflects the demographic state of education across the country with seventy-five percent of matriculated students identifying as white. The emphasis on urban social justice is a recent one in the school’s nearly one-hundred year history, and has been accompanied by structural and curricular changes including the addition of practice-oriented faculty to support PSTs on-site as they are strategically placed in partnering urban districts for clinical experiences.

The school of education at Franklin cites meeting the needs of diverse learners and addressing equity concerns in research and practice within its vision statement. In addition, the mission of the school focuses on the creation of teaching and learning knowledge related to cultural, linguistic and policy-related dimensions in the field. The attention placed upon preparing future educators in a robust way is also reflected in the strategic goals in which two of three overtly target social justice issues. The first highlights class, race, language, sexual identity and the theoretical and ideological considerations that impact said concerns, while the third attends to teaching and learning specifically with regard to culturally responsive pedagogy and curriculum design. The change in the mission and vision occurred between my time as a master’s student and becoming a faculty member at Franklin which colored my perception of my present role
and previous experiences. In general, I expected to bring my lived experiences to my instruction with PSTs with whom I would come to work and exemplify how the social constructions of race, class, gender and a host of other social qualifiers influence classroom learning.

The recent shift in aims at Franklin are also represented by cross-cutting courses that bookend the program in the first two and final semesters. In the first year, students take three credits of teaching emerging bilingual populations in the specific content area of the PSTs certification in addition to three credits of urban education. The final course that students may choose (for which they may also select course equivalents) centers on social justice, schools and communities. While some of the content of the two initial courses is standardized, others like the social justice, schools and communities course, are electives that are tailored around the teaching instructors, their professional expertise and/or research interests. The inquiry course that all teacher education students took mandatorily in the summer they began the program was not an elective, and the content of the course was not flexible. Comparing my teaching experiences between the inquiry course in which the Lareau “Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life” (2003) text was situated, and the new cross-cutting courses (which I also taught) presented a stark distinction in the way I understood Franklin’s TPP. From my vantage point, I could see both the power and pitfalls of inflexible course designs. The change in the program’s goals were still in the early stages of execution, and depending upon the instructor and the degree of flexibility in each course, the core texts could augment or detract from prevailing programmatic expectations in unsuspecting ways.

Lareau’s Unequal Childhoods and Franklin’s Teacher Preparation Program
As outlined in the opening vignette, the use of curricular texts as entry points into understanding the varied experiences of Black and minoritized student populations that PSTs will come to teach is not a reality specific to Franklin University. For example, a power search on the Google search engine for “Lareau Unequal Childhoods on syllabus site:.edu” yielded more than two thousand hits. Among the results were institutions from every geographic region of the U.S. and representing public, private, large, small and half of the U.S. Ivy League schools. Expectedly, the most common department using the text, “Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life” (2003) was Sociology, but representation was also noted in composition, social work, psychology, human development and education among others as well as being frequently included in cross-listed humanities courses. It is important to note the frequency with which specifically courses for education were cross-listed with other departments that had Lareau’s work as a central component to the syllabus. A motivating factor in cross-listing course content is to ensure that students can gain credentials that reflect mastery at best and familiarity at least with content necessary for their degree or certificate completion. The presence of this text throughout Franklin’s coursework and its representation of low-income and Black families for a program focused on urban teacher preparation, cannot be overstated.

The Language Education program at Franklin boasts a similar reach in consistently housing a course entitled, Teaching Emerging Bilinguals, which every student in the teacher certification program had to take and pass to graduate. This form of intra-school course cross-listing represents the potential influence of both popular academic curricular texts like Lareau’s, and ostensibly discipline-specific professionals like LTEs within the broader context of teacher preparation particularly at Franklin.
These general teacher preparation design features and their potential ideological impacts present an important line of inquiry relative to conceptions of race, language and power, particularly for my lengthy involvement with Franklin as an institution.

The Impact of Language Teacher Educators

As with all programs at Franklin, the Language Education program has both tenure and non-tenure track faculty along with contingent instructors who support their content-specific PSTs from their entrance into the urban social justice program through graduation. Inclusive of this support is the teaching of courses that span both mandatory and elective courses in the development of social justice oriented educators, including the emerging bilinguals course. While the two other cross-cutting social justice oriented courses at Franklin are housed outside of Language Education, the one within Language Education is most consistent in that urban education rotates in its departmental home, and the social justice, communities and schools course is not standardized neither in its design nor execution. Factors impacting the course distribution across tenure and non-tenure track LTEs included the load expectations among the instructors resulting in a large number of contingent faculty teaching language PSTs. Among all courses taught within the program, contingent faculty were responsible for instructing the bulk of them.

My role as non-tenure track lecturer on a terminal contract was not uncommon among instructors in the urban social justice TPP, nor did it detract from my programmatic responsibilities or potential impact upon PSTs. In my years as a lecturer, I would teach courses on methods and assessment, licensure preparation, teaching emerging bilinguals (for up to four distinct content areas) and urban education. My engagement with PSTs across the school was similar to that of other contingent LTEs—it
was far reaching. Franklin’s faculty composition is consistent with the national prevalence of contingent faculty in higher education in that the percentage of non-tenure track faculty rose from approximately 18 to 84 percent between 1993 and 2013 (Finkelstein et al., 2016). Franklin’s contingent LTEs, in this way, have regular access to shaping the understanding of language and culture, its functions and expressions which can be likened to the use of Lareau’s text, even in the hands of contingent faculty and outside of schools of education proper. That is, curricular texts and all instructors who interface with PSTs have the potential to shape their beliefs and pedagogies. The engagement with both *Unequal Childhoods* and the contingent faculty in the Language Education program at Franklin is unavoidable and influential for all PSTs in the program. It is important to note that English as a Second Language (ESL), Bilingual, and World Language (WL) teachers comprise the cohort for whom the LTEs at Franklin are directly responsible. Still, through the teaching emerging bilinguals cross-cutting course, LTEs are also responsible for and having regular engagement with content area PSTs representing all grade levels from K-12 and all content areas which increases our reach and potential impact across the urban social justice TPP.

**Conclusion of Context and Background**

The impact of language teacher educators (LTEs) and arguably, all teacher educators, in shaping how their students and colleagues conceive of distinctly human linguistic and cultural practices within the the racialized context of U.S. schooling is considerable and particularly so for those who develop ESL, bilingual and WL teachers who become frequently tapped as school-based experts within their schools and districts. Moreover, the very language in curricular texts and within pedagogical approaches within teacher
preparation potentially disrupts, supports or reifies PSTs’ preexisting understandings of the communities with whom they will work upon exiting their TPPs. By extension, every graduating class of PSTs that enters the field, reinforces the eventual impact of teacher preparation and LTEs with regard to acceptable linguistic practices and thereby, the very humanity of students, across disciplines. For this reason, the ways of being and knowing that are valued in teacher preparation through the lens of LTEs and the texts from which they teach can reveal the role of language in shaping racial ideologies in (language) teacher preparation.

**Problem Statement**

Teacher preparation and LTEs greatly influence perceptions of language and culture in public K-12 education writ large. Still, it is unclear how what is linguistically and culturally valued within those programs is shaped and how that which is shaped is represented in curriculum, and finally to what extent LTEs understand or communicate that valuation and finally, and the ways in which they do (or do not) use this understanding to inform their instructional practice.

**Statement of Purpose**

To better understand the role of LTEs in ideologically framing Black and minoritized ways of knowing and being within Franklin University’s Urban Social Justice TPP, my dissertation will consist of one critical essay, and two qualitative studies addressing the following related but distinct essential and research questions:

Overarching: How does an urban social justice teacher preparation program shape racial ideologies?
1. Research Question: How are notions of capital (cultural, linguistic, and social) legitimized through policy and academic texts?
2. Essential Question: How does a popular academic teacher preparation text represent Black communities, their assets and lived experiences?
3. Research Question:
   1. According to self-report, how do LTEs at Franklin University understand ‘culture’?
   2. From what do language teacher educators draw in order to tacitly or explicitly address culture and identity in the preparation of language teachers?

I address the first question via raciolingistic genealogy (Flores, 2021), the second question through textual analysis within a critical essay and finally, the third set of questions in a qualitative case study. In the first study, I explore how over time, policy and academic texts consistently reinforce and encourage a particular set of antiBlack approaches within teacher preparation. In paper two, I investigate the usage and implications of curricular texts specifically within Franklin's TPP, and paper three finally examines the beliefs and ideologically-rooted pedagogies of Franklin’s LTEs.

**Theoretical Framework**

In this section I will outline the theories that inform my understanding of both the perceived languaging practices that are deemed desirable in classrooms and the ways they are ideologically shaped by race in teacher preparation and language teacher preparation.

As a Black woman who was raised using both Black Language and white mainstream English (Baker-Bell, 2020), I have constantly strived to bring all of my linguistic repertoire into classroom spaces. While rationales for the rejection of my language use changed over time, (from accusations of plagiarism and denying that my lexical choices were legitimate from instructors, to my outright removal from language classrooms by school counselors), the institutional resistance I faced in authentically languaging my reality has been consistent. I am now in a position to undertake a systematic and
empirical investigation to make sense of this uninterrupted linguistic pushout, and to challenge how it manifests in language teacher preparation. I will demonstrate how these theories are, in a global historical sense rooted in Wynter’s understanding of Man 1 and Man 2, and more specifically within a U.S. contemporary context, within Critical Race Theory (CRT) which form a foundational antiBlackness in U.S. schooling as an institution. I will then outline how specific tenets of CRT which exemplify the notion of Blackness as subhuman, are foundational to the ability to address the essential question in the critical essay, and the research questions in the qualitative case-study and the raciolinguistic genealogy (Flores, 2021). I will finally trace contemporary culture-centric educational theories which take up CRT and complicate them with Wynter’s theory of the overdetermination of Man as white, male and Christian. This global framing will offer an amplified understanding of ideologies within U.S. language teaching and teacher preparation – the central problem to be addressed in this dissertation.

Global antiBlackness, Language and Schooling

One theory that is prevalent in Black language education today is that of the poverty of language or what evolved to be known as languagelessness (Rosa, 2016). While the terms associated with this conceptualization of Black language practices may vary, they remain a central focus among educators and language educators alike in the areas of policy, pedagogy and teacher preparation.

In his work, Black skin, white masks, post-colonial thinker Frantz Fanon theorized the link between language and humanity as connected to his critique on Algerian subjugation in another of his works, The wretched of the earth, by the French nation-state
as early as the 1960s (2007). He noted that the violent colonizing practices of the French were heavily psychological and advocated for violence as the sole form of liberation for colonized Africans both in Algeria and abroad. Language was one site of colonization that Fanon warned against as he chided that Africans sought to become human in the eyes of French oppressors by mastering the imperial language (Fanon, 1967). His consistent reference to the binary between white and Black is echoed by Sylvia Wynter who reminds us that institutions extend and maintain colonial hierarchies and that in the case of Fanon, the school curriculum in the French colony of Martinique deliberately suppressed any ‘[B]lack countervoice’ which may have cast Blackness in a positive light (2003).

Wynter furthers the connection between subjugation and the absence of language for Africans and African descended people in tracing anti-Blackness over time from what she calls ‘Man 1’ and the era of religious justification for anti-Blackness in the European construction of Blackness as the biblical descendants of Ham, to ‘Man 2’ and social Darwinian deselection of the Black race (2003). Due to the antithetical placement of Black people as opposing both whiteness and ‘common sense’ notions of humanity, subjugating Blackness remained a target for any competitive nationalistic aspirations globally during these colonial struggles. Avineri et al. alert us that the word gap debate, which posits that the lack of quality and quantity language used in home environments are responsible for student difficulties in school can, “be traced to the 1957 Sputnik launch,” (2015) wherein the United States’ preoccupation with maintaining imperial influence globally triggered policies that blamed Black and immigrant laziness for a drop in literacy rates as discussed in the 1983 “A Nation at Risk,” policy report.
By focusing on the language used at home, and constructing languaging practices hierarchically, the gains and changes taking root as a result of the Civil Rights era of the 1960s were met with heavy governmental surveillance or even the disallowing of funds. Black schools engaged in equity efforts were on the receiving end of punishment for serving these supposed dysfunctional minoritized families who were cast as the cause of their own poverty, inclusive of language poverty. The 1965 Moynihan report further solidified notions of Black familial dysfunction by portraying the ills of U.S. society as borne of female-headed households which supposedly placed Black children at a disadvantage on standardized tests. Spillers (1987, p. 73) contends that Black bodies, while held to this gender norm were ungendered during the transatlantic slave trade in being logged as property without note of “name, next of kin” language or other humanizing information.

Feminist activist, poet and scholar June Jordan (Keller, 2017) reflects on teaching during the 1960s writing, “[p]opular wisdom had it that the only American boys and girls who could neither read nor write, were Black” (p. 59). She did not find this to be her first-person experience, but instead noted the hegemonic expectations upon language production regardless of students’ ethnic or racial designations. This caused her to muse, “When will a legitimately American language, a language including Nebraska, Harlem, New Mexico, Oregon, Puerto Rico, Alabama life and working-class [...] become the language studied and written and glorified in the classroom?” (p. 59). This reflection is echoed from policy to practice in noting a distinction between Black and racialized language practices, and those praised in the classroom.
The years following the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which guaranteed protection from discrimination based on race, also saw court cases surrounding schoolchildren and their language practices such as the 1968 Bilingual Education Act (Sung & Allen-Hardy, 2019). Geneva Smitherman (1998) notes that in moving from Tennessee to the Midwest, she was placed in speech therapy for speaking what was then called Ebonics, a West African influenced variety of English, that was highly targeted and pathologized to the extent that between the 1960s and 1980s, speaking said variety would bar one’s entry from the teaching profession (p. 98). In 1979, one such case in the overwhelmingly white Ann Arbor, Michigan, found that fifteen Black American children who resided in public housing in Detroit were being placed in special education classes because they spoke what was called Black English (Smitherman, 1998) or African American Vernacular English. Linguists testified, and the remedy called for was that teachers at Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School be trained on acknowledging and using the students’ home language in pursuit of their literacy. Seventeen years later the issue of Black English emerged again when the Oakland school board resolved that Ebonics was not a dialect, but a language (Baugh, 2015) and should be treated as such in educating the 53% Black population of Oakland. The case made it to the senate under the Clinton administration at which point it was struck down for being ‘absurd,’ as senators cited the Rev. Jesse Jackson for claiming that the use of Ebonics in schools was a way of lowering expectations for Black children kland case saw Black English described as “disgusting,” “slang,” “street,” “lazy,” and the “language of illiteracy,” and many of these claims were from Black Americans (Rickford, 1999, p. 200). The growing Black middle class were becoming subject to classist ideologies which suggested that approximating to whiteness
and exceptionality was to credit for their opportunities rather than policies like affirmative action. As psychoanalyst Fanon warned years prior, “to speak means to assume culture,” and as social progress was not coupled with institutional acknowledgement of Black humanity, the language of the Black middle class reflected colonial interests of continued Black subjugation. This is evidence that as Avineri et al. (2015) noted, “the [word] gap discourse recreates ineluctably reproduces the very social, linguistic and educational disparities it calls into question,” (p. 72). That is, the assumption that ostensibly non-Black populations deserved for their languages to be acknowledged and accompanied by such resources as outlined by the BEA, restored the bottom most positioning of languaging from Black bodies as an absence of humanity and worthy of neither resources nor recognition within U.S. schools.

**Critical Race Theory in U.S. (Language) Teacher Education**

Within the context of legal scholarship (Delgado & Stefancic, 1993), Critical Race Theory (CRT): (1) acknowledges racism as normal and ubiquitous in the U.S. context; (2) employs and values storytelling as cultural wisdom on race relations to challenge prevailing understandings of people of color as inferior; (3) critiques liberalism as an incremental and thereby counterproductive approach to racial equality; (4) acknowledges that whites are the primary benefactors of race-based affirmative action as it is applied in practice conceived of along with gender as intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1990; Harris & Leonardo, 2018); and (5) asserts that what motivates action for the betterment of Black people and people of color is its overlap with the interest of whites, termed interest convergence (Bell, 1980); and finally (6) expands to reflect whiteness as
property relating to the immaterial “compensation to those whites who lack material wealth” (Harris, 1993, p. 1759).

The pervasiveness of whiteness in teacher education (Sleeter, 2017) while framed as objective in its reflection in the curriculum (Yosso, 2002) is an extension of the colorblind (Bonilla-Silva, 2002) liberalism which Critical Race Theory (CRT) critiques. Colorblind liberalism within critical legal studies explains the consistently successful litigious outcomes of groups classified as racially white within the U.S., as the result of individual efforts unrelated to group discrimination based on racialized categories. It is therefore an apt frame through which to better understand the representations of Black communities in popular teacher preparation texts. The adoption of CRT into education as discussed by Ladson-Billings (1998), rightfully demonstrated how complex cultural ways of being within racist structural contexts had been racialized presenting a new lens not only for legal scholarship (where the framework was birthed), but also within education.

The steady beat of normalized colonial hierarchies is reflected in the U.S. based critiques of liberalism through CRT as it debunks the assertion that civil rights laws were improving the lives of Black and minoritized populations. In critically rejecting this liberal ideal, it restores racialized groups as a necessary point of analysis to understand discriminatory practices and impacts. To address the essential question for the critical essay (paper 1), “How does a popular academic teacher preparation text represent Black communities, their assets and lived experiences?” the same critique of liberalism must be made to understand the complexity that race adds to social class within the U.S. context and particularly within schools.
The tenets of CRT help not only to make sense of the shortcomings of a seemingly benevolent legal system, they also offered ways to psychically preserve (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995) oneself as a racialized person whose reality is in stark contrast to dominant representations of justice while mapping a path towards liberation (Delgado & Stefancic, 1993). In education, CRT is a critical and necessary frame for understanding racism as institutionalized (Bell, 1995) where colorblind ideologies persist and uphold liberalism, or the idea that individual meritocratic efforts yield institutional results, in the face of systematic discrimination based on race. The use of counterstorytelling to voice one’s reality through CRT in education as a Black or racialized person is also integral to criticality in the field particularly for those at the intersections of multiple forms of oppression like class, race and gender. In word, via law or educational policy, efforts to curb discrimination that do not center race often materially benefit white females (Guy-Sheftall, 1993 as cited in Ladson-Billings, 1998). Thus, the ability to discern how educational resources, both material and immaterial, allocated by race-neutral or race-evasive policies are a continuation of racism are best framed through interest convergence and the direct storytelling of those who experience intersectional subordination (Crenshaw, 1991).

With CRT as the framing for investigating how languaging practices are valued, perpetuated and spread in U.S. K-16 education, there is potential for centering the logics of racism rather than its impacts as a starting point to foundationally understand how the longstanding racial and cultural mismatch may both obscure and reify racial ideologies in (language) teacher education.

*Critical Race Theory in Teacher Preparation Texts*
CRT translates the critique of liberalism via colorblind ideologies, centers Black community practices voiced by members of the Black community through counterstorytelling and unearths the motivation to center white sensibilities in the selection and teaching of race-evasive texts within TPPs. The colorblind approaches characteristic of liberalism (Bonilla-Silva, 2002) pervade teacher preparation as curricular texts center on class alone as the defining factor that separates academically successful students from those who do not have similar levels of success in schools. Colorblind racism refers to the abstraction of liberal principles upon matters of race and attributes cultural rather than racial rationales for the way performances of racialized populations in education and other markets are measured (Bonilla-Silva, 2002). Although these suppositions do not reflect the lived realities of Black and racialized populations, across popular social science texts, Black people are infrequently called upon to voice their own realities as a form of counterstorytelling (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Bernal & Villalpando, 2002) to challenge colorblind ideologies. This strips Black communities of their jurisprudence (Matsuda, 2018) as outsiders to resist the hegemonic and naturalized white dominance prevalent and perpetuated in institutions inclusive of those that house TPPs.

Within programs targeting urban populations, including texts that dismiss Black humanity is an act of interest convergence that favors white sensibilities (Sleeter, 2017) while reinforcing notions colorblind meritocracy. Bernal and Villalpando warn that this causes an apartheid of knowledge legitimacy in academia since “[t]hose who believe that our society is truly a meritocratic one find it difficult to believe that men gain advantage from women’s subordination or that whites have any advantage over people of color” (2002, p. 171). As a result, omitting the centrality of racism at an institutional level from
U.S.-based social analyses in particular, is tantamount to naturalizing racial hierarchies as a reflection of innate cultural deficiencies. By failing to engage in the counterstories of Black youth as voiced from their own experiences within TPPs, this curricular move creates epistemic and raciodemographic challenges (Milner, 2012) particularly in the preparation of teachers.

*Culture-based Pedagogies in Language Teacher Preparation*

The importance of culture within language education is uncontested. My working definition for culture is a uniquely human set of beliefs, behaviors and artifacts that are distinct between groups and across settings delineating how they navigate the world as well as how they identify with, between and among each other. Neither the teaching of language (Banes et al., 2016) nor culture (Kubota, 2001; Rosa & Burdick, 2017; Bacon, 2020), however is neutral. The “imposition of a cultural arbitrary” (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990), particularly in institutions of education, is a colonial logic which allows for a ruling class to maintain power through pedagogical reinforcement of specific behaviors between social classes. This enregisterment conjoins perceptions of language use and perceived cultural poverty associated with racialized groups as inherently inferior (Rosa & Flores, 2017). The extent to which identifying with and being accepted as belonging to a culture is a question of power. Through the racialized construction of the Afrodescended as property (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995), racism persists as fundamental to conceptions of belonging and the absolute right to exclude (Harris, 1993) even culturally and linguistically.

To better understand how language teacher educators (LTEs) attend to the politics of culture and belonging within language teacher preparation, the research questions for the
qualitative case study are, “According to self-report, how do LTEs at Franklin University understand 'culture?’” and, “From what do language teacher educators draw in order to tacitly or explicitly address culture and identity in the preparation of language teachers? In drawing from CRT for educational research to ground this investigation, I acknowledge that racism is endemic (Milner, 2007), and therefore invisibilized in the United States. How might the normalization of racism impact hierarchical assumptions about race, culture and language assemblages even within spaces that endeavor to disrupt said hierarchies? I assert that, within the context of Franklin University which has a mission of equity and social justice, a certain level of sociopolitical consciousness, or ability to both decenter whiteness and challenge racism in the curriculum alongside students (Ladson-Billings, 1995;1998), is necessary to enact culturally relevant pedagogy in the preparation of teachers. In fact, the suite of culture-centric approaches and theories which predominate conversations about race-conscious instruction in teacher education are the necessary framing that position LTEs as capable of understanding their own positionality within the greater racial hierarchy of the country, and how that potentially influences their work within language teacher preparation.

The assumed ability to teach about culture among language teachers positions the theory of CRP as appropriate for unpacking precisely how LTEs accomplish this feat while acknowledging that neither preparation nor belonging to specific racialized communities (Milner, 2010) alone can ensure culturally relevant practices. For example, one component of CRP, sociopolitical consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 1998) which in earlier work is connected directly to Freire’s conscientization (Ladson-Billings, 1995), involves teachers partnering with students to challenge a racist curriculum and debunk its
presentation as neutral and objective (Yosso, 2002). Sociopolitical consciousness, in addition to cultural competence, the ability to maintain one’s cultural integrity while succeeding academically (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p.476) and academic success as measured by classroom teachers and not strictly by high stakes tests (Ladson-Billings, 1995), make up the CRP trifecta, and imbue practitioners with the ability to critique racist curricula and act to change an unjust social structure (Freire, 2000). Similar to culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2002), CRPs sociopolitical consciousness also calls for direct engagement with topics deemed controversial like educational apartheid and the remnants of Jim Crow (Matsuda, 2018) policies both in and out of schools. Still, if curricula and other discursive societal representations affirm the colorblind ideologies of LTEs, they may find little need for challenging said curricula especially alongside potentially less critically conscious and often racially homogenous language PSTs. The way LTEs understand (or do not understand) their identities as reflective of their access to structural power provides insight into their acknowledgement of CRTs racism as endemic to U.S. society, and the meritocratic liberal ideologies that may be present in their own practices.

The ‘loving critique’ of culturally relevant pedagogy in the form of culturally sustaining pedagogies (CSP) (Paris, 2012), asserts that the former does not “go far enough” (Paris & Alim, 2017). CSP calls for educators to, in addition to acknowledging the innate worth of diverse learners, to support them in maintaining their ways of being as they co-construct goals with their teachers who have done the self-work to identify all cultures as non-hierarchically and equally valuable. The challenge among all the culture-centric approaches is expecting that educators will accept that culture itself is inherent to all equally (inclusive of the educators themselves) rather than as “an object and
instrument of government” (Bennett, 1992, p. 25) politicized against racialized groups. This tension is displayed in language education research via distinct framings of culture primarily as capital that is disproportionately available to students based on race, wealth and other factors (Zwiers, 2013). The colonial underpinnings remain so firmly undisturbed that culture, as counter theorized through CRT as a form of community wealth which includes linguistic, cultural, navigational among other categories (Yosso, 2005), still reinforces a naturalized white hegemony by virtue of defining itself against an invisibilized white standard. Language teacher educators who operate from a critical orientation, but without attention to antiBlack colonial logics which position culture as a governmental regulatory (Bennett, 1993) process, will only reinforce hierarchical language ideologies as they attempt to standardize, improve or equate racialized language practices with those considered more human (Rosa, 2016).

*Culture as Property*

Policies that, on the surface, seem to benefit multicultural and multilingual students, also represent neoliberal (Flores, 2013) interest convergence like the 1968 Bilingual Education Act (Sung & Allen-Hardy, 2019). Defined, neoliberalism is “the merging of the state and the market in a new form of corporate governance (Klein, 2007 as cited by Flores, 2013). Neoliberalism as a global phenomenon with localized repercussions was built on the commodification of Black Africans as a system of capital (Jung & Vargas, 2021). Domestic reinforcement of this proprietary relationship bears the vestiges of antiBlackness in seeking to privatize and withhold public resources like education from Black people, while justifying their inevitable poor performance in schools as the result of the “transmission of flawed cultural values” (Dumas, 2013, p. 541) in Black families.
In its domestic deployment, theorizing how language is valued through CRTs tenet of whiteness as property helps frame the research question for the raciolinguistic genealogy (Flores, 2021) in the first study: How are notions of capital (cultural, linguistic, and social) legitimized through policy and academic texts? The global lens offered by culture as a commodity clarifies how an expansion of federal funds to educate linguistically diverse students could exclude Black students who are framed as resisting “market friendly racial and educational identities” (Dumas, 2013, p. 542) in being culturally unassimilable.

The strategic marking and unmarking (Mena & García, 2020) of languages shifts the articulation of antiBlackness to include a range of seemingly oppositional state and federal policies like (English-only mandates and Title III) to simultaneously disclude Black communities framed as both not speaking English nor being English learners. Unmarking refers to how a disembodied “racialized, stigmatized object,” (Mena & García, 2020, p. 3) such as the language or culture of racialized populations, is recast as a desirable commodity with market value when performed by non-racialized, or white, populations. Englishes that are not deemed standard, when and because they are performed by Black bodies, form an intersectional (Combahee River Collective, 1983; Crenshaw, 1990) racialized language assemblage (Flores & Rosa, 2017) that renders Black language users ineligible for resources (inclusive of acknowledgement and instruction) in U.S. schools. It is important to note the global and historic location of this articulation in that Black U.S. English users outside of the U.S. may be received differently due to their imperial citizenship, whereas historically and within the U.S. the use of English by Black enslaved Africans was punishable by death or (Anderson, 2010)
dismemberment. When language is overdetermined as solely legitimized by white users, neoliberal markets continue to operate with (anti)Blackness as capital. Despite the praise the Civil Rights era receives, in some ways it furthered antiBlack raciolinguistic ideologies (Flores & Rosa, 2019) by delegitimizing Black language and culture (Sung & Allen-Hardy, 2019). Discussions about race in language teacher preparation are avoided or coded through the term 'culture' as it pertains to human subjects rather than objectified Black commodities, which contributes to the flexibility of race as applied to diverting material resources away from Black communities. Wynter (1976) theorizes this clearly and amplifies the neoliberal tendency to maintain Blackness as outside of the construction of humanity and thereby incapable of 'possessing' or performing culture or language.

Policy, like law, is operationalized through practice, and enforcement within teacher education apparatuses is guided by academic texts inclusive of research, curriculum and assessments. Still, after the Civil Rights movement, overt identification of race as a rationale for excluding Black and minoritized populations from both material and immaterial resources became a hinderance to liberal post-racial ideologies (Melamed, 2006; Aggarwal, 2016) particularly in schools. Whiteness as property-- whiteness imbuing institutions and individuals with the absolute right to exclude (Harris, 1993), is the tenet of CRT that most heavily informs the first study as the notion of property extends beyond material resources to the value assigned to language. Funding entitlements tied to groups to promote equity including Title III related to linguistic access to instruction, became restricted through euphemized racism reframed as the poverty of culture -- and culture included language. One example of this is how the BEA
referred to as an act of Anglification (Rosa, 2016) entitles funds to linguistic minorities, then deemed Ebonics a non-language and the results of ignoring the languaging practices of Black students as a result of cultural poverty (Sung & Allen-Handy, 2019). The maintenance of this exclusionary practice, however, hinges upon research which supports the co-naturalization of race and language (Rosa & Flores, 2017) and the strategic erasure of the capacity to language from Black and racialized bodies (Rosa, 2016). Claims that ‘academic language’ (Zwiers, 2007) reflect the possession of ‘cultural’ and ‘linguistic capital’ (Zwiers, 2013), which are then calcified and threaded throughout teacher preparation assessments offer a means out of pathologized Blackness while funneling money back into institutions. In this way, language ideologies are demonstrated as having perceived value, and in the instruction of language pre-service teachers, “institutions reproduce dominant language ideologies as they circulate and sustain ideologies that support their power” (Banes, Martinez & Wong, 2016,p.170). Approaches to language teacher development predicated upon notions of human and less human historical and sociopolitical ideologies necessarily only recreate the antiBlack hierarchies upon which they were founded.

Conclusion of Theoretical Framework

I have shown how key tenets of CRT help illuminate the need for a critical race analysis within (language) teacher preparation and curriculum. Additionally, I have demonstrated how sociopolitical consciousness which necessitates centering race, in this case through CRT, can provide insights into pedagogical orientations in language teacher preparation. Finally, I outlined how theoretically grounding my investigation into language policy within teacher preparation through Wynter’s conception of Black as the
ultimate and naturally dysselected Other, offers critical insights on racialized evaluations of student language practices. Taken together, endemic antiBlackness as actualized in language and teacher preparation through liberal race-evasiveness, and the degree to which culture and language are treated as property (Harris, 1993) from which Blackness is precluded, offers clarity on how acceptable language practices are decided upon, perpetuated and maintained in the development of language teachers and more broadly, teachers across disciplines.

**Conceptual Framework**

In what follows, I will outline culturelessness as a concept that locates the phenomenon of un/marking culture and within it, language, along the continuum of erasure within the Black/white racial binary. I will first establish a definition for culture and its manifestations in language teacher preparation after which I will discuss two factors that contribute to the construct of culturelessness: privatized monoculturalism and language as property. I will then highlight the roles of language and race within culturelessness as a concept and finally frame its function within the language of teacher preparation.

*Culture in (Language) Teacher Education*

While culture can be succinctly defined as a uniquely human set of beliefs, behaviors and artifacts that are distinct between groups delineating how they both navigate the world and identify with, between and among each other, the very notion of culture can be traced to colonial justifications for imperial anti-Indigenous subjugation. The writings of humanist lawyer Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda in *Democrates Alter* suggest, “barbarian communities of the New World lack even the rudiments of culture” and
therefore require the external governance from Spain (Fernández Santamaria, 1975). Echoes of this purported cultural absence can be found within teacher preparation, wherein references to cultural capital abound. One definition of cultural capital is, “the useful set of experiences and knowledge that are shaped by family and community” (Zwiers, 2007), while as a challenge to that very notion through the lens of CRT, it is conversely conceived of as community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) that includes sub-categories such as navigational, linguistic, familial, inspirational and resistant capitals which reflect a framing of epistemic sovereignty that expand what is considered ‘useful’ to include experiential knowledge beyond white middle class norms.

I contend that culturelessness is a spectrum wherein the extremes of erasure motivated by post-racial neoliberalism are characterized on one end by culture as inessential because when accompanied by whiteness it, and thereby, humanity, is an assumed possession, invisible and dangerous to the state to name. In naming whiteness and its artifacts, a possible revelation of inequitable distribution of resources connected to equal nonmaterial cultural products across racial designations might be revealed. At the other extreme of this spectrum of erasure, Blackness represents the absence or poverty of culture (inclusive of language) as an extension of the propertied status of Black bodies, thereby incapable of possessing anything - even one’s body, let alone the intangible traits (Harris, 1993) that constitute one’s humanness inclusive of language.

Privatized monoculturalism

Organizing society hierarchically has served to dissociate the bourgeoisie from the servant-class (Stoler, 1995) in European feudalism (Wynter, 1992) and is derived from the idea of a single God-given culture – a notion that still permeates modern
institutions today. In U.S. colonialism, the single-culture articulation evolved as white immigrant groups over time successfully shifted the center of ‘common values’ (Wynter, 1992) to incorporate their own ethnic (German, Jewish, Irish, Italian) ways of being ultimately contributing to their localized deracialized status. Racial order itself, having preceded the colonization of the western hemisphere took on varied articulations through agricultural and industrial eras (Robinson, 1983) and has proven itself malleable even in today’s globalized world. Distinct European ethnic identities which could serve to disunify the political structure of whiteness (only codified in recent global but ancient U.S. history during the 1800s), are not reflected in data reported which reflect the overwhelming whiteness (Sleeter, 2017) of teacher education (AACTE, 2013). As processes of population management contributed to the framing of Black and Native populations (Foucault, 1991; Bennett, 1992 as cited by Ladson-Billings, 2004) as culturally impoverished, material access achieved through whiteness was legally codified (Harris, 1993) through the restriction of resources like property ownership (Aggarwal, 2016) and tax funded education (Anderson, 2010) solely for white and newly white populations. To maintain the borders of cultural whiteness, language protectionist approaches in schools (Daniels, 1990) served to validate common-sense theories of reality (Smitherman, 1998) as well as how those realities were expressed resulting in modern-day institutional linguistic discrimination. I argue that the restriction of access to resources by virtue of cultural exclusion is a politic through which the governmental regulation of social subordination is perpetuated at the institutional level.

*Language as property*
Whiteness as property—a concept that centers how whiteness imbues institutions and individuals with the absolute right to exclude (Harris, 1993), is extended beyond material resources to the value assigned to language as an extension of culture. Prescriptive notions of standard, mainstream, or academic language serve to reinforce existing linguistic hierarchies (Alim, 2007; Rosa & Flores, 2017) through raciolinguistic discrimination. The property/propertied dichotomy can be traced to the ways in which Afro-descended people, at the time of Native American colonization and prior, were considered sub-human and property (Wynter, 2003; Farley, 2021) or savages, respectively. While Native people were dispossessed of their land, both groups were subsumed as colonial spoils (Fanon, 2007) under the burgeoning creation of a white race. In these two distinct cases of racialization, Black and Native bodies were not perceived as having value, but their land and the labor were, respectively as the United States imagined itself as an immigrant nation without reckoning with its “conquest, displacement or enslavement” (Wynter, 1992). I posit that language as a civilizing tool (Mignolo, 1992) furthered a white American mythos of national superiority based on an effort-laden monocultural ideal that served to maintain racialized class stratification (Robinson, 1983) -- a process inherited from western European societies. While some characteristics of whiteness adapt geopolitically and with time, property as an entitlement has long been linked to personhood within this construct. In preparing teachers to identify the power of linguistic and racial ideologies, white pre-service teachers struggle to reflect (Picower, 2009) on how their presumed authority on sorting youth based on their linguistic and cultural valuations represents an extension of this colonial order. Since race is the principle by which other oppressions are organized (Leonardo, 2004) the flexibility
of whiteness even linguistically must be carefully surveilled and policed by the state (Stoler, 1995) operationalized through institutions like public schools (Anderson, 2010) in ways that maintain its exclusivity. Manifested in schools, whiteness as property becomes the duty of teachers and administrators to enforce through sorting and testing that often is solely predicated upon political and socially constructed notions of racial superiority.

*Culturelessness and the In/visibility of Race*

The commodification of nonmaterial cultural artifacts, inclusive of language, reflects a neoliberal (Melamed, 2006) colonial inheritance of whiteness as property (Harris, 1993). Said differently, the construction of a white monocultural norm as a means to perpetuate and justify class stratification is rooted in commonsensical discursive articulations of Black and Native communities as less-evolved (Hall, 1992; Wynter, 2003). The distinctly antiBlack global animus that complicates whiteness as property within a multiethnic and multiracial society is steered by European Enlightenment era logics which presented globalized racial strata with clear hierarchical delineations to a developing United States. Vargas and Jung present this conceptualization from a Korean vantage point in the late 19th century:

Civilization and enlightenment were about acquiring knowledge, but they were also about “assets” and “talents.” As “yellows,” Koreans had the requisite racial potential to become a “fully enlightened” nation. “Blacks and reds,” “savage and preenlightened nations,” were beyond the pale. (2021, p. 156)

The “potential to become” specifically excludes Black and Native people who are seen as lacking ‘assets and talents’ which would include histories and language’ (Rosa, 2016)
both in current policy and through historical precedent. The erasure of histories (Baldwin, 1969, Wynter, 1992) are evidenced through curricular texts which rebrand ‘Black and Red’ communities through a universalizing immigrant narrative with indigenous populations as original immigrants and the Afro-descended as voluntary immigrants (Wynter, 2003) to sustain the antiBlack U.S. national origin story centered on western European superiority. In this way, race as a sociogenic (Wynter, 2003) phenomenon signifies ongoing class stratification through associations of inferiority inclusive of language along these strict hierarchies of white, yellow, Red and Black.

My contention is that the delegitimization of language for Black and indigenous populations is best understood through a raciolinguistic perspective that acknowledges the conaturalization of race and language (Rosa & Flores, 2017) such that power is maintained by virtue of whiteness through institutions which police the language usage (Flores et al., 2020) of non-white people to varying degrees. Weaponizing language (Bryan & Gerald, 2020; miles-hercules & Muwwakkil, 2021) in this way also provides the discursive power to re/inforce associations between race and assumed characteristics and abilities. Black and minoritized populations, as excluded from the uniquely human act of languaging, locates this phenomenon of un/marking culture and language, along the continuum of erasure within the Black/white racial binary – an ongoing process I term as culturelessness. At either pole of this binary racially Black and white populations are rendered cultureless as their racial designations signal an immediate social classification within a broader formation of racial capitalism (Robinson, 2000) of those who are property as opposed to those who have property (Harris, 1993), respectively. Any cultural manifestations, particularly those that are nonmaterial, become invisible to the extent that
they run counter to prevailing dichotomous racial stereotypes. Cultural manifestations associated with racial whiteness become subsumed under class-based terminology indicative of the worth of hard work or innate ability, while cultural manifestations associated with racial Blackness constitute an absence or lack of culture altogether. In 1997, Hall argued that clustering behavioral expectations with race represents a system of power and exclusion, “used in order to divide populations into different ethnic or racial groups and to ascribe characteristics to these different groupings and to assume a kind of normal behavior or conduct about them” (2021, p. 3). Culture, in this way becomes the new floating signifier (Hall, 2021) as norming cultural practices performed by white bodies simultaneously abnormalizes those performed by Black bodies constituting the racialized culturelessness of both which becomes legitimized through governmental entities like schools.

Within the cluster of classifications Hall discusses are the language practices in which racialized communities engage. Yet race hierarchically divides the way those practices are valued within a neoliberal context. Mena and García (2020) assert that in the case of bilingual Spanish/English users, for racially white bilinguals, “[u]nmarking produces the effect of ‘normalcy’ detached from social inequality” (2020, p. 27). A similar marking occurs for racially Black communities and their language practices (Alim, 2005) which are often labeled as barriers to their success while the same practices (Flores & Rosa, 2019; Baker-Bell, 2020) are praised when employed by their racially white counterparts. The utility of culturelessness is identifying what the labels of ‘normal,’ ‘legitimate,’ ‘capital,’ and others are performing within a binary continuum of race. Marked culture within a racial capitalist society that thrives in its racializing
processes signals an unfinished process. On behalf of the institutions, marking culture signals that bodies are *on their way* to racialization by absorbing cultural practices into cultureless designations of class or skills (racial whiteness) or a cultureless designation of deficiency and abnormality (racial Blackness).

I am arguing that without a means of proving one’s humanity through uniquely human displays of culture and language which are immediately racialized as manifestations of valueless Blackness or valuable whiteness, institutions like schools withhold resources from minoritized populations particularly within a U.S. context where contradictions between race, class and culture are mature (Leonardo, 2012) and unquestioned. In the case of racially Black students, nonmaterial displays of culture are marked as inferior and reduced to culturelessness which frames schools as remedial spaces in which the role of teachers is to deposit (Freire, 2000) capitals reinforcing the neoliberal role of schools. In this way, TPPs treat the raciodemographic challenge (Milner, 2012) as a problem of the cultural (Bhaba, 1989) and thereby interchangeable with that of race absorbing it into “a cluster of classifications” (Hall, 2021) associated with inferiority. Instructors and teachers who fail to critically engage with their power as institutional representatives through monocultural expectations of language teaching and language teacher preparation “supply the means of a governmental intervention in and regulation of culture” (Bennett, 1992, p.26) through the racialized policing of both bodies and the language practices associated with those bodies. In this way, culture and its articulation through language become “a system of differentiation” (Foucault, 1982) by which the state can impose a form of governmentality (Flores, 2013) that perpetuates
disproportionate dispersal of resources unidirectionally towards racially white populations and institutions.

*Implications of Culturelessness in (Language) Teacher Preparation*

As a conceptual frame, culturelessness validates the experiential knowledge of Black communities as a cultural artifact born from long-term sociopolitical navigation which must be reckoned with within teacher preparation and language education. Resisting culturelessness at either end of the binary is a form of combatting whiteness as both unnamed yet presumed superior and ideal - an identity established upon antiBlack exclusivity. Despite the colonial foundation of whiteness and its categorical right to possess and exclude (Harris, 1993), it is the malleability of racial categories as mutually determined that keeps them alive, and the invisibility of those categories as reconstrued through class and various forms of ‘standardization’ that keeps their material impacts obscured from direct engagement within language education and teacher preparation. By highlighting how race informs what is linguistically and culturally valued which is then reinforced through teacher preparation, culturelessness constitutes a pathway to articulating both white supremacy and antiBlackness in a colorblind (Von Esch et al., 2020) field as a microcosm of larger societal colonial legacies. Caught among epistemic and curricular silencing along with its ostensible neutrality (Yosso, 2002) teacher preparation (inclusive of language teacher education) is currently poised to engage the symptoms of race-based power hierarchies, but not to challenge their logics. Language teacher education must be measured against its enduring utility in propagating white linguistic and cultural supremacy and the presumption of Blackness as subhuman largely articulated through how it euphemizes race (as culture, class, etc.) and assumes white
cultural desirability as distinct from the desire for access to material resources historically and presently denied to Black and minoritized populations.

Conclusion of Conceptual Framework

I have demonstrated the way a racialized and singular conception of culture is framed as property which disembodies it from Black and minoritized populations while assigning it as an inherently white possession. I subsequently discussed the way this power can be unwittingly wielded in language education and language teacher preparation as a form of social management. Finally, I offer the concept of culturelessness as a means to better discuss the antiBlack colonial legacy of immaterial dispossession that maintains class inequities. The value of this concept as a lens for language teacher preparation is how it attunes researchers and practitioners alike to often invisibilized violences that manifest through programmatic design, instructional choices and curricular selections.
CHAPTER 2: GENEALOGY OF CULTURELESSNESS

Vignette 2

You can’t win, you can’t break even
And you can’t get out of the game
People keep sayin’, things will get better
But they look just like they stayin’ the same [...] You can’t win, the world keeps movin’
And you’re standin’ far behind
People keep sayin’, things’ll get better
(Just to ease your state of mind)

Charlie Smalls (Performed by Michael Jackson)

Nearly two decades before Franklin University adopted its new mission and vision for equity and social justice, I sat in my language and culture course preparing to share my cultural artifact. As Master’s candidates, we were assigned to bring in an object that represented our culture, to share it with our cohort-mates and to explain its significance. Michael Jackson’s rendition of the song “You Can’t Win” in his performance as The Scarecrow in the 1978 film The Wiz felt like the best linguistic and cultural representation of my experiences as a Black woman – one in which I would ground my instructional orientation as a Spanish teacher.

I watched the presentations of my fellow aspiring world language teachers who shared their artifacts reflecting voyages from Europe and the Anglification of their surnames upon arrival to the U.S. followed by the trials of immigrant inspections their forebears endured on Ellis Island. The sinking feeling I’d had time and again as the not-quite-an-immigrant reflecting on U.S. origin stories began welling up in my stomach as I prepared to display my video clip. In spite of my nerves, I had deep pride in the musical mastery of Michael Jackson and the distinctly Black choreography and languaging that I
would share, and I was even more excited to unpack the lyrics of this song. I passed the
lyric sheets around, and after the video explained line by line the ways that Black
Americans were restricted for several generations after emancipation from economic
advancement, and how the beauty of our culture remained strong through critical displays
of language and art in the face of these struggles. After a short silence, someone
commented,

*My grandfather came here with the clothes on his back and no money in his
pocket. Our family started a business with nothing but their hard work and
sacrifice, and that’s why I’m here today. Why can’t Black people just do the
same?*

This comment from an Italian-American colleague was one I anticipated, but it felt
particularly damning since I was the sole presenter whose cultural artifact was publicly
challenged. Alone, I stood in front of the room as the only Black PST in my cohort,
reminded that my prior triumphs in pursuing a Master’s in language education as a first-
generation college student would not protect me from continued invalidation of my
belonging as a teacher of languages. What about the shared history between the
Scarecrow and I? The taunting he endured with a pained smile and his poignant lyrics
rendered us both as unintelligible in this shared classroom activity. My artifact reflected
how I understood my community through brilliant cinematic storytelling. Rather than the
quintessential immigrant narrative, I shared a complicated and unresolved truth about
Black American ethnic and national identities. In following the assignment directions, I
alone managed to confound the expected ends with my presentation. I shrank and found
my way back to my seat deafened by a discomfort that was far louder than the courtesy
applause. I told myself the assignment should have been changed, but deep down I knew it was me that was expected to change or somehow be different.

This sobering episode left me reflecting on the differences between how I was received by my instructor and my peers and the implications of that moment among many for my professional identity. I knew the language I used made sense, but the story I told somehow did not. I interpreted the silence of our instructor as an agreement that my cultural identity was one that did not fit amongst the group. As my Italian-American colleague’s comment went unchallenged, I accepted that the silence was not only my instructor’s response, it was the complacent approval of the rest of my cohort as well. I would later graduate at the top of my class, but differently – as a less expressive and perhaps less honest version of myself. This lesson on culture and identity provided an impactful takeaway for me about language instruction: Your language is only as acceptable as the story it communicates.
Limited Capital: A Genealogy of Culturelessness in (Language) Teacher Education

[This paper in its entirety can be found in the journal of Working Papers in Educational Linguistics.]
Abstract

Black youth as struggling students is a persistent narrative in the contemporary U.S. psyche, both preceded by and markedly displayed through the 1983 report, “A Nation at Risk”, which reflected coded language encouraging a return to the pre-Civil Rights United States. This framing positioned Black students, as the culprits for the ills of U.S. schooling -- a continuation of a long history of educational policy that discursively enforces the need to defend society (Foucault, 2006) against subhuman (Wynter, 2003) populations.

Drawing from Zwiers’ “Building Academic Language: Meeting Common Core Standards Across Disciplines” (2013) and the policy report “A Nation at Risk” (1983), I problematize the ways in which these texts brand Black culture and language as subhuman deviant threat to U.S. society.

Introduction and Background

In an era of racial reckoning and blaring inequalities made further visible by COVID-19, institutional experts are eager to acknowledge the value of Black people in the United States. The institution of education is no exception, and we currently find ourselves amidst a longstanding effort to elevate that which quantitative data suggests is altogether absent - the value that Black students bring to classrooms. That is to say, by many measures, Black students underachieve academically--particularly on standardized tests--compared to their white counterparts with other groups performing on a curiously nearly linear continuum that negatively tracks to their phenotype from racially white to Black
(National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). The aforementioned data are drawn from assessments guided by standards (Muhammad, 2020) designed to sort students for their future professional (Anyon, 1980) or educational paths and reflect the calls for the United States to fulfill its alleged rightful place as a leader both economically and militarily.

The policy document “A Nation at Risk,” provides language to help us understand how this return to greatness was to be executed relative to schoolchildren (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). Distinct from previous “separate but equal,” conceptions, this document implicitly reinforces biological notions of race as determinants of discriminatory and unequal access to educational resources. In substituting *capital* for human worth or ability and orienting the general population to contend with the threat of national and economic failure as a result of post-Civil Rights era access for Black and other non-white students, neoliberal multicultural efforts to remain globally competitive were set in direct opposition to Black humanity. This linguistic shift, inherited by and advanced during the Reagan era, is apparent across different social campaigns including the wars on poverty and drugs (Burden-Stelly, 2017; Alexander, 2020). Within education, this language has not only been taken up academically, but it has also proliferated widely through courses, professional development, and scholarship as evidenced by the call for asset-based over deficit-oriented pedagogies. The supposed global threat that racialized underperforming students present to the nation suggests a preoccupation with the potential disruption of racial hierarchies ultimately conveyed as a concern for low standards and a lack of effort on behalf of Black students and their families in particular. Across the aforementioned texts,
the question is not whether or not Black students have capital, but rather, a unilateral commonsensical truth is posited --the inferior quality and quantity of that linguistic capital based upon presumed historico-cultural deficiency (Melamed, 2006, p 1).

The assumed cultural poverty (Valentine, 1969) of Black communities is facilitated through neoliberal multicultural discourses which affirm that all students have capital, but that the culture of Black students is a distorted pathological (Melamed, 2006) offshoot of American culture. As a linchpin of a “liberal race paradigm” race must be re-coded as culture (Lentin, 2005) and culture then commodified in the same ways as race so that it can be cut off from “outsiders” (Melamed, 2006, p.2) who are seen as a threat to white supremacy. Thus, this antiBlack culture-centric rhetoric justifies that resources be withheld from Black students due to their resistance (Dumas, 2013) of monocultural white Americananness taught to them through abnormal Black family (Moynihan, 1965) upbringings.

The edTPA (Educative Teacher Preparation Assessment) furthers race-evasiveness particularly in unmarking (Mena & García, 2021) academic language as a racialized register (Zwiers, 2013) that, if acquired that can increase the capital that minoritized students bring to the classroom. The maintenance of white supremacy through commodifying terms like “social,” “linguistic,” and “cultural capital,” solidify racial hierarchies by offering two options (Melamed, 2006) to the unintelligible Black student whose access is necessarily limited to capitals of a lesser value - attempt intelligibility for the white perceiving subject (Rosa & Flores, 2017) or accept pathologization. “A Nation at Risk” places the responsibility of these attempts at acquiring more capital on racialized students, while Zwiers, through the edTPA’s central focus on academic English (Stanford
Center for Assessment Learning and Equity, 2018), admonishes teacher candidates to augment the lesser *capitals* of non-mainstream students. In both texts, the fundamental understanding of the capital metaphor reproduces the image of the culturally bereft subhuman (Wynter, 2003) Black student who must be given white language (Fanon, 1967) or ways of being to interrupt their burdening of a benevolent nation.

Blackness, as it has come to represent phenotypic similarities among Afrodescended populations, politically reflects “the thing to be most disdained” (Warren & Coles, 2016) and, as coterminous with “slaveness” representing various forms of capitalism (Wilderson, 2014) in which Black bodies are constitutive of property. Through governmentality, or “the process by which subjects and populations are made to fulfill their role in the governing structure” (Foucault 2007 as cited by Flores, 2013), a possibility of Black culture (p. 215) is declared debatable and only provable through anthropological study (Burden-Stelly, 2017) rather than an assumed human inheritance. Over time, the inevitability of racial capitalist logics (Robinson, 2000) within institutions like schools that position Black bodies as surplus value has minimally altered in its discursive representation from those slavable to the monetizable “problems of Blackness itself” (Dumas & Ross, 2016, p. 429) in the form of academic underachievement.

The pursuit of social uplift, which is cast as either the responsibility of the learners or teachers depending upon the (con)text, counterintuitively positions Black students as valueless and as perpetual consumers of more *quantity* and *quality* capital—a euphemism for humanness or whiteness (Wynter, 2003). The representation of Black students in particular as receptacles to white mainstream language and culture does not reveal that the ability to occupy white subject positions or to derive social benefits from said
positions directly violates the logics of the capitals metaphor. Fanon cautions that “[t]he colonized is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country’s cultural standards” (1967, p. 18), thereby rendering Black students in U.S. schools as cultureless and cultural ways of being as commodifiable entities disembodied from the people who perform them. This continued denial of Black humanity (Shange, 2020) is evidenced by the unmarking (Mena & Garcia, 2021) of white mainstream norms through the raciolinguistic assemblages (Flores et al., 2020) of cultural, linguistic and intellectual capital.

My textual analysis centers on the unintelligibility of linguistic, social and cultural capital (Zwiers, 2013) as available to Black students through an emergent (Anaïs, 2013) representation of previous policy delineations that idealize a “common culture” to be acquired with great effort as a means of disciplining “idlers” (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) who are characterized as threats both to U.S. economic and white national identity. My research question is: How are antiBlack notions of capital (cultural, linguistic, and social) legitimized through policy and academic texts?

**Conceptual Framework**

In what follows, I will outline culturelessness as a concept which locates the phenomenon of un/marking culture and within it, language, along the continuum of erasure within the Black/white binary. In drawing from the theories that shape culturelessness, I will then highlight the tensions of preparing (language) teacher candidates to attend to various capitals irrespective of antiBlack racism in the U.S.

*Culture as Property*
While culture can be succinctly defined as a set of human beliefs, behaviors and artifacts that are distinct between groups delineating how they both navigate the world and identify with, between and among each other, within teacher education, having cultural capital is represented differently depending on the reference. While Zwiers’ definition of cultural capital is, “the useful set of experiences and knowledge that are shaped by family and community” (2007), Yosso challenges that notion through the lens of critical race theory (CRT), conversely conceiving of it as community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) including sub-categories such as navigational, linguistic, familial, inspirational and resistant capitals. The latter reflects a framing of epistemic sovereignty expanding what is considered ‘useful’ to include experiential knowledge beyond white middle class norms. I am theorizing culturelessness as a spectrum wherein cultural capital and race (Black or white) cannot coexist since, on one end it would be redundant since whiteness is analogous to humanness (Wynter, 1992), and thereby culture is an assumed possession (Harris, 1993), invisible and dangerous to the state to name. The danger in naming culture alongside racial whiteness is its necessary fracturing along precolonial designations inclusive of ethnic and linguistic particularities that disrupt dichotomous racial logics. At the other extreme of this spectrum of erasure, Blackness and cultural capital cannot coexist because Blackness represents the absence or poverty of culture (inclusive of language) as an extension of the propertied status of Black bodies, thereby incapable of possessing anything - even one’s body, let alone the intangible traits (Harris, 1993) that constitute one’s humanness inclusive of language. Wynter’s theory of the overrepresentation of man as white, male and Christian, has been euphemized in social sciences through terms like ‘culture’ (Lentin, 2005; Burden-Stelly,
2017) and evidenced in policy by the War on Poverty (Sung & Allen-Hardy, 2019) and the resulting word gap discourse (Avineri et al., 2015) to disembody and measure dominant and acceptable ways of being, inclusive of languaging practices. Racially Black populations are barred from consideration as fully human through their historic inability to own property (Harris, 1993) continuing from the colonial afterlife of slavery (Sharpe, 2016) and domination (Aggarwal, 2016). Language as an ideologically exclusive byproduct of political whiteness further legitimizes white worldviews as articulated from the position of assumed ownership even within academic settings. Those who do not conceive of the world from a white western patriarchal perspective are deemed sub-human, and further without language or as languageless as theorized by Rosa (2016). Because whiteness dominates invisibly, the inequitable distribution of resources as a result of assumed unequal measures of human attributes, language and culture, is managed through the disproportionate institutional investment among humans and beasts.

**Conceptualizations of Black Cultural and Linguistic Poverty**

Even as culture represents the distinctly human ways of conceiving of and moving through the world, CRT brings multidimensionality to Bordieuean (Yosso, 2005) notions of capital shifting its center to race as it intersects with class (Leonardo, 2012) and language (Flores & Rosa, 2019) to produce distinct forms of discrimination. Similar to Oscar Lewis’ poverty culture theory, Blackness is equated to ‘not belonging’ and an absence of history compounded by a passive depiction of that historical severing with Black American populations. Thus, language culture and history are underexplored for their humanizing capacity, and pathologized if portrayed as distinctly Black. Culturally sustaining pedagogies (Paris & Alim, 2017) contextualizes the colonial violence that
ruptured Black Americans and many Black diasporic communities during chattel slavery from their histories and insists that they are not without language or culture. Still, the culturalism (Burden-Stelly, 2017) that developed in its place essentialized varied ways of knowing and being to an acceptable and antiradical format such that assimilationist multiculturalism (Melamed, 2006) remained the standard for proving Black humanity. Institutional raciolinguistic enregisterment (Flores & Rosa, 2019) positions schools as “an instrument of governmentality [in which] antiBlackness confiscates the body of the Black, distorts it for the purpose of accumulation and exploitation, and returns that distortion to the Black as reality” (Burden-Stelly, 2017, p.215). This distortion of the cultureless Black then becomes the site of exploitation for the ills of society as well as schooling which can only be remedied by depositing the missing human features into Black students. When taken up through asset-based culture-centric approach to teaching and learning, the invisible authority of whiteness can determine not only whose culture is ‘useful,’ but can position efforts to sustain (Paris & Alim, 2017) Black culture as futile. When linguistic and cultural practices reflect a non-threatening assimilationist standard, they are hailed as progressive, but to the extent that they force historic and political contextualization into pedagogical discourse, they are pathologized (Melamed, 2006). Since race-evasiveness permeates language teaching (Von Esch et al., 2020) and teacher preparation (Chang-Bacon, 2021) by euphemizing colonial issues of power as ‘cultural’ in nature, the examples of sociopolitical consciousness that emerge can reinforce dominant orientations to social hierarchies derived from the identities of predominantly white language and language teacher educators and researchers presenting a raciodemographic (Milner, 2012) issue in teacher preparation. This issue is one of
‘culturalism’ (Burden-Stelly, 2017) which frames Blackness as a flattened and abstracted choice of expression rather than as a societal position deserving of material and economic resources. The type of internal validation which institutionally endows language (teacher) educators as equipped to evaluate the utility of student linguistic and cultural practices without sociopolitical contextualization encourages antiBlackness in language teacher preparation.

**Conclusion**

I have demonstrated how culture is framed as property which disembodies it from Black populations and assigns it as an inherently white possession replacing the need to discuss race altogether. I subsequently outlined how theory supports my characterization of Black people as suffering from linguistic and cultural poverty in U.S. institutions. In what follows, I will apply a raciolinguistic lens to genealogically trace the ways in which normative language practices are qualified in teacher education through the currency of culturelessness and address the following research question: How are antiBlack notions of capital (cultural, linguistic, and social) legitimized through policy and academic texts?

**Methods and Analysis**

The raciolinguistic genealogical (Flores et al., 2021) approach does not seek to identify an origin of (Foucault, 1984), nor to resolve, phenomena, but rather to trace and bring attention to the reification of racial logics in order to illuminate possible pathways for the disruption of white supremacy. My process was first to identify mainstream textual representations of language and culture. “A Nation at Risk,” the 1983 policy document commissioned by President Reagan, and chapter one of Zwiers’ “Building Academic English: Grades 5-12” a widely used text in language education, satisfied this intent. The
focus on chapter one attends to the definition and example of capital as is foundationally relayed and drawn from in the remainder of the text. Their institutional and chronological distinctions (published approximately 30 years apart) position them as ideal data since “geneaAfter coding for both possession and protection, a third theme, patriotism, emerged. I finally thematically identified discursive representations of language as defensible, capital as limited through the conceptual frame of culturelessness to better understand how Black students are barred from the possession of said resources and indeed are framed as threats to it.

logy provides an account of dynamic rather than static states, concentrating on the transformative, continuous, and mutating nature of objects of study (Foucault, 2002, p. 9)” (Anaïs, 2013, p. 126). Accounting for conceptual consistencies across time and context provides lenses through which to analyze these data.

Within these texts, I selected key portions that represented capital or the commodification of language and culture. The data set was bounded by the portrayal of language and culture as entities to be possessed and protected. I therefore included additional representations outside of the specific term capital including investment, resource, disarmament among others. As this paper is specifically focuses on how notions of capital, culture and Blackness intersect within language teacher education, it is important to acknowledge that race as a socially constructed category does not reside within one sole ethnic or national group, and that other non-Black communities, inclusive of Latinx students, are categorically treated as a singular linguistic and racial group despite the intra-categorical diversity (Clemons, 2021). While it is not the central concern of this paper, I propose continued vigorous research to explore the complexities of the
precarious access (Bonilla-Silva, 2004) Black and/or indigenous Latinx populations have regarding their portrayal as lacking language and culture. Acknowledging that the many popularized discourses which position Black students in the U.S. as inherently possessing ‘assets’ and ‘capital’ are well-intentioned, this paper seeks to provide nuance and caution against the inevitable failure in using anti-Black racial logics to interrupt white supremacy in language teacher education.

**Findings**

I present my findings from the analysis of, “A Nation at Risk,” (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) and chapter one of “Building Academic English: Grades 5-12” (Zwiers, 2013) under two themes: Language Must Be Defended and A Limited Supply of Capital. I finally frame the stability in the discursive representations of capital as white cultural property as Culturelessness in (Language) Teacher Preparation.

*Language Must Be Defended*

Central to the 1983 policy report, “A Nation at Risk,” was the optimization of U.S. resources with education being framed as the commodity in question. In order to control the increasingly diverse population of schoolchildren, the document politicizes the bodies (Foucault, 2006) of students as a threat to “American prosperity, security and civility” (National Commission on Excellence in Education, p. 1). It cautions that “our nation is at risk”, and that the “rising tide of mediocrity” is partially to blame (1983, p. 1). The watery metaphor relays a sense of being overwhelmed by something with a diluting quality leaving readers to imagine the types of bodies in this rising tide. In the wake (Sharpe, 2016) of federal funds being redistributed from all-white mainstream English speaking populations and becoming accessible to Black and racialized linguistically
diverse students, this strategic language choice overtly targeted “the American people” in the form of “an open letter” (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, p. 1) casting negative light on the overall progress of the nation’s schoolchildren within a mere generation of some of the aforementioned landmark judicial decisions. In fact, the 1983 report accurately asserts that at the time of its publication, “the average citizen today [was] better educated and more knowledgeable than the average citizen of a generation ago--more literate, and exposed to more mathematics, literature, and science,” (p. 4). Thus, contributing to the need for the committee of twelve, which boasted not a single academic expert on education, to recast particular U.S. schoolchildren as “internal enemies” (Stoler, 1995, p. 96) in order to maintain a racialized caste structure with white middle-class monolingual mainstream English users at the top.

In both the Lau v Nichols and Ann Arbor cases, it was determined illegal to use students’ languaging practices as justification for special education classifications. The Lau case specifically cited the use of language as a proxy for “national origin” as a key determinant of the case having violated the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and called for “taxpayers of all races” to contribute (569) to the education of said students (Lau v Nichols, 1974). Nine years later, “A Nation at Risk” would conjure fear surrounding this attempt at equitable distribution of federal resources by citing secondary school curricula as having been “homogenized, diluted and diffused to the point that they no longer have a central purpose [...] a cafeteria style curriculum in which the appetizers and desserts can easily be mistaken for the main courses” (1983, p. 9). Fifteen years after the Third World Liberation front successfully protested for ethnic studies in California in 1968, this rejection of cultural and linguistic pluralism would subject Black and minoritized
children to the othering logics of Orientalism (Smith, 2006) once more. Despite their citizenry, the report suggests an equitable and responsive disbursement of instructional and curricular resources would place the country at the mercy of “an unfriendly foreign power” (p. 1). Despite the 40-year gap in publishing, Zwiers seamlessly continues these logics in his hypothetical case studies of “diverse students who can become casualties of invisible criteria in schools” (2013, p. 9) including:

Sara, who immigrated to the United States four years ago from Mexico and “asks very few questions even when she does not understand the assignment” (p. 5)

United States-born Armando whose “social English is fluent, but his academic English is weak according to his teachers [and who] complains that he is not interested in any of the topics that are taught in his classes” (p. 5)

Kim who arrived from Vietnam two years ago whose “oral language has errors, but she can make herself understood in most situations” (p. 5), and

African-American David, who, per Zwiers, speaks African-American Vernacular English, and “likes school but does not like to use mainstream English in front of peers in his classes[...] he knows there is a difference but does not want “to sound white” (p. 6)

Neither law nor policy had challenged the perception of Kim, Armando or Sara as threats to the assimilation of distinct cultures into a nationalized educational agenda. They are the embodiment of the “emerging sense of national frustration” that the 1983 commissioned report suggested was creating a “fear of losing a shared vision for America” (National Commission on Excellence in Education, p. 7). What is invisibilized is not the criteria for success as Zwiers (2013) would suggest, but rather a privatized
white monocultural understanding of language and who could rightfully use it – an understanding which had been “developed by its members over time” (p. 8) and which had “define[d] what is intellectual, logical and linguistically appropriate” (p. 12) in various institutions including schools. David, of course is the foremost “internal enemy” as he is described as willfully rejecting white mainstream English (Baker-Bell, 2020), although his hypothetical rationale is not explored.

In keeping with the legacies of anti-Black dehumanization, “A Nation at Risk” warns that students benefiting from this recent access to free and presumably equal public education were “coasting through life” (p. 9) forever at odds with the common good of the state (Wynter, 2003) which had previously enjoyed a “thirst for education” (p. 8). The comparison drawn juxtaposes eras one generation apart, but carefully avoids invoking Native histories to reinforce the indigenous erasure in the foundation upon which “this country was built” through its “relative isolation from the malignant problems of older civilizations’ (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, p. 4). In the report’s attempt to demonize the pluralistic backgrounds of the nation’s children now being served in schools, it draws on biopolitical logics that call into question the ability of U.S. schools to regularize the supposed superiority from which the country had previously derived great pride “generations ago,” in the era of the “Sputnik” (p. 1) –years immediately preceding the Civil Rights Act (1983).

As a direct influence of “A Nation at Risk,” standardization was determined to be the best means of controlling populations via numeric codes (Deleuze, 1992). It was an attempt to discredit the educational attainment of those most recently awarded access to public schooling, racialized students. The counterargument to the educational improvement
relayed in the policy report from one generation to the next was that those who *graduated* were not enjoying the same gains (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, p. 5) as the general population at large. Indicators of risk (the name of a section in the policy document) cites standardized testing results to validate claims that the nation’s students were underperforming. While language alone cannot alter the performance of students, Foucault cautions us that by changing the access to resources through categorical naming practices, we in turn modify the population by determining who to “let die” as a projection of the market economy onto government (2008). To ensure clarity in the dichotomous framing of who threatens the United States versus who belongs, National Commission on Excellence in Education reestablishes that despite widened access to education for the linguistically diverse,

> “citizens know and believe that the meaning of America to the rest of the world must be something better than it seems to many today [and that] Americans like to think of this Nation as the preeminent country for generating great ideas” (1983, p. 11).

In other words, critiquing the United States to improve upon its treatment of Black, Indigenous and newcomer populations was tantamount to relinquishing one’s citizenship and thusly called for heightened vigilance in schools. The “ample” (p. 3) documentation from which the commission derives this conclusion is rooted in surveillance and management such that nine of thirteen bulleted indicators are based on standardized testing in order to legitimize the borders of whiteness (Stoler, 1995) and retard the impacts of the Civil Rights Act.

* A Limited Supply of Capital
The legacy of intervention and regulation from the National Commission on Excellence in Education laments students’ lack of “higher order intellectual skills” (1983, p. 1) and is echoed contemporarily in the adoption of the Common Core in 2010 as a standardizing tool for U.S. public education by determining which populations fail to enact the “language of the American bourgeoisie” (Flores, 2013, p. 277). It is important to recall that prior to both the Lau v Nichols and Ann Arbor cases, special education environments were de facto settings for students whose languaging practices did not reflect those of the dominant white teaching force furthering a logic that would make segregating and controlling racialized populations more manageable (Foucault, 2006). Zwiers argues that the “narrow range of accents, vocabulary, and grammar typically valued by those in power” (2013, p. 2) constitute the linguistic capital that “[f]amilies pass on [...] to their children who ‘invest them’ in school” (p. 8). He then argues that the school-sanctioned hierarchical knowledge organization reflected in this narrow language production may somehow be “the most complicated tool set in the world to learn how to use” (p. 1) and as one that does not value “lack of clarity, lack of evidence, lack of focus and extraneous language” (p. 15). This line of logic continues the binary thinking that conflates the language use of white middle-class monolingual English speakers with the exclusive capacity for clear, evidence-based and focused use of language unlike that of those deemed non-mainstream, namely “ELs, children of speakers of AAVE and children from poor families” (2013, p. 2). While the Common Core was widely challenged in its adoption, language education research responded to such “robust language demands” (Zwiers, 2013, p. 2) through the teaching of academic English. Zwiers’ 2013 text is aptly subitled, “Meeting Common Core Standards Across Disciplines” and his empirical work
is cited in the central expectation for the use of ‘academic’ language (Stanford Center for Assessment Learning and Equity, 2018) in the edTPA (Educative Teacher Preparation Assessment).

In many ways, the 1983 policy report demanded the theorizing of supports and approaches like those offered in Zwiers’ 2013 work, for language learners to “expand their linguistic capital” (p. 12) and for teachers to “work alongside students to develop and add new forms of cultural and linguistic capital” (p. 18). Building from the work of Jim Cummins, Zwiers encourages language education practitioners that all students have linguistic capital, but of varying “qualities and quantities” (2013, p. 7). Cummins warns that there are separate systems of language, basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP), which require different types of input to acquire, and Zwiers extends this language as entity logic to argue that, “[j]ust as money and things are unequally distributed in society, so are the less visible words, skills and knowledge that give people advantages” (Bourdieu, 1986) (Zwiers, 7). What is invisibilized in this common-sense logic of capital is whiteness as cultural property. In a Bourdieuan sense, the worth of otherwise neutral capitals reside in their exclusivity which is reinforced through an artificial demand as articulated in this case, through the institutional call for academic language. This deficit orientation parallels popular word gap discourses which promote racialized children as languageless (Rosa, 2016) and thereby ineligible for personhood since the exclusive academic register is not something non-mainstream students can “just naturally pick up” (Scarcella, 2003 as cited by Zwiers, 2013 p. 2). Limiting conceptions of language as cultural possessions solidifies them as exclusive resources that, because of the presence of English learners and users of
AAVE, adds additional burdens upon schools and their personnel. These are the demands the “A Nation at Risk” report warns overwhelms schools by asking that they “provide solutions to personal, social, and political problems that the home and other institutions either will not or cannot resolve” (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, p. 1). Since mothers and middle and upper-class families pass on an exclusive linguistic capital that non-mainstream students can only access through school, Zwiers suggestion that “the rich get richer” (p. 8) in terms of capitals, directly reflects the warning in “A Nation at Risk” that providing access to this limited linguistic capital creates “demands on our schools and colleges” causing an “educational cost as well as a financial one” (1983, p. 1).

Bourdieu’s conception of social capital highlights the restrictive nature of this ‘entity’ based understanding, and the misapplication thereof exposes the contradiction of any capital (linguistic or otherwise) as something one might earn through individual effort or based on teacher competency. Both Zwiers and Cummins encourage teachers to consider the environment it takes to produce a particular register of language, but in disembodying the practice of languaging from the students who enact them, they reify biological conceptions of who might benefit from these settings based on race alone. The National Commission on Excellence in Education similarly warns that access to civic participation should be based on “a shared education [and] common culture” or risk “disenfranchisement” and restricted access to full participation in “our national life” (1983, p. 4). The report further utilizes a raciolinguistic ideology (Flores & Rosa, 2015) by suggesting that “the progress of society” hinges upon Black and minoritized students “own efforts, competently guided” (1983, p. 3) which can provide them more “quality
and quantity” language (Zwiers, 2013) – a logic analogous to the antiBlack suggestion they “be taught how to be properly human and cleansed of [their] bad habits through education” (Flores, 2013, p. 266).

“A Nation at Risk” (1983) warns of impending national disunity through the changes enacted in education during the years following the Civil Rights Act. This caution reveals an attempt at the standardization of language regarding what it means to be academically successful through testing as a nationalizing technology. Falling short of these restrictive measures became framed as a loss of “intellectual capital” (p. 9) and gave way to calls for curricula to maintain a “central purpose” in accordance with said measures as opposed to “cafeteria style” (p. 13) curricula reflecting the diversity of classrooms. Contrary to the allusions from Zwiers, the policy report warns us not to “scapegoat” teachers who are already “beleaguered” (p. 7) due to the “shoddiness” of unnamed citizens exacerbating a supposed national “fear of losing a shared vision for America” (p. 13). Still, Zwiers also reinforces the conception of language learners as takers of limited resources and suggests that with linguistic capital, “[i]f a lot is already there then learning is much less work, with much less likelihood of failure” (2013, p. 8). This linguistic and cultural devaluation proceeds from an ideological historically rooted in colonial domination in which subjugated knowledge is “rearranged,” “possessed and assimilated” (Mignolo, 1992, p. 305) by the dominating class to reconstitute what counts as civilized. Determining what counts as language then restricting who has access to it not only dehumanizes racialized students, it maintains the Bourdieuan notion of capital in its true essence – a resource to be wielded for social stratification, rather than as a communal practice.

*Culturelessness in (Language) Teacher Preparation*
To possess language and culture within an anti-Black neoliberal context is by default a state of whiteness rendering the dichotomous opposing state of Blackness as abnormal and without culture or language. One cannot augment the quality or quantity of something assumed altogether absent, and the framing of teachers as having to consciously teach their languaging practices to those unable to inherit them from their families is one that points to a subhuman starting point for those who have been naturally dysselected (Wynter, 2003). The mere presence of non-white linguistically diverse students in U.S. public schools triggered a securitization (Khan, 2014) reflex from the Reagan administration calling for more surveillance and management of suspicious bodies. According to the National Commission on Excellence in Education, the threat of “common culture” (p. 4) being rejected and the proliferation of the nation’s sudden “confusion of vision” (p. 9) is a call to secure the borders of whiteness (Stoler, 1995) that blur as a result of the enforcement of policies like the Civil Rights Act which provided racialized students access to education. According to Kubota et al., “foreign language study should enable students to critically understand their native culture and its underlying ideologies [and] about how sociopolitical issues of race, gender, class, domination, and power influence the organization of a particular culture” (2013, p. 13). Still, language teacher preparation contradicts this suggestion by adhering to the logic of hierarchical cultural ‘capitals’ that simply casts Black students as lacking by virtue of ranking their racialized norms ahistorically and in opposition to white American monoculturalism.

Social and other forms of capital are defined by Zwiers as they are quite ubiquitously in education— in terms of quantity and quality without mention of who is charged with
making those determinations of value. In fact, the various ways in which white mainstream English is euphemized, including “school-like conversations, school-aligned varieties of English, language used by those in power, teacher-like language, language expected in academic settings, language of mainstream teachers & curricula” and “English valued by school,” (2013, ch.1) all demonstrate immense effort in unmarking academic English as a common sense (Wynter, 2003) entity as opposed to a proxy for whiteness. According to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) created in 2010 and currently adopted in 41 states in the nation, determinations about language in the form of English Language Arts and through its use in other academic disciplines, are meant to ensure students are prepared for college, career and life (Common Core State Standards, 2021). Thus, standardized expectations of language across disciplines extends implications of language teacher preparation as related to a level of future civic engagement (Banks, 2017) and citizenry of students (Ladson-Billings, 1995) through the perceived use of particular linguistic conventions. Thus, the fundamental impact of language teaching is a central concern for language education practitioners who are charged with discerning between linguistic innovation and error (Flores & Rosa, 2019) despite the subjective and racialized nature of such determinations.

**Conclusion**

I have taken a genealogical approach to deconstructing the metaphor of various capitals in (language) teacher education and argued that their usage renders Black students as ineligible for capitals (i.e. culture and language) in U.S. classrooms. The concept of capital as used in educational spaces is discursively constructed through policy and academic texts limiting the subject positions of Black students in order to defend
(Foucault, 2006) and maintain white supremacy. The data derived from the two texts in question represent a reality in which Black and Indigenous studenthood overburdens U.S. schools as they require additional quality and quantity capital - an extension of a fundamental logic of racial sorting that permanently positions whiteness as idealized and fully human.

I further argued that the use of terms related to capital regarding student languaging practices do not reflect empirically advanced versus less complex academic ability on behalf of students. Instead, it reflects an effort-laden depiction of commodified and dissociated language as an entity which Black and minoritized students cannot own – a framing that supports the maintenance of white supremacy in the institution of U.S. schooling. The “particular visions of reality” (Allan, 2008, p. 16) into which we are goaded induces an ideological culturelessness for Black students who linguistically, culturally and racially do not match those who wield institutional power over them; those conversely deemed as having “capital” and a nationalistic and unified “common vision” (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, p. 9). This capital is represented across policy and academic texts as one biologically inaccessible for racialized students who introduce a “confusion of vision” to U.S. schools through a raciolinguistic reification of the binary between normal and abnormal populations (Stoler, 1995). Within a framework of culturelessness, one’s striving to assimilate, or moving towards whiteness via acquiring various capitals, is framed as a form of “civic nationalism” (Melamed, 2006, p. 2) which would require that many students divest from Black cultures.
If the function of racism is to distract Black people (Morrison, 1975), we are in grave danger of unwittingly putting forth efforts to disprove that Black students are somehow less evolved (Flores, 2013) by working within antiBlack frameworks rather than subverting their logics. I do not suggest that Black students be recognized as having more or different culture/capital, but rather that culture as capital, be problematized altogether. Leonardo warns, “The appeal for different forms of cultural capital is a distinctly racial argument following the lead of multiculturalism, whether intended or not” (2012, p. 442), and I have demonstrated a steady discursive reflection of market logics used to portray Black and indigenous populations as disproportionate consumers of state resources who burden teachers to make white middle-class norms more overt and student assimilation possible. Outgoing education secretary Betsy DeVos cited “A Nation at Risk” as recently as 2019 in support of school choice giving credence to neoliberal logics that suggest each individual climb out of their abnormal subject positions rather than simply “coasting through life” (1983, p. 9). Whether identifying the responsibility as that of Black students or white teachers, the concept of culture as capital is inherently antiBlack and culture should alternatively be defined within teacher preparation as does Robinson: “ethnoracial associations solidified politically over time” (2000, p. 62) such that it cannot be disentangled from the historico-political context in which it develops. Calling for the use of Black language and culture as a means for accessing white monocultural and monolingual norms (Kubota & Austin, 2007), even if presumed equal in value, only makes the dehumanizing entity-based rhetoric of “capital acquisition” all the more dangerous.
In rejecting entity-based notions of culture, culture-centric frameworks that directly critique a white monocultural monolingual standard can also avoid the singular articulation of a flattened respectable cultural Blackness which suggests it too can be standardized. Commodifying the language practices of any racialized community puts their very personhood in question (Rosa, 2016). Subscribing to the analogy of students’ language and culture as capital furthers the rhetoric of biopolitical (Foucault, 1984) racism in subdividing the worth of groups of humans based on perceived differences and presumed empirical racial hierarchies, cultural or otherwise. In humanizing language as a practice, Black and racialized speakers should be invited to display the linguistic dexterity they often enact by virtue of navigating hostile spaces which delimit their humanity based on the white perceiving subject (Flores et al., 2020) --as an act of joy rather than one of survival (Love, 2019). In spite of imperial, colonizing and racial violence, Black and racialized communities have and continue to set their own standards in terms of linguistic and cultural innovation, and celebrating this rather than sorting and managing it is the very epitome of what it means to be human.
CHAPTER 3: COUNTERING THE CANON

Vignette 3

Es lamentable que a estas alturas hay que llamar la atención a estas realidades--y como se perpetúan con nuestros hijos, en los maestros que enfrenten cada día....

From the flurry of emails I received that night, this line strikes me most. It was the end of the first fall semester of my doctoral coursework at Franklin, and I had walked out of class after deciding I could no longer endure the way the Black working-class community—from which I hailed—was being maligned by a colleague, and without any interruption on behalf of my instructor. The email excerpt commiserates, “It’s shameful that at this level it’s necessary to call out such realities—and how they are perpetuated upon our children through the teachers they encounter on a daily basis.”

My Latinx colleague was addressing how I, amidst packing my bag, interrupted our Chinese American colleague who, for the third time, reduced Black communities, namely her own high school students, to their ‘difficult’ names and lack of work ethic. Over the course of three separate class meetings, this particular doctoral student joked about unpronounceable Black names “100-letters long” and the disrespect of a Black American young man who saluted the flag with his left hand. Yet, her swift punishment of this student fell short of displaying the height of her disdain for this community. What she found even more contemptuous was the perceived squandering of opportunity by these families on public assistance—a scene she verbally painted the night I walked out in the middle of the class meeting. She explained that night how she had come to the United States poor and worked various jobs from 5am to 10pm, resulting in her triumphant
career as a math teacher and subsequent entry into the PhD in Education program. She continued to share that she could not fathom why ‘Black people with section 8 and food stamps’ could not accomplish what she had.

In the first two class meetings, other doctoral students among us attempted to unpack and redirect this particular colleague who regularly compared her experience as a Chinese national entering the United States in the 1980s to a general Black American experience. They cited many important considerations, including evolving global politics, the apartheid-like governance of the United States, and Reconstruction-era inequities. The steady silence, however, from the instructor was what seemed to embolden this colleague to continue unbothered and uncritical in her class-centric critique until a verbal confrontation erupted on this third encounter.

I had experienced this feeling of erasure at classes at Franklin before, but as a Black mother whose child could have very well been a student in this colleague’s class, this particular erasure was unbearable. The false equivalency between her experience and those represented by the Black students and families who bore the brunt of her critique drove me to lecture her on the harm she was inflicting directly and indirectly, then to walk out of class long before it concluded .

Honestly, I do not remember what I said, but it certainly contrasted the antiBlackness her students faced with the ways she expounded upon her own experiences. The emails I received from members of my cohort thereafter, led me to believe my response was clear, impactful, and directly contradicted the culturally bereft caricature conjured by this colleague that same evening. Separate email excerpts included:

*I'm sorry that you had to experience that level of ignorance and privilege...*
Your response to her comments was one of the realest, most profound, and unmistakably intelligent things I have ever heard in a classroom...

I'm SORRY that the classroom culture was VIOLENT...

I want to thank you for doing the emotional labor I'm not equipped or mature enough to do...

Among the emails was one from my instructor who, in light of the incident, would adjust the syllabus to assign Black American scholar Ta-Nehisi Coates. The discussion that followed offered historical information on the experiences of Black people in the United States and involved only the voices who had previously demonstrated interest in this topic. The class-based analysis that reduced Black struggles to the ‘we are all immigrants’ narrative did not arise - and my cohort-mate simply refrained from the one-time conversation. At the conclusion of the course I was left to wonder, without my interjection, would such comments, Black erasure and reductionist anti-Black discourses have ever been even momentarily refuted in this PhD-level course on education?
Critiquing the Canon: Towards a More Critical Use of Lareau’s “Unequal Childhoods” in Teacher Preparation
Abstract

The purpose of this manuscript is to highlight ways in which, absent a critical lens, the inclusion of certain foundational texts in teacher education, such as Lareau’s *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life* (2003), can reinforce the white gaze (Dumas & Ross, 2016) in teacher preparation. To better understand the depictions of Black communities through texts like these, I draw from critical race theory (Bell, 1980) and apply the counterstorytelling (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002) as a liberatory approach to the text with specific attention to incrementalism, liberalism and interest convergence. I draw upon contemporaneous works that portray Black youth from single parent households in their own words which yields depictions of Black working-class families like those in Lareau’s work as more complex than presented in her work. I expose potential opportunities to enact a critical race curriculum (Yosso, 2002) with canonized texts like Lareau’s through literature that centers Black youth voicing their own experiences in their communities and in school to bring depth and nuance to canonical texts. Through this counterstory, I present findings to combat the overwhelming whiteness (Sleeter, 2017) in teacher preparation through curriculum curation and reflection.

Introduction

Texts that distort entire groups of people are damaging to readers in various ways (Sims Bishop, 1990). When such texts are canonized in teacher preparation programs (TPP), the
damage is compounded as they influence not just the reader but the future students with whom the reader may interact. For better or worse, readers develop or refine theoretical relationships with the people described in the texts they read, and with populations with whom they may never actually interact (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985) or have not interacted with previously. In considering the narratives that the overwhelmingly white female preservice teacher (PST) population encounters during their pedagogical tutelage, we must guard specifically against the ways that deficit views of Black students are reinforced by textual relationships (Cross, 2016). Furthermore, when theoretical misunderstandings evolve into teacher practice, prevailing stereotypes of minoritized populations (Cross, 2016; English et al., 2020) are further solidified. From a critical race perspective, addressing the absence of stories in education about Black people which they themselves voice (Ladson-Billings, 1998) is essential to combat the spread of misinformation in TPPs and to interrupt the notion of urban populations as “remedial or unreachable” (Milner, 2011).

The potential negative impact of biased curricula is compounded by the tendency of TPPs to center K-12 students’ academic development without comparable regard for various capitals (Yosso, 2005) that are integral in the lives of many minoritized students. Simply put, minoritized ways of being are not rewarded in overwhelmingly white teacher preparation spaces (Sleeter, 2017). In this regard, it is essential for TPPs to carefully curate materials and design instruction to disrupt dominant white norms (Bertrand & Porcher, 2020; Ladson-Billings, 2000) which cast Black communities as abnormal.

In this essay, I focus on Lareau’s Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race and Family Life (2003), a commonly used text in TPPs as a way to model how to engage with this and
similar texts with intention. I offer a deconstruction of the text to “disrupt the status quo” (Allen et al., 2017) by addressing the fundamental issue of power involved in the silencing of Black voices to narrate their own realities (Delpit, 1988). The purpose of this paper is to offer teacher educators guidance on teaching with and about this and similar texts in ways that honor how Black communities leverage their knowledge on behalf of their children. Finally, I provide ways to support PSTs with dominant white ideologies in better understanding the nuances of Black child-rearing practices that Lareau misses, demonstrating how Sleeter's (2017) work can help TPPs be more thoughtful about how we select and engage with canonized texts.

**Background**

*Pre-Service Teachers and “Unequal Childhoods”*. Instructors in TPPs do well to incorporate texts and research from the social sciences in their courses to enrich PSTs understanding of systemic issues. However, they must be critical of the messages they are sending via the texts they select (Yosso, 2002), how their choices reflect dominant white sensibilities (Haddix, 2012; Sleeter, 2001), and how those texts are taught. Zygmunt and Clark emphasize that true engagement (2016) with minoritized communities is necessary to increase the cultural awareness of the largely white middle-class female teacher workforce, but community engagement can reinforce stereotypes (Cross, 2016) if not coupled with thoughtful coursework (Austin & Hsieh., 2021) and reflection opportunities. Because community partnerships are uncommon in TPPs, curriculum choices become even more significant as they often serve as exposure to racialized and Black communities for white PSTs.
The average American teacher is a 43-year-old white woman (Will, 2020). These teachers report to predominately white administrative workforce whose lack of lived experiences with marginalization makes it challenging to identify or interrupt potentially discriminatory pedagogy and curricula (Grisson et al., 2021). While the majority of American public schoolchildren will soon be made up of minoritized populations (Taie & Goldring, 2020), the demographics of PSTs generally match practicing teacher demographics (AACTE, 2013), demonstrating a consistent racial homogeneity being replicated across educational levels and settings. This “overwhelming whiteness” (Sleeter, 2001) contributes to a sense of neutrality in a white-normed curriculum. Not only does this present an echo chamber effect among educators and their leadership, it contributes to the silencing of Black K-12 students and PSTs who may employ it as a strategic choice (Haddix, 2012; Hill Collins, 2000; hooks, 1994) or as a result of being marginalized in white-dominated spaces (Delpit, 1988).

Institutions that seek to expose PSTs to young people of minoritized backgrounds should look to invite the voices (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2000) and stories from those populations to diversify the understanding of their complex experiences. PSTs commonly associate student ability with class and race (Reiter & Davis, 2011) and erroneously believe these social categories can be separated (Cross, 2016) or considered individually outside of a sociopolitical context. According to Allen et al. (2017), TPPs that seek to disrupt these patterns would routinely ask, “whose voice is missing?” as a form of critical reflection and consistently seek to unearth how power is wielded within institutions rooted in white hegemony. These voices can challenge the additive notion that that class can outweigh the impact of race on social and educational inequities (Choo & Ferree, 2010; Spillers, 1987).
However, it is essential that TPPs position novice educators as humble and critical in their budding understanding of a complex system of oppression (Combahee River Collective, 1986; Crenshaw, 1991; Hill Collins, 2000) within which race, gender and class play integral roles. To accomplish that, they must hear about the experiences of those in the margins as a way to complicate the canonized narratives they may be offered in their coursework. PSTs must develop critical literacy skills in reading texts and reflecting (Allen et al., 2017) on their positionality in relation to those texts, and thereby in relation to the communities described in them.

These complexities and understandings around positionality are especially critical when teacher preparation instructors assign students *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life* (2003) by Annette Lareau. While no straightforward definition exists of what makes a text canonical, Lareau’s book has been cited in over 8000 texts according to Google Scholar, has its own Wikipedia page, is summarized via videos on Study.com, and features in foundational teacher preparation courses at my institution. One of the focal Black working-class families, the Taylors, are foregrounded in the book (Lareau, 2003, p. 31). At the same time, the text minimizes attention to race, which positions underexposed PSTs as the audience for a distorted understanding of the Taylors racialized struggles while implicitly privileging featured white families (Yosso, 2002). Lareau chronicles her time with families from distinct social classes and categorizes parenting styles based upon what she perceives to be unifying factors irrespective of race across the families with whom she and her team interacted. She details the parenting styles among various families as different while highlighting that only specific approaches are rewarded in schools. This creates a
hierarchy theoretically euphemizing difference as deficiency in parenting styles without regard for the structural inequities already present in schools and other institutions.

In addition to being mostly white, U.S K-12 teachers, and PSTs, are mostly women from middle-class backgrounds (Will, 2020). These demographic patterns suggest that when PSTs encounter Lareau’s descriptions of child-reading practices in middle-class families as concerted cultivation and poor and working-class families using a natural growth method, PSTs will recognize themselves in the middle-class families and pathologize or other the working-class families. Although the study is based on the practices of 88 families, the book focuses on 12. Based on Lareau’s description, Tyrec Taylor of the highlighted Taylor family, may be read as a victim of natural growth parenting based on Lareau’s (2003) conclusion:

Since simply stepping out of the front door and joining his neighborhood friends for informal play obviously gave Tyrec much pleasure, his mother felt that was preferable to having him involved in an activity that required extensive involvement on her part. For her, as with other working-class and poor mothers, being a good mother did not include an obligation to cultivate her children’s various interests, particularly if doing so would require radically rearranging her own life (p. 79)

This excerpt provides an example of how Ms. Taylor is presented to PSTs. She is described as resisting involvement in the life of her son, rather than voicing her own experience as a “speaking subject” (Bernal, 1998) from her perspective as a Black working-class mother. Without careful support, PSTs reading the book may conclude that class, not
race is a central determinant of student success in schools. In their analysis of Lareau’s text, Choo and Ferree (2010) note that by refusing to isolate class from other identity categories, namely race and gender, we can provide a more thorough analysis as it forces the reader into a critical awareness of those who are marginalized in multiple ways by their position in society. Absent this lens, both teacher educators and PSTs who fail to invite and prioritize the perspectives of the raced, classed and gendered into their classrooms, may create spaces wherein the dominant societal narrative is upheld rather than challenged (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

While Sleeter (2017) identifies three aspects of critical race theory (CRT) as they pertain to teacher education, Ladson-Billings is responsible for ushering CRT into the field of education more than twenty years prior, discussing its timely adoption in an era where so many cultural ways of being had been racialized thereby necessitating a new lens not only for legal scholarship (where the framework was birthed), but also in education. Within the context of legal scholarship, CRT set out to: (1) acknowledge racism as normal and ubiquitous in the U.S. context; (2) employ and value storytelling as cultural wisdom on race relations to challenge prevailing understandings of people of color as inferior; (3) critique liberalism as an incremental and thereby counterproductive approach to racial equality; (4) acknowledge that whites are the primary benefactors of affirmative action as it is applied in practice; and (5) assert that what motivates action for the betterment of Black people and people of color is it’s overlap with the interest of whites, termed interest convergence (1998). To analyze Lareau’s text as a representation of whiteness in teacher education, I will use the three CRT tenets from Sleeter’s work including a) the incremental steps which are only employed where white interests converge with people of color, b) the
reinforcement of colorblind ideologies which distorts how structural racism impacts racialized communities, and c) the failure to center the experiential knowledge of Black and minoritized people—all which serve to maintain white interests. In the analysis that follows, I will present excerpts of how the Taylor family is presented with a focus on class alone in Lareau’s text leading to a colorblind understanding of institutional inequity, and how this and similar texts must be challenged by the centering Black experiential knowledge. I conclude with recommendations for teacher educators to effectively critique the canon in teacher preparation in general.

**Analysis**

**Countering the accomplishment of ‘Natural Growth’**

*Learning and The Village Approach to Child-Rearing.* The chapter on Tyrec essentializes his family lifestyle as *natural growth* suggesting a hands-off approach to his upbringing. *Natural growth* is contrasted with the word concerted (in *concerted cultivation*) - a term reserved for those parents who strictly schedule and pay for the activities in which their children engage. This is most notable by the adults in the home life of Garrett, Tyrec’s middle-class white counterpart. For Tyrec, the “visits to relatives” which are “set by parents” do not constitute effort nor coordination per this description (Lareau 2003, p. 76). The same description that goes on to note:

> As with most working-class and poor children, for Tyrec, contacts with kin-from large, extended family events on weekends to informal drop-ins on weekdays - are a part of the fabric of daily life. His great-grandmother, several aunts, cousins, and both grandmothers live close by (three of his cousins live “around the corner, in the next block”). Two other cousins his
age frequently stay overnight at Tyrec’s house. He often helps his great-grandmother with household chores on the weekend; when she needs him, Tyrec is required to assist his great-grandmother before he begins playing with his friends (p.76)

When compared to concerted cultivation, this section suggests that parental figures are not directly in charge of many of Tyrec’s activities. Rather than as a statement of fact, the juxtaposition of Tyrec’s typical dealings to those of his middle-class counterparts, mostly delivered by paid personnel, suggests it is inferior to the structured activities preferred by the middle-class families. Despite his ability to navigate multilayered involvement with various family members, his funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992) are not highlighted as transferable to the school institution, nor is his home life lauded for the intricate role it plays in Tyrec’s sense of belonging. Furthermore, this familial care style is not regarded for its inventive nature relative to the communal support offered within a social class that likely cannot afford help for hire. Collins (1986) alludes to this painfully overt omission within the sociological tradition of marginalizing Black women by not account[ing] for […] how racial/ethnic family members are differentially integrated into wage labor, and how families alter their household structure in response to changing political economies (e.g., adding more people and becoming extended, fragmenting and becoming female-headed, and migrating to locate better opportunities) (S29)

Stated differently, Ms. Taylor, a Black mother, crafted an environment that reflected her norms and values and Lareau characterized it as a deficit. Thoughtfully designing the
means to reinforce the family-oriented nature of Tyrec’s home life is presented as undesirable because it results in “racially segregated groups,” in which Tyrec participates, in spite of living within a few blocks’ proximity to white families (Lareau, 2003, p. 68). In the same way that this echoes the hyper-surveillance Black boys endure in school settings (Harris & Leonardo, 2018), the positive quantification of the Taylors parenting ability is measured against how much effort is spent approximating Tyrec to whiteness rather than the inherent value of reinforcing cultural and community values. Sleeter describes how curricula are often designed to fit the emotional needs of white students and portraying the Taylor family as irresponsible for Tyrec having contrasting school and home experiences does precisely that. The extent to which white interests are centered in this text are reflected when a working-class a white child named Billy also engages only with children within his race, and Lareau provides no measure of how race impacts this practice. PSTs who may find white dominant narratives familiar will consider this neutral and not racialized thereby having their interests centered in the selection of this text. Choo and Ferree’s analysis aptly reveals, “The implications of race for the cultural logic of childrearing for white families is undermined by failing to consider how it could be that Billy’s home is “only a few blocks away” from those of Black children but nonetheless he “mostly plays with white children” (2010, p. 141). This casting of the Taylor family’s choice as detrimental for Tyrec’s life, but of Billy’s as both harmless and agentless, is an attempt to suppress the understanding that “race is an organizing principle that cuts across class” (Leonardo, 2004, p. 140) in favor of the class-driven hypothesis Lareau champions. This form of colorblindness (Sleeter, 2017) is used to explicate certain families under the guise of “social class” despite
the fact the Black middle-class families remain vulnerable in spite of socioeconomic status explicitly because of their race (Gillborn, 2013; Harris & Leonardo, 2018).

Lareau goes on to critique Tyrec’s father by presenting his living apart from the family as a negative feature. Mr. Taylor is cast as both absent and an impediment to the fast-paced schedule romanticized within the white middle-class families’ structure. Lareau writes that the father, “talks to the children on the telephone most days of the week, and usually sees them once a week” (2003, p. 69), but he is also described as having difficulty reading and not wanting Tyrec to play football “citing safety issues” (2003, p. 69). Tyrec’s father expresses concern for his son’s physical well-being, in addition to regularly imparting life wisdom and insisting that his children are indeed capable. Mr. Taylor is described as having “opinions on many issues including the state of the world,” and he “weighs in on decisions related to the children” (Lareau, 2003, p.69). Yet, rather than hailing this father and as a prime component of familial capital (Yosso, 2005), he is myopically construed as the result of menial financial and social resources. The underlying assumption that the white westernized nuclear family is superior by default to alternative family structures is part of a deeply pathologizing legacy solidified by the Moynihan report, The Negro Family (1965) more than half a century ago. This conclusion is set against a racialized standard that ignores the complex interplay between how Black men are disproportionately punished in schools, overpoliced (Dei, 1993; Sibblis, 2014), and suffer mass incarceration at rate incomparable to white men (Dumas & ross, 2016; Goff et al., 2014; Owens & McLanahan, 2020) which directly augments the amount of single-parent female-headed households in the Black community. PSTs are guided to the deep-seated trope of the single-parent female-headed household as an impediment to family stability irrespective of Mr. Taylor’s
involvement or the documented cooperation and engagement of both parents in Tyrec’s life.

To add Black experiential knowledge to the reading of this text and those like it, teacher educators should offer parallel texts like those from Flennaugh (2016) who chronicles the reflections of two high achieving Black males in high schools in California. The young men speak to what matters most to them, inclusive of schooling, in terms of identity formation. They voice their own realities as the researcher employs an identity mapping methodology and follows up with semi-structured interviews to better relay the beliefs of these young men about their own lives. This comparative text serves to rupture the tendency of outsiders to adopt one-dimensional understandings of communities via essentialization in using case studies which offer depth and specificity by design (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). David, one of the young men highlighted in Flennaugh’s study, is like Tyrec in that his father is not living in his household but is an integral part of the “village” that shapes his identity. David does not depict the term “father” at all on his identity map but does write “family” in a large circle, which, by standards determined by the researcher, serves to communicate that it is of substantial importance. Flennaugh explains that his follow-up interview revealed an important revelation about the role of David’s father:

It is clear that David’s father is supportive and instrumental in David’s position as a high-performing student. However, what stood out about David’s description of his father was how he talked about the manifestation of his father’s support. Though David’s father does not live in the same home as him, David highlights the phone calls about homework as indications of his father’s support. (p. 18)
Despite the manifestation of this support revealed through the interview process, the fixed assumption about the capacity of a single-parent household (Dumas, 2013) reverberates in Lareau’s methods and her analysis of Tyrec’s family. It is in David speaking for himself that we uncover the wealth of support available to him in the person of his father. For PSTs, access to community voices is not a luxury but a necessity (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2000). Absent a fuller understanding of family dynamics, PSTs are left in want of Tyrec’s characterization of his own father for an authentic understanding of the support provided by family.

Those who prepare teachers would find an additional opportunity to complicate Lareau’s depiction with the second young man who participated in Flennaugh’s study. Like David, Adam offers an insider’s knowledge of how the erasure of community value detracts from the capacity for young Black men to perceive institutional white spaces as places in which to thrive (Love, 2019). Flennaugh emphasizes that it is:

[i]mportant to note on Adam’s identity map the distinction he makes between “education” and “school,” [...] When asked to explain this separation during the interview, Adam states, “Well, education is not just what you can learn in school, but what you can get outside of school” (2016, p.20).

This juxtaposition of school and education for students like Adam should serve as a warning for educators that young men of color are seeing the process of schooling as removed from, different than, and possibly less meaningful than what they may think of as authentic learning. This level of nuance demonstrates that class alone is insufficient
(Milner, 2007) for understanding how Black youth experience school, and that intentional methods which center Black participants’ experiences in their own words will challenge privileged understandings of marginalized existences. To contend with Lareau’s failure to portray the rich cultural and purposefully organized home life of Tyrec while recasting it as the result of self-centered and resigned parenting, teacher educators must center Black experiences presented by Black adults and children to provide more accurate depictions of Black working-class families to PSTs.

**Countering Discourses of Social Deprivation**

*Highlighting Protective Factors within the Black Community.* Lareau’s text describes Tyrec thusly:

> For nine-year old Tyrec Taylor, organized activities were an interruption. In contrast to Garret Tallinger, Tyrec centered his life on informal play with a group of boys from his Black working-class neighborhood. Aside from going to school and summer day camp, Tyrec took part in only two organized activities: Sunday school periodically throughout the year and Vacation Bible School in the summer. (p. 66)

This quote highlights how much Lareau misses by focusing primarily on class. The loved ones who carefully craft a community for Black children to have their identities reflected back to them as positive serve an important purpose. This fictive kinship has been proven to increase the likelihood that Black youth find academic success and become first-generation college students (Whitney, 2016) in spite of the hardships they may suffer socio-economically. Whereas Lareau selects Garrett, Tyrec’s white middle-class counterpart, as
a racially neutral (Sleeter, 2017) reference against which to compare Tyrec’s family structure, she ends up re-centering race but positioning it as determinant. What is also overlooked is that a church-based structure as Tyrec’s central organizational engagement besides school reflects a common decision largely informed by U.S.-based racial histories. It was in churches in the southern United States in the mid-nineteenth century that Black communities discovered information otherwise kept from them and where they set up some of their earliest literacy efforts in the form of church-sponsored Sabbath schools (Anderson, 1988). Currently, Black churches continue to serve as cultural and community hubs particularly for Black youth and away from the white gaze. The need for such a structure is supported in critical race curricula to counter, “traditional school curriculum [sic] having an unacknowledged political agenda, which is implicitly organized to privilege Whites” (Yosso, 2002, p. 102). By way of these community gathering places, Black youth are paired with mentor-like figures with whom they can identify and are provided a sense of possibility relative to their aspirations. The potential for this meticulous curation of relationships is to serve as a buffer to daily and damaging forms of discrimination (English et al., 2020) that extend beyond the personal to both the institutional and structural levels (Harris & Leonardo, 2018).

While Tyrec is presented as experiencing free flowing unstructured (Lareau, 2003) time amidst a myriad of family and community members, Flennaugh’s study offers a counter-story in Adam who explicitly navigates being racialized in a school setting. As he completed the identity map activity, Adam identified music as a large part of his identity, and while he played in the school band, he opted to affiliate music with church rather than school citing that “many of his friends were musicians” (2016, p. 22) separating
music into private and institutional realms. He further shared depicted education as a rather large circle representing a significant portion of his identity, while school as much smaller and less central to his identity. His rationalization was, “Well, education is not just what you can learn in school, but what you can get outside of school” (p.20). The distinction between education and how actual learning occurs materializes differently for Black youth in a white-normed setting thus materialized on his identity map as an existence fragmented and marked by a psychic (Fanon, 2007) double-consciousness (Du Bois, 1968). When race is considered separable from class, it erases the complex ways of navigating that working-class Black students use to traverse institutions like school making complex identities more palatable in overwhelmingly white (Sleeter, 2001) TPPs.

Teacher educators must be aware that Unequal Childhoods diminishes the benefits of families and fictive kin reinforcing the customs of Black children, their values, and beliefs and instead, casts them as randomized and unplanned. To shift the gravity of whiteness (Sleeter, 2017), teacher educators must stress how the text fails to highlight that in addition to increasing the likelihood that Black youth will attend college (Whitney, 2016) and reinforcing a sense of humanity (Leonardo, 2004), the intentional effort-laden practice characterized as natural growth also is credited with the safety and protection of Black youth from becoming entangled with law enforcement in negative ways. Williams et al.’s research demonstrates that there exists within the frame of this hand-selected community (in addition to non-school or structure related relationships and involvement), protective factors that reduce the likelihood of youth coming into contact with the criminal justice system after initial contact (2017). The structure of Tyrec’s life and children like him relay
care and curation but this structure must be effectively unpacked and taught strategically as that to avoid the reinforcement of white supremacy.

A text like Flennaugh’s casts a critical light on Lareau’s depiction of Tyrec in reflecting that academic push-out (Dei, 1993; Morris, 2016) commences early-on and some Black students cope by deciding to locate their true senses of self, outside of the establishment of school. It is further discernible in the overrepresentation of Black and marginalized students outside of learning spaces within the institution of school in the form of suspensions and expulsions (Sibblis, 2014). Vague reasons for removing these children from classrooms account for the majority of disciplinary actions taken against them, and it has been documented that

“[...] the process whereby children are evaluated, classified, and assigned to special classes has come under attack as being unduly arbitrary, culturally biased, and often motivated more by the desire to get rid of troublesome youngsters than to educate them” (Weatherley & Lipsky, 1977, p. 173).

When teacher educators incorporate “realities, contexts and resources” (Sleeter, 2017, p. 164) along with the Black children they depict, the value those students bring is more accurately framed, and thereby better understood. PSTs who are consistently exposed to the cultural wealth of the Black community structure can bear witness to the protective village offered Black children that serves to refute the negative characterization they too often experience upon crossing the threshold of the schoolhouse.

**Countering Sustained Surveillance**
Cultivating a Childhood Space for Black Youth. As K-12 public school spaces lack representative faculty with whom students of color might find sociocultural common ground (Shedrow, 2017), neighborhoods in which communities of color find themselves remain segregated, especially with regard to the working and working-poor class. This results in radically different cultural expectations between the school and home communities for Black students – a reality not reflected in the Tyrec vignettes that Lareau selects to contrast him from his white middle-class counterpart, Garrett Tallinger. Lareau describes that in the Tallinger family, the father is away for half of the week and the children spend their time in separate rooms and often in conflict, yet they are praised for knowing how to “set priorities,” and “shake hands with strangers,” (p. 39). Conversely, in the racially homogenous community in which Tyrec spends his time, he is offered opportunities to partake in self-regulatory and leadership practices. For example, Tyrec passes the time in his neighborhood largely unsupervised under what is described as an “open-ended agenda” (Lareau, 2003), but with “expectations [that] she [his mother] articulates explicitly” (p. 68). She notes that he spends time with older and younger children, and that they invent games and are arbiters of disputes as “the boys typically resort to some sort of informal conflict resolution” (p. 80). Still, Ms. Taylor’s careful consideration of her son’s relationships and opportunities for self-direction and problem-solving within a community network are pathologized in comparison to the white patriarchal familial structure reflected in institutions like school where white children are rewarded for enacting norms that match the power structure. Lareau also notes that Tyrec’s environment allows for laughter, leadership, and maturity while in the context of his peers (2003, p. 71). The sense of liberty available to Tyrec is realized in spaces like
these, as opposed to white spaces that are hindered by adultification and a tendency to frame Black children less innocent than their white counterparts (Goff et al., 2014).

Lareau outlines the pleasure of carefree activities in which the neighborhood children engage, but disregards how critical this is to their development in light of the fact that, for Black youth, developmentally appropriate expression is often assumed to be deviant and results in punitive reactions in a school setting (Dumas & Ross, 2016; Owens & McLanahan, 2020). Teacher educators cannot leave these critical analyses as afterthoughts or for ‘diversity courses’ which are often bracketed (Sleeter, 2017) and de-centered from core pedagogy courses. They must acknowledge that many of the measures taken to control the bodies of Black youth are part of the ‘push-out’ epidemic plaguing U.S. schools as they result in gross overrepresentation in statistics reflecting expulsions and suspensions (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2000; Morris, 2018; Rafa, 2018). Illuminating these complex understandings is necessary for unpacking a text like Lareau’s for its place in the “feel-good” curriculum (Yosso, 2002, p. 99) which fails to problematize the unearned privileges white children enjoy in school settings simply for sharing racial designations and cultural sensibilities.

With such a powerful opportunity to make whiteness visible, teacher educators need to identify how Tyrec’s mother not only used insight and effort to construct a safe space for Tyrec to experience childhood away from the gaze of white supremacy (Dumas & Ross, 2016), but applied inherited knowledge that has been preserved and passed down by carefully selected members of “the village” invited to maintain this culturally affirming environment. This gaze construes an ideological standard of white middle-class, cisgender, monolingual norms upon racialized bodies, and is operationalized through the right to
exclude based cultural engagement styles less common among Black youth. Lareau overlooks the epistemic knowledge that Tyrec’s family offers, and in minimizing race, frames Tyrec’s access to opportunities as unearned (Dumas, 2013). In ignoring this “cultural intuition” (Bernal, 1998) the family’s child-rearing practices are reduced to Ms. Taylor having fallen short of “being a good mother” (Lareau 2003, p. 79), a common caricature of Black mothers (Collins, 1986). We who prepare teachers serve as the arbiters who can challenge this distortion with Black experiential knowledge and critical reflections.

We as teacher educators must challenge Lareau’s decision to deem one form of child-rearing more labor intensive and thereby more aligned to school success as a reality amidst many depending on group experiences which are raced and classed. For children for whom having fun for the sake of having it is a rarity in classroom spaces (Paris & Alim, 2017), Ms. Taylor should be credited with the way her Black child has a semblance of his childhood outside of school. Populations that are “empowered to affect the lives of children,” inclusive of university students, find that “Black children are disproportionately treated like adults,” (Goff et al., 2014) which bolsters the essentializing effects of the research-driven norming of whiteness against racialized community practices that are crafted for the care and protection of Black youth.

In highlighting this seemingly free-range style of parenting, Lareau strategically shifts our attention to the distance from the “norm” that is being created by Tyrec’s limited opportunities to be controlled by white adults. It is important to recast this “educational inequality” with a critical lens “to expose and challenge macro and micro forms of racism disguised as traditional school curriculum” (Yosso, 2002, p. 95). We must highlight to
PSTs that not only is Ms. Taylor expending great effort to protect her son (Collins, 1986; Watson, 2020), she is prolonging his looming encounter with societal impositions of “respectability” which lie in wait to prematurely end the childhood he scantily possesses.

**Conclusion and Discussion**

Lareau’s *Unequal Childhoods* offers a detailed yet incomplete view into the lives of families and children specifically about how their home lives impact the way they experience the institution of school. The reader comes to know Tyrec’s mother as a hindering yet marginal character in his life and she is further assigned a disposition through Lareau’s choices. Without purposeful redirection, a PST is likely to understand Tyrec as an unfortunate product of his mother’s financial shortcomings. As she is depicted as passive and working-class, Ms. Taylor is spoken for and rendered without agency, depriving her of the opportunity to contextualize her choices within her racialized existence while also allowing the readers to rely on “stock explanations” for difficulties her son may encounter in school (Ladson-Billings, 1998). In countering Ms. Taylor’s depiction as disengaged, and purposefully recasting it as silenced, we can disrupt the nature of teacher preparation to center white sensibilities (Sleeter, 2017). We can then reconceive of Tyrec as loved and full of potential rather than as the pitiful recipient of what is framed as sub-par parenting from his archetypally ‘ineffective’ Black mother (Collins, 1986; Spillers, 1987). Since a central tenet of critical race theory (CRT) acknowledges racism is normal in U.S. society (Sleeter, 2017), as it is mapped onto teacher preparation, we must also acknowledge racism as foundational to how curricula are designed (Milner, 2007) maintaining “hidden assumptions” of Black inferiority (Allen et al., 2017). Thus, explorations of the lived experiences of Black and working-class communities, particularly
those who have heads of household subjected to employment challenges due to gender, are better understood from their own renderings.

For PSTs who do not reflect their students racially or in social economic status, this text and those like it may overrepresent Black working-class and poor families as: prioritizing themselves over their children, preferring ease/pleasure-seeking over effort regarding the interests of their children, and as poor parents in general who encourage neighborhood play to expend less effort in child-rearing. While I do not see Lareau as having used Tyrec and his family as a generalization for all Black families, acknowledging the scant amount of community-engaged TPPs in the country, and the near absence of Black teacher educators, we have to acknowledge the impact that curricular selections have as substitutes for true engagement with Black communities. For this reason, the narrow representation of the Taylor family and those like theirs amplify the potentially deleterious impacts on PSTs through their presentation when not paired with specific critical approaches, reflections and companion texts. PSTs must be guided through reflection to critically analyze the unique ways in which Black people experience poverty (Milner, 2013) which removes the ability for white PSTs and those who center whiteness for opting out (Sleeter, 2017) of acknowledging complex systems of racial oppression while supplanting the misinformation with the wisdom and voices of Black communities (Gillborn, 2006; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2000). On the other hand, uncritical exposure to problematic core texts is one way teacher education reinforces white hegemony. By purposefully selecting texts authored by and speaking from the Black experiential knowledge (Sleeter, 2017) teacher education programs can place their PSTs directly in
epistemic community with those who they may one day come to teach - Black working-class youth.

Instructors and professors have a variety of options when making curricular decisions. They can limit curriculum to the resources created by and centered on the Black lived experience within peer-reviewed literature, but they can also value and canonize materials which are in abundance, including the artistic and multimodal artifacts which offer PSTs both the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ of marginalized knowledge systems. When we treat primary sources, current events, digital, and musical representations as legitimate and complex artifacts in which to ground reflections, we further model equitable access for Black and minoritized learners to make meaning outside of white Western traditional classroom practices. Our purposeful centering of those complex and varied narratives along with modeling (Bertrand & Porcher, 2020) critical strategies of engagement like critical reflective inquiry (Kalchman, 2015), is a powerful start to more equitable teacher preparation. *Unequal Childhoods* and similar texts should be put into conversation with ones that center on Black epistemologies as teacher educators ask critical reflection questions like, “Who benefits from this depiction?” and “Who is silenced?” Just as Ms. Taylor carefully curated the biological and fictive kin with around Tyrec, teacher educators and PSTs can learn how to augment their experiences with Black communities through purposeful and varied exposures to their stories to appreciate their complex ways of knowing and being.
CHAPTER 4: RACE AND DISCOURSE IDENTITY

Vignette 4

This was my second year as a lecturer at Franklin, and my cohort was rather small that semester. We were joined by a new faculty member in the Language Education program. Her blue eyes and blonde hair epitomized what a number of the newly arrived international language pre-service teachers (PSTs) might have conjured in their minds when thinking of the U.S. professors they would soon meet. The cohort members met her first and, at my request, she shared some insights about the Chinese, Indian, Dominican, Egyptian and Salvadoran teacher candidates who I would soon meet. I could not believe I would be working with the most ethnically diverse pool of PSTs yet in all my time, from being a teacher education student to being a lecturer, at Franklin, and that they would have a year of social justice coursework under their belt before arriving at my course.

I faced an online adjustment due to the remote format that COVID-19 necessitated. Other than the move to virtual learning, however, I anticipated a smooth world language methods course as I taught the course the year prior. Still, early in the planning stages of this particular semester, the language PSTs began to question my credentials. I had never experienced this and realized that my spring semester assignment meant this cohort had met all my colleagues in the program besides me. Once, a PST whose camera was on, unmuted to ask me about my professional background. Having attended secondary school in the Dominican Republic, she, a racially Black person, indicated that she was curious about the differences between me and her English as a Second Language professor. While she did not specify what sparked the curiosity, she also did not inquire as to the white ESL methods instructor’s credentials. On a separate
occasion, a white Salvadoran PST asked me, “Pero usted es profesora de world languages?” in spite of having been in the course with me for a month by that point. My purposeful decision to provide examples of instruction in Spanish to accommodate the language more than half of the cohort endeavored to teach seemed insufficient to answer her question. As I grappled with what the source of her confusion could be, she later directly asked, “¿Usted habla español?” These questions and other displays of discomfort with my authoritative role with the cohort propelled me to accept that my capacity was indeed in question. This was further solidified when my new white colleague shared that she validated my expertise as it had become a topic of discussion in her course on multiple occasions. The adjustment I would need to make to teach world language methods that semester was unrelated COVID-19. I adjusted instead to an unfiltered antiBlackness from an international vantage point – one surprisingly unaffected by post-racial euphemisms within U.S. discourses.

I wondered what their experiences were prior to arriving within the country for this program and to what degree those experiences with naming race were challenged or reinforced based on their time in the program. I questioned in what discussions on race and inequity they had engaged during their year at Franklin and how, in the wake of those discussions, they could so publicly assume my inferiority. As a result of this unnamed racial bias, I scheduled 1:1 meetings with each teacher candidate and continued to use Spanish as the language of modeling during whole-group instruction, specifically at the request of the recently-arrived Salvadoran PST. Each passing week, we delved deeper into the nuances of race and culture as they pertained to language instruction, and the direct questioning I endured earlier in the semester eventually dissipated. By the end of
the course, I was exhausted from fighting the impossible contradiction between what some of the cohort believed a professor should look like and their expected performance of my Blackness. In a course dedicated to the respect for and celebration of the beauty in languages and cultures, my personal and professional efforts became fractured and complicated. My acceptability as an instructor hinged upon the endorsement of my new white colleague to my students, and I was thereby made to concede that it could similarly be withdrawn regardless of my effort, impact or ability.
“A Hard Time Seeing the Relevance”: Race and Discourse Identity in Language Teacher Preparation

[This paper in its entirety can be found in the International Journal of Literacy, Culture and Language Education.]

Abstract

Perceptions of linguistic deficiency represent an extension of the devaluation of Black and racialized speakers which impacts their participation and representation particularly within language classrooms. Though racism is directly challenged in current education research, language education remains a fertile space for weaponizing seemingly race-neutral terms like ‘culture’ and ‘identity’ as a means of minimizing the importance of race and other sociocultural factors on classroom language learning. Through semi-structured interviews, this critical qualitative case study investigates the racial ideologies of three language teacher educators (LTEs) at Franklin University. Findings suggest the de-racialization of ‘culture’ and ‘identity’ influences the goals, design, and execution of instruction in this language teacher preparation program. Implications include guidance for language teacher preparation research and practice inclusive of centering race and clarifying the roles of race and power in language teacher preparation. Critically
confronting who benefits or suffers when we use the term ‘culture’ in lieu of race in
teacher preparation is also recommended.

Introduction

Race and language, while defined differently, are difficult to disentangle
ideologically (Baker-Bell, 2020; Baugh, 2015; Smitherman, 1998). Gramsci defines
ideology as “the power of the ideas of the ruling class to overshadow and eradicate
competing views and to become, in effect, the commonsense view of the world”
(Bartolomé, 2010, p. 508). Hierarchical ideologies of race (Omi & Winant, 1993) and
language (Baker-Bell, 2020; Baugh, 2015; Flores & Rosa, 2019; Hudley, 2016) are
critically engaged in the literature but are challenged to a lesser degree as a unit in the
ways it impacts teacher education. This omission poses persistent challenges within
teacher education (Chang-Bacon, 2022; Cochran-Smith, 2004) spaces. Despite the
diminishing white U.S. population (Frey, 2020), the overwhelming majority of teachers
(Geiger, 2018) and teacher educators responsible for teaching students characterized as
urban and multicultural are white. The absence of Black and minoritized teachers can
further impose white dominant ideologies (Sleeter, 2017) upon their students that are
reflective of the raciodemographic positioning (Milner IV, 2012) of many white teachers
among the ‘ruling class.’ While belonging to a minoritized group does not automatically
ensure one’s ability to address the racial and cultural complexities of teaching (Milner IV,
2010), the likelihood of having personally experienced material impacts of racism as it
pertains to language is not in favor of the predominant demographic category to which
teachers and teacher educators belong. Taken together, this raciolinguistic ideology
within teacher preparation manifests in ways that reinforce its seemingly natural stratifying power.

Racism is directly challenged in most current education research, yet language education remains a fertile space for weaponizing seemingly ‘race neutral’ terms like *culture* and *identity* minimizing the importance of race and other sociocultural factors (Kubota & Lin, 2006) upon classroom language learning. While shifts towards culturally relevant (Allen et al., 2017) and sustaining (Paris & Alim, 2017) approaches that dare to name realities of Black and other minoritized populations increase, language teacher preparation often engages in neoliberal multicultural languaging politics which rebrand race and issues of power in terms of culture (Melamed, 2006). Hence, the socio-political consciousness necessary to effectively discuss race remains underexplored particularly through its euphemization as *culture* (Von Esch et al., 2020) despite calls for intercultural (Byram, 1997) and cultural competences (Ladson-Billings, 1995) within the field’s continued race-evasive (Chang-Bacon, 2022) approach. The inability to connect the legacy of school as a site of racialization to language education spaces due to coded language can prevent critical and thorough research on race in (language) teacher education.

The growing awareness of how race and language are co-naturalized (Rosa & Flores, 2017) has sparked language teacher educators (LTEs) to investigate their instructional practices, the impact of centering race in their curricular selections (Austin & Hsieh, 2021), and the explicit design for critical reflection with their pre-service teachers (PSTs). Still, investigations centering the ideologies of LTEs themselves are less prevalent in the literature (Bacon, 2020; Chang-Bacon, 2022). The present study
addresses this gap by investigating how race conceptually emerges within teacher preparation. To better understand the conceptual and linguistic weaponization of race-evasiveness among LTEs, the following research questions were employed:

(1) According to self-report, how do LTEs at Franklin University understand ‘culture’?

(2) How do LTEs at Franklin University discuss tacitly and/or explicitly addressing culture and identity in the preparation of language teachers?

**Theoretical Framework**

Language use deemed as un-standard—when and because it is produced from Black bodies—forms an intersectional (Combahee River Collective, 1983) racialized language assemblage (Rosa & Flores, 2017) that renders Black language users ineligible for resources (inclusive of acknowledgement and instruction) in U.S. schools. Language remains a site of cultural gatekeeping within a U.S. context where contradictions between race, class, and culture are mature (Leonardo, 2012) and unquestioned. In fact, teacher preparation programs treat the problem of the cultural (Bhabha, 1989) as interchangeable with that of race absorbing it into a cluster of classifications (Hall, 2021) associated with inferiority.

The notion of a single God-given culture derives from European feudal hierarchies (Wynter, 1992) as a means to dissociate the bourgeoisie from the servant-class (Stoler, 1995) and still permeates modern institutions both discursively and conceptually. Supposed cultural deficiency, or non-whiteness, is marked in language classrooms as failure to produce standard, academic or appropriate language (Alim, 2007; Rosa & Flores, 2017). This raciolinguistic ideology in schools can result in Black and
minoritized language users’ placement in long-term English language (EL) tracks (Brooks, 2019) absent from advanced levels of world language (WL) study (Anya, 2011), and pathologized for their use of Black English (Baker-Bell, 2020). These class and race-based conceptions of culture become weaponized in ‘common-sense’ discussions about language teaching and learning encouraging the surrender of non-white/dominant ways of being for potential access to social and material educational resources.

Since language teaching professionals demonstrate race-evasiveness (Von Esch et al., 2020) by coding colonial issues of power (Stoler, 1995) as ‘cultural’ deficits, it is essential to consider the raciolinguistic implications of what LTEs mean by the term ‘culture’ when reflecting upon their identities and enacted practices.

**Literature Review**

Until recently, a lack of literature on race in language teaching (Kubota & Lin, 2006; Von Esch et al., 2020) has impacted the proliferation of culture as an uncritical euphemism for race within language education (Von Esch et al., 2020). Considering and instructing (language) learners apart from their racialized socio-political context (Pascual y Cabo & Prada, 2018), yields negative results for their linguistic advancement (Anya, 2016), their ability to implement (Jacobs et al., 2015; Kohli, 2009) or transfer practices (Martel, 2015) and affirm their racialized languaging practices (Bustamante & Novella, 2019). This separation further diminishes PST ability to refute language learning as ideologically neutral (Bacon, 2020). Studies centered on the experiences of language PSTs and transfer (or lack thereof) of practices outside of university contexts reflects this inability to clearly articulate issues of power and race.
Lived experiences provide a lens through which (language) teaching and learning are understood. The ways that Black and racialized groups experience their contexts however, are not welcomed in classrooms (Lindahl et al., 2021). Anya’s multiple case-study of Black American students studying Portuguese in Brazil (2016) found that failure to recognize that Black students enter classrooms aware of their socio-political positioning and non-dominant languaging practices limits their ability to advance in proficiency as they are disinvested in inauthentic representations of communities of practice. For the 42 racialized heritage Spanish speakers in Pascual y Cabo and Prada’s (2018) study, service learning opportunities enhanced confidence in Spanish usage and reinforced preexisting bicultural and bilingual participant identities. Despite linguistically responsive instruction implemented with 50 Latinx teacher candidates across various disciplines, participants in Lindahl et al.‘s study (2021) succumbed to naturalized hierarchical language ideologies based on their associations of language policing and schools. These findings build upon Kohli’s (2009) work with twelve PSTs of color who recognized the same racial and linguistic hierarchies they recalled from their own childhood classroom experiences being replicated at the clinical placements within their urban teacher preparation program. The absence of critical discussions on raciolinguistic power hierarchies within the educational experiences of these groups did not inhibit their ability to recognize these dynamics, it simply reinforced that the classroom was not a place to disrupt such socio-political realities.

Bustamante and Novella (2019) confirm these findings in their qualitative multiple case-study wherein Latina heritage language PSTs had their linguistic practices devalued as not standard or grammatical enough for their WL pedagogy courses. The
Black American participants from Anya’s 2016 study depended upon the non-classroom community as a preferred context for Portuguese languaging in the absence of discussing socio-political realities within the classroom. Still, while the Latina PSTs from Bustamante and Novella’s (2019) study used their language skills in the community, they later found said skills were not valued in their university-based courses as they were not considered academic enough. Similarly, raciolinguistic ideologies were either transferred as with Bacon’s (2020) mixed methods study with 127 novice teachers, or endured through societal norms as with Dobbs & Leider’s (2021) qualitative study with fifteen novice and early career teachers. Participants in these mandated structured English immersion courses displayed beliefs in hierarchical racialized monolingual language ideologies (Bacon, 2020) even without direct instruction on the topic. While these studies suggest ontological understandings of race and language-based hierarchies are strong and hard to shift within teacher education courses, the literature does not attend to the goals or orientations of the (language) teacher educators who either designed and or instructed the courses and the possible influences of their own lived experiences upon their practices.

The goals of (language) PSTs and teacher preparation programs may be misaligned, and LTEs serve an important role in creating opportunities for language PSTs to navigate these differences and create their own practice with sufficient modeling and support. At a college in the Midwest, a case study performed with a single Spanish language PST (Martel, 2015) sought to determine how a prospective language educator’s identity evolves over the course of the teacher preparation program. The qualitative methods employed indicated that the PST taught in ways that appeased her instructors despite the approach failing to center her students as was her preference. Similar to
Bustamante and Novella’s study (2019), Martel (2015) shares evidence of the shifting nature of PSTs conceptions of language in light of university-based instruction. Nevertheless, findings indicate that the potential agency language PSTs exert reflects the support they receive in navigating mismatches between their university programs, their clinical placement mentorship, and their individual orientations.

When aligned, direct instruction on culture and power within language teacher education can involve both critical reflection and language awareness (Lindahl et al., 2021). For example, in Jacobs et al.’s (2015) study, PSTs defined culture for themselves, reflected on the provided definition of culture with regard to their lived experiences, and connected those experiences to issues of power and race they saw in their placements. While Bacon (2020) found an unintentional transfer of ideologies, and Martel (2015) suggests ideological transfer may not occur in spite of intent, Jacobs et al. (2015) posit an uneven adoption of critical consciousness despite overt planning and direct instruction on culture. Jacobs et al.’s (2015), relying on Terrell & Lindsey’s (2008) work, clarify 'culture’ for PSTs as

a set of practices and beliefs shared by members of a particular group that distinguish that
group from other groups [including] all characteristics of human description [...] age, gender, socio-economic status, geography, ancestry, religion, language, history, sexual orientation, physical and mental level of ableness, occupation, and other affiliations. (Terrell & Lindsey, 2008, p. 16)

The definition of culture offered to PSTs in Jacobs et al.’s (2015) study did not include racialized and systemic dimensions of power despite efforts to employ culturally
responsive teaching within the program. Thus, the literature indicates that while impact is possible between TEs and (language) PSTs, the influence of varying conceptions of ‘culture’ among LTEs upon their instruction of language PSTs remains unclear.

The literature reflects that beliefs about language and culture among language PSTs evolve, but that they are often not framed socio-politically in terms of power and race. While these beliefs are influenced by the racialized lived experiences of PSTs outside of classrooms in addition to the institutional rigidity of school, they can also be affected by LTE instruction for better or worse. The degree to which this influence is reflective of LTEs understanding of and experience with critical self-reflections of their identities as cultural and racialized beings, remains underexplored. The present study aims to determine what LTEs report as their understanding of culture (inclusive of their own), and the ways in which they draw from those understandings to address culture and identity in their practices with language PSTs.

**Methodology**

This critical qualitative case study (Merriam, 2009) drew from a preliminary program review (see Appendix A) from which the interview protocol found in Appendix B was derived. I was interested in both the social context within which the LTEs at Franklin University were operating as well as how they made meaning and understood their roles and approaches. In light of these goals, the critical case study method suited my questions best as they also aimed to impact positive change (Merriam, 2009) in teacher preparation.

**Context and Background**
This critical qualitative case study took place at a public university in the northeast of the United States. Demographically, Franklin University’s School of Education more closely reflects the state of education across the country (AACTE, 2013) with seventy-five percent of matriculated students identifying as white. An emphasis on urban social justice is a recent shift in the school’s mission and vision and has been accompanied by structural and curricular changes. These shifts reflect a commitment to centering class, race, language, sexual identity, and the theoretical and ideological considerations that impact discrimination based on these categories in both pedagogy and curriculum design. Structurally, Franklin University added faculty with practical expertise to support PSTs on-site as they are strategically placed in urban districts for clinical experiences.

I reviewed publicly available program and course information for Franklin University (Appendix A), and noticed varying emphases upon sociocultural factors that impact language instruction. This, in conjunction with the literature on race and language teaching and teacher preparation, led me to address the research questions:

1. According to self-report, how do LTEs at Franklin University understand ‘culture’?
2. How do LTEs at Franklin University discuss tacitly and/or explicitly addressing culture and identity in the preparation of language teachers?

Participants

The participants in this critical qualitative case study (see Table 1) were instructors from the large public research institution, Franklin University. Non-probabilistic criterion sampling was used to identify language education instructors in
Franklin University’s teacher preparation program (Merriam, 2009). Participants met the following criteria: at least three years of experience teaching in the language education preparation program inclusive of their having taught a methods course. I sought to include a representative from each sub-discipline, World Languages, English as a Second Language (ESL), and Bilingual/Bicultural education, resulting in all language methods instructors from Franklin University’s Language Education program as participants in this study (N=3).

Table 1

Participant Raciodemographics and Discipline Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Franklin University Language Education Methods Instructors</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Self-Identification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sharon</td>
<td>English as a Second Language</td>
<td>White middle-class Italian Catholic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Noelia</td>
<td>World Languages</td>
<td>White upper middle-class American with a Spanish Background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ana</td>
<td>Bilingual/Bicultural Education</td>
<td>Dominican and American Working-class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Like more than seventy percent of faculty in U.S. higher education (Yakoboski, 2015), the participants are adjuncts. Sharon is a part-time lecturer in ESL methods, Academic English in the Content Areas, and Educational Technology. She identifies as a white woman and has taught ESL in the K-12 setting and served on state level associations for language educators. Noelia is a supervisor of World Languages in a K-12 district and as a part-time lecturer, has taught World Language methods among other language education courses for the past three years. She identifies as American with a Spanish background. The final participant, Ana, is a bilingual middle school educator.
who serves as a state level representative for a language education association. For the past three years as an adjunct, Ana has taught Assessment of English Language Learners (ELLs), Principles of Language Acquisition, and ESL Methods and Assessment. She identifies as Dominican-American. These three participants represent the entirety of the methods course instruction within the language education program at Franklin.

**Instruments**

I emailed each participant to solicit one-on-one interviews. The hour-long semi-structured interviews were audio recorded, then transcribed and stored on a password-protected computer. I composed data memos immediately following each session, and participants member-checked their transcribed interviews. The transcripts, memos, and review of the programmatic and course data provided a comprehensive understanding of culture and identity as understood by the participants. Over multiple data analysis meetings, low incidences of coding discrepancies were resolved.

**Data Analysis**

After reading all transcripts and listening to the interview audio multiple times, I executed open and inductive coding (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996) to determine emergent codes. I returned to the data for a second pass using the third tenet of culturally relevant pedagogy, socio-political consciousness, for axial coding. I isolated this tenet based on the literature which reflects a tendency towards race-evasiveness (Chang-Bacon, 2022) and coded language (Bryan & Gerald, 2020) frequently used in (language) teacher education. The specific definition I use for socio-political consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 1998) can be found in Table 2.

**Table 2**
## Coding for Data Analyses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identity:</strong></td>
<td>(P) involves teachers partnering with students</td>
<td>(I) institutional “institutional confirmation is secured by authority figures associated with said institutions”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Culture</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Language</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ethnicity</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Geography</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Beliefs</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Nationality</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Loyalty</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Pride/belonging</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture:</strong></td>
<td>(C) challenge a racist curriculum and debunk its presentation as neutral and objective</td>
<td>(D) discourse “discourse confirms identity via dialogue with individuals considered rational”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Products</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Practices</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Perspectives</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>SES</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tolerance</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Race</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Social context</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instruction:</strong></td>
<td>(S) a pedagogy through cultural points of strength that shift the locus of reference away from dominant white world views</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Savior/helper:banking</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Superiority</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Comfort</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Working together</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Convenience</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Cultural adaptations</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Clarity/being explicit</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Responsibility</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Relevance</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Values</em></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Asset approach</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Bidirectional learning</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Modeling</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Reflection</em></td>
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</table>

The first coding pass addressed the first research question: “according to self-report, what are the ways in which language teacher educators *tacitly* or explicitly address culture and identity in the preparation of language teachers?” After coding for socio-
political consciousness, in the third and final pass, I coded the data using Gee’s identity as an analytic lens (2000) to unpack the discursive systems (Hall, 2021) the participants employed to validate their identities. This constant comparison method revealed racialized and power-affiliated constructions of identity that paralleled the instructional moves the participants described as they distanced from or approximated themselves towards raced classifications. During interrater reliability sessions, transcript excerpts were lengthened or shortened upon recommendation to better demonstrate these themes.

Findings and Discussion

I present my findings under three themes: (1) Duality and Belonging, (2)...

Conceptually, each theme explicates the coded usage of the term ‘culture,’ peripheralizing the socio-political realities of race and power in language teacher preparation. At the same time, these three themes attend to both research questions.

Duality and Belonging: Defining Identity

Identities as we perceive and enact them are socially situated (Gee, 2004) and our linguistic choices indicate both proximity and distance from desired classifications, or the ways in which we language the “kind of person” we are (Gee, 2000, p. 99). Conveyed below through alignment with discourse and institutional “values, norms, perspectives and assumptions” (Gee, 2004, p. 69), the participants vied to be accepted and/or removed from racialized identity categories through their lexical choices throughout the interview process. For example, Sharon understood the words culture and identity as referring to religion, language, and ethnic identity. She shared that her Italian-Catholic roots were the ones with which she most identified.
So, growing up my parents were from two different cultures. My dad’s family was Italian American, and he was the first generation born in the United States. My grandmother spoke to me only in Italian. I’m guessing I felt more comfortable but, even then, I felt a loyalty to my mom who did not speak Italian or understand Italian at all. Her family chases back to the American revolution. So, her great-great-grandmother participated in the daughters of the American revolution.

Whereas Italian as an ethnicity is important in Sharon’s estimation, she peripheralizes it linguistically by affirming her discourse identity through her ‘loyalty’ to her mother. She then reinforces her belongingness through an institutional validation in referencing the Daughters of the American Revolution. This institution, according to https://www.dar.org/, has evolved since its inception in the late 1800s and now overtly focuses on “patriotism” through a “better education” for women from “any race religion or ethnic background” who have descended from a U.S. soldier who fought in the American Revolutionary War. Still, it is most commonly known for its vigilance against “unAmerican activities” between the first and second World Wars (Wendt, 2013, p. 256).

In aligning herself with this specific institution, Sharon unwittingly relays her sense of belonging not just to a historically exclusive institution, but one known for surveilling and policing ‘unAmericanness’ by banning African-American members and seeking to “Americanize” the country’s foreign population (Wendt, 2013, p. 944).

While being descended of a ‘first generation’ Italian, and having roots in the ‘American Revolution,’ was a point of loyalty for Sharon, she also identified as being of ethnic Jewish descent—a detail from which she distanced herself in describing her upbringing.
Somebody in the family… [an] ancestor was married to a man who was Jewish and was then disowned by the rest of the family. And so, my mom’s family came from the Jewish side and so they were mostly culturally or ethnically Jewish. So, they did not go to […] I’ve never seen a synagogue and my mom never went to one. So that’s how we grew up. The family knew nothing about Judaism at all.

To round out her ‘two cultures’ comment, Sharon elaborates on her Jewish background by sharing that her Jewish ‘ancestor’ by marriage was ‘disowned.’ The distance between Sharon and this ethnocultural designation is far in time as well as relationship, and she completes the sentiment by clarifying how unfamiliar Judaism is to her religiously since she has ‘never seen a synagogue.’ Belonging in this way is constructed discursively through family members for whom Sharon demonstrates a sense of closeness. Both her institutional and discourse identities are planted in a socio-political context that has, over time, aligned her with whiteness, and both religious and linguistic privilege. She has no facility or need to describe herself in terms of race, based upon her understanding of the terms culture and identity.

Noelia used language and geography markers to define her culture and identity. As he summered in Spain, she described feeling ‘between two worlds,’ yet only the spelling and pronunciation of her name set her apart within U.S. classrooms.

I’ve always identified myself as an American, but an American with a Spanish background. Very often when people look at my name or they don’t know me beforehand, they wonder who is that? Like who is this, Noelia Martinez? Like, what does she look like? And then when they meet me with my blue eyes and very pale skin, they’re like, Oh, wait a minute. Okay.
Noelia’s self-description depends on the institution of school to solidify her identity as American. Phenotypic markers of ‘blue eyes’ and ‘very pale skin’ affirm this belonging. While never naming race, Noelia precisely identifies these physical features that offer assurance to those around her and affirm her Americanness. Neither Sharon nor Noelia used “white” to describe their race until I specifically asked in a follow-up interview to use race as a descriptor. Both participants, when asked, provided the direct response, “white,” without further explanation.

Ana described her culture and identity in a complex situated way. Her response depicted relationships and the impact of environment upon individuals as a means of making sense of who she was and how she understood herself.

When I define [culture] for myself, like not the academics, it’s the way I view and live life. It’s the perspective with which I view and interpret and live my life perspective. That’s my [definition]... and what does that perspective run on? Traditions, histories, experiences… the people around me where I’ve lived, where I’ve worked, how I speak, who I speak with and speak with my languages...

Ana also alludes to geography and mentions language in her definition, yet neither are described as stable categories. She is the sole participant to mention traditions and histories which extends her understanding of culture as evolving and contextual, and the through-line of her response is plurality rather than duality (i.e., this or that). Ana alone who affirms her identity, ‘not the academics,’ or any institution—and race still, was not a part of that description.

All participants described their identities through belongingness, but Ana, in contrast to Noelia and Sharon, identified herself as belonging more expansively to
dynamic histories, perspectives, languages, and traditions. Avoiding race terminologically in these ways either, in Sharon and Noelia’s cases, approximates them institutionally to power and whiteness by surrendering the foreignness of language and physical features; or, in Ana’s case, distances her from dominant categories through disidentification with a fixed monocultural norm.

**Helping You Belong Here: The Role of Culture**

Sharon used examples from previous cohorts with current ones to explain how she supports ESL PSTs in tolerating differences among themselves. These differences for her are centered upon class, and she shares that it is the role of the institution to provide resources to PSTs who may lack them in order to promote equality within the learning context by ensuring learners can execute tasks.

A lot of our teachers tend to be middle class[…] so they tend to teach through the eyes of a middle class person[…] They come to me shocked they’ll say things like, I remember one [PST] saying ‘well what’s the big deal if [the university] doesn’t give you the $50 you need for some kind of resources’ […] And I said some people don’t have $50 and some people feel that it’s not their place to put out the $50. I said so you’ve got 2 things happening here: the schools should make sure that the resources are there, but they don’t always have the money [because] it may have been allocated elsewhere.

Sharon offers institutional critique in highlighting that resources students need ‘may have been allocated elsewhere’ to encourage her ESL PSTs to be more tolerant of class-based diversity. In the interpersonal critique, Sharon highlights that one’s experiences may limit the way they understand people around them and identifies that ‘teachers tend to be
middle class’ and therefore teach ‘through’ their middle-class ‘eyes.’ She encourages an
additional layer of discreteness when a similar theme materializes from her reflections on
her direct instruction.

We talked about how when somebody doesn’t have something how you can
quietly give that to that person. And you don’t have to say, “Well you don’t have
it,” you can say, “I forgot mine as well. I sometimes cannot place my pencil. I
know I put it somewhere but I forgot where I put it.” That type of thing you know,
give them suggestions rather than say, “I can’t believe he comes to school every
day without a pencil.”

The limits of Sharon’s institutional critique appear to be where they meet possible
solutions. She encourages students to ‘quietly’ provide what students need thereby
helping them fit into an institution that she also acknowledges may not allocate resources
properly. Thus, her instruction suggests individuals should adjust to the system, rather
than challenging that system through asking critical questions about resource allocation.

Through her instruction, Sharon tacitly suggests language PSTs assimilate to gain
belonging within the institution.

In discussing the role of culture in instruction, Noelia too offers institutional
critique in that she finds the gendered nature of the Spanish language a barrier to students
who do not fit the binary of ending feminine nouns and adjectives with an ‘a’ and
masculine ones with an ‘o.’

I feel that teachers themselves need to be aware of who they are and they need to
also be aware of who they’re serving and then they can start to bring to light all of
the different aspects [...]
Not related to culture, but related to language is the gender neutrality that has come up. There might be various [barriers] related to sexual identity that might need to be broken. So, the classroom climate is super important […] creating a comfortable, safe space for every single student […] what we as teachers need to allow for with these languages that are masculine, feminine. So, do we let the kids put Es and Xs on everything just so that way, if they’re identifying as gender neutral, they can go ahead and choose the appropriate letter that they feel works for them?

Noelia, like Sharon, centers on the lived experiences of teachers as affecting their instruction. She then clarifies that gendered language, to her, is not cultural. This response is a musing rather than a reflection of Noelia’s instruction. Still, Noelia’s dual role as a WL teacher educator and supervisor at a local district suggests that these insights influence her leadership with in-service Spanish teachers (or Romance languages).

So, in Spain, ‘Real Academia’ is rejecting everything. But, I was just having a conversation with my director of curriculum about this [topic] this morning […] that languages evolve, as new cultures and 10,000, 50,000 people are using the X, well then we’re using the X. So that is also a part of your classroom environment […] being open to allowing kids to choose at this…

Noelia directly challenges The Royal Spanish Academy (RAE) which self-defines as “una institución cultural dedicada a la regularización lingüística entre el mundo hispanohablante” (RAE, 2019, para. 1), a cultural institution dedicated to linguistic regulation in the Spanish-speaking world—and concludes that it is within the teacher’s
responsibility to take up this challenge on a classroom level by ‘allowing kids to choose’ even without the expressed sanctioning of the use of ‘x’ in place of ‘a’ (for feminine) or ‘o’ (for masculine) by the RAE. Unlike Ana, Noelia’s response suggests that she finds immediate resistance to the institution a valid means of creating belonging at a classroom level even if the larger context does not respond in kind.

For Ana, preparing Bilingual/Bicultural teachers prioritizes the visibility of bilingualism through her own embodied experiences. She describes her role as one of advocating for bilingual youth with monolingual language PSTs to counter deficit assumptions about bilingualism.

We’re able to assume that you don’t have a language. People still look at you like, Oh, your English is too good—wait, where you from? No, no, no. Really? Where are you from? Where are you from? What is, what does that feel like? I can speak to that. A kid might not be able to speak to it […] I can trouble it.

In reflecting on experiences and how they inform her role in teaching culture and identity, Ana, like Noelia, has personally been rejected as a language user. Whereas Noelia’s name seemed to not ‘match’ the whiteness of her physical appearance, it was Ana’s English proficiency which caused a similar level of racialization. While yet unnamed, it was race that caused Noelia’s belongingness to be confirmed in the same way it delegitimized Ana’s. Still, Ana finds this purported languagelessness (Rosa, 2016) a valuable opportunity to ‘trouble’ the racially typified ‘cluster of classifications’ that render her unintelligible as the legitimate user of any language, through leveraging her institutional power as an LTE.
I have one student who is adamant about English and English only and she’s very
deficit minded and we’re working through that. I’m hoping to do that through the
reality of the policy—“Here is the EdTPA [Educative Teacher Performance
Assessment] rubric.”

Despite Ana’s affiliation with Franklin University, she, in her role as a
Bilingual/Bicultural LTE relies on an extension of institutional power in the language of
the teacher preparation assessment (i.e., EdTPA) to discourage deficit beliefs about
bilingual students. Whereas Ana can be questioned and delegitimized despite her role due
to her racialization, policy offers her an institutional identity (and credibility) that
monolingual language PSTs must acknowledge.

Reflecting on one’s identity caused Sharon and Noelia to feel a need to choose
(among ethnicities, languages, geographies, etc.) Yet, shifting the topic to culture
revealed a level of engaging said binary differently for both participants. Sharon equated
culture to class and suggested that those who have more, individuals or institutions,
should provide for those with less and in a discrete manner even without institutional
support. Alternatively, Noelia supported resisting the either/or binary of gender
altogether, and while accounting for gender outside of her definition of culture, found it
important enough to address during the interview an additional demonstration of
resistance towards upholding the status quo. While acknowledging that teachers teach
from who they are, neither Sharon nor Noelia found this institutional tension a space to
unpack in their own identities, but under the guise of ‘culture’ felt more at liberty to
engage ideas about power and privilege instructionally. Ana, while implicitly affirming
that one teaches who they are, was the sole participant to rely upon her institutional
identity, in this case, to further the mission and vision of the school towards social justice and equity through the teacher licensure exam.

**Limited Experience, Limited Applicability: In Practice**

In discussing her practice, Sharon explicitly uses the term ‘culturally responsive teaching’ (CRT) to describe her goals with ESL language PSTs. Her methods for demonstrating said practices are lecture and video based.

We have a lot of articles that we have them [PSTs] read dealing with CRT and I showed them examples. I give them personal examples as well as using various videos of classroom teaching where they can see CRT and then we dissect it. What aspects of CRT do you see in this video? What do you see them doing? What could she do to improve? We always try to take it one step further, so that they understand because they’re going to be dealing with Danielson as well as EdTPA where it’s always going up another step. So, they need to know that even though that looks like a good lesson, there’s always something you could do to make it better.

Using videos and lectures, Sharon elicits ideas from language PSTs to identify possibilities for CRT and allows for the institutional alignment through the Danielson Framework (a teacher evaluation instrument commonly used in the region and at Franklin) and through the teacher licensure test, EdTPA. This is meant to encourage compliance on behalf of students to ‘go one step further’ with their instruction. To determine active rather than passive practices that might reflect Sharon’s explicit teaching of culture, I asked about instances of resistance she has experienced.
Sometimes they’re able to make connections and sometimes not. There was a section of it about translanguaging which you know is a hot issue. The students had a hard time seeing the relevance of that and understanding the difference between code-switching and translanguaging. The relevance issue went to the lack of interest maybe on the part of the clinical field observation teachers. Some of them came back and told me that the teachers outright came out and said that they felt that it was a deterrent to English language learning. Some of the classroom teachers told the students that they felt it was something that wouldn’t actually be feasible in the classroom because […] we have several different classrooms where several different languages are being used. The classroom teachers’ concern was mainly in comprehending what the students were saying.

Here, unlike Sharon’s previous willingness to challenge an institutional or individual class-based sentiment, she concedes to the discursive construction of translanguaging as ‘a deterrent to English language learning.’ Per Sharon’s explicit description, it is the clinical placement (Jacobs et al., 2015; Kohli, 2009) which serves as institutional resistance to this progressive language learning approach, and the infeasibility of translanguaging was ‘the classroom teachers’ concern.’

In teaching WL PSTs about culture and identity, Noelia discusses her practice through activities that honor student names. She offers personal reflections about how she was academically miscategorized based on a racialized linguistic assumption—that her physical appearance as white meant she was not bilingual enough to be in advanced language classes. Noelia muses that this resulted in her not being challenged in her Spanish classes. This mismatch between perceived identity category and language ability
is a theme maintained from Noelia’s insistence on languaging gender in a way that students experience it rather than relying upon the linguistic binary that exists in Spanish (despite a lack of institutional support). Her approach to affirming names is through ice-breaker activities.

I’ve always been very cognizant of pronouncing names correctly to really make sure that the students know that I value however different their name is. Because very often my name is mispronounced and it’s just chopped to pieces [as a student] especially in my, in my Spanish classes, I remember very often the teachers would turn to me or relied to me or sometimes the students would gravitate towards me […] because of knowing Spanish, they were like, “Oh, well, you know, you’ll, you’ll get a hundred on this” or “I should work with you cause we’re going to do awesome on the projects; you know everything already.” So, my Spanish courses never really challenged me and you know, the language or the, the context of learning the language.

The ability to partner with students and challenge racist assumptions reflects Noelia’s previous stance on gender binaries. To better gauge additional instructional moves along other dimensions of identity inclusive of race and class, I asked that Noelia share some practices from her instruction.

We talked a little bit about self-identity, but I could have certainly done more as the instructor of how we can know ourselves better and who we are and then how we can also tap into our students more. We did ‘getting to know you’ stuff like the first day of class, like and I just did different world language activities with
cards and dice and icebreaker sort of things. But I could have definitely emphasized that a little bit more.

The limits of Noelia’s instructional moves match her experiences with identity-affirming language. She acknowledges that she ‘could have certainly done more’ beyond the first day and icebreaker activities, and there is evidence in her responses that she finds language which matches one’s lived realities worth fighting for. Still, she did not explicitly provide instruction reflective of those beliefs with her WL PSTs.

Ana’s work with Bilingual/Bicultural language PSTs reflects her embodied experiences in navigating a pluralistic identity. She anticipates a tension, and insists upon it for the sake of instruction.

It helps to be bilingual when you’re talking about what it feels like to be bilingual […] I helped the students, my particular student, to think different. I changed her perspective of Latinx people and culture and that she now understands that we have many histories and many different traditions and it’s so beautiful. […] So, with this Methods [course] they’re gonna find that I’m going to force them to bring in their experiences, what they’re seeing and they’re questioning into their readings and have those debates and really grapple because the expectation is that they will see value and tolerate honor or appreciate and harness. And I think that’s where the conflict is going to come up and helping them work through that because they are mostly white coming from upper middle-class backgrounds.

Ana suggests that her own bilingualism can affect the way Bilingual/Bicultural language PSTs understand their students, and that she will ‘force them [PSTs] to bring in their experiences,’ not to discuss, but to debate. Without directly being asked, she contrasts
this plurality with her teacher candidates ‘white’ and ‘upper middle-class backgrounds’
implicitly suggestive of monoculturalism in the way their racialized subject positions
present a conflict for the ‘histories and many different traditions’ of Ana’s Dominican-
Americanness. While Ana, like Sharon, suggests her pedagogy is anchored in readings,
due to the active description of her instruction, I asked Ana to explain what her goal was
in explicitly partnering with teacher candidates in this way.

I sincerely hope that I am effective in doing two things, giving them a critical
perspective so that they can highlight culturally sustaining practices and pedagogy
and advocacy. I want to empower their voice to speak for the kids and for
themselves; that’s my objective. And every single course that I teach, a critical
lens, I will create cultural sustainability and equity and advocacy.

Culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP), like CRT and translanguaging mentioned by
Sharon, is a progressive equity-based approach which aligns with Franklin’s mission
where the participants teach. The “cultural and linguistic flexibility” however, that is
central to CSP is not only terminologically important for Ana, is reflected in how she
self-describes, as well as how she approaches instruction with Bilingual/Bicultural
language PSTs in terms of repositioning power. Race is central to understanding power,
language, and identity (Deroo & Ponzio, 2021; Paris & Alim, 2017) and Ana expresses
this implicit knowledge in her response by shifting the locus of reference away from
white middle-class norms in her instruction. Similar to Noelia choosing to fight the RAEs
gendered linguistic binary despite a lack of institutional support, Ana invited ‘conflict’ as
an opportunity for modeling teacher candidates to ‘speak for the kids and for themselves.’
These findings reflect the constancy of race and racism, implicit or explicit, as a central determinant in the goals and practices of LTEs. These analyses lay bare how the racialized experiences of the participants animated their understanding of culture and identity and manifested in their capacity to instruct language PSTs. The concept of culture was expanded or contracted through alignment with valued institutions or individuals to dis/include class, gender, language, and race demonstrating that in many ways, you teach who you are. Ana’s description of her identity and instruction resisted racial Black/white binaries in addition to conceptions of language as bounded systems. She languaged her approaches through progressive and pluralistic scholarship (e.g., CRSE [culturally responsive and sustaining education] and translanguaging) which reflected her description of self. All participants drew from onto-epistemic expertise, yet Ana, who identifies as Dominican-American, drew from her racialized experiences (Anya, 2016; Kohli, 2009) to deepen her practice with PSTs studying to become bilingual/bicultural teachers. The participants’ ability to employ the term ‘culture’ to signal socio-political issues without naming race or colonial histories and their impacts undermines the ability of LTEs to norm, discuss, and grow their understandings of complex issues related to racism despite structural and curricular shifts towards equity and justice at Franklin University.

**Conclusion and Implications**

This study sought to address the ways LTEs at Franklin University understood ‘culture,’ as well as how they tacitly or explicitly addressed culture and identity in their preparation of language teachers. Findings suggest that participants understood culture as racialized and particularly so through their conceptions of self in accounting for various
class markers including phenotype, language, gender identity, citizenship, ethnicity and nationality. Drawing upon the passive institutional power of Franklin and/or the teacher licensure exam, these relative categorical allegiances or enmities reinforced white monocultural ideals rendering discussions of those ideals impossible through coded language. Thus, language teacher preparation at Franklin is cast as an incubator of neoliberal multicultural anti-Blackness through coded representations of race as presented through ‘culture.’

This study further suggests that within the urban social justice teacher preparation program at Franklin University, LTEs are agentive irrespective of institutional support toward ends they espouse and in the ways they understand said ends. In this case, changing structures (curriculum and clinical placements) to center equity and social justice was helpful for participants, but the success of their agency could have further been buttressed by receiving ongoing institutional support for reflection and racially-conscious instruction. The tendency for LTEs to use the lens of self to make sense of race and power despite not seeing themselves as racialized reinforces the need for teacher preparation programs to establish and norm how ‘race’ is understood by instructors in order to address social hierarchies particularly within programs that center urban social justice.

Participants in this case demonstrated a common-sense albeit racialized understanding of ‘culture’ upon which there was no universal agreement. For recommended future study, it is important that we investigate under which culture paradigm language teacher educators are oriented—culture as ethnoracial associations solidified politically over time, or culture as a state-endorsed politic of difference
(Bennett, 1992) in which instructors are an instrument of government. Without this distinction, application of progressive CRSE frameworks within language teacher preparation are destined to falter due to a post-racial multicultural tendency to evade discussions of race.

Teacher educators who feel distanced from the practical implementation of CRSE despite their theoretical knowledge may not deem progressive culture-based frameworks as relevant based on their own identity formations working from a “do as I say, not as I do” (Lindahl et al., 2021) approach. To counter this, (language) teacher preparation must increase Black and minoritized educators within their ranks whose real-life experiential knowledge and expertise (Austin et al., 2021) can amplify and center those that more closely align with K-12 student populations. It is important, however, that these professionals be tenure-track faculty to increase the likelihood that they truly possess the power to affect structures and curricula. Finally, to address race in language teacher preparation, we must avoid the euphemism of ‘culture’ and center race by specifically asking, *Who benefits from collapsing socio-politically, geopolitically and historically contingent categories of race into commonsensical and static hierarchies of ‘culture’?* We must further take notice of who can claim cultural and linguistic difference as positive and for whom this remains a mark of inferiority. This line of critical questioning is a starting point towards acknowledging the centrality of race as an enduring anti-Black colonial construct in language teacher preparation.

**Appendix A: Franklin University Distribution of Credits**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban Social Justice Teacher Preparation Program</th>
<th>Total Credits</th>
<th>Percentage of Culture &amp; Identity credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Old Certificate</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual/Bicultural Education</td>
<td>Old Certificate</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Language</td>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Appendix B: Interview Protocol**

1. What is your name and your position?
2. How long have you held that position?
3. How would you define culture?
4. What understandings of culture do you think pre-service teachers need to be effective teachers of language and culture?
5. What activities do you plan to help pre-service teachers understand culture(s)?
6. What misconceptions about culture(s) do your pre-service teachers have?
7. How do you help them overcome these misconceptions?
8. How do you see your role with regard to helping future teachers teach about culture and identity with their future students?

9. What is the role of identity in language learning?

10. How do you help future teachers understand the importance of the role of identity?
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF CULTURELESSNESS

Vignette 5

Before the onset of COVID-19, preparing language PSTs for the teacher licensure exam was already a challenge. Even prior to remote learning, the hefty finances and technological savvy necessary to be granted a license through EdTPA (educative teacher performance assessment) was enough to overwhelm teacher candidates, and this was without an airborne pandemic with which to contend. Preparing to record, annotate, analyze, and justify their planning instruction and assessment while completing student teaching and trying to earn an income at the same time, posed a level of challenge that pushed many of them to the brink under ostensibly normal circumstances. It was, as a result, unfathomable that one might supersede all those challenges only to decide against teaching, but that’s precisely what Kiara did.

In all my years at Franklin, I was the only Black American language PST I had ever known, so it was difficult to conceive of how race might be understood outside of my Afro-descended existence. I knew that where and to whom I eventually wanted to teach Spanish felt largely unaddressed in my tenure as a licensure candidate, but I rationalized that it was because I was such an anomaly as a Black American language educator. As a standard, I checked in to see the scores earned on the licensure exam and employment statuses of my language PSTs after each semester of preparation with them. I reveled in celebrating that they somehow survived the semester and checked to see if I could make personal connections on their behalf based on my near decade of middle and high school Spanish instruction in different regions around the state. I was surprised to
find that Kiara, despite successfully completing the program, never set foot in an ESL classroom as a teacher—and decidedly, never would.

   Kiara was the white Latinx version of myself—she had a special place in my heart due to her social justice orientation and her linguistic prowess. Kiara had a background in political science and her bachelor’s degree was in linguistics. She was both racialized and from an urban area with severe income inequality, while counting herself among the middle-class in terms of socioeconomic status. She had grown up a contradiction of prevailing racial, linguistic and class stereotypes: Latinx with English as her first language, and able to afford the two-year work hiatus necessary to become a teacher through our program while remaining passionately connected to communities where folks were likely financially incapable of something similar. The more I learned about Kiara, the more I understood how our program had failed her.

   Well into the summer after the spring semester in which her cohort had graduated, I checked in with Kiara to see why she had not put her degree to use. She explained that having spent the beginning of the pandemic in a bubble at Franklin wherein the realities of co-morbidities, school dependence and public assistance were not discussed in conjunction with instructional practice and theory, she no longer felt compelled to enter the teaching profession. She completed her clinical practice in a place where her Anglo cooperating teachers sneered at the immigrant children but were kind to her, assuming that her ability to student teach along with her English competence meant she couldn’t be ‘one of them.’ She did not identify as an immigrant nor as low-income or undocumented, but her solidarity with those communities made her time at Franklin discussing grammatical competency and the triumphs of racial equality unbearable.
Like me, Kiara was unsuccessful at centering her course-related dialogues in the realities of her community and clinical placement. As a result, she felt that what she had learned wouldn’t make a difference for her would-be students. Kiara and I differed in our next steps after graduating from Franklin's TPP thirteen years apart. While I continue to teach, she decided her commitments to social justice and racial equity would have to be taken up outside of the classroom. She joined an organization committed to globalized multilingual writing support and has never looked back.

**Discussion**

The purpose of this dissertation was to determine how an urban social justice teacher preparation program shaped racial ideologies at Franklin University. As an African-American woman from a working class background, my own experience as being underrepresented within the institution of U.S. schools provided for me an authentic curiosity for this work. Despite my education, qualifications, and positions ranging from a master’s degree student to a credentialed university lecturer, the antiBlackness I both witnessed and directly experienced provided the impetus for me to research the nature of racial ideology formation within Franklin’s teacher preparation program. The shift in mission and vision towards social justice at Franklin deepened my desire to understand the effective translation of equity-oriented ideals into practice specifically in hopes that both Franklin and the broader academic community might benefit from the findings herein offered.
I approached this investigation through two qualitative studies and a critical analysis of a core curricular text used within Franklin University’s teacher preparation program. For the first study, I conducted a raciolinguistic genealogy (Flores, 2021) to explore how language practices are normed and valued in teacher preparation. In paper two, the critical essay, I investigated the use of Lareau’s “Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life,” (2003) to determine how, as a popular academic teacher preparation text, it represented Black communities, their assets and lived experiences. Finally, I conducted a case-study of the language program at Franklin’s teacher preparation program (TPP) and interviewed all three of the methods instructors in the program to investigate how language teacher educators (LTEs) at Franklin University understood ‘culture,’ as well as how they tacitly and/or explicitly discussed addressing culture and identity in the preparation of language teachers. Across the papers, the conceptual framework of culturelessness, provided a lens by which to understand the unique and distinct forms of invisibilizing ways of knowing and being for those racialized as either white or Black. Racial whiteness and Blackness were largely unarticulated across the data gathered in this dissertation reinforcing a naturalized hierarchy of inequitable outcomes for Black communities. The norming of racial whiteness is described in economic and cultural universalizing terms, while the abnormalization of Blackness is described through the deficit portrayals of Black communities and their cultural artifacts (linguistic or otherwise).

After outlining the summary of findings in distinct sections as separated by the three papers of this dissertation, I will place said findings in conversation with the language education and teacher preparation literature to surface the contribution of this dissertation
to the field of language teacher preparation in the areas of research, practice and policy. I will then provide implications and conclusions based on these contributions.

**Summary of Findings**

In what follows, I will provide an overview of the findings in each of the papers from the dissertation work that addressed the overarching research question, How does an urban social justice teacher preparation program shape racial ideologies? Each subheading will reflect the findings for the distinct yet related sub-questions that guided the three papers in this dissertation: The research question for the raciolinguistic genealogy, “How are notions of capital (cultural, linguistic, and social) legitimized through policy and academic texts?” is addressed in the section entitled ‘Capital through the lens of Culturelessness,’ the essential question for the textual analysis paper, “How does a popular academic teacher preparation text represent Black communities, their assets and lived experiences?” is addressed under ‘Class through the lens of Culturelessness,’ and finally, the research questions, “According to self-report, how do LTEs at Franklin University understand ‘culture?’” and “From what do language teacher educators draw in order to tacitly or explicitly address culture and identity in the preparation of language teachers?” are addressed in the section entitled, “Culture through the lens of Culturelessness.”

With specific attention to the methods and conceptual frame of culturelessness, I will describe how each paper further clarified the shaping of racial ideologies within Franklin’s urban teacher preparation program. I will then conclude by synthesizing how avoiding normed and overtly defined understandings of race and the ways it organizes
societal expectations of humanness as central to institutional teaching and learning within the U.S., antiBlackness is largely reinforced within Franklin’s TPP.

**Capital through the lens of Culturelessness**

To better understand the formation of racial ideologies within TPPs, and particularly at Franklin, in the paper, “Limited Capital: A Genealogy of Culturelessness in (Language) Teacher Education”, I focused on an educational policy report that impacted academic expectations through teacher licensure approximately a generation after the policy was published. Through a raciolinguistic genealogy, I analyzed two primary data sources including the 1983 “A Nation at Risk” report on the state of U.S. education, and Zwiers’ text, “Building academic language: Essential practices for content classrooms, grades 5-12” (2013). In tracing the discursive representations of language in commodifying terms like ‘capital,’ my findings reflect the ways that language was framed as property and, as an extension of whiteness as property (Harris, 1993), Black and Indigenous students were and continue to be fundamentally precluded from humanized subject positions. The findings are summarized under themes entitled ‘Language must be defended’ and ‘A limited supply of capital’ to synthesize the depictions of a mythic monocultural (Wynter, 1992) ideal against which Black and Indigenous students are measured linguistically. Through the conceptual lens of culturelessness, it becomes clear that the proposed ability for said students to acquire language practices that could be measured as ‘academic’ directly defies the logic of how patriotism and intellectual capital are defined both by the 1983 report and within the 2013 academic text. Culturelessness, which locates the phenomenon of un/marking culture and within it, language upon the continuum of erasure within he Black/white binary, offers
clarity to the research question by suggesting the cultural and linguistic practices of Black and Indigenous students are not, and perhaps were not ever, in question. Instead, the ways in which language practices are normed and valued in teacher preparation reflect a culturelessness at either end of the Black/white racial binary that is held in place by the threat these students pose to a politically white standard of language and culture predicated upon their positions as non-human and savage, respectively. In shaping racial ideologies at Franklin and wherever the EdTPA and calls for ‘academic language’ are centered, antiBlackness is foundational to conceptions of human value and normalcy.

Culturelessness recognizes the Black/white racial binary that unmarks culture once either racialized status is reached. The language of capital that is taken up within social sciences (inclusive of education and teacher preparation) includes the sub-categories of cultural capital and linguistic capital (Yosso, 2005; Zwiers, 2013) which are highlighted as determinants of student success in U.S. K-12 public schools. Yet, capital is not profoundly analyzed from its conceptual depth as a term affiliated with capitalism and the need for surplus (Wynter, 1976; Ahmed, 2004) value to fuel a market economy dating back to a precolonial era. The omission of Bourdieu’s engagement with capitals that are both material and symbolic (Navarro, 2006) but not a priori reconstitutes property/propertied binary that Harris outlines in her work on whiteness as property (1993). In fact, the very circulation and exchange of the symbolic cultural and linguistic capitals increase their value and reinforce antiBlack subjugation. Continued usage of ‘capitals’ without attention to how race organizes the ways in which this contingent value system is determined and maintained demonstrates the utility of culturelessness as a framework through which antiBlackness in language education and
teacher preparation can be understood. When Zwiers explains that “the rich get richer,” (2013, p. 8) he does not unpack how the initial wealth was acquired nor that it is distributed along the Black/white binary. In equating human worth to economic means, symbolic surplus value is extracted from Black bodies in the form of various capitals through discourses of culturelessness as a naturalized state which normalizes whiteness while abnormalizing Blackness. The need to discuss race disappears as we are oriented towards preferred embodied power relations (Navarro, 2006) that specific groups simply lack.

The relationship between the symbolic and material capitals is also underexplored in the context of language teacher preparation in that calls for various capitals (Yosso, 2005) from minoritized groups has become a common response to an analogy birthed in racialized inequity. In centering the historical devaluation of Black bodies considered capital and not fully human (Wynter, 2003) we extend calls for humanizing subjugated communities without circulating symbolic capitals that justify the misappropriation of material resources towards the white middle class. The notion of capitals as symbolic or material is fundamentally exploitative and opting for discussions of accumulating them rather than reckoning with human value irrespective of its disembodied circulation invalidates social justice efforts at their core. Identifying the erasure of culture once groups are categorized as distinctively ‘Black’ or ‘white’ forces a reckoning with the exchange of racial currency at the cost of historical, ethnic and sociopolitical formations over time, and suggests all people are cultured (rather than having culture as a possession) regardless of who is racially designated as the ruling class.

**Class through the lens of Culturelessness**
Texts that shape racial ideologies in Franklin’s teacher preparation program, are not limited to policy and licensure related documents. In the second paper of this dissertation, I critically analyzed Lareau’s “Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life,” (2003) a curricular text not only centered at Franklin’s TPP, but one that is widely cited and used in thousands of higher education syllabi nationally. In paper two entitled, “Critiquing the Canon: Towards a More Critical Use of Lareau’s “Unequal Childhoods” in Teacher Preparation”, my central question was, “How does a popular academic teacher preparation text represent Black communities, their assets and lived experiences?” Findings suggest that the central claims of Lareau’s text revolved around natural growth or the decentering of children in the lives of working-class (and Black) parents, and Black youth as both socially deprived and in need of sustained surveillance. These representations contribute to the unfamiliarity pitfall (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985; Cross, 2016) that authoritatively reinforces a liberal class-centric and antiBlack rationale to systematically inequitable outcomes for Black youth in U.S. public schooling. Through counterstorytelling as a theoretical approach (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002), these claims highlighted the overwhelming whiteness in teacher preparation (Sleeter, 2001) providing a context for the counterclaims posited through alternative interdisciplinary texts that centered Black experiential knowledge. These counterclaims from the analysis included A Village Approach to Child-Rearing, Protective Factors within the Black Community and Cultivating a Childhood Space for Black youth. Central to counterstorytelling is the critical race theoretical orientation (Bell, 1980) that refuses to deconstruct the simultaneity (Collins, 1986) of oppressions at the intersection of race, gender and class. This refusal countered the portrayal of assets and lived experiences of
Black communities as depicted in Lareau’s text as solely the child-rearing tendency of the working-class to exist outside of the white gaze (Morrison, 1975) and, in certain cases, within racially Black homogenous settings. With Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life,” (Lareau, 2003) as a core text in Franklin’s TPP, the notion of Black communities as culturally impoverished is solidified through the authority of its canonical placement in the coursework.

While discussions on class should innately call for the ways in which race organizes it, oftentimes it is instead used as a means to evade racist rationales as to why specific groups are deserving of their classed subordination or elevated statuses. Culturelessness attends to the unarticulated conflation of more material resources as analogous to more ‘culture’ and therefore a higher ‘class.’ The inevitability of class struggle has been theorized from Engels to Marx but the racial dimension is clearly outlined in Robinson’s work on Black Marxism which locates race initially within “internal” relations of European peoples” (2000, p.2). In this way, difference markers like race and language, whether articulated or not, are fundamentally tied to conceptions of class in ways that predate chattel slavery. Culturelessness in its present and U.S.-based articulations highlights the material aspect of class and brings the notion that it is a distinct possession (Harris, 1993) of racially white membership and absent from racially Black ones into focus.

Class as the central focus of Lareau’s “Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life,” (2003) displaces race rather than engaging it directly to outline the disproportionate resources and success rates of differing classes of people within a Pennsylvanian community. Leonardo addresses this entanglement not in Lareau’s field of
sociology, but rather in education by arguing that, “the coordinated but awkward dance between race and class represent the dilemma around which educators and students twirl and spin” (2012, p. 429). Her text lacks the perspectives of the multiply marginalized (Collins, 1986; Choo & Ferree, 2010) further obscuring the interplay between race and class as it is experienced firsthand.

The fundamental assumption that all ethnoracial groups can be understood through the lens of class reduces the foundational U.S. structures of colonialism and plantation labor to the ‘nation of immigrants’ mythology (Wynter, 1992). The savage (Wynter, 1976; Moten, 2013) and subhuman class designations assigned to Indigenous and Afrodescended communities respectively, served to rationalize dispossession and human trafficking among other atrocities and self-sanitize as ostensibly equal points of comparison to European immigrant groups who are presented as having meritocratically assumed a higher class rank in U.S. society. While CRT identifies race centrally for these group-based mistreatments based on varied markers of difference, culturelessness highlights the class-based aspect of this treatment in ways that are often ignored in educational theory. This is echoed in Leonardo’s assertion that, “if race is not separated out as a distinct social phenomenon conceptually[...] It cannot discriminate between culture, on the one hand, and race on the other” (2012, p.431). To be considered without culture due to the lack of material resources exposes that the use of ‘culture’ in this way is a simplistic proxy for race.

**Culture through the lens of Culturelessness**
To explore the specific racial ideologies in language teacher preparation at Franklin, the research questions for my case study were (1) According to self-report, how do LTEs at Franklin University understand ‘culture’? and (2) How do LTEs at Franklin University discuss tacitly and/or explicitly addressing culture and identity in the preparation of language teachers? For the final paper entitled, “A Hard Time Seeing the Relevance”: Race and Discourse Identity in Language Teacher Preparation”, I chose to derive my protocol for the semi-structured interviews conducted with each instructor from a preliminary program analysis of Franklin’s language education program in the areas of world language, English as a second language and bilingual/bicultural methodologies. This approach allowed me to position each participant as the authority on their deployment of methods to engage language pre-service teachers (PSTs) in reflective opportunities regarding culture in their professional pedagogical development. Flores and Rosa argue that “race can organize the imagination of particular language practices” (2019, p. 148) rendering language and racial ideologies both as inseparable and present within language teacher preparation (Bacon, 2020) irrespective of overt instructor acknowledgement thereof. In foregrounding the participants’ positionality, the abundance of codes within the data relative to how culture was defined by each participant surfaced race and power as central to self and cultural conceptions among the three instructors despite the near absence of race in their articulated responses during the interview process. Thematically represented as Duality and Belonging, Helping you Belong Here, and Limited Experience, Limited Application, my findings suggest that culture, per the LTEs at Franklin, is indeed understood through their racialized experiences. Culturelessness again helped to clarify this coded language that functioned
similarly to race in the case of the participants - as a floating signifier (Hall, 2021) that approximated or distanced each participant from or towards whiteness depending upon the context and goals of the individual. Noelia, who identified as American with a Spanish background, for example, found herself to be culturally ‘between two worlds’ in that her colleagues found comfort in the belongingness of her ‘blue eyes and pale skin’ despite her foreign-sounding name alluding to an erasure of her ethnocultural self in favor of racial whiteness. She also found difficulty in practically addressing identity in her world language methods course which reflects an issue of relevance for LTEs who themselves cope with racialized issues of power via assimilation and white proximity. The participants further drew upon discourse or institutional identities (Gee, 2000) to affirm their use of the term 'culture' in racialized ways that reflected their experiences with being marginalized through language, nationality, religion and other social identifiers. This study in particular lays bare the shaping of racial ideologies within Franklin’s TPP as active and reverberative despite being euphemized as ‘culture’ by methods instructors within its language education program.

Culturelessness exposes an unarticulated racialized monocultural expectation that, when reached, invisibilizes its very existence through various framings including terms like standard (Alim, 2007), appropriate or academic (Flores & Rosa, 2015), formal (Sledd, 1969; Baker-Bell, 2020), and mainstream (Zwiers, 2013) among others. When culture is used in teacher preparation and language education texts, it is often in one of the following ways: to denote the governmentality (Foucault, 1982; Flores, 2013) – the notion that institutions like schools serve to uphold nationalistic ideals through language and culture as technologies of social management, or, per Leopold Sedor Senghor, to
identify the crystallization of “the expression of the relationship between Man and his natural environment” (Wynter, 1976, p. 6). The distinctions are valuable, but not interchangeable and reconstitute antiBlackness by, for example, referring to both definitions within the same context without attention to their separate functions.

Sharon in my case study, who discussed nationality, language and ethnicity when asked about culture, later exchanged definitions under the umbrella term within the same context when dismissing her ability to incorporate translinguaging into her instruction due to its ‘irrelevance.’ Her first expressions acknowledged historical and societal relationships between people and their environments that over time solidified making modes of engagement distinguishable among and between communities. Her second description, however, dismisses this form of culture for governmentality noting that the need to center ways of being that are distinct among groups and solidified over time as they relate to their environments through language, do not serve to uphold white middle-class American expectations in U.S. public schools through governmentality – the alternate definition of culture.

In articulating with specificity what is meant by ‘culture’ as we use it in teacher preparation and language education, we can avoid the conflation of naturalized hierarchical conceptions of culture which depict Black students as threats (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) due to difference and internal enemies who resist assimilation (Melamed, 2006). Culturelessness challenges us to be specific in our language rather than allowing for ‘culture’ to become the new floating signifier (Hall, 2021) replacing race in post-racial discourses on educational inequity.

Conclusion for Summary of Findings
Language is a carrier of cultures (Carr, 2021) histories and ideologies, and through policy, academic and curricular texts, Franklin’s TPP and LTEs often validate longstanding antiBlack ideologies through unchallenged white hegemonic approaches. While race is sociogenically real (Wynter, 2003), according to Omi & Winant, “racialization is an ideological process” (1994, p. 14) that is politically, temporally and geographically contingent. Within a TPP whose mission and vision prioritize social justice and equity, it is critical to acknowledge an expanse of entry points to engaging with race that will vary based upon both individual and group-based epistemic and ontological meaning-making within the ethno-racially plural society found in the northeastern U.S. where Franklin is located. The real impacts of antiBlack racism as enacted through numerous social institutions inclusive of schooling are indeed challenged in the strategic plan of the program, its mission, vision and other various course-related discourses threaded throughout Franklin’s TPP. They are more often than not, however, presented as static rather than changeable and reflective of sociopolitical whims based on white supremacist ideals which can or should be resisted. Since racial formation (Omi & Winant, 1994) by definition reflects the process whereby colonization and assemblages (Combahee River Collective, 1983; Flores et al., 2020) of suffering and purported inferiority are naturalized through institutions and governments, engaging with and presenting texts which do not challenge white hegemony is an ideologically racist endeavor. Gramsci defines ideology as “the power of the ideas of the ruling class to overshadow and eradicate competing views and to become, in effect, the commonsense view of the world” (Bartolomé, 2010, p. 508). The ideological discourses I investigated through the raciolinguistic genealogy, the critical essay and case-study, rather than
challenging the commonsense presentation of white supremacy as naturally ordered, offered practices for altering and/or assimilating the abilities, behaviors and beliefs of Black and minoritized students and communities or simply described the existing inequities fueling a multicultural neoliberal (Melamed, 2006) approach to teacher preparation.

Language in its every permutation reflects the ideology of its authorship, which, in the case of my multi-layered investigation into Franklin, resulted in a data-rich corpus across the three papers. The presence of race throughout the data, but largely through the coded language of capital, class and culture, resulted in dissertation findings that reveal that antiBlack ideologies within Franklin’s TPP may be ones that are reinforced rather than interrupted.

**Culturelessness in Teacher Preparation and Language Education Literature**

In addressing how the urban social justice teacher preparation program at Franklin shapes racial ideologies, the findings from this dissertation work extend and challenge the current literature within teacher preparation and language education. Below, I place the dissertation findings in conversation with the aforementioned areas of literature in the following categories: Confounding deracialized notions of language property, Historicity, Blackness and resisting disembodiment and No raceless culture, no cultureless race. I conclude by outlining the need to expand my theoretical orientation to an expanse larger than the U.S. context which complicated and enriched my engagement with CRT to accommodate the immensity of time and space across which racialization occurs.

*Confounding deracialized notions of language property.* In preparing teachers for a licensure exam which centers upon academic language across content areas (SCALE,
2018), we must have a clear notion of what makes specific language uses ‘academic’ while others are not. Zwiers claims that academic language is “the most complicated” (2013, p. 1) among all registers to use and that access to this distinct register is “unequally distributed in society” (p. 7) through various capitals. His text, which informs the EdTPA, positions this specific mode of communication as superior to all others and as central to ensuring student success. Nevertheless, the same exam is cited for fostering a “painful” “test preparation culture” (Chiu, 2014, p. 28) thereby restricting PST ability to practice meaningful instructional moves outside of the prescribed rubric-aligned expectations of the licensure exam. Lareau would argue that this type of exposure to and familiarity with institutional norms prevalent in schools (e.g. testing culture) which happen to be white middle-class monolingual English ones, is how concerted cultivation (2003) of middle-class children improves their academic outcomes. Neither Zwiers nor Lareau, however, identify the idealized linguistic or cultural standards as racially contrived despite the overwhelming whiteness (Sletter, 2017) within teacher preparation. This invisibilizes the cultural power differential wielded over Black and minoritized students as a legacy of colonial relations that render racialized language practices unacceptable both when and because they are produced from Black bodies forming an intersectional (Combahee River Collective, 1983) racialized language assemblage (Rosa & Flores, 2017) which PSTs are thusly being trained to uphold.

The common core state standards and teacher licensure exam which idealize academic language reflect concerns from the 1983 educational policy report published nearly a generation earlier than Zwiers’ work, which highlighted minoritized students’ tendency to “coast through life,” as an endangerment to the country (National Commission on
Excellence in Education, p. 9) and its intellectual capital. The immediate past education secretary DeVos cited this report as recently as 2018 and later argued that not only was the nation currently “at a greater risk,” but that resources particularly in “cities” like “Detroit” (U.S. Department of Education, 2019) be diverted away from public schools and towards vouchers demonstrating a steadfast belief that expanded access to public education as a result of Civil Rights era policies and legal pursuits was tantamount to diluted intellectual rigor. Depersonalizing, monetizing and measuring (Chiu, 2014) the craft of teaching is an ideological choice that favors the status quo in U.S. schooling which is indeed racially white. The arbitrary nature of a linguistic standard purported to be objectively more complex is revealed more clearly through global discourses like NAEP which demonstrate that whiteness itself is a context specific sociogenic reality. We see this in that native English speakers who are Black outside of the U.S. (Smith et al., 2020) must learn how racialized white language expectations are wielded in the U.S. and adjust for it when crossing geopolitical borders. White symbolic and material capital (Navarro, 2006) magnified through discourses of academic language and exchanged through teacher preparation can only be defanged by challenging academic language not as an objectively superior variety of language, but as white institutional property.

_Historicity, Blackness and resisting disembodiment._ Although in different countries and written 64 years apart from each other, sociologist W.E.B. DuBois and psychoanalyst Frantz Fanon both grappled with how being Black within white spaces necessitates a dissociative stance towards the perception of self. This fundamentally critical orientation towards racialized power structures afforded both thinkers a necessary analytic for navigating worlds wherein their humanity and realities were regularly erased. Black and
minoritized PSTs report similar criticality in navigating their unacknowledged racialized ontologies (Kohli, 2009; Haddix, 2016) within teacher preparation spaces. Curiously, racialized groups who do not fit as squarely into the Black/white binary benefit more from overt exposure to multiculturalism within teacher preparation contexts (Cherng & Davis, 2019) suggesting that the forces of racialization that Asian and Latinx PSTs (in this case) experienced prior to their teacher preparation were interpreted as something other than cultural difference. It is possible that distinct entry points into racialization with which the Franklin LTEs were confronted, are experienced by communities who do not identify as Black or white, but are underexplored outside of teacher preparation based on the unique salience of antiBlackness as the defining racism within the U.S. In short, the racial binary which many critical frameworks challenge [see TribalCrit (Brayboy, 2005), LatCrit (Valdes, 2013), AsianCrit (Museus, 2013) and others] for failing to represent immigration, language, naturalization and colonization, still necessitate the anchor of antiBlackness by which to interpret other forms of racial subordination. Culturelessness as highlighted in “A Hard Time Seeing the Relevance”: Race and Discourse Identity in Language Teacher Preparation”, calls for race and culture to be specifically named and historicized such that the Black/white binary can be addressed regardless of the racial makeup of the PSTs or LTEs in question. Discussions on culture in teacher preparation having statistically insignificant impacts on racially Black and white PSTs (Cherng & Davis, 2019), may confirm their ontological experiences as cultureless while those who are and can still experience whiteness as a process (Daniels & Varghese, 2020) may find value in learning about culture in ways that, for them, have not yet been subsumed and invisibilized by race. Simply presenting
PSTs with information about diverse communities leaves their framing about “the expression of the relationship between Man and his natural environment” (Wynter, 1976, p.6) unchallenged (Reiter & Davis, 2011) particularly in the event that the constructions of race for the PSTs in question reflect the status quo. White PSTs, for example, may find power inequity in society a natural result of the world order (Picower, 2009) while Black PSTs face silencing (Delpit, 1988; Haddix, 2012) in teacher preparation spaces through a focus on multiculturalism without regard for power and race. Racialization as a historical and geopolitically-specific process (Omi & Winant, 1994) provides not only a space for Black PSTs to be received wholly as their critical selves, it opens a pathway for those otherwise racialized to critically examine their own relationships to power (Freire, 2018; Milner, 2011) through understanding race as a process that impacts all communities rather than as a static designation.

_No raceless culture, no cultureless race._ Creating an environment in which (language) PSTs will not just passively learn about, but rather experience and critically self-reflect upon the performative aspects of language and culture in various contexts necessitates a personal knowledge of the dynamics of race and power on behalf of those facilitating the experience. Texts that replicate one-dimensional and static representations of inequity without regard for the role of power and race like those represented in Lareau’s “Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life,” (2003), only naturalize PSTs experiences with the notion of greater and lesser cultures outside of teacher preparation. The critical orientation that self-awareness of one’s racialized position affords within a teacher preparation spaces encourages that texts like these be challenged, critically unpacked or
replaced altogether so as not to reinforce hierarchical notions of culture without attention to how racial formations inform them.

Black and minoritized PSTs may find communities that reflect back to them the critical orientations towards race and language they have come to know through lived experiences (Pascual y Cabo et al., 2017), but encounter that criticality less often in institutional language learning (Anya, 2016) and in language teacher preparation (Bustamante & Novella, 2019). This can cause negative results for linguistic advancement (Anya, 2016) a sense of shame regarding non-dominant languaging practices (Bustamante & Novella, 2019), and further, extinguish the desire for language PSTs to attempt progressive pedagogies (Martel, 2015) while working through clinical experiences. In looking to assume stances and replicate methods that appease university instructors, language PSTs should come to learn that those instructors also experience the world through their cultural and racialized subject positions. The discursive approximation to or distancing from the Black/white binary that the LTEs from my case study displayed, however, suggests that LTEs may not embrace or actively reflect upon their own racialized experiences while instead opting to focus upon culture which can encourage language PSTs to respond in kind. This attempt to replace race with culture reinforces racist hierarchies by suggesting that the two cannot exist simultaneously, yet recommitting to racial logics through the guise of culture. Culturelessness urges LTEs to investigate the ways race obscures or accentuates cultural and linguistic manifestations through raciolinguistic assemblages (Flores et al., 2020) towards ends that reinscribe hierarchies of power reflective of the larger society.

*Conclusion of Discussion*
The centrality of race to the framing, analysis and findings of this dissertation underscores the importance of CRT as a foundational point of inquiry for language education and language teacher preparation. Whiteness as property, racism as endemic to U.S. society and a critique of liberalism played major roles in parsing the complexity of how language and culture are framed as uniquely white possessions in spite of race itself being unspeakable and therefore euphemized as ‘culture.’ Still, to fully attend to how racial ideologies are shaped within Franklin’s TPP, a broader understanding of racialization as a process historically and globally was necessary. LTEs must understand their own racialization along the Black/white binary in addition to acknowledging that said binary is experienced differently around the world and domestically unsettling the national monocultural governmentality to which they may be accustomed. The critical race-reflexivity that culturelessness necessitates has to become a regular process in which LTEs engage in order to recreate similar opportunities in the context of their teacher preparation courses. This orientation can initiate the dynamic and relational awareness needed to center Black and minoritized ways of knowing and being among PSTs who can, in turn, engage similarly in their K-12 teaching.

Implications

The purpose of this dissertation work was to explore the ways in which Franklin’s TPP shaped racial ideologies. The findings that resulted from the raciolinguistic genealogy, critical analysis and case study afforded insights that potentially advance research, practice and policy for both teacher preparation and language education. In what follows, I will outline how this dissertation, primarily through the methodologies and findings, offers next steps for (language) teacher preparation practices, to nuance the
types of questions and ways we research language education and language teacher preparation, and investigate how we interpret and dialogue with policies as corpora that represent place-based polities that we can either resist or reinforce.

As has been suggested in previous research, a lack of relevance (Kubota et al., 2003, Chang Bacon, 2021) was cited by LTEs in this dissertation work as a reason for not centering race and power through progressive approaches like translanguaging. What this work suggests, however, is that relevance is not enough (Paris, 2012) to attend to the ethnolinguistic and racial plurality not in a specific classroom setting, but in the world for which we are preparing language teachers to work. This body of research further offers an acknowledgement of the role that institutions like teacher preparation programs play in social management through governmentality (Foucault, 1982; Flores, 2013) and language and culture as technologies of social management. Future studies that address this distinct understanding that language educators may have regarding their role and function – one of enforcing a monocultural norm as opposed to sustaining plural linguistic and cultural practices, can reframe and complicate the way we understand teacher preparation research gaps and programmatic designs. We may determine, for example, that the investigation of what LTEs (Johnson, 2016) and program administrators believe the purpose of language education is, holds as much value as attending to how that education and preparation manifests.

An additional research implication for this dissertation work is methodological in nature. Existing literature has already suggested the value of self-study (Fasching-Varner & Dodo Seriki, 2012) in teacher education as well as the need for language educators to investigate their own attitudes, dispositions (Allen & Hancock, 2017) as well as identities
(Senyshyn & Martinelli, 2020) with regard to how they develop language PSTs. However, the self-study method is often employed by LTEs with preexisting orientations towards equity and social justice. My case study suggests that research theoretically oriented as a liberatory practice within frames of race and power (like CRT) can position the identity exploration process as one that differentiates for participants rather than possibly reinforcing already held beliefs about societal power relations. That is to say, the value in self-study can be better understood based on the current self-awareness and goals of the LTEs in question, and research designed to challenge the status quo can present departures from norms or standards to which a given TPP ascribes.

Current research argues for the importance of centering race in teacher preparation (Allen & Hancock, 2017) and in language education (Kubota et al., 2003). This dissertation suggests, however, that there is a lack of clarity regarding the very definition of race thereby complicating the ability to interpret findings wherein race is directly studied. Critical (Fairclough, 2013) discourse analysis (Gee, 2004) can serve to unpack research findings relative to race and power in teacher preparation and language education. In asking “How is this piece of language being used to make certain things significant or not and in what ways? (Gee, 2004, p. 11), future research can attend to the function of participants' language and related texts rather than its face-value significance which may be misleading in the conflation of race, ethnicity, culture etc.

In revisiting the distinct understandings and uses of the term culture to discuss various identity markers and group-based means of navigating society, this dissertation suggests that the term culture be problematized altogether. Culture, as it emanates from a colonial justification that barbaric native people must be subject to the governance of the Spanish
empire due to their inability to observe natural law (Fernández Santamaria, 1975), has remained a justification for the antiBlackness enacted in governmental institutions. Wynter (1976) suggests that the human is overdetermined as the white western male, and that “culture as a weapon of domination” (p. 9) removes the possibility for a general acceptance that all beings are either humans or cultural. At its core, a culture that suggests the departure from white western modes of being and knowing constitutes non-culture or barbarism leaving culture itself beyond reconceptualization. This dissertation contributes to calls for this form of humanism (Bietsa, 1998) to be challenged at its core and in the particular case of teacher education, to acknowledge the irreducible personhood and value of all learners by centering the ways of being and knowing specifically associated with raced and gendered groups (e.g., Black women) as the starting point of educational theory.

The ways in which this dissertation work genealogically confirmed the consistency between a heavily critiqued and consequential policy report from a generation ago, and current teacher preparation discourses, affirms the implications it has for educational policy. Firstly, raciolinguistic genealogy as method (Flores, 2021) offers immense potential for identifying changes or consistencies in racialized discursive representations that would otherwise be interpreted as normative. While educational and all policies will always be ideological, a raciolinguistic perspective (Flores & Rosa, 2017) serves to denaturalize the current grid of intelligibility (Foucault, 1978) that invisibilizes white supremacy in its policy-based instantiations. This work signals promise in critical language scholars undertaking a raciolinguistic genealogical method and or partnering with educational policy makers to interrupt the reproduction of antiBlackness by forming
new anticolonial grids of intelligibility that center solidarity among Black and Indigenous subjugated ways of knowing.

**Conclusion**

The overarching question for this dissertation was, How does an urban social justice teacher preparation program shape racial ideologies? My findings suggest that in the case of Franklin University’s TPP, commonsensical antiBlack ideologies are reinforced rather than interrupted. Considering the power and influence of language teachers within K-12 spaces that are increasingly representative of minoritized (Taie & Goldring, 2020) youth, it is imperative to have a clear and a robust understanding of their preparation. The results of this dissertation serve to inform those who design and participate in teacher preparation and language teacher education both programmatically and methodologically while presenting implications for teacher preparation and language education research by highlighting fundamental assumptions about race in texts, assessments and instruction which, whether or not explicitly articulated, reinforce antiBlackness.

This dissertation suggests that at Franklin, the dated antiBlack policy report “A Nation at Risk” continues to influence the testing apparatus which in turn creates demand for the harmful academic and curricular texts adopted in the program, while instructional approaches reflect attempts to increase the nonmaterial capitals of Black youth and communities. Said texts also provide descriptions of Black communities and their language practices that stigmatize their distance from white middle-class norms which are idealized through coded language (termed ‘capitals,’ ‘class’ or ‘culture’), simultaneously abnormalizing Blackness. In addition to the conflation between material and nonmaterial resources, these representations and approaches do not engage the lack
of material resources afforded to Black communities, nor the sociopolitical and historical contexts that created said inequities.

The avoidance and superficial engagement with race within Franklin’s TPP reconstitutes whiteness as the norm, albeit unspoken, against which all other ways of being and knowing are compared and measured. Explicitly, through public documents and syllabi, Franklin’s TPP engages directly with concerns of social justice and race consciousness. Implicitly, however, as evidenced through the inability to model, articulate and justify race-conscious pedagogies particularly in the language education program, engagement with race and power on an ideological level is enacted through culturelessness and is therefore perfunctory and superficial in nature.

This dissertation is limited in that LTEs responsible for methods courses were the only TEs interviewed, and therefore the results may not fully represent the expanse of all disciplinary programs at Franklin. Still, in recognition of the teacher licensure expectation that all PSTs command academic language and the centrality that the language education program plays within the context of Franklin, to that end, this work suggests that more critical research be dedicated to language education writ large. As Crandall reminds us, “Language teacher education is a microcosm of teacher education” and thus, the tendency to euphemize race and reproduce antiBlackness at Franklin which this dissertation work lays bare, can serve as a reckoning and a caution, as well as a point of inquiry towards a broader investigatory agenda for future educational research, practice and policy.
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